



Thanks to shows like *So You Think You Can Dance* and *Bunheads*, dance is having a pop-culture moment. Escape the treadmill with tips from five pros and cool classes, plus creative cardio options that provide the same benefits sans choreography.

Edited by **Sarah Bruning**

Michael Apuzzo

Megan Fairchild

Joey Kipp

Rita Donahue

Melissa Toogood

More online!

Get additional tips from these dancers at timeout.com/newyork.

Hot dancers

Michael Apuzzo, Paul Taylor Dance Company

How does dancing keep you fit?

Dance requires you to constantly think about what your body is doing and what shape it's making at any point in time. At the same time, it's a physical exercise by necessity, so it forces you to stay at your peak physical shape and helps you maintain that for a long time.

Are there any exercise tools or techniques that you recommend?

I do a lot of warm-up exercises to activate my core, because if you just let the larger muscles do everything, they will eventually tire out, and then the smaller ones aren't prepared to handle the

workload. Also, since we're on tour most of the year, I've learned to use Thera-Bands wherever I go. They come in different flexibilities, and you can tie them around poles or bedposts and target whatever muscle group you want.

Rita Donahue, Mark Morris Dance Group

How does dancing keep you fit?

You get a sense of what you need to work on and what will help you continue to be healthy well into your life. Mark is really interested in proper alignment, and he's good at stripping away people's defense mechanisms or bad habits—some people slouch, some raise their shoulders from stress. You become conscious of those little tics that do more harm than good. For me, once I let my shoulders drop, I noticed all my neck tension faded away. I don't get chronic pain anymore.

How do you supplement your practice?

Mark teaches a company ballet class every day, so I'll typically do something like yoga or Gyrotonics on my days off. Through dance, I discovered Pilates. I have a wonderful private teacher who helped me elongate my spine by an extra half inch, so I'm a bit taller. We do a mix of mat- and machine-based exercises.

Melissa Toogood, freelance

How does dancing keep you fit?

You really have access to your body and your physicality, and [it also gives you] a better understanding of movement, because we move throughout our daily lives. [It means] being fit in a way that you feel healthy in your bones and your muscles and your joints. Plus, there's often a mirror in class, so you have another way of getting feedback about your body and your alignment.

PHOTOGRAPHS: KRISTA SCHULTE

What's an easy dance move people can incorporate into their workouts?

I do a lot of *relevés*, which means rising from the toes, to strengthen my legs—not only by themselves, but with a tennis ball or something between my feet. [The ball] lets you focus on not just your calves, but using the whole body to take you up and down. It also helps align your legs all the way up to your pelvis, instead of just popping your feet repeatedly.

Joey Kipp, freelance

How has dancing helped you stay fit?

During my senior year in college, I had a severe injury from a car accident, and I would do lots of back exercises originated by [Merce] Cunningham in my wheelchair. When I was finally able to dance again, I enrolled in a full Cunningham class. It's very structural and

linear, so it was great for focusing on developing my strength and large muscle groups. Once I got stronger, I started doing more master classes at Peridance and Steps—anything to help me get used to having different parts of my body initiate the movement.

How else do you stay in shape?

After my injury, I started swimming a lot because it's low impact. It helped lengthen my muscles, similar to how dance does, and it allowed me to engage my body in a way that was easy on my joints. Swimming also works my back, my internal and external obliques, and my arms.

Megan Fairchild, New York City Ballet

How does dancing keep you fit?

It's definitely a very disciplined thing to do; you

don't get to slack off and still succeed. Dancers develop strong calves to *relevé* and jump; we activate our deep external rotators under our butt to turn out; and we use our inner thighs and core muscles to stabilize.

What else does your fitness routine entail?

