

VANCOUVER TAP DANCE SOCIETY | VANTAP

Student Handbook



www.vantapdance.com

Instagram [@vantapdance](https://www.instagram.com/vantapdance)

Facebook [@vantapdance](https://www.facebook.com/vantapdance)

Twitter [@vantapdance](https://twitter.com/vantapdance)

Instagram [@tapcovancouver](https://www.instagram.com/tapcovancouver)

Facebook [@tapcovancouver](https://www.facebook.com/tapcovancouver)

Youtube [@VancouverTapDanceSociety](https://www.youtube.com/@VancouverTapDanceSociety)

Table of Contents

Mission, Vision, and Mandate	3
Cultural Values	4
Organization Overview	6
Activities and Services Overview	7
VanTap Society	7
VanTap Arts Centre	8
VanTap Academy	8
VanTap TapCo Youth Tap Ensemble	9
VanTap Productions	9
Policies Overview	10
Code of Conduct	10
Student Academy Information	12
Away Dates and Absences	12
Dress Code	12
Shoes	12
Online Classes	12
Drop-in Classes	13
Academy Levels	13
Photos and Videos	13
Fees and Payments	13
Membership	13
Social Media Policy	14
Snow Days and Cancellations	14
COVID-19	14
Arts Centre Parking	14
Office Hours and Email Communication	14
Withdrawal from Academy Programming	14
Refund Policy	15



Mission, Vision, and Mandate

The core foundation of the society may be found in its mission, vision, and mandate. They are listed below.

Mission

To celebrate tap dance and related cultural arts as vehicles of learning, human expression, and thriving communities.

Vision

We envision spaces in which the cultural values of growth, care, cooperation, excellence, and grace, are experienced, engendered, and expressed with joy through the physical practice of tap dance and related cultural arts. This is achieved through the activities of training for all levels, ages, and body types; sharing the arts and celebrating unique voices in performance; and producing events designed to gather communities together.

Mandate

The mandate of the Society has remained steadfast throughout the history of the organization. It includes:

- **Academy:** The Academy provides dance education for dancers of all ages, levels, and body types throughout the year at various levels of engagement.
- **Vancouver International Tap Dance Festival:** The annual festival is dedicated to spreading the joy of tap dance by offering dancers with unique opportunities to learn from internationally-renowned guest artists, and presenting audiences with premiere performances.
- **TapCo:** The Society's Elite Youth Performance Ensemble. TapCo carries repertoire ranging from classic to contemporary pieces, and tours British Columbia schools with an educational show about tap dance.

- **Outreach Program:** Leveraging the faculty of and students trained by the Academy, the Outreach Program provides classes to hundreds of children each year in local schools and community groups.



Cultural Values

VanTap is a place where people come to find a supportive and educational environment. This is especially true for students of the VanTap Academy who have sometimes been hurt by unhealthy competitive environments. The Society at large has adopted the following cultural values as a way to articulate and promote the kind of environment we would like to see flourish.

Growth - One way to define a community is the gathering of a group dedicated to growing together. Growth is also the natural goal of learning. We work to engender growth throughout our organization, from the classroom to the stage, from the faculty to the board room. This value binds us in the never-ending journey towards whatever lay ahead.

Care - Organizations have a tendency to dehumanize, particularly as they grow. People become numbers, personal stories become marketing tools, and the organization that once served people begins to serve itself. That is unless the people who make up the organization continue to care for each other. Care speaks to support through the offering of time and resources, the willingness to listen, and to engage individually with everyone. Care also fuels the pursuit of solutions for the problems the organization and the people it serves face. We work because we care. We grow because we work.

Cooperation - Tap dance in particular has a stereotype as a solo art form. Communities tend to celebrate the individual voice, more than the group. This is a general cultural trend as well, with celebrity culture, but it is ultimately unhealthy. Tap dance actually derived from a

communal practice of music making, singing, and dancing. While individual voices should be celebrated, they should be remembered as singular examples of an entire community. Cooperation is the ethic that binds communities like VanTap's together. We engage to enable one another's pursuits. We empower each other to achieve goals. We connect with each other and the community around us to forge bonds of friendship. Many hands make the work light.

