

Practice Essentials

Dancers empty their dance bags and tell us what products they bring to practice.

BY ELIZABETH LOUISE HATT

Do you ever wonder what tools dancers consider the most important for their career? This month *DRN* asked a selection of dancers to share the contents of their dance bags. We discovered the most common products were health and medical items for unexpected injuries.



Noelle York



CAROLYN FRIEDHOFF, 14
Dancer
Miami Conservatory
Miami, FL

- **Thera-Bands** "They are for working my feet before class—to warm up my ankles."
- **I-Flex Junior Stretch Unit** "It wraps around the door and you use it to stretch your legs."
- **Toe spacers and masking tape** "Since I don't wear toe pads—I feel the floor better without them—masking tape better cushions my toes, and it's a lot easier to put on."
- **Band-Aids, corn cushions and rubbing alcohol** "I use corn cushions for blisters. The alcohol is for rubbing on my pointe shoes to make the box softer."
- **Stitch Kit** "The thread is waxed so it's really strong, and it has two really thick needles. Sometimes the ribbons fall off or I need to add extra elastic to my pointe shoes."

ADAM METZGER, 18
Dancer
Steps on Broadway
New York, NY

- **Socks of varying thickness** "I bring three pairs—each for a different pair of shoes that I use for different dances or to warm up in."
- **Tap booties** "These are basically bags for your tap shoes, but they also double as a cover. You can practice without ruining the floors or your taps—and without disturbing others. They are very difficult to find."
- **Screwdriver** "Just in case a tap comes loose. It happens a lot with an old pair of tap shoes."
- **Sleeveless shirt, t-shirt and long-sleeve shirt** "I never know what studio I am going to be in, and one room is a lot colder than the others."

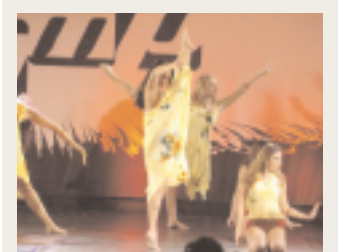


NOELLE YORK, 17
Dancer & Assistant Teacher
Simi Dance Center
Simi Valley, CA

- **Moleskin** "I just started carrying it for pointe, because it doesn't hurt as much if you wrap your foot in it and then use a gel pad."
- **Sweatpants** "I bring sweat-pants for hip hop class because you always want to dress the part."
- **Blister Band-Aids, antiseptic spray, hydrogen peroxide and medical wraps** "I don't personally carry these things, but my friend does—she's the one who always gets injured—so I just borrow from her if I need something."
- **Rhinestones** "Since we rhinestone our own costumes, I bring them with me so I can work on it during the breaks between classes."

MARA POWERS, 10
Dancer
The Ballet Slipper
Oak Harbor, WA

- **Skirts** "We don't have to wear a skirt, but this way I can see when my hips are off center, because the band will not be straight."
- **Legwarmers, shrugs, shorts and pants** "I like to wear more layers and strip them off as I get hot, instead of being too cold while I'm dancing. I'll wear them during the warm-up and then take them off at the bar."
- **Extra pair of ballet slippers** "Just in case I get a hole or forget my shoes at home, then I always have another pair."
- **iPod** "If I have a break, I can listen to the song we're dancing to and get the music going in my head."



ANNIE FUHRMAN, 22
Dancer
Jazz Unlimited
Marlton, NJ

- **Medical wrap or Ace bandage and a first aid kit** "Because if it's not me, someone is always getting hurt."
- **Good luck charm** "This key chain that I won at my very first competition when I was about 9 or 10 years old. It's sort of a good luck charm."
- **All-natural granola bars and bottled water** "I always have something to eat. Quaker Oats makes these bars that I love, so I always carry one in my bag."
- **Old pointe shoes** "Just in case I need them—in case one pair breaks."

Do you know a dancer who would like to share his or her point of view? E-mail ehatt@dancemedia.com to participate in What Dancers Want.