

Tips for Preparing for Camp

1. Teach your dancers fundamentals before they arrive at camp. Your seniors and officers should be able to handle this.
 - Posture/Extension
 - Closing feet
 - Jazz 1st & 2-Parallel 1st and 2nd position
 - 2nd w/turnout (Ballet 2nd)
 - Contagion/Ripple
 - Plie` (theory: counter action)
 - Pivot
 - Spotting (theory: last to leave 1st to return)
 - Chaine`
 - Chasse`
 - Passe`
 - Releve`
 - Pas de bourree`
 - Ball change
 - Kicks
 - Grand Jete`
 - Grapevine
 - Arm Placement-high and low V-T arms-Touchdown-Diagonals
2. Teach your new dancers as many routines (some from last year) as you can. They need the experience of learning routines. Teach the first several routines more slowly. Then teach a routine in an hour and a half. That's how much time they have to learn routines at camp. Instead of teaching whole routines, teach 1/4 of a routine in 20 minutes. Evaluate them on what they've learned. At camp they will be receiving blue, red, white, or green ribbons individually. Have them perform the routine they've learned in groups of four and present them with blue, red, white, or green pieces of construction paper or simple colored gift wrapping ribbon so they will be used to being evaluated.
3. Bring props or something similar to work with while learning routines. For hoop routines, paper plates can be substituted. If you don't have the prop, use your imagination. The dancers learn much better with something in their hands.
4. Practice stamina on kicks. Teach your dancers a kick pattern. If you don't already have one, a link to our Kickmaster version is listed on the top of our contest page. This is the same kick pattern that will be taught at camp.

5. When officers return from officer leadership camp, have them teach the routines they learned. Teach in one large group, then break into small groups to polish and perfect.
6. Work on facial expressions. Create different moods. Work on novelty expressions.
7. Practice "energy" on steps. Have the girls perform only 32 counts over and over in groups and name several "Miss Energy" performers each day.
8. Give "Homework." Assign parts of music and expect polished choreography.
9. Divide your team into groups before you get to camp. You can check the website, www.showtimeint.com, the week before the camp to find out the schedule of group classes. Make sure to assign an officer to each group. Even though officers may be more advanced dancers, they may be going to a beginner class with their particular group. If you don't have an officer go to each class with a group, there will be no one from your team who knows the routine well to work with that group at camp, and when your team returns home, there will be no one to teach the routine to the entire team.
10. Practice an entrance and exit for your home routine and also for your camp dance evaluation. It will be easier on your dancers if you use similar entrances and exits. "5-6-7-8." (Include a simple turn to the audience and getting into beginning position.) You won't know the exact beginning position now for the camp dance, of course, but you could practice one that is standing, one that is on the ground, and one that is kneeling. When you get to camp, you will have to adjust your entrance and exit, but it is so much simpler to adjust than to teach it on the spot. It is easier to have the entrance go all the way from "5-6-7-8" to beginning position with continuous counts than to have a lot of "halt" commands and commands to face front and then commands to assume beginning position. Make it one continuous entrance to make it easier on yourself and cut down on errors. Make them concentrate on keeping spacing even while marching in and out and having correct spacing on beginning position.
11. Review the evaluation forms with your team. Pass out copies and have them grade several squad performances.
12. Preset common formations. Such as: Kick line, triangle, block. Make sure your dancers can transition from one to the next without crossing to the opposite side.