



in concert with Miss Linda's School of Dance
and the Great Falls Symphony Orchestra

The Nutcracker Handbook Cast Expectations & Agreement



Photo: Sean McFarland

Miss Linda's School of Dance is very excited to partner with the Great Falls Symphony and the Montana Ballet Company to bring a very "Montana Nutcracker" to Great Falls. Following the traditional nutcracker story this production has a distinctive rustic feel as the Bridger Mountains serve as the backdrop for Christmas mystery and magic.

This is a Montana initiative to have Montana artists working to promote Montana creations. It has been many years since our community dancers have been asked to participate with a professional production and whereas some opportunities put the community dancers in the background, this production integrates them into the full process. There is a high standard for this show and to participate is a real commitment of time and effort. However, the rewards look to be rich in dance, friendship and statewide cooperation.

Who can audition for The Nutcracker?

Community students ages 5 and up are eligible to audition for *The Nutcracker* regardless of studio affiliation. Without exception, dancers must be age 5 on or before September 2nd, 2026 to audition and participate in *The Nutcracker*. There is no audition fee.

Can I still audition if I'm not able to make it to the audition class?

Due to the auditions and choreography being taught the same weekend, it unfortunately isn't possible to participate if you've missed the audition class.

What can I expect at the audition?

Please wear dance attire, (leotard and tights), or clothes that allow for free movement. Dancers will wear numbers and be observed by members of MBC's Artistic Staff. Dancers who have been on pointe for at least one year should bring their pointe shoes and be prepared to complete exercises on pointe.



Photo: Sean McFarland

Can I audition for a specific role?

Auditions are for *The Nutcracker* production as a whole, not for specific roles. Every role is important to the production and all casting is at the discretion of the Artistic Staff. The casting of understudies, corps, soloist, and principal roles is determined by talent, ability, suitability for a role, commitment, and attitude, not on seniority or age. Please come with a passion for the art of performing and the joyful prospect of artistic and technical growth. We understand there may be

disappointment over not receiving a desired role. We believe this situation is an opportunity for growth and preparation for life outside of the ballet studio. Please think about your desire to be a part of the magical performing opportunity rather than getting a specific part before deciding to audition and understand that it is difficult for the Artistic Staff and the rest of the cast when dancers drop out of the production after not getting the role or roles they want.

How and when will I find out what role(s) I have?

All audition participants will be notified via phone at 1:00pm the day of auditions. Choreography will begin at 2:00pm the same day. Dancers will be told their part and Saturday rehearsal time during that call.

How much does it cost to participate in The Nutcracker?

There is a non-refundable \$195 per dancer Participation Fee for *The Nutcracker*. This fee covers auditions, working with the original director and choreographer, rehearsals, costume fitting and alterations, performing at the Mansfield Theater with the full Great Falls Symphony Orchestra and includes two complimentary tickets to the performance on November 24th. Dancers will provide some basic pieces like shoes, tights and certain base layers.

Please note, MBC participation in Bozeman is \$350 per dancer. Miss Linda's along with the Great Falls Symphony wants to ensure that all dancers who wish to perform in The Nutcracker are able to do so. To assist this goal the participation fee has been lowered to \$195 and may be paid in installments. Dancers are also welcome to get sponsorship through their friends and family. Payments will be taken at Miss Linda's School of Dance Front Desk by cash or cheque. Credit cards are accepted but will incur a 3% processing fee.

Do all performers pay the same participation fee regardless of how many parts they have or how many performances they do?

Participation fees are the same for each cast member regardless of stage time. The amount of time on stage will obviously not be the same for Ginger Cookies as it will be for the Party Scene, but nevertheless every dancer still needs rehearsals, costume fittings, preparation and the same attention to every detail. Rehearsals, tech and the performances themselves can be tiring, even for our oldest dancers. Because we want this to be an enjoyable one and memorable for all the right reasons, we may limit their rehearsal time or split performances, but the amount of preparation required for each and every cast member is the same.



Photo: Nashan Photography

When do rehearsals happen?

Rehearsals will begin September 19th after auditions. They will then be held every Saturday leading up to the performance on Tuesday November 24th. Rehearsal times will be specific to roles with the full schedule available after the first weekend of learning choreography.

There are no rehearsals October 17th or November 21st.

The week of the show there will be rehearsals at the Mansfield Theater Sunday evening the November 22nd and Monday evening November 23rd.

Please look over the rehearsal schedule when it's available to identify which rehearsals you are expected to attend and note any potential conflicts.

How will I know when rehearsals are?

The rehearsal schedule will be made available online, posted at the Miss Linda's, and emailed to cast members. Please review your rehearsal schedule carefully as days/times may not be consistent from one week to another. Please check for schedule changes regularly.

How will I hear about schedule changes or any other important information?

We use email to communicate with cast members. PLEASE BE SURE TO CHECK FOR AND READ ALL EMAILS. If you are not receiving emails, please check your junk/spam folder and/or let the Front Desk know.

Can I miss any rehearsals or performances?

Dancers are expected to attend all rehearsals for parts (including understudy roles) they are cast in, and all performances. Dancers with more than two unexcused absences may have their role assigned to an understudy.

Please let the Rehearsal Directors know of any known potential conflicts such as trips and school activities. Permission to be excused from rehearsals must be obtained beforehand from the Rehearsal Directors by emailing Miss Linda's: office@misslindasdance.com In the case of unexpected illness, please notify the Front Desk as soon as possible using the office email or calling (406)761-8876; dancers with a fever, cough, etc. should stay home and NOT attend rehearsals.



Photo: Lauren Brown

Do dancers' families need to purchase tickets to attend performances?

Each dancer will be given two complimentary tickets to the performance, (a value of \$200). Additional tickets may be purchased through the Symphony at <https://www.gfsymphony.org/>

Are families allowed to come to Dress Rehearsal?

Dress rehearsal is a closed session. Only crew, performers and Symphony members are allowed.

Are families allowed backstage and in the dressing rooms?

Only those who crew are allowed backstage and in the dressing rooms. We suggest doing hair and make-up before arriving for dress rehearsal or performance. Space in the dressing rooms and backstage is limited. Parents/Guardians will sign dancers in and out before and following all theater rehearsals and performances.

Are parents allowed to take pictures/video at rehearsals or performances?

No. Due to copyright and privacy issues, photography and filming of rehearsals and performances is not permitted. MBC will have a professional photographer taking pictures that will be available for purchase by cast members.

What should I bring to rehearsals?

Proper ballet attire should be worn for rehearsals, including the appropriate footwear for your role. As rehearsals can involve some waiting time, NUT-FREE snacks, a water bottle, and warmups are encouraged, as well as any homework, books, and activities to keep busy during downtime. Please label everything with your name.

What should I bring to the theater for rehearsals and performances?

Dancers should bring all components of their costume for which they are responsible (tights, shoes, undergarments, etc). Information will be provided closer to performance weekend, detailing the costume and hair needs for each role. A water bottle and NUT-FREE snacks, as well as warmups, hair supplies, and items to keep active during wait times are encouraged. Please note: dancers may not eat in the theater or while in costume. All food should be consumed in designated areas (such as the lobby) only. Cell phones/electronic devices should not be brought to the theater. **Please label all items; MBC is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items. Please leave valuables and personal jewelry, watches, etc. at home.**



Photo: Lauren Brown

When will I get my costume?

A schedule of costume fitting times will be provided at the first rehearsal. All costumes are the property of MBC and should be treated with care. Eating, sitting on the floor, running, going outside, or into the audience while in costume is not permitted and antiperspirant must be worn for ages 10 and up. Costumes, hairpieces, jewelry, and accessories do not go home with dancers and are not worn during rehearsals until dress rehearsal. Dancers are responsible for hanging up their costumes properly when not in use and making sure all headpieces and accessories remain with their costumes.

What else is helpful to know?

- Please be sure to get plenty of sleep.
- Please be sure you are fueling adequately and drinking plenty of water.
- Please be sure to read ALL communications from Miss Linda's and adhere to the Miss Linda's School of Dance code of conduct during all rehearsals and performances; keep emails for future reference and be informed as to all rehearsal times, costume, hair and makeup requirements, and all other pertinent information.

- Please inform the Rehearsal Directors of any medical conditions, allergies, injuries, or concerns when rehearsals begin.

The Nutcracker Performance

Mansfield Theater – November 24th 7:30PM

*each dancer will receive two complimentary tickets

Tickets may be purchased at <https://www.gfsymphony.org/>



Photo: Sean McFarland

Nutcracker Cast Agreement (to be reviewed and signed):

- 1) PROFESSIONALISM IS EXPECTED AT ALL TIMES AND IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES. Everyone, including fellow dancers, staff, and volunteers, shall be treated with kindness, dignity, and respect. Proper etiquette (no yelling, running, chewing gum, etc.) must be observed. Dancers not behaving in a professional, courteous manner shall be dismissed from rehearsal and potentially from the cast.
- 3) The rehearsal schedule will be posted at Miss Linda's and emailed to cast members. Please review your rehearsal schedule carefully and check for schedule changes regularly.
- 4) Attendance at rehearsals, theater rehearsals, warm-ups, and performances is mandatory. Please be on time and sign in/out when required.

- 5) Permission to be excused from a warm-up/rehearsal must be obtained beforehand from the Artistic Staff. Unexcused absences from rehearsals could result in the role being assigned to an understudy. Please email any known potential rehearsal conflicts to the Front Desk: office@misslindasdance.com.
- 6) If unavoidable circumstances occur that prevent you from attending class/warm-up or rehearsal, you are required to notify the Front Desk as soon as possible.
- 7) Dancers may be invited to participate in public appearances, lecture demonstrations, and various community activities, and be available for photo/video shoots and interviews as requested.
- 8) Costumes are provided for all dancers with the exception of tights, shoes, and certain base layers. Information on color, etc. shall be provided later. While in costume, performers shall be careful of damaging costumes (no eating, sitting down, etc.) and antiperspirant must be worn for ages 10 and up. All costumes shall be hung up properly after use and hairpieces/accessories shall be left with the costumes. At no time, prior to or after a performance, are costumes to be worn in the audience. No costumes shall be taken home.
- 9) All costumes, sets, and props are the property of Montana Ballet Company. They are to be treated with respect and kept in their designated places at the studio and in the theater.

Thank you for your partnership in creating a magical Nutcracker!

Please tear this page out: sign and return prior to your first scheduled rehearsal.

I understand the requirements for participation in MBC's *Nutcracker* and will strive to make this a rewarding dance experience for myself and for all involved. My involvement in *The Nutcracker* will be a priority for me. I will arrive at rehearsals and performances prepared and with a positive attitude.

Cast Member Name(s) _____

Cast Member Signature(s) _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____

Notes