IndianRaga Certification
The new gold standard in Bharatanatyam Dance

IndianRaga's new certification program is the first ever structured, coherent, fair assessment mechanism to certify performers of Indian Classical Bharatanatyam Dance at various levels of training and performance.

A. Parameters for assessment

Balance and Grace, Expression and Emoting, Posture, Rhythm, and Technique (Ex. Aarimandi, position of hands and feet)

B. Panel of assessors

Holistic assessment of each candidate by a panel of accomplished dance teachers

C. Standardized Testing

Online video-based mechanism eliminates bias and delivers an unparalleled test-taking experience.
What?
Syllabus will test concepts of Bharatanatyam and ability to perform

How?
Levels 1 through 10 to evaluate progress at various levels of training and performance

Advantages of getting certified
1. Recognition of dancing skills
2. Qualitative assessment of level of accomplishment
3. Encouragement of commitment towards dancing
4. Presentation of credentials for arts or academic profile

Understanding the different levels.
Through a carefully constructed path of progression, the dancer grows through focus and perfection on technique, adding layers of emotion, complexity and nuance from the Beginner to Advanced level

A. Level 1 to 3 (Beginner)
- Initial levels of training
- Understanding of basic terminology
- Ability to perform basic Adavus in various speeds
- Recite basic Mudras
- Acquire additional skills with Bhajans, slokams and expressions

B. Level 4 to 7 (Intermediate)
- Acquire additional skills with Alarippu, Jathiswarams, Varnams and Thillanas
- Exposure to live performances

C. Level 8 to 10 (Advanced)
- Advanced level compositions with complexity of technique and emotion
- Professional dancing ability
- Studio recordings
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Topics</th>
<th>Recommended Learning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Namaskaram</td>
<td>• Proper way to do the Namaskaram (Namaskar) and the meaning behind that</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warm-Up Exercises (Beginner Level)</td>
<td>• Any exercises taught by your instructor to stretch and condition the body before all practice sessions and performance</td>
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| Basic Terminology            | • *Namaskar* - A Bharatnatyam dancer starts and ends every session of dancing with Namaskar (obedience). Dancer seeks blessings and permission from Mother Earth to stomp on her during the dance. The dancer pays respect to God (Nataraja), Teacher (Guru), and Audience.  
• *Angashuddham* - Refers to purity, clarity, and neatness of adavus and stance.  
• *Attami* - Refers to the neck movements.  
• *Samam (Samapadam)* - Feet together and standing straight.  
• *Araimandi (Ardhamandala)* - Is a basic posture of the body in Bharatnatyam in which the body should be straight, legs bent at the knee, and toes facing sideways.  
• *Muzhumandi (Mandala)* - The torso should be straight while sitting down on the toes of the two feet.  
• *Sollukattu* - Rhythmic syllables  
• *Nritta hastas* - Hand movements executed along with adavus solely for aesthetic beauty of embellishment are called nritta-hastas. |
### Basic Adavus
- **Tatta Adavu** – Thaiya – Tai - striking the floor with sole of the feet
- **Natta Adavu** – Taiyum Tattat Taiyum Tam - stretching the leg and striking with heels
- **Pakkaadavu** (Visharu Adavu) – Ta Tai Tai Ta - importance to Swasthika position
- **Kudditu Mettu** (Tai Hath Tai Hi) - jumping on toes and striking the ground with the heels while retaining the toes-contact with the ground
- **Sarikal** (Sarukkal) **Adavu** (Tai Ya Tai Yi)

### Basic Mudras
- One of the most striking features of Indian Classical Dance is the use of hand gestures. Speaking in dance via gestures, rather than orally, in order to visually convey outer events or things, as well as inner feelings, two classifications of specific traditional 'MUDRA' (hand/finger gesture) are used in Indian Classical Dance.
- **Asamyuktha Hasta Sloka** (**Single hand gestures**):
  - Pathaakas, Tripathaako, Ardhapathaakah, Karthareemukkah, Mayooraakhyo, Ardhachandrascha, Araalah, Shukathundakah, Mushtishcha, Sikharakhyascha, Kapiththah, Kataamukkah, Soochee, Chandrakalaa, Padmakosha, Sarpashirasthathaa, Mrgashirsha, Simhamukkah, Kangulascha, Alapadmakaha, Chathuro, Bhramarashchaiva, Hamsaasyo, Hamsapakshakaha, Sandamsho, Mukulaschaiva, Thamