

FREE PLAYBOOK FOR DANCE STUDIOS

Keep them dancing.

How to turn trial classes into dancers who stay for years. The 6 moments dancers drift away, 8 habits that keep them enrolled, and messages you can send today.

6

moments dancers are most likely to drift away

8

habits that keep dancers enrolled term after term

6

copy-and-send messages, plus a goal bank for every level



One regular dancer is worth years of bookings.

Dance studios are good at filling trial classes. The studios that grow are the ones that turn those trials into dancers who stay for years, and keep them.

\$1,440

One dancer, two classes a week, for a year

2 weekly classes at **\$18**

× **40 weeks** of term time in a year

= **\$1,440 a year** from one dancer

\$4,320+

The same dancer over three years

Three years of weekly classes, before you count costumes, showcase tickets, exams, competitions, privates or the younger siblings who follow. Lose them after their first term and all of that walks away.

Replacing a dancer means ads, free trials and hoping they enrol. Keeping one means a clear next step, friends in class and a few well-timed messages to parents.

Most dropouts are predictable. Dancers rarely quit out of nowhere. They drift away at a handful of moments every studio will recognise, and each one is a chance to step in. The next page shows you where they are.

Where a dancer's value really comes from

Weekly classes

The steady base: ballet, jazz, tap, hip hop and contemporary, booked term after term.

Extras

Privates, solos, exams, competitions, costumes and showcase tickets from dancers who already love it.

Word of mouth

Dance spreads through school friends. Happy families bring siblings, cousins and classmates.

Figures are examples. Swap in your own prices, weeks and currency.

The 6 moments dancers are most likely to drift away

Know when dancers drift and you know when to step in. Watch these six closely.

AFTER THE TRIAL CLASS

1

“Now what?”

The trial goes well, then nothing happens. No class is offered, no term is booked, and the family moves on.

Do this: offer a place in a class before they leave.

MONTHS 2–4

2

Lost in the back row

A new dancer joins a class mid-term and can't keep up. They feel behind, so they stop wanting to go.

Do this: place dancers by level, not just age.

MONTHS 6–12

3

Stuck on the same steps

Early progress is fast, then it stalls. Without a goal to chase, dancers and parents start to wonder if it's worth it.

Do this: give every dancer a goal they can see.

FIRST TERM

4

No friends in class

Dancers come for the dancing and stay for their friends. A child who knows nobody in class drifts first.

Do this: pair new dancers with a buddy.

AFTER THE SHOWCASE

5

The big night is over

The end-of-year concert finishes and the summer break starts. Without a next goal, families don't come back.

Do this: book next term before the showcase.

END OF TERM

6

The term runs out

Re-enrolment arrives with no reason to carry on. Parents don't decide to stop. They just don't sign up again.

Do this: re-enrol before the term ends.

Quick exercise: think of the last five dancers who stopped coming. Which moment did each leave at? Most studios find one or two moments explain most of their dropouts. Fix those first.

Habits that keep dancers booking week after week

1 Turn every trial into a place in class

The trial class is where most dancers start, and where many stop. The fix is simple: never let a trial end without a class offered and held.

TRY THIS

- ✓ At the end of the trial, **offer a place in the right class** and hold it for 48 hours.
- ✓ Send the **term invoice and a welcome note** the same day, while the excitement is fresh.
- ✓ Tell parents **what to wear and what to expect**: uniform, hair, shoes and how progress is shared.

2 Place dancers by level, not just age

A class works when dancers are at a similar level. Put a beginner in with dancers who have trained for years and both sides lose interest.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Give every dancer a **level** for each style: their exam grade if they have one, or your own levels.
- ✓ Offer a **catch-up private** for dancers who join mid-term.
- ✓ Keep **one open class** a week where every level dances together for fun.

Ready-made goals for every level

Pick two or three per dancer and adjust them to suit the style. The levels are broad studio levels, so they work alongside any exam syllabus you teach. These are examples to adapt, not official standards.