Excellence - Excellence speaks to the high level of what we aim to accomplish. We pursue excellence in all our programming, in our communications, and in our operations as a not-for-profit organization. In pursuing excellence ourselves, we trust that those we engage with will experience it and be inspired to pursue it as well.

Grace - The pursuit of excellence is fraught with challenges. There will always be failures along the way. Some will be big, while others will be small. They all bear a sting. Grace is the ethic that allows us to continue the journey towards excellence, because of growth, fueled by care, and with cooperation. Without grace any failure would signal the end of the journey. We value grace as the mechanism that keeps us going.



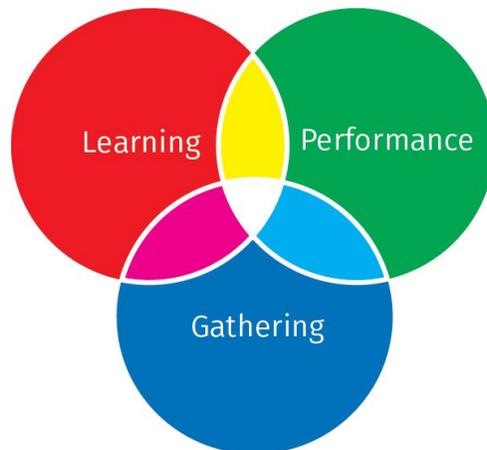
Organization Overview

Vancouver Tap Dance Society operates 4 distinct units of activity that interact with one another and live under the umbrella of the society. As a student or member of the VanTap Team it is important to understand the various units interact.

1. Arts Centre
2. Academy
3. TapCo
4. Productions

Examples of interactions include the Arts Center providing space for Academy, TapCo, and Production programming; TapCo performing at Academy or Production events; Academy advertising at a Productions event.

These four units operate to varying degrees in the following three spheres of work: Learning, Performance, and Gathering.

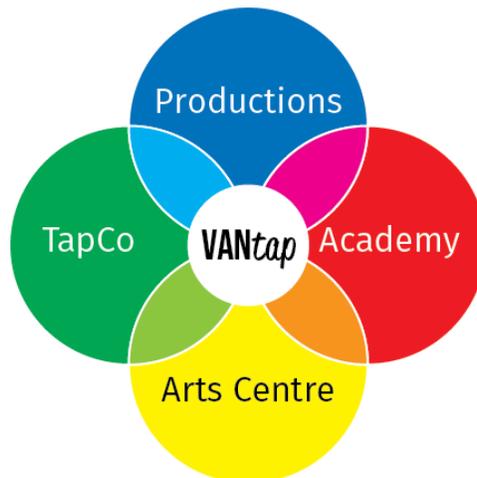


Learning - Learning is clearly evident in the activities of the Academy classes, but also found in conversations with parents, the exposure of audiences to unique performances, and a sharing of tap dance history that frames what we do at the Society. Throughout the activities

of the society there are many teachable moments, and all should be taken for sake of inspiring engagement.

Performance - Performance is found most easily in the audience directed performances Academy students, TapCo, and the Festival’s guest artists partake in. Additionally we find the idea of performance in the execution of excellent services, our clients and members having an excellent experience, and being good neighbors in our community.

Gathering - Gathering is seen most often in the community events that are hosted at the VanTap Space, such as the *Celebrate! Series* and *Community Conversations*. However, gathering also focuses our attention around other programs like our membership, being supportive of the community that forms around Academy faculty, students, and parents as they grow together, and in the larger gathering of the Festival that establishes a connection point for the global tap dance community here in Vancouver.



Activities and Services Overview

The following section will give you a high level view of the activities and services that the Society engages in on an annual basis. Further detailed information about specific programs is available online at www.vantapdance.com, or by request.

VanTap Society

The Society is the umbrella under which all VanTap activities and services occur. At the Society level we find our Membership, the Board of Directors, all Development Initiatives including fundraising and partnerships, the Sas Selfjord Scholarship Fund, and the Artist in Residence Program.

As a not-for-profit society, the Board oversees all the activities and services we engage in. The Board members are elected by the Membership who vote during the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Board officers (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary) are then appointed by Board members from within the ranks of the Board.

