

# Dance STANCE



# Dance STANCE

BEGINNING BALLET FOR YOUNG DANCERS



ONCE UPON A  
Dance

Ballerina Konora - Teacher Terrel - Stella Maris

## Also by Once Upon a Dance

### Dance-It-Out Creative Movement Stories (ages 4+)

Joey Finds His Jump!  
Petunia Perks Up  
Dayana, Dax, and the Dancing Dragon  
Princess Naomi Helps a Unicorn  
The Cat with the Crooked Tail  
Brielle's Birthday Ball  
Mira Monkey's Magic Mirror Adventure  
Belluna's Big Adventure in the Sky  
Freya, Fynn, and the Fantastic Flute  
Danika's Dancing Day  
Andi's Valentine Tree  
Daryl and the Dancing Dolls

### Ballet and Body Awareness for Young Dancers (ages 6+)

Dancing Shapes  
More Dancing Shapes  
Nutcracker Dancing Shapes  
Dancing Shapes with Attitude

### Poses for Creative Movement & Ballet Teachers

Konora's Shapes  
More Konora's Shapes

### Ballet Inspiration Journals/Notebooks

Ballerina Dreams  
Dancing Shapes

### Coming Soon in this Series

Falling into Dance with Ballerina Konora  
Turning It Around with Ballerina Konora

Dedicated to Eva for the choreography,  
Andrea for the jam,  
Peter for the wisdom,  
Michelle, our weight-shift expert,  
and all the teachers who helped my dance  
stance, especially at Emerald Ballet Academy  
and Pacific Northwest Ballet.





Dance Stance: Beginning Ballet for Young Dancers with Ballerina Konora  
(Ballet Inspiration and Choreography Concepts for Young Dancers Series)

© 2022 ONCE UPON A DANCE

Illustrated by Stella Maris Mongodi, [www.stellamarisart.it](http://www.stellamarisart.it)

Layout and cover design by Stella Maris Mongodi

Author/Publisher: Once Upon a Dance

Ballerina Konora Photo @heidiahadefleonard

All proceeds donated to charity.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except for brief quotations for review/promotional purposes and other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

Teachers are welcome to use for class; please give ONCE UPON A DANCE credit.

LCCN: 2022904395

ISBN: 978-1-955555-227; 978-1-955555-234; 978-1-955555-241  
(paperback) (ebook) (hardcover)

Juvenile Nonfiction: Performing Arts: Dance

(Juvenile Nonfiction: Concepts: Body; Juvenile Nonfiction: Careers)

First Edition

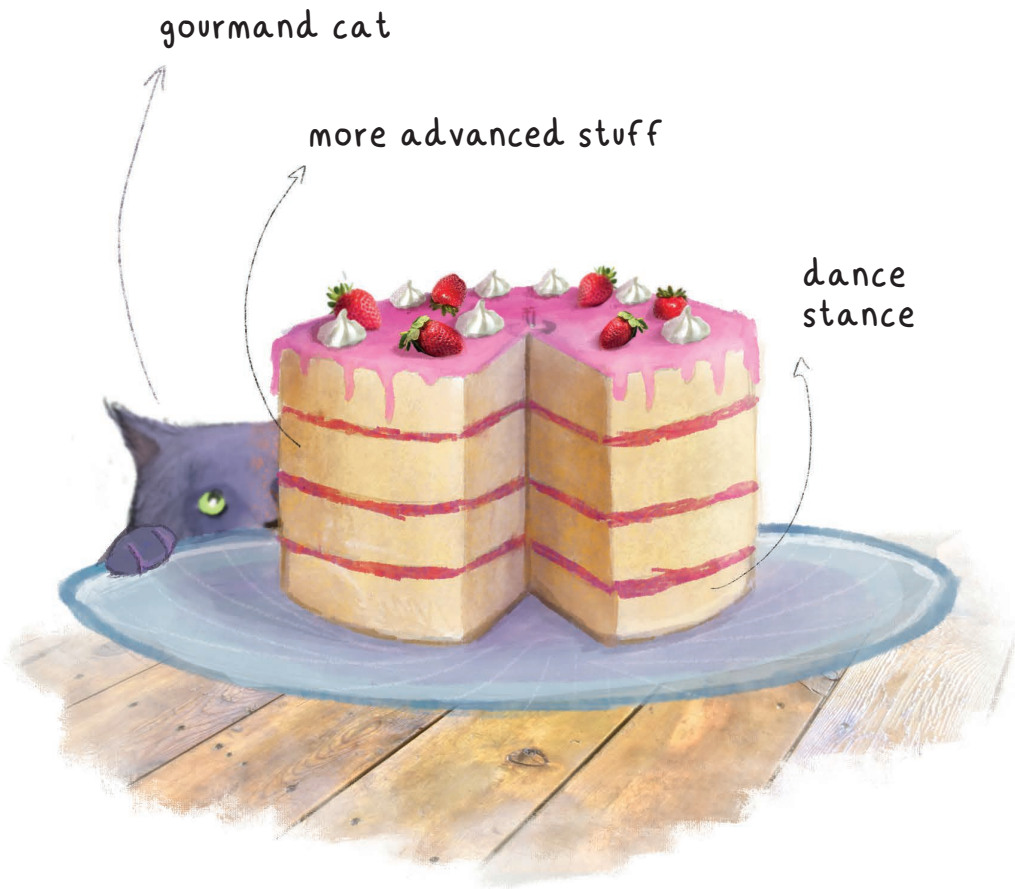
All readers agree to release and hold harmless Once Upon a Dance and all related parties from any claims, causes of action, or liability arising from the contents.

