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### Dance? Me? Really? Local dance studios roll out the red carpet for "non-traditional" students [Dance]

August 1, 2011 - 8:00am

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by [Michelle Rynbrandt](#)

Somewhere in the back of that closet is a dusty pair of tap shoes...or ballet shoes worn with holes. They haven't been touched for years, but you've never been able to get rid of them.

There's a reason for that.

Maybe you drive your child, week after week, and sit in the lobby with the other parents, whittling away the hours listening to the jaunty jumping going on in the room on the other side of the wall...

Don't say you haven't thought about it.

So you've never taken a dance class in your life—or maybe it's been years since you last shuffled across the floor.

What's stopping you? Too old? Can't move that way anymore? It's not acceptable for a mother/father/business person/pharmacist to take a dance class?

Wrong.

Jennifer O'Brien of [Jennifer's Academy of Dance](#) has men and

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women in her tap, ballet, jazz, hip hop and modern classes ranging in age from 18-68. Says Stacy Davis, Director of [Dance Designs](#), "It's a lot of fun, and it's not just for kids anymore. It's also for the young at heart!"

Though most adult classes have a laid back and fun atmosphere, both the [Louisville School of Ballet](#) and Jennifer's Academy of Dance have classes that are focused on technique and have a more structured feel. "These classes are aimed toward the adult pursuing a dance career or for those wanting to take their dance to another level," O'Brien says.

But for the majority of adults considering classes? O'Brien encourages, "Try a class and see how it goes. There is always someone in class that is in your same situation. What do you have to lose?" And with many studios, including the Louisville School of Ballet, Jennifer's Academy of Dance and Dance Designs, offering your first class for free, she's right.

If the thought of putting on a leotard and tutu make you cringe, get over it. While most studios have attire requirements for their younger students, adults are encouraged just to wear clothes they can move in comfortably: workout wear, shorts or yoga pants. And if you pick the right classes, you won't even need special shoes.

Yes, taking a tap class in your sneakers might be a little tough, but tennis shoes are perfect for most jazz, hip hop and [Zumba@](#) classes. And if you think modern dance might be more your style, just peel those shoes off completely. All you need are your own bare feet.

The studios know that your life is busy, and they try their best to be accommodating. [Louisville Ballet School](#) offers 18 different adult classes Monday through Saturday. Though most are in the evenings, morning sessions are available as well. The school offers a "punch card" which can be used for any of their classes, so you're free to try tap one day and hip hop the next; you aren't committed to the same class every week unless you want to be.

So, the words "dance recital" conjure feelings of dread in your heart? You gave up sweaty sequins, matching hats and bright red lipstick decades ago?

Once again, you're free to breathe a sigh of relief. On the prospect of performances Davis responds, "Of course, the option is there, but most [adults] just do it for fun and exercise."

Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, "Men do not quit playing because they grow old; they grow old because they quit playing."

Get out there and play.

Image: Courtesy of Jennifer's Academy of Dance

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