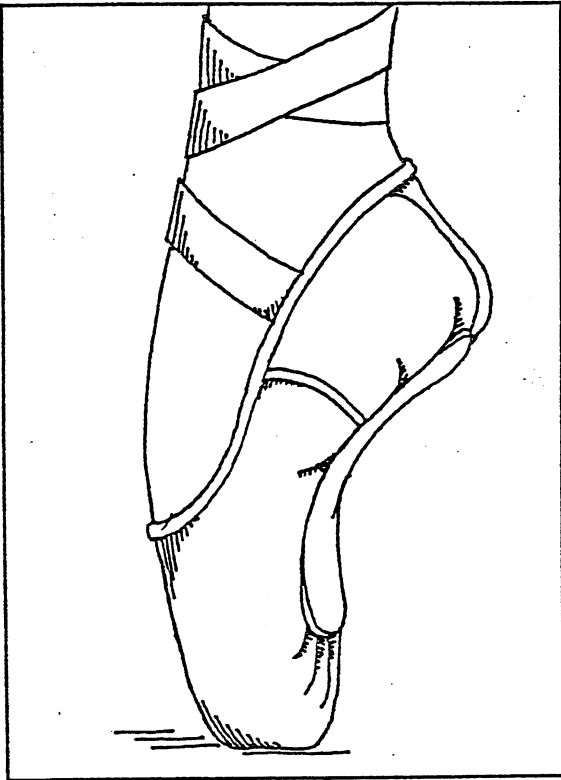


WHAT BALLET DANCERS WEAR



POINTE SHOES

Pointe shoes are the satin slippers worn by a ballerina to help her dance on the tips of her toes with speed and grace and to give the dancer's leg a long, graceful look. Dancers must train for many years before their feet, ankles, and legs are strong enough to dance in pointe shoes. The toe of a pointe shoe has a block, or box, built into it that surrounds and supports the dancer's toes. The block is made of layers of glue and fabric, like papier-mache. The part of the shoe the dancer actually balances on is about the size of a half dollar. Pointe shoes are very expensive because they are made by hand. They also don't last very long, sometimes only for one performance.

TUTUS

A tutu (pronounced TOO-too) is a special dress worn by a ballerina. The Romantic tutu is made of soft, transparent material and has a long, full skirt. The classical tutu became popular about a hundred years ago. It allowed the audience to see the dancers' legs as they performed the beautiful ballet steps and movements. This kind of tutu has a short, round skirt that sticks out from the body. It is made up of layers of stiff mesh or netting. Like pointe shoes, tutus are made by hand. Each one costs between \$3000 and \$5000!