Level	Technique	Flexibility and strength	Performance
 Tiny tots Ages 3–5	Point and flex on the counts	Balance on one foot for 4 counts	Follow a short routine with the teacher
 Juniors Ages 6–9	Hold a balance in retiré for 4 counts	Splits within 20 cm on both sides	Learn the full showcase routine
 Intermediate Ages 10–13	Clean double pirouette	Splits within 10 cm on both sides	Routine on the counts, in formation
 Seniors and team Competition	Clean fouetté series of 8	Full splits and a controlled extension	Solo performed with expression at a competition

Before you invite a dancer up a level, check four things

Consistency

They hit the goals for their level on most attempts, not just once.

Confidence

They perform the steps with confidence and want more of a challenge.

Activity

They play regularly. A dancer who comes once a month will struggle more after the move.

The fourth check is the group. Introduce the dancer to the class at the next level, ideally with a friend moving up too. A familiar face makes the move stick.

3

Give every dancer a goal they can see

“Getting better” is vague. “Land a clean double pirouette” is something a dancer can chase, measure and feel proud of. Goals turn casual dancers into committed ones.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Set **two or three goals per dancer** from the goal bank, written in plain words.
- ✓ Check the **same skills the same way** every 6–8 weeks, so progress shows up as a number.
- ✓ Share a **two-line progress note** with parents after each check.

4

Build friendships, not just technique

A dancer with friends in class is far less likely to leave. Friendships don’t happen by chance in a busy studio. You can help them along.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Give every new dancer a **buddy** in their class for the first month.
- ✓ Run **bring-a-friend weeks** each term.
- ✓ **Celebrate milestones** out loud: a first exam, a first solo or a competition medal, shared the same day.

Keep it specific: “Mia held her retiré balance for 4 counts today, up from 2” means more to a parent than a long, general report. Specific beats long, every time.

5 Turn missed classes into makeups

Colds, school camps and birthdays will cancel classes. What matters is whether parents feel they lost their money or just moved a class.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Write a clear **makeup policy**: how much notice, how many makeups per term and when they expire.
- ✓ Let families **book makeups themselves** into a class at the same level.
- ✓ Run **holiday workshops**, so dancers keep moving when the routine breaks.

6 Keep practice going between classes

Flexibility and routines improve at home, not just in the studio. A dancer who stretches and runs the routine during the week keeps up, and stays.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Set **one small task** after class, like “stretch 10 minutes a day” or “run the routine to the music twice”.
- ✓ Share the **routine video** so dancers can practise at home.
- ✓ Let dancers **tick tasks off** in the app, and praise the effort.

Watch your waitlists: after-school classes fill first. A long waitlist for 4 pm jazz is a sign to open a second class at that level.

7

Act on three quiet weeks

Dancers rarely announce they're quitting. Missed classes come first. If a dancer has missed three weeks, they are already drifting.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Check each week for **dancers who have missed classes** three weeks running.
- ✓ Send a **personal message to the parent**, not a promotion: "We've missed Ava in jazz."
- ✓ Offer an **easy way back**: a catch-up private, a new style to try, or a part in the next routine.

8

Re-enrol before the showcase

The end of term and the showcase are when families decide. Make carrying on the easy option, before the decision even comes up.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Open **re-enrolment before the showcase**, while everyone is excited.
- ✓ Make it **one tap** for parents to keep the same classes and teachers.
- ✓ Ask anyone who stops **one question**: "What's the main reason?" Patterns tell you what to fix.

Make staying the default: when re-enrolling takes one tap and leaving takes a decision, more families stay. Automatic term billing does this best.

6 messages you can use today

Swap in the words in teal and send by SMS, email or your app. Short and personal works best.

After the trial class

HABIT 1

Hi **parent** , **name** loved **style** today! I've held a place in **class, day, time** for the rest of term. Confirm here and you're all set: **link** .

