

Terrill D. Mitchell

"Jazz Workshop"

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Warming Up- Make sure that you incorporate a lot of cardio, this enables the muscles to warm up quickly and the flexibility to increase.

- Include repetitions and holds or stretches
- Hold splits 1 inch OFF the ground with straight legs before relaxing into the ground.
- Over rotate and under rotate on leg stretches to increase range or motion.
- Cardio tips: jumping jacks, prances with variations, up-beat warm-up combos.

Extensions

- Create repetitious hip exercises for hip rotations.
- Hip hinges exercise. Pulsing the hip up and down, focusing solely on the hip flexors.
- Leg lifting exercises. Starting in tendu, lift the leg to 45 degrees and continue to 90 (hold each degree for a minimum of two (8) counts. Do this in repetition and increase the hold time. Do this with front, side and back and tilt extensions).

Turning

- Start all turn progressions by breaking down a turn. A balance flat, then releve, then single, double, etc. Then go back and add plies and spot changes. (Dancers need to understand that it takes more than just lifting up to make a turn. They need to press down into the ground and straighten their supporting knee faster than they think.
- Most dancers create "simple bad habits" when working on turns. (ie: Allowing the heel to drop and not fighting for it, lazy spotting, sloppy arms, etc). Break these habits by choreographing something SPECIFIC for EVERY count to avoid relaxation in the limbs.
- When executing a turning progression, sometimes reinforcing sharpness and precision helps with body placement and speed.

- Spotting! Try having your dancers disconnect their spots from their shoulders. (body THEN head)! This helps to stay and land on releve as well as maintain the timing of their turns.

Jumping

- Practice jumps without big preparations to create strong and powerful jumps. (ie: STANDING switch tilt will force the dancer to focus on getting her bottom leg off the ground and in the correct position.
- Add arm variety to change illusion of simple jumps
- Gain power by doing jumps from two feet. Any jump can be broken down from this preparation.