

IMPORTANCE OF A PROPER DANCE FLOOR FOR YOUR YOUNG DANCER

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Investing in a dance/theatrical flooring system is an important part of a dance studio for the safety of dancers. The flooring system allows for the instructor and students to perform and practice safely. There are three parts to a **dance floor system**: the slab, the subfloor, and the floor surface.

The slab, typically concrete, is the foundation. It should be dry, level and structurally sound. Dancers should NEVER jump on a hard surface, such as concrete. Each time a dancer jumps, around 3 times their body weight is returned. Over time, this can cause fatigue and severe injury. To prevent dancers from dancing on a hard surface, it is imperative to install a floating subfloor.

The subfloor is a crucial part of the displacement of energy. Placing foam and wood on top of the concrete slab creates air pockets that allows the wood and foam to flex and absorb the dancer's energy, giving them a safe return as they land jumps and high energy movements. The floating subfloor provides lateral foot support and a springy energy absorbent surface. It also reduces vibration on the knee joints after impact.

Once the subfloor is installed, it is now important to choose the floor surface. Hardwood or vinyl flooring specifically designed for dance and the performing arts, are the recommended choices. Stay away from VCT tile, plywood, masonite, wood laminate, carpet, concrete, stone, ceramic tile and rubber. The reason is they are not appropriate choices for dance due to the wear characteristics and the amount of friction is not suitable to dance or movement activities, bringing the possibility of more strains and stress fractures. Another safety aspect is many dance floors have antibacterial and anti-fungal additives that help keep your floors hygienic, since such a wide range of motions is performed on the dance floor.

The most important investment a dance studio can make is a professionally sprung foam subfloor and a vinyl dance floor. These dance floors require weekly cleaning and maintenance with super-concentrated industrial strength floor chemicals and cant last up to 18 years if cared for properly. Not only will this be the best surface to dance on, but it will protect dancers from injury, fatigue, soreness and their overall health and well being.