Lately, what I've been doing is yoga podcasts from a Southern California company called YogaGlo (yogaglo.com). They put all of their classes online, so you have a huge wealth of styles to choose from, and you can spend whatever amount of time you have available. Also, the biggest thing that dancers are really good about is that any way they exercise, they always stretch those muscles out. We never want to bulk up anywhere, so if we swim, we stretch our arms; if we bike, we stretch our quads and our butt; if we run, we stretch our quads, hamstrings and calves.—SB

Classes by genre



House Dance at Alvin Ailey Extension

Ballet

Introduction to Ballet at Ballet Academy East

Even though you move at a snail’s pace throughout this session, the inner-thigh strength needed to point your toes perfectly means you’ll work up a sweat no matter what. Veteran teacher Joseph Malbrough—a former principal dancer with the Chicago City Ballet, among other companies—focuses on the fundamentals, giving a layman’s tutorial on the basic positions. You’ll share barre space with enthusiasts young and old, who practice their *relevés* to live piano accompaniment, with tunes by everyone from Bach to Britney. *1651 Third Ave between 92nd and 93rd Sts, third floor (212-410-9140, balletacademyeast.com). Schedule varies; visit website for details. Single class \$17.*

Beginner Ballet at Joffrey Ballet School

Aspiring bunheads, beware: You should already know your pliés from your pirouettes if you want to keep up with longtime instructor Dariusz R. Hochman, who formerly taught at Adelphi University and National Academy of Arts, among other institutions. His devotees in the class swear by their leader’s emphasis on precision: Hochman watches his charges progress through each fundamental position with hawk eyes, correcting participants firmly but with care. This particular class boasts an above-average ratio of guys, who appreciate its nonstop core action and challenging jump-turn cardio sequence. *434 Sixth Ave at 10th St, fifth floor (212-254-8520, joffreyballschool.com). Mon–Thu 7–8:30pm; single class \$17.*

Adult/Teen Ballet at Brooklyn Ballet

This laid-back conservatory caters to casual dancers. Though an occasional subway rumble can be heard over the recorded Tchaikovsky, you’ll be too busy concentrating on your workout to care. After warming up and stretching at the barre, you’ll practice your balance at center floor with jumps and turns. Holding second position prevents upper-arm flab, turnout in fifth position works the glutes, and a *rond de jambe* flexes your pecs. Teacher Eric Holzworth draws his influence from legendary choreographer George Balanchine, so expression and performance are taught alongside technique. *160 Schermerhorn St between Hoyt and Smith Sts, Downtown Brooklyn (718-246-0146, brooklynballet.org). Tue–Thu 7–8pm; single class \$15.—Yelena Shuster*

Fusion

Lyra at Hype Gym

Defy gravity in Heliummm Aerial Dance’s entry-level tutorial, where hanging upside down from a suspended hoop using only your legs is just the beginning. Drawing on principles from modern dance, ballet and acrobatics, the routine is packed with twists and turns that build a strong core while simultaneously engaging your biceps and triceps. (All that swinging around strengthens your hamstrings, too.) The class environment is relaxed and friendly, and even absolute newbies will be surprised by what they can achieve in the course of an hour. *480 Second Ave at 27th St (917-280-2611, heliummm.com). Wed 5:30–6:30pm; trial class \$35, single drop-in class \$40.*

Zumba at M Dance & Fitness



Get your heart rate pumping in this low-pressure, high-energy class, which combines steps from salsa and merengue. Instructor Diana Dove encourages students to move at their own pace, without putting too much emphasis on acing the choreography on the first try. The purpose here is to have a good time, and to get a full-body cardio workout with a focus on hips, abs and butts. You’ll be too busy shaking ass to the reggaetón and pop-placed soundtrack to notice that you’ve been moving for an hour straight—but you’ll definitely feel it the next day. *Locations and schedule vary; visit mdancefitness.com for details. Trial class \$15, single class \$20. Enter the code “TONYFIT” or e-mail tonydeal@mdancefitness.com when booking a single or multiclass package online to receive \$10 off through Oct 15; not valid for trial class.*

Pon de FLO at Crunch

Instructor Heather Fay’s energy is palpable and infectious: As you mimic her jumps, drops, shimmies and shakes, you won’t be able to help smiling, even if you fumble the steps. The choreography takes its cues from a medley of Caribbean, hip-hop and reggae styles, so the footwork is fast-paced, but there’s enough repetition for the routine to sink in quickly. Since every part of your body is constantly moving, you get the benefits of a cardio workout, plus core conditioning and muscle toning (particularly your abs, glutes and quadriceps). Calming cooldown moves, similar to yoga poses, wrap up the session. *Location and schedule vary; visit crunch.com for details. Nonmember day pass \$30, monthly membership \$60–\$99.—Luisa Rollenhagen*