Practice this week

HABIT 6

Great class today, **name** ! This week: **task** , a few minutes a day. Tick it off in the app when you're done. See you **day** !

Class cancelled

HABIT 5

Hi **parent** , **teacher** is unwell today, so **class** won't go ahead. Pick a makeup class at the same level here: **link** . Sorry for the short notice.

Ready to move up

HABIT 3

Hi **parent** , **name** has hit every goal for **level** . We'd love to move them up to **next class** next term. Reply yes and we'll save the spot.

After three quiet weeks

HABIT 7

Hi **parent** , we've missed **name** in **class** the last few weeks! Hope all is well. Is there anything we can change to make it easier? Just reply.

Re-enrolment

HABIT 8

Hi **parent** , next term starts **date** . We've held **name** 's **classes** . Keep the same classes in one tap here: **link** .

Send them from one place. When messages live in one app instead of your personal phone, any coach or staff member can pick up a conversation and nothing gets lost.

Know your retention rate

Dance studios run in terms, so measure it each term, and keep an eye on it monthly. It takes two minutes and tells you whether your new habits are working.

$$\frac{\text{Dancers who played last month and this month}}{\text{Dancers who played last month}} \times 100 = \text{Retention rate}$$

Example: 260 dancers were enrolled in Term 3. 229 of them re-enrolled for Term 4. That's $229 \div 260 \times 100 = 88\%$ retention. You kept 229 of last term's 260 dancers.

Your monthly scorecard

Fill it in at the start of each month. Splitting by level shows you exactly where dancers are leaking out.

Measure	How to work it out	Month 1	Month 2
Retention rate	Use the formula above		
Trials that enrolled	Trial classes that turned into a term		
Classes per dancer	Total enrolments ÷ active dancers		
Studio use	Class hours booked ÷ studio hours available		
Quiet dancers	Dancers who missed 3 weeks in a row		
Makeups used	Makeups booked ÷ classes missed		
Top reason for leaving	From your one-question exit check		

Watch the trend, not one number. If most of your losses happen after the showcase, that's where to put your effort next term.

A simple plan to get started

You don't need to do everything at once. Pick up one or two habits a week and they'll soon be part of how you run your studio.

WEEK 1

See where you stand

- ☐ Work out last term's retention rate
- ☐ List the last five dancers who stopped, and at which moment
- ☐ Give every dancer a level for each style

WEEK 2

Fix the first term

- ☐ Offer a class place at every trial
- ☐ Give every new dancer a buddy
- ☐ Send the welcome note to every new family

WEEK 3

Level up the dancing

- ☐ Set two or three goals for every dancer
- ☐ Share this term's routine video
- ☐ Message every family with three quiet weeks

WEEK 4

Lock in next term

- ☐ Write your makeup and notice policies
- ☐ Open re-enrolment before the showcase
- ☐ Plan a bring-a-friend week and add your exit question

Tip: put a recurring reminder in your calendar for the first day of every month to fill in the scorecard on page 10. Small, steady improvements add up fast.

Run all 8 habits without the extra admin

Every habit here works with a spreadsheet and a phone. They're far easier to keep up when your software does the remembering. That's why we built Outcoach.

Dancers grouped by class

Group dancers for classes and routines in one click.

Goals for every dancer

Goals from dance templates, with progress parents can see in the app.

Practice between classes

Set stretches and routine run-throughs dancers tick off at home.

Quiet dancers flagged

See who has missed classes or not re-enrolled, and follow up.

Makeups handled

Families book makeups themselves, and credits are tracked for you.

Easy re-enrolment

Term billing, reminders and re-enrolment in one tap.

Turn new dancers into regulars

Outcoach brings weekly classes, privates, competition teams, exams, showcases and payments into one app, with AI that does the admin for you.

Start your free trial at outcoach.io

Questions? Email support@outcoach.io and a real person will get back to you.