

Leela Academy

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Where are the classes offered?

A: The Leela Academy offers classes in multiple cities across the United States, and online. You can find classes closest to you [here](#).

Q: Can I start a class in mid-session?

A: Yes, absolutely. We welcome new students throughout the year.

Q: Am I too old to start kathak?

A: It's never too late to start! We have students of all ages, including many mothers who are 30 and 40+. People join for different reasons and there is a niche for everyone at Leela.

Q: I have had some previous dance experience, can I start at the next level?

A: We require all new students to start in the Level I class, regardless of prior training, as material and techniques do vary from gharanas. We place a strong importance on students attaining a solid foundation in kathak technique, tal, and sur. It is important to note that students with prior dance experience do tend to progress faster than others if they are consistent in their attendance and individual practice.

Q: I have studied for many years and am looking for opportunities to dance professionally now. Do you have an opportunity to audition for your professional company?

A: We appreciate your interest in dancing with us! We deeply value the guru-shishya parampara and the philosophies with which we approach our training. It's important that dancers spend time studying and training in these philosophies first before being considered to dance in our professional company.

Q: I am very serious about my study of kathak and would like to fast track progress. How can I do this?

A: Students who are interested in accelerating their progress can do so by taking advantage of all the supplemental educational programs offered by Leela. These include annual intensives, retreats, annual assessments, and performance opportunities. We regularly find that those students who are consistent in their attendance and individual practice, and take full advantage of supplemental activities progress at an accelerated rate.

Q: Do you have an annual recital or other performances?

A: Numerous performance opportunities are available to students at Leela. All students perform in an annual recital performance and also have the opportunity to participate in numerous community performances throughout the year at festivals, cultural programs, and house concerts. In order to participate in performances, students must demonstrate strong knowledge and ability in the dance (as measured by in-class evaluations), consistent attendance, and individual practice.

Q: What is the dress code for classes?

A: Students should wear a kurta (preferably cotton) to class with churidar or salwar. Hair should be tied back in a neat bun or a braid. Long braids should be pinned to kurtas to avoid injury during swift turns.

Q: Do you offer private classes?

A: Private classes are available by location. Click [here](#) to see availability by location.

Q: When will I get ghungroo?

A: At Leela, we treat our ghungroo with a high degree of reverence. Students earn their ghungroo by demonstrating dedication and serious study. Once students have completed Levels I and II and demonstrated their progress by successfully completing their Level II assessment, they are ready to receive their ghungroo. Students make their own ghungroo and are officially given the ghungroo in a ceremony officiated by their teacher. This ceremony initiates the student into their study of kathak and formalizes the relationship between teacher and student.

Q: How do I register for classes?

A: For registration information, click [here](#).

Q: How much are classes?

A: Click either the [Adult Division](#) or [Children & Youth Division](#) to learn more about pricing.

Q: I cannot afford classes but I am very passionate and serious about studying kathak. Do you have any scholarship programs?

A: We do not have a scholarship program, but our fundamental principle is that money should not come in the way of anyone's strong desire to acquire knowledge of this incredible art. If you have a financial hardship to pay your tuition, we would be happy to discuss a work-study project for you to do in exchange for class tuition. We are also happy to offer payment plans for those needing to pay in installments.

Q: Can I try a class before enrolling?

A: Yes. All new students are encouraged to attend a free trial class.

Q: Are there any discounts available?

A: A family discount of 10% is applicable to each subsequent immediate family member taking a class within the same session. A student discount of 25% is available for students in college with a valid student ID.

Q: How do I make up for missed classes?

A: Students may make up a missed class by attending a class of a comparable level. Missed classes must be made-up within the same session and will not be credited to the following session.

Q: Can I video the classes so that I/my child can practice at home?

A: A critical skill for all kathak dancers is the ability to improvise. Improvising requires a highly aware and attuned mind, as well as the ability to grasp and retain material quickly. At Leela we aim to begin developing this skill early. Utilizing videos as an aid to learning interferes with the ability to train a sharp mind and memory. As a result, we do not allow students or parents to video classes. We do however have ample tools and materials to help students in their study and practice. These materials are available through our Learning Center.