Levels of Performance for Participants and Groups

Levels of Performance for OSSDF Participants

*Please read the level descriptions **carefully** before selecting your level. **Dancefest levels may be defined differently from levels used at other competitions or programs**. Your **Dancefest level** should be based on the criteria outlined here, including your training, performance experience, and current skill level.*

Level of Performance	Descriptions
Novice	Dancers who are NEW to formal dance training and performance. They have limited experience learning, rehearsing, and performing choreography and have not participated in competitive dance *anywhere*. ***Dancers may perform at this level for one year only***.
Intermediate 1	Dancers with developing experience through **school curricular and extra-curricular programming**. They show foundational technique, performance skills, and growing consistency. This level also includes novice dancers who have participated in Dancefest before. **Skill examples:** single pirouette, basic leaps, kicks, simple floorwork, basic grooves and isolations.
Intermediate 2	Dancers with more established training and performance experience. This includes dancers in **recreational or non-competitive studio programs**, dancers with **less than 2 years of pre-competitive studio experience**, and dancers whose experience through **school curricular, extra-curricular, or community programming** have developed a similar level of technical and performance skill. **Skill examples:** consistent single turns, developing double turns, stronger leaps, more complex floorwork, higher kicks or extensions, and layered movement and rhythm.
Advanced 1	Dancers with substantial training and performance experience. This includes dancers with **1–3 years of studio competitive dance experience (including B level competitive dancers)**, as well as dancers whose experience through **school curricular, extra-curricular, or community programming** have developed a similar level of technical and performance skill. **Skill examples:** consistent double or multiple turns, more complex turning combinations, switch leaps, advanced jumps, controlled extensions, inversions, complex floorwork, and strong dynamic changes.
Advanced 2	Dancers with extensive and sustained advanced training and performance experience. This includes dancers in their **4+ years of studio competitive dance experience (including A level competitive dancers)** as well as dancers whose experience through **school curricular, extra-curricular, or community programming** have developed a similarly advanced level of technical and performance skill. **Skill examples:** advanced turning combinations, fouettés or à la seconde turns, complex leap and jump combinations, sustained extensions and balances, advanced floorwork, inversions, and intricate rhythmic or musical layering.

Professional Judgment for Individual Levels:

*Teachers may move a dancer **up to a higher performance level** if the dancer's demonstrated technical and performance skills exceed the level indicated by their training experience. Factors such as additional rehearsal, performance experience, and overall skill development may be considered.*

Levels of Performance for OSSDF GROUPS

The overall goal is still to place groups in a level that ***minimizes major differences*** *between routines in the same category and supports the* ***strongest learning experience for participants****.*

NOTE: Lifts and acrobatic movements are not required at any level. *Any lift involving height or balance above the shoulders, throws, unsupported inversions, elevated drops, or other high-risk elements must follow the Dancefest* ***High-Risk Movement Guidelines.***

The goal is not to level the routine based on the ***most experienced dancer*** *or the* ***least experienced dancer****, but to select the category that most accurately reflects the performance ability of the group overall.*

Level	***Dancer Composition***	***Teacher Involvement***	***Performance Expectations***	***Skill Examples***
Novice	Use Novice when the makeup of the group is **primarily Novice dancers**.	Teacher guidance and feedback may be provided throughout the creative, cleaning, and rehearsal process.	Beginning-level group choreography with straightforward formations, timing, and movement vocabulary.	Basic unison, simple formations, clear spacing, straightforward transitions, simple level changes, basic use of direction.
Intermediate 1	Use Intermediate 1 when the **combination of dancer levels** in the routine results in an overall **average** of **Intermediate 1**.	Teacher guidance and feedback may be provided throughout the creative, cleaning, and rehearsal process.	Developing group work with clear formations, timing, spacing, unison, and basic transitions.	Clean unison, simple canon or ripple, multiple formation changes, basic partner interaction, simple floorwork, changes in level and direction, basic musical accent
Intermediate 2	Use Intermediate 2 when the **combination of dancer levels** in the routine results in an overall **average** of **Intermediate 2.**	Teacher guidance and feedback may be provided throughout the creative process, with **limited teacher involvement in cleaning and rehearsal**. **Students take primary responsibility for rehearsing, cleaning, and refining the piece.**	More developed choreography requiring stronger synchronization, musicality, formation changes, and movement complexity.	Strong synchronization, layered movement, more complex canon or ripple, frequent formation changes, small groups performing different movement at the same time, connected partner work, **simple supported lifts,** more complex floor-to-standing transitions.
Advanced 1	Use Advanced 1 when the **combination of dancer levels** in the routine results in an overall **average** of **Advanced 1.**	Teacher guidance and feedback may be provided during the creative process. **Students are fully responsible for rehearsing, cleaning, refining, and preparing the piece for performance.**	Complex choreography requiring strong synchronization, musicality, spatial awareness, transitions, and group performance quality.	Complex timing patterns, intricate formation changes, multiple choreographic layers, detailed musical accents, counterbalance, controlled weight sharing, **more complex supported lifts and partner transitions,** seamless changes between levels and groupings.
Advanced 2	Use Advanced 2 when the **combination of dancer levels** in the routine results in an overall **average** of **Advanced 2.**	Teacher guidance and feedback may be provided during the creative process. **Students are fully responsible for rehearsing, cleaning, refining, and preparing the piece for performance.**	Highly complex choreography performed with advanced control, precision, musicality, versatility, and ensemble awareness.	Highly intricate timing and formation patterns, sophisticated rhythmic layering, multiple groups performing contrasting material simultaneously, advanced musical interpretation, **complex controlled lifts, partnering and weight sharing**, seamless changes in level, direction and energy, sustained precision

				throughout complex choreography.