Hip-hop and house

House Dance at Alvin Ailey Extension

Eddie Stockton’s class starts with hopping in place and stretching, before transitioning into choreographed sequences. One pattern might feature jumps interspersed with quick twists and



Beginner Ballet at Joffrey Ballet School

PHOTOGRAPHS: FROM TOP: KYLE FROMAN; ROSALIE O’CONNOR

low-spinning sweep kicks, followed by side-to-side leaps paired with snaking footwork. Part of the fun is that the Brooklyn-born teacher blasts his own DJ mixes and circulates through the room to help students master each attitude-enhanced move before adding another. If you still get tripped up, don't stress: Stockton supplies encouragement, reminding students that it's okay to add their own flavor to the prescribed routine. *405 W 55th St at Ninth Ave (212-405-9500, aileyextension.com). Thu 8–9:30pm; single class \$16.50, first two classes \$25.*

Beginner Popping at Peridance Capezio Center

According to instructor Tweetie, the trick to making these jerky movements look cool is the quick flexing and releasing of your joints. Since popping is a new type of internal motion for most people, she demonstrates how to isolate muscles in your arms, legs, chest and neck through simple routines set to super-loud music. You'll be sore by the end of 90 minutes, but ready to come back and try it again. *126 E 13th St between Third and Fourth Aves (212-505-0886, peridance.com). Wed, Fri 1–2:30pm; single class \$18.*

Hip-Hop at Cumbe Dance

Want to learn hip-hop from a master? Take a class with Roger G, who appeared in Michael Jackson's "Bad" and other videos. His pro experience shows as he breaks down the street-friendly moves, making them easy for both novices and experienced dancers. Roger's newest class quickly blends separate components into a solid routine that the group performs at the end of the hour-and-a-half session. *558 Fulton St at Flatbush Ave, Fort Greene, Brooklyn, second floor (718-935-9700, cumbdance.com). Tue 6–7:30pm, Sat 4:30–5:30pm.—Sarah Rammos*

Swing

Beginner and Intermediate Class at Brooklyn Swings

Your initiation into this lively style kicks off with an intro to solo moves in front of a mirror. Once you've got the key steps down, you'll partner up for the real dancing: Couples step, rock-step and side pass for an hour, and alternate between following and leading. You might stumble on fellow twosomes as you work through more complex combinations in this slightly cramped space, but no one seems to mind. When your core and legs are aching, just picture Cat Deeley cheering you on. *The Muse, 32D South 1st St between Kent and Wythe Aves, Williamsburg, Brooklyn (brooklynswings.com). Tue 7–8pm; single class \$15, four classes \$40.*

Swing/Lindy Basics at Dance Manhattan

You'll get to know your classmates right away in this four-week course: After being paired with an initial partner, you'll switch off every few minutes. Thighs and calves are tingling by round three as you master triple steps and inside-turn passes. By the fourth class, you'll have mastered the basics, as well as fancier twists and spins. With your freshly toned legs, you'll have the confidence to hoof it in social settings, not to mention improved balance. *39 W 19th St between Fifth and Sixth Aves (212-807-0802, dancemanhattan.com). Thu 7–8pm; single class \$25, four-week course \$85.*

Introductory Swing at Stepping Out Studios

This gratis workshop adds a few salsa moves to the standard swing mix. Anywhere from five to 30 students attend each session, but you'll usually get plenty of attention. After learning the basics solo, you'll try more impressive moves like the Suzie-Q and crossover, and you'll work with partners. Stepping Out's method combines the slower West Coast style and the faster East Coast variation, though the emphasis changes depending on the teacher.

Regardless of the style, the rapid-fire moves not only shred your leg muscles, but also give your lower back and arms a killer workout. *37 W 26th St between Broadway and Sixth Ave (646-742-9400, steppingoutstudios.com). Fri 8:30–9:30pm; free.—Samantha Vance*

International

Joneeba African Dance at Djoniba Dance Centre

Led by founder Djoniba Mouflet, this 90-minute class leaves you feeling fully energized. The trademarked Joneeba technique incorporates both yoga and West African dance, working your body from head to toe. A thorough warm-up, filled with crunches and stretches, limbers up your muscles predancing. Next, you'll follow easy-to-learn steps that mimic exaggerated running moves (your knees rise chest-high while your feet kick back behind you). No experience is required, but be prepared to hustle as you move quickly to the beat of live drums.



