



10

**QUICK TIPS
TO HELP YOU TO
CHOREOGRAPH YOUR
VERY OWN AMAZING
DANCE!**

CREATE • MOVE • INSPIRE

As a dance teacher, I love it when students excitedly ask me if they can show me something they have choreographed themselves. I started making up dance routines well before my teen years and performed them for family, friends, at church and at various functions such as family weddings and birthdays. I loved choosing music and then editing it, which back then involved sitting in front of the old sound system for hours while making cuts to copied cassette tapes.

These days, students have the privilege of performing their own choreography at various competitions and eisteddfods in the specially titled “Own Choreography” sections. This is a fantastic platform for students to gain experience and constructive feedback from seasoned professionals.

So, if choreographing your own dances and routines is something that you have started having a go at or is something that you would like to try doing in the near future, I have put together 10 quick tips to help you get started! Enjoy!

1. **Have an intention or storyline for your dance** – Even if you choose to choreograph a tap solo that doesn’t have a particular storyline, listen to your music and link an emotion to the way it sounds. Experiment with using different facial expressions to match your music as you choreograph.
2. **Vary your floor patterns** – Don’t stay on the one spot all of the time (unless of course this has to do with the intention of your dance)! Moving around the stage will generally create a more visually appealing and complete routine.
3. **Use a mirror to create your own unique shapes and movements** – Mirrors are a great tool to use when choreographing. Try making different shapes with your body to come up with your own original moves and sequences.
4. **Choose music that makes you “feel” something** – Make sure you really like the music you have chosen. It should make you feel like dancing! Does it make you happy, sad, excited, hopeful, angry, joyous, etc?
5. **Improvise to the music during the process** – It is great to just put the music on and let your body move. You could even record yourself while doing this and then if you do something that matches your music really well, you can go back and watch it over so that you remember what you have done.
6. **Match your movements to the music you choose** – Don’t just put that walkover you mastered in class last week in your routine because it’s your current favourite step. Create movements that suit the music you have chosen and match the intention of your dance.
7. **Experiment with the use of different levels** – Have you incorporated floor work and steps of elevation into your routine? Have you drawn on your use of plié and rise?

8. **Include different qualities of movement** – ‘Qualities’ are ways in which movements can be performed. For example, you can perform one single movement in many ways, such as smoothly, quickly, sharply, softly, percussively... the list goes on!
9. **Explore the use of different eyelines** – Pay attention to where you are looking for each movement. How does your eyeline help to portray your dance’s intention? If your routine is about feeling shy on your first day of school, it wouldn’t make sense to look out at the audience continuously for the entire dance.
10. **Don’t be “safe” with your choreography** – Try really hard to create your own movements and style. Don’t just fill your routine up with steps you have learnt in class. While it is ok to include these, the more time you take to experiment with how your own mind and body create movement, the more interesting your choreography will be!

Happy choreographing!

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