Use this book at your own risk.

## WHAT'S THIS BOOK ABOUT?

A Word from Konora .....	7
What's a "Dance Stance" Anyway?! .....	8
This is Where You Need a Lot of Imagination .....	13
Up a Notch (Already?! .....	21
Dance Being Still. So Weird (Notes from a Ballerina #1) .....	25
Defining Dance (Notes from a Ballerina #2) .....	27
Becoming a Flamingo .....	31
Look Ma, No Hands! (Notes from a Ballerina #3) .....	34
Rele-meh .....	37
Advice for Your Future Old Self (Notes from a Ballerina #4) .....	43
Dance Stance is a Girl's Best Friend .....	45
Everybody Stinks at First (Final Notes from a Ballerina) .....	47
Practice Makes Purrfect (Or better, at least. Who's perfect, after all?) .....	48
It's OK to Take a Break (I did too) .....	51
70 and Still Rockin' (It's never too late to learn new skills) .....	52
Curiosity Doesn't Always Kill the Cat! (Poor cat) .....	55
Enjoy the Ride (It can be a rollercoaster) .....	56
And Above All.. .....	57





Hello Fellow Dancer,

Thanks for joining me for some “dance stance” practice!

I’ve found it helpful, over my ballet career, to take a step back and revisit techniques from time to time. And it’s also helpful to hear different descriptions of things you’re already practicing.

I like to think of dance as a **gorgeous multi-layered cake**, full of delicious fillings such as jam and cream. It’s beautifully decorated with icing and swirls. All of the different ingredients work together to make a wonderful cake that everyone can enjoy.

The **first layer of the dance cake is posture** and that’s what we will learn about in this book. The book is not to be a substitute for in-person training, which will be necessary if you want to pursue dance seriously. I also want to note that not all ballet styles agree with the fundamental advice here. For example, the Cecchetti method, in particular, would say something quite different.

I’ve added my “Notes from a Ballerina” diary pages in case you want to come back to those later.

*Kanora*



## WHAT'S A "DANCE STANCE" ANYWAY?

I am a graceful ballerina who loves to dance. I've practiced for many, many years to become an expert dancer.

Ballet builds step by step. When a professional dancer performs a ballet move on stage, it represents years of practicing ever-harder steps. We dancers study the building blocks of ballet, creating taller towers of skills with each passing year.





One of the first building blocks, which we continue working on for years or even decades, is how to stand. Let's call this our "dance stance." It's the basis of everything.



Creating good posture and thinking about where we place our feet and how we connect to the floor allows us to balance, spin, and jump.

So, how do we find our dance stance? Let's start at the beginning, which is always a good place to start.



## THIS IS WHERE YOU NEED A LOT OF IMAGINATION



Stand with your toes facing forward and your feet parallel like two railroad tracks.

Bring your toes together just a smidge with a little more space between your heels than between your toes. Imagine spreading the soles and toes of your feet out across the floor, as if you wanted your feet to touch the edges of the room.

Or perhaps imagine you have wide duck feet and long frog toes. Try to feel you are attached to the earth. You are grounded and secure, like a magnet attached to metal.