Membership is different from being a client of the Society. Members engage to various degrees in volunteerism, activity at the AGM, and support of Society by various means both financially and in-kind. Members are eligible to receive special discounts and opportunities simply by being members.

Clients take part in activities of the Society and/or receive services in exchange for a particular financial fee (example: ticket fee to a performance). While many members are (or have been) clients, not all clients of the Society are members.

Of note, the Society has recently formalized a scholarship fund in the name of the founding Executive Director. **The Sas Selfjord Scholarship Fund** supplies funds to the Academy and Festival (see below) to ensure programs are accessible and provide specific bursaries for students of merit and need attending programs there.

VanTap Arts Centre

This is VanTap's home. Most VanTap activities and services are centered around our space. In addition to Academy and Festival classes, Pop-up workshops, and gatherings like the Gregory Hines Birthday Celebration, VanTap | Space hosts a number of community events that are produced by other organizations with visions aligned with VanTap's Mission and Vision. VanTap Studios specifically are also available for rent through the Space Rental Program.

In the lower levels of the building we have two storage rooms. We also currently have a tenant (City Baptist Church) that operates from a set of suites, office and common spaces in the lower level of our building.

VanTap Academy

The Academy sits at the heart of the Society's educational activities. The Academy has the following programs that attract a broad range of students with various levels of skill, interest, and prior exposure to the craftwork:

Academy's 10-Month Program - both competitive and recreational, tap-dance-centric training with conditioning and related forms (breaking, jazz dance, etc) also provided, youth through adult, culminating in a year-end recital.

Tap Artistry Program - a special program designed to bridge the divide between studio culture and the professional tap dance world.

Spring Break Camps - one week long programs running only during the school calendar's spring break.

Summer Program - A special schedule that runs during the summer including Dance Camps, a summer Boot Camp, and Drop-in Classes.

Special Courses - 6-8 week courses that cover specific topics (Absolute Beginners, Tap Dance for Lindy Hoppers, etc)

Drop-in Classes - Classes that run throughout the year, offering opportunities for multiple levels of dancers to engage with training. These also include Pop-up Workshops with local and international artists. *All drop-in classes must be booked 1 hour prior to the class beginning, to ensure classes will run, we recommend reserving your spot sooner.*

VanTap | TapCo Youth Tap Ensemble

Through its partnership with **ArtStarts**, TapCo travels through the Greater Vancouver Area, and British Columbia at large, presenting educational shows to elementary school audiences. TapCo also performs for community, private and corporate events.

VanTap Productions

There are three annual events that VanTap | Productions is responsible for. In order of occurrence in the calendar year, they are, **The Gregory Hines Birthday Celebration** (the first Saturday after February 14th, Hines's actual birthday), **Tap Dance Days** (a series of weekly events during the month of May), and the annual **Vancouver International Tap Dance Festival** (week-long intensives, weekend workshops, and premiere performances, the last week in August into Labor Day Weekend). VanTap | Productions events are designed with the general public in mind in an effort to grow the audience of tap dance and related cultural forms in Vancouver. Invite your friends to these.



Policies Overview

Overview

Society policies are in place for the protection and safety of all members, staff, and clients. Here you will find policies specifically around code of conduct, incident reporting, and more generally standards and procedures.

- Code of Conduct
- Incident Reporting
- Standards and Procedures

Code of Conduct

It is expected that all employees, members, and clients always act with fairness, honesty, integrity, and openness; respect the opinions of others and treat each person with equality and dignity without regard to gender, race, creed, ancestry, place of origin, political beliefs, religion, marital status, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Confidentiality

Respect and maintain the confidentiality of information gained as a volunteer or member.

Harassment and Bullying Policy

VanTap is committed to an environment in which members and parents are treated with respect and dignity, free of discrimination and harassment.

Harassment

Any form of harassment based on race, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, or age will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment is any conduct, comment, gesture or contact of a sexual nature that one would find to be unwanted or unwelcome by any individual, or that might, on reasonable grounds, be perceived by that individual as placing a condition of sexual nature on an employment or career development.

