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STRICTLY BALLROOM

What to Wear to a Dance Class

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Many students who are starting a ballroom dance class ask, "what should I/we wear?" In my days of competition training, it's not uncommon for guys to wear shirt and tie with dress pants and the ladies would be in a skirt (and appropriate top). We were dressing like this for a couple of reasons: 1) respect to the coach, and 2) made us feel more formally dressed, which is how we would have felt at a competition. However, things are much more relaxed in Winnipeg so you can wear whatever you're comfortable in (in good taste of course). Footwear, on the other hand, will require a bit more of a discussion. As a courtesy to the dance studio, you don't wear shoes on the dance floor that you have worn outdoors because rocks and sand can damage the floor. You want to be sure that the footwear you're in gives you support for pivoting (for example flip-flops are a horrible choice). Make sure the soles don't mark the dance floor. True ballroom dance shoes come in a range of prices and it basically depends on what quality you want. The important characteristic is that there's a suede sole and a flexible toe region. In Winnipeg, you can try out Harlequin in downtown or there's a Chinese gift store in the Johnson Terminal Building (Forks) that sells less expensive shoes. The other alternative is to order online...however you're gambling with your money since you really don't know what the sizes are like.