

General Audition Information

The Nutcracker

Please carefully read the Terms and Conditions - Letter of Agreement for a detailed description of the rehearsal and performance schedule for *The Nutcracker* 2026, absence policy, fees, mandatory family meetings, and family and dancer volunteer requirements. Below is an introduction to auditions and a brief overview of the time and financial commitments involved in taking part in *The Nutcracker*.

Nutcracker Performance Dates

CU Ballet's *The Nutcracker* will be performed at the Virginia Theatre. The performance dates are as follows:

Friday	December 4 at 7:30pm
Saturday	December 5 at 2:00pm and 7:30pm
Sunday	December 6 at 2:00pm and 6:00pm

Thanksgiving Weekend Rehearsal

There will be no rehearsals from Thursday, November 26th through Saturday, November 28th. Happy Thanksgiving!

Audition Registration and Check-In

Auditions will take place at Champaign Ballet Academy, 2810 W. Clark Road in Champaign on Saturday, August 29, 2026. Dancers auditioning for *The Nutcracker* are asked to complete and submit the online audition registration form by **5:00pm on Wednesday, August 26th**. The \$10 audition fee (cash or check made payable to CU Ballet) is due at audition check-in.

Audition Class Schedule

Experienced dancers ages 10 through 13 audition from 11:30am – 1:00pm

Some dancers may be asked to stay for the afternoon auditions. Some dancers may be excused earlier than the published ending time.

Experienced dancers ages 14 and up audition from 1:30 – 4:00pm

Some dancers may be excused earlier than the published ending time.

Each dancer auditioning will be assigned an audition number and his/her measurements will be taken.

Audition Attire

Male and female dancers should wear ballet class attire. Dancers on pointe should bring their pointe shoes.

Posting of Audition Results

Audition results for Company placement will be announced the week of August 31st. The *Nutcracker* casting will be announced by 8pm on Wednesday, September 16th. The cast list will be posted online at www.cuballet.com and posted on the door at Champaign Urbana Ballet, 2816 W. Clark Road.

Performance and Fees

Dancers 14-years of age and up audition simultaneously for a position in Champaign Urbana Ballet Company and a role in *The Nutcracker*. Dancers 10-13 years of age audition simultaneously for Junior Company and Apprentice membership in CU Ballet and a role in *The Nutcracker*. It is not necessary to be a Company member to perform in *The Nutcracker*. Should a dancer be accepted and choose to join CU Ballet, he/she will attend mandatory Company class prior to Saturday rehearsals from 12:30–2:00pm. Dancers who accept membership in the Company (Senior Company, Junior Company and Apprentices) are committing to participating in the spring production of *The Sleeping Beauty* at the discretion of the Artistic Director on May 7-8, 2027.

To participate in *The Nutcracker*, there is a non-refundable cast fee of \$235 which must be paid by cash or check at the **mandatory** Family Meeting on Friday, September 18th. If more than one member of an immediate family is cast in *The Nutcracker*, the fee is \$385/family. This fee covers rehearsals, costuming, cast party attendance, and a commemorative tee shirt. There is a separate casting fee of \$235 before participation in the spring production. The costume itself will remain the property of the ballet company. Dancers are responsible for his/her tights, shoes, make-up, hair products and other personal items.

A professional videographer and photographer will record and photograph *The Nutcracker*. If you wish to order a recording of the performance or performance photos, you will have that opportunity. CU Ballet does not receive any profit or portion of sales from those items.

Terms and Conditions - Letter of Agreement

A signed Letter of Agreement, including Terms and Conditions, is required for all cast members and must be submitted at the September 18th Family Meeting. Dancers 18 years of age and older must sign this letter. A parent or guardian must sign for each cast member younger than 18 years of age.

Family Commitment

1. **Rehearsals** Rehearsals begin on Saturday, September 19th. With only 10 weeks to prepare, attendance at rehearsals is mandatory. Should an emergency arise, dancers must contact the Assistant to the Artistic Director, Ava Teague via email, staff@cuballet.com. See Terms and Conditions for more detailed information on rehearsal schedules.
2. **Senior Company and Junior Company/Apprentice Class** Senior Company and Junior Company/Apprentice classes, held each Saturday prior to rehearsals from 12:30–2:00pm are **mandatory**. Senior Company and Junior Company/Apprentice classes begin Saturday, September 19th.
3. **Costume Fittings** All scheduled costume fittings are mandatory. Dancers should not schedule regular activities on Friday evenings or Saturdays before company class and/or following rehearsals because costume fittings, which will be announced in advance, may be scheduled during these times.
4. **Family Meetings** A **mandatory** family meeting will be held on **Friday, September 18th from 5:30-6:30pm at Countryside School Gymnasium**. **All dancers** along with **any first-time Nutcracker parent(s)** must attend this meeting. A second family meeting for parents new to *The Nutcracker* will take place on Saturday, October 24th from 1:45-2:45pm at Countryside School Gymnasium.
5. **Service Hours** Every cast member family has a 12-hour minimum service hour requirement leading up to and/or during the production.
6. **Company Dancer Service Hours** Company members are required to complete 15 hours of service. Junior Company and Apprentice dancers will be asked to provide service hours when possible. A dancer's service hour requirement is in *addition* to the family's service hour requirement. Many service hour opportunities will take place on Saturday mornings before company class.