



## POWER STRETCH

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<http://www.dallaspowerhouse.com>

★ Power Stretch is the term used for an ultimate flexibility and strengthening class for the dancer, drill team member and potential drill team member. Power Stretch is important for many reasons. It is directly associated with injury prevention, body alignment and creating the perfect balance between strength flexibility.

**INJURY PREVENTION:** Did you know that one of the best ways to prevent injury was through proper stretching? A Power Stretch class should be conducted the same as a dance technique class. The instructor takes the students through a brief warm up which includes calisthenics and brisk walking if the space allows. This movement allows ample blood, essential fluids and oxygen to flow to all muscles in the body. Next, stretches follow a gradual pattern that increases in intensity. (Intensity also includes partner stretching.) This lesson plan of stretching teaches each student about his or her own body and what it must realistically have to be injury-free.



**BODY ALIGNMENT:** Body alignment is important for not only flexibility, but correct range of movement when executing technical dance steps. It is very important for an instructor to have a watchful eye and be both knowledgeable and responsive to the students so that stretches are done correctly. Poor form makes a stretch useless and could cause injury.

**BALANCING STRENGTH AND FLEXIBILITY:** In dance movement, muscle groups work on a system of stretching and relaxing. Therefore, it is very important for a dancer to be as strong as he or she is flexible. Otherwise, injury may once again occur because the particular muscle groups are not able to keep the body in proper alignment. In Power Stretch class, the instructor will do exercises that will strengthen isolated muscle groups. In most cases, both the strengthening and stretching exercises will be done in a format so that the student can be educated about his or her own body.

★ In conclusion, when these elements are applied in a challenging and fun environment, the student not only acquires a flexible and healthy body, but also a positive mind when it comes to setting realistic goals and expectations as a dancer.