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## Picking Classes

Dance Lines By Rubye Del Harden

One of the most important decisions you'll make before you ever set foot at All-Star Dance Camp is choosing the right level for each class you take. This might sound simple, but it's actually one of the biggest factors in whether you walk away from camp feeling inspired, challenged, and excited... or frustrated and overwhelmed.

The key thing to remember is that your level is not the same in every dance. You might be a full Bronze dancer in Waltz, but a beginner or intermediate dancer in Viennese Waltz. You might dance Bronze or Silver Rumba comfortably, but still feel like an intermediate dancer in West Coast Swing. That's completely normal - and it's why taking a few minutes to really think through your class choices matters so much.

So how do you choose the right level? The best answer is always to ask your teacher. If you take private lessons, sit down with them, look at the class

schedule together, and let them help guide you toward the levels that will give you the most growth and enjoyment.

But not everyone has that option, and even if you do, it's still helpful to understand the "why" behind level choices. If you choose classes that are below where you're currently studying, you'll probably be bored. If you jump too far ahead of where you are, you'll likely spend the class confused because you're missing the building blocks that lead up to that material. Stretching yourself is great - that's how you grow - but stretching too far (skipping levels) can leave you feeling lost instead of motivated.

Choosing the right level is really about setting yourself up to get the most out of every class. In general technique and dance classes, most dancers are happiest working at their level or just slightly above it. In routine classes, however, many dancers intentionally choose to dance at their level or even one level below. That allows you to focus on the full picture — the sequencing, the performance, the musicality, and the technique — instead of just surviving the steps. When you're not overwhelmed, you learn more deeply, dance with more confidence, and actually enjoy the process of mastering the routine rather than worrying your way through it.

In the rest of this article, we'll give you some practical guidelines to help you decide which level is the best fit for you in each dance — so you can walk into every class set up for success, growth, and a whole lot more fun on the dance floor.

## **Before You Pick Your Classe...**

### **Jim Maranto Has Some Thoughts**



**Jim Maranto**

U.S. Champion Jim Maranto offers several important insights in the section below, but one in particular really stayed with me. He says it is nearly impossible to accurately self-evaluate your true dance level. Most of us tend to swing one direction or the other. We either underestimate ourselves — “I’m not good enough for that class” — or overestimate ourselves — “I’ve been dancing for years, I’ll be fine.” The truth is, neither assumption tells the whole story.

He says that there are two traditional ways dancers try to define “level”:

1. The steps\* you know (Bronze, Silver, Gold, etc.), and
2. How long you’ve been dancing (experience over time).

Both of those help describe exposure to dance... but neither one truly measures proficiency. Knowing a lot of steps doesn’t automatically mean you can dance

them comfortably, confidently, and with control. That's where things get tricky.

Jim made an important distinction: choosing the right class is not the same thing as defining your dance level. Class selection has much more to do with your comfort level than with your technical résumé. You might “know” Silver steps, but if being in a fast-moving Silver class makes you freeze up, get stressed, or feel lost, then that class isn't serving you in that moment. On the flip side, you might take a lower-level class and discover you can relax, dance better, and actually absorb more.

Bottom line:

👉 The best class for you is the one where you feel comfortable enough to try, to mess up, to ask questions, and to actually dance.

Growth happens when you're challenged—but not overwhelmed.

And that's a powerful reframe for all of us: choosing a class isn't a label about who you are as a dancer... it's simply choosing the environment where you'll learn and enjoy yourself the most right now.

\*To learn more about Levels of Ballroom Dancing, there is a helpful article at Just Danze Houston. [Click here to read the article.](#)

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## Videos

You can check out all of our videos from our last camp on our YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/@AllStarDanceCamp>. Videos are added as soon as they are available.

## Comments? Questions?

Email our camp director, Rubye Del Harden at [rubyedel@allstardancecamp.net](mailto:rubyedel@allstardancecamp.net).

## About All Star Dance Camp



All Star Dance Camp is the best ballroom dance vacation! Dancers of all ages and abilities gather in Philadelphia, MS at [Pearl River Resort](#).

In addition to a welcome party on Sunday evening, camp features four full days of classes with dinner and dance parties every evening. As always, National Champions Jim & Jenell Maranto will be headlining camp. All Star Dance Camp offers seven or more classes daily and opportunities to take private coaching with all our great camp staff members. Campers can choose their own classes and class levels. Class levels include Beginning, Intermediate and Full Bronze as well as Silver levels.

Camp tuition includes classes, dinner Monday - Thursday and dance parties each evening. Call Jill at (662) 213-0504 to register.

## All Star Dance Camp

June 7-12, 2026

[allstardancecamp.net](http://allstardancecamp.net)

Call Jill at (662) 213-0504 for registration.

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