VanTap has a zero tolerance policy with respect to harassment. It may be grounds for dismissal from our programming

Bullying

Bullying is an offensive, cruel, intimidating, insulting or humiliating behaviour which includes physical violence or the threat of physical violence. It can be physical or verbal, direct or indirect such as gossip, lobbying other members, or parental interference regarding child's progress, placement, performances, that escalates to coercion, innuendos, or bullying tactics is not tolerated and can be grounds for withdrawal from any of VanTap programs.

Bullying is considered harassment in general, unless there is physical contact or a threat of violence, where it is considered violence. Bullying is ill treatment which is not addressed under human rights legislation or criminal codes.

Informal Addressing of an Issue

Tell the person that you find the behavior uncomfortable and request it stop immediately.

If the person does not stop or you are unable to speak to the person, you should follow the formal procedures below.

Formal Addressing of an Issue

- Bring the matter to the attention of the Artistic Director of VanTap.
- If the member is not comfortable doing so, the matter should be brought to the attention of the HR Committee (consisting of current members of the Board of Directors).
- The person will have an opportunity to respond to the complaint.
- The complaint will be investigated based on discussions with all parties, all in confidence.
- If the complaint is judged to be true, corrective or disciplinary action will be taken and a record of the investigation will be maintained.
- If the complaint is not substantiated, no further action will be taken but a record of the investigation will be maintained.
- The complainant will be advised of the conclusion in writing.

If a complaint is substantiated, possible courses of action by the VanTap may be:

- A request for a formal apology.
- Written warnings placed in the personnel file.
- Suspension or termination from Vancouver Tap Dance Society.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout any formal or informal investigation. Disclosure of information will only be made if required to investigate the complaint and as required by law.

Adherence to Code of Conduct

All employees, members, and clients must adhere to the Code of Conduct. They will certify this by signing a declaration that they have read, understand, and will abide by this code.

Student Academy Information

Being a student at VanTap Academy is a special place to be. You are part of a unique team of educators, staff and board members, who enjoy sharing the knowledge of their crafts with dancers of all ages, levels, and body types, and cultivating a culture in the room that is based on growth, care, cooperation, excellence, grace.

Away Dates and Absences

Please email admin@vantapdance.com or call the office 604.253.0293 if you will be absent for any dates. Any absence heard through a fellow dancer will not be acknowledged.

Dress Code

All Dance Classes

- Hair must be tied back. This includes bangs where a dancer can not see properly.
- No jeans are allowed.
- Please wear comfortable, breathable loose clothing. E.g. leggings and tank top, shorts and t-shirt. Large hoodies will be asked to be taken off once dancers are warm. No inappropriate logos, graphics or revealing clothing.

Shoes

Tap

- Tap shoes are required.
- We offer a [tap shoe rental program](#), to elevate the costs associated with growing dancers. All of our tap shoes are donated, and rentals are only subject to size availability. *We are limited for shoe size Women's 7+.*
- If you're looking to buy new shoes, we recommend The Dance Shop in Vancouver, and a full soled black lace up tap shoe.

Jazz

- Jazz black slip-on shoes are required (preschool jazz dancers may wear runners)

Conditioning

- Indoor sneaks, black is suggested.

Online Classes

For our 10 month academy programs, e.g. Level 1 Tap, Level 3 conditioning, TapCo etc. we can offer the class online via Zoom during COVID-19, to learn from the faculty in-studio. Please [email](#) the office to arrange.

All drop-in classes are available in-person or online.

Drop-in Classes

All drop-in classes must be booked 1 hour prior to the class beginning, to ensure classes will run, we recommend reserving your spot sooner, via our [online store Amilia](#).

Academy Levels

To help you get a better idea of where you or your dancer may fit into our 20/21 season please email admin@vantapdance.com with your dancer's previous experience and dance goals to help find them the right class.

Photos and Videos

No parents, students and/or family members or friends should be taking photos or videos through the studio doors, or at events without prior consent from the designated teacher or staff. This is to help protect the privacy of our students and their families.

Fees and Payments

At VanTap we offer payments via credit card or e-checks (direct deposit) through our online system, Amilia. If you prefer to pay cash, post dated cheques, please contact the office. E-transfers can be sent to admin@vantapdance.com.

- A \$25 registration fee will be charged upon registration for our 20/21 season, this is non-refundable, this helps to account for our administrative fees to make sure your experience is enjoyable and professional.
- All VanTap members, receive 10% off VanTap Academy Programs
- There are two payment plans available for our 10 month program. In full, paying for the 10 month program at once. Or divided up monthly into 10 payments. Upon registration you will be asked to pay a portion of the 10 month payments, this is to reserve your spot.
- All dancers are charged a costume fee \$50 - \$60 (depending on age), for the 2021 Year End Show

Membership

As VanTap is a not-for-profit organization, we are a member run society. We rely on our members to help guide decisions through our AGM. Additionally, membership provides opportunities for discounts for all programs at VanTap as well as discounts and benefits in our community and through our partners. To find out more about becoming a member visit:

www.vantapdance.com/society/membership/

Social Media Policy

We understand that you may be active on social media and may use the various platforms that exist for many purposes.

Our social media policy is in place for the protection of the children, that are an integral part of our VanTap community. Please only post photos of other children under the age of 18 with prior verbal consent from other parents.

We enjoy seeing the joy of tap dancing everyone shares. Feel free to tag [@vantapdance](#) or mark your location at Vancouver Tap Dance Society.

Snow Days and Cancellations

The Academy may have to cancel class due to unforeseen circumstances that are out of the Academy's control (force du major). The Academy will do what it can to schedule make-up classes, but there is no guarantee a make-up day will be arranged. There will be no reimbursement for these unforeseen circumstances.

COVID-19

The health and safety of our community is our first priority.

[20/21 VanTap Academy COVID-19 Safety Protocols \(pdf\)](#)

Arts Centre Parking

Unfortunately VanTap does not have their own parking for parents and students. We ask you not to park in our neighbour's High Point Liquor Store's parking, unless you are a customer of theirs on that day. We recommend parking on either side of Hastings St and on Kaslo St.

Office Hours and Email Communication

The VanTap office team is small and juggles a variety of responsibilities. We do our best to respond to emails and return phone calls in a timely manner. Our office hours change depending on the time of year and we appreciate your patience.

Withdrawal from Academy Programming

If a dancer would like to stop attending classes at VanTap in any class that is part of our 10 month program, the primary contact must fill out an [academy withdrawal form](#). Then a staff member will withdraw and stop tuition payments as is fit.

Please note there will be a \$15 admin fee charged for this change.

Refund Policy

At VanTap we understand unforeseen circumstances may arise resulting in the change or withdrawal of a program. Our refund policy is as follows for Academy Programming:

10 Month Programs (Sept - June, youth and adult)

- Complete Academy Withdrawal Form
- If paid in full for the 10 month program, payment will be refunded starting the following month. E.g. If you requested withdrawal Oct 24, payment will be refunded for Nov - June.
- If you choose monthly instalments for method of payment, payments will be stopped the following month. E.g. if you requested withdrawal Oct 24, payment will be stopped as of Nov.

Drop-in Classes

- Non-refundable and non replaceable
- Purchased classes that have been pre-booked via single purchase or multi-pass cannot be transferred if missed.
E.g. A student who misses a Tuesday's Drop-in that was pre-booked via a multi-pass purchase cannot take a Thursday Drop-in as a makeup.

Private Lessons

- 50% refundable prior to 7 business days before date of private lesson
- No refund within 7 business days of date of private lesson
- No refund after the private lesson
- If a student can find someone to switch private lessons with, lessons can be exchanged for no fee, with approval from both parties and a staff member.

Special Courses

E.g. 8 week adult absolute beginner course

- 50% refundable prior to 7 business days of first day of class
- No refund within 7 business days of first class.
- No refund after the first class.

Spring and Summer Camps

- 50% refundable prior to 7 business days of first day of class
- No refund within 7 business days of first class.
- No refund after the first class.

Show tickets

- Non-refundable, e.g. VanTap Choreography Showcase, Year end Show, fundraisers etc.

Other Fees

- Non-refundable, e.g. Reg Fees, Costume Fees (once received), Shoe Rental Fees etc.

Still have questions? Email us at admin@vantapdance.com