Swing/Lindy Basics at Dance Manhattan



Pole Virgins at Body & Pole

Peridance Capezio Center, 126 E 13th St between Third and Fourth Aves. Mon, Wed, Fri 7:30–9pm, Sat 2–3:30pm. • 22 W 34th St between Fifth and Sixth Aves. Sun 5–7:30pm. • (212-470-5929, djoniba.com). Single class \$18, five-class card \$78, ten-class card \$160, 20-class card \$310.

Cuban Motion and Latin Technique at Dancesport

If Baby and Johnny are your dirty-dancing idols, sway into this class led by studio head Paul Pellicoro. The 55-minute workout combines three types of dance: salsa, merengue and bachata. You'll begin with footwork to help you nail the rhythm. Combinations, such as salsa's six-step pattern over an eight-count beat, demonstrate how motion from your core can affect your entire body. As you move to the upbeat Caribbean music with a rotation of partners, you'll feel your abs tighten and posture straighten. *22 W 34th St between Fifth and Sixth Aves (212-307-1111, dancesport.com). Mon 6:30pm; single class \$25, four-week course \$90.*

DhoonyaFit at Dhoonya Dance

You can burn as many as 800 calories in 60 minutes of this Bollywood-inspired class. Guided by jazz and Indian hip-hop tunes, the challenging session will fulfill your daily cardio and strength-building routine at once. You'll endure 15 full-body exercises with a focus on extreme cardio, working your way through a mix of bhangra, classical and folk dance forms. Moves range from push-ups to steps such as "Bolly-taps," a toe-tap-and-hip-drop pattern that works your obliques. Finally, cool down with slower-paced stretches to help bring your heart rate back to normal. *DANY Studios, 305 W 38th St at Eighth Ave (347-644-0052, dhoonyadance.com). Schedule varies; visit website for details. Single class \$20, five-class card \$90, ten-class card \$150. Use the online code "TONY" when booking to receive 15 percent off a single class through Sept 30.—Allison Merzel*

PHOTOGRAPH: DANCE MANHATTAN; ALLISON MICHAEL ORENSTEIN

Burlesque and belly dance

Belly Dance at Bamboo Moves

Get ready to shimmy and shake with this sweat-inducing workout. Instructor Lynn N. fuses five different styles (African, Arab, Greek, Moroccan and Turkish) with her own Latin roots to create an hour-long, cardio-heavy butt-kicking that firms your arms and abs. Chest lifts, stomach rolls and hip gyrations are set to the beat of an international soundtrack, and the last ten minutes of each class are dedicated to "free dancing" around the studio. *107-40 Queens Blvd between 70th Rd and 71st Ave, suite 206, Forest Hills, Queens (718-263-0788, bamboomovesyoga.com). Wed 8:45pm, Sun 10:30am; single class \$20. Mention TONY when booking to receive \$5 off your first class through Oct 13.*

Burlesque Dance at Burlesque Bikini Bootcamp

The first 30 minutes of this ladies-only class are a warm-up that combines strength training, yoga, ballet, plyometrics and cardio. After push-ups and tricep dips, students learn a sassy burly-Q combo filled with kicks, turns and sultry shimmies. The more you strut, the more you'll notice your jiggly bits firming up, and soon the only things wiggling will be your hips. *151 W 26th St between Sixth and Seventh Aves (347-248-2533, burlesquebikinibootcamp.com). Mon, Wed 6, 7pm; Sat 10am; single class \$25. Use the online code "TONY" when registering to get a ten-pack of classes for \$89 (regularly \$180) through Oct 15.*

Pole Virgins at Body & Pole

Classes at the only coed pole-fitness studio in the city will work muscles you never even knew you had. The 90-minute full-body workout kicks off with a half hour of dance-based conditioning to

PHOTOGRAPHS: LEFT TO RIGHT: KRISHA JUNG, CHRISTINA M. HIGGS, FRANCHINE DANETA



DhoonyaFit at Dhoonya Dance

help strengthen the core and upper body. Beginners then learn how to flirtatiously—and gracefully—walk around the pole and practice floor work, fan kicks, hip rolls and basic spins. You'll leave with burning abs—and a newfound appreciation for Channing Tatum and his *Magic Mike* crew. *115 W 27th St between Sixth and Seventh Aves (212-334-6900, bodyandpole.com). Daily 10am–10pm; single class \$25. Use online code "TONY" to get a discounted three-class package for \$69 (regularly \$75) through Sept 27.—Melody Serafino*

Theatrical

GLEEful at Broadway Bodies

Self-proclaimed Gleeeks can strive for greatness in this workshop, which features musical-theater and pop tunes from the Fox hit *Glee*. Instructor Travis Nesbitt, who honed his dancing chops performing in the *Radio City Christmas Spectacular* and Off Broadway's *Altar Boyz*, leads the exuberant session. Even if you have zero dance training, you'll feel at ease: The first 30 minutes are dedicated to the simplest steps (pivot turn, grapevine), aimed at building coordination skills while simultaneously upping your heart rate. With the half hour left, you'll tackle song-specific hand- and footwork that's easy to pick up, but tough enough that you'll feel as if you learned something—not to mention sweated off a ton of

calories. *Chelsea Studios, 151 W 26th St between Sixth and Seventh Aves, sixth floor (347-926-3952, broadwaybodies.com). Wed 7pm; single class \$18.*

Beginner Theater Dance at Steps on Broadway

Dancer and music-video choreographer Christopher Liddell exudes plenty of energy, making this taxing musical-theater class a total blast. A major yoga devotee, he uses Sivananda-influenced muscle-lengthening techniques in the 30-minute warm-up, in which you'll also work on ballet steps and muscle isolation to help prevent injuries. The remaining hour focuses on a routine to tunes from *Mamma Mia!*, *West Side Story* and other lively musicals. His clear instructions will have you dancing in the vein of Bob Fosse and Jerome Robbins, two icons whose numbers emphasized athleticism. You'll leave feeling long and lean, and probably humming a Broadway tune. *2121 Broadway at 74th St (212-874-2410, stepsnyc.com). Fri 1pm; single class \$18.*

Beginner Theatre Dance at Broadway Dance Center

Fair warning: The "entry-level" classes at this popular studio are aimed at dance fans with at least a few years' experience. If you're up for the challenge, but still feel a bit rusty, opt for a session run by the ever-patient Lainie Munro. In the first half hour, you'll warm up with basic ballet steps, plus crunches, legs lifts and floor stretches. Many of these moves feel like those in aerobics classes, and your hamstrings and calves will be screaming in no time. For the next 15 minutes, you'll learn a simple combination used in a popular musical; recent routines have included *In the Heights*, *Chicago* and *The Wedding Singer*. Munro then spends the rest of the hour teaching a group number set to a specific show tune. Once everyone is comfortable, you'll divide into two groups to perform. Take the opportunity to go all-out; you'll tone your arms and strengthen your core with turns and lots of kicks. *322 W 45th St between Eighth and Ninth Aves, third floor (212-582-9304, broadwaydancecenter.com). Wed 3pm; single class \$18.—Elizabeth Denton*



Burlesque Dance at Burlesque Bikini Bootcamp

Classes for antidancers



Excuses abound for not enjoying or even trying dance: Maybe you lack coordination or flexibility, or perhaps you crave something that lets you fight or tap into your spiritual side. Regardless, we’ve found a workout that’ll give you all the benefits of dance—increased balance, lean muscles, better poise—without the hang-ups.

“I want something more badass.”

