

Is There Something that Helps to Prevent Injury to the Dancers?

The two most important factors in injury prevention are proper instruction with a qualified and experienced professional, and the proper dance floor.

Research the injury rate at the school. If its high it means the training and/or floors are inadequate. Quality dance floors are “sprung” and covered with Marley.

A sprung dance floor does not actually have springs in the floor, but rather high density foam incorporated into its design. Usually the sub floor is the concrete foundation, above that lie sections of the high density foam. High grade plywood is then laid over the foam to spread out the impact.

Marley covering is then put on top of the plywood to prevent slipping and even out the dance surface. The high density foam absorbs the shock of landing from high jumps and

repeated impact on the body. This relieves the majority of pressure and the impact on joints, ligaments and muscles. In addition to absorbing the energy of the impact, the high

grade plywood floor also relieves stress on the body by not rebounding back immediately. This prevents a counter force on the body after landing. It also makes the dancer use their

own power to push off the floor rather than using the spring of the floor. This aids in creating muscle strength and control. Without a sprung floor, the types of injuries that are

prevalent include: Achilles tendonitis, plantar fasciitis, stress fractures of all bones of the lower legs, feet and ankles, knee cartilage damage, lower back pain, hip pain.

A myriad of other injuries occur that are not directly related, such as sprained ankles, shin splints or heel/ankle spurs, because of tight muscles in the legs created from dancing on

a floor that is too hard. If a floor does not have Marley covering, floors should be wood that is not coated with varnish or polyurethane to keep the floor surface from being too

slippery. Usually rosin is allowed on wood floors in order to prevent slipping. Some studios who do have Marley do not allow rosin on the floor in order to prolong the life of the

Marley. However, if the studio temperature is too cold, the pores in the Marley surface shrink creating a very slippery surface. As a result, most professional training schools do

allow a small amount of rosin on the Marley floors. Without a proper dance floor surface, injuries such as chronically pulled or strained inner thigh muscles, calves and muscles of

the feet are common due to the body's efforts to keep from slipping. Injuries such as strained shin/perennial muscles or sprained ankles can be common due to slipping.

Dance studio flooring should never be tile, concrete, Pergo, linoleum or asphalt tile. No dance floor should be directly on a concrete sub floor.