Try this: Introductory class at the New York Capoeira Center

Perhaps you’ve played as Eddie in *Tekken 3*, or maybe you remember the Durmstrang wizards’ entrance from the fourth Harry Potter movie. Either way, you’ve seen capoeira, a Brazilian martial art that incorporates elements of dance (especially breaking) and is performed to a rhythmic soundtrack. Beginners’ classes at this school focus on moving safely in tandem with a partner and practicing three fundamental skills, including cartwheels. Despite being labeled “introductory,” the class is mixed ability, so attendees practice to the level they’re comfortable with—most stick with crouched half-cartwheels. The instructors create a jovial, supportive atmosphere where it’s okay to make mistakes. That’s a good thing: Capoeira demands balance and some serious core and upper-body strength. Look for a new outpost of this school opening in Williamsburg this fall. *Clemente Soto Velez Cultural Center, 107 Suffolk St between Delancey and Rivington Sts, suite 307 (212-677-2209, newyorkcapoeiracenter.com). Schedule varies; monthly membership \$130–\$165, registration fee \$100. —Jonathan Shannon*

“It’s not soul-nurturing enough.”

Try this: IntenSati at Sacred Brooklyn

Yogis seeking to supplement their practice can enhance their flexibility and peace of mind during this feel-good class. Instructor and certified personal trainer Dyan Tsumis combines martial arts, dance, strength conditioning and yoga, teaching simple aerobic moves to create a high-energy routine. While doing jumping jacks, heel drives and more to the up-tempo music, participants chant positive affirmations to encourage their inner warrior to fight through the burn. With each sequence, you’ll notice your attitude improving, along with your balance and mental focus. *197 Clifton Pl between Bedford and Franklin Aves, Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn (347-715-4112, sacredbrooklyn.com). Tue noon; single class \$20. —Teresa Roca*

More online!

Find healthy-cooking workshops, more classes and an NYC gym guide at timeout.com/newyork.

“I’m already addicted to Pilates.”

Try this: Mixed-level class at the Bar Method Soho

At first glance, a class at this sleek spot could be mistaken for a yoga session with some ballet tossed in. But as students hold basic poses (leg lifts, planks, lunges) or lean into a barre, there’s all sorts of imperceptible flexing going on. The muscle-shredding workout kicks off with a cardio warm-up the minute you walk through the door, and the assault continues for a full hour, mixing crunches with bicep curls and other targeted exercises. Newbies may require a few classes to develop body awareness (and endurance), but the staff is kind to even the biggest of lummoxes.

The best health and fitness apps

These mobile tools will aid your quest to achieve a better body.

Lose It!
If you’re serious about dropping pounds—or at least tracking your calories—consider this comprehensive app your new BFF. You can add food, recipes and exercise routines based on whether you’re trying to lose weight or maintain it. Plus, you can connect to Facebook and Twitter to have your friends join in on the fun (or shame you if you deviate from your goal). Available for iOS and Android; free.

Charity Miles
Find the best motivation to walk, run or bike by tracking your distance while earning money for your favorite charity. The more you use it, the more you can increase the sponsorship pool, so that every organization scores some dough. Available for iOS and Android; free.

Spark Recipes
Cooking at home is easier and healthier with this app from the popular online weight-loss community. Search more than 190,000 recipes to find your favorites based on course, prep time or even cuisine. You can also easily track your total calories with complete nutritional information. Available for iOS and Android; free.

Restaurant Nutrition
If you’re one of those New Yorkers who uses the stove for storage space, download this directory, which features 250 restaurants and more than 60,000 food items. Most listings are from mainstream chains, but you can still keep track of your favorite foods and approximate dishes from indie eateries. Available for iOS and Android; free. —Irina Gonzalez

You’ll feel the posture-straightening, gut-flattening effects after a single session (once you regain your strength). *155 Spring St between West Broadway and Wooster St, second floor (212-431-5720, soho.barmethod.com). Times vary; single class \$37, 30-day unlimited pass \$195 (new clients only), multiclass packages \$160–\$765. —Ethan LaCroix*

“I’m not flexible and have two left feet.”

Try this: Lastics open-level class at Stepping Out Studios

Former dancer Donna Flagg designed this studio’s program four years ago, drawing upon her training at UArts and Rutgers. The result is a series of dance-inspired standing and seated stretches that elongate muscles. If you’re picturing lying leisurely in child’s pose for an hour, you’re out of luck: Flagg’s 60-minute classes use your body’s natural resistance to promote greater flexibility and core strength. *37 W 26th St between Sixth Ave and Broadway, ninth floor (646-736-7880, lastics.com). Mon, Wed 6:30pm; single class \$20. —Dayna Sason*

PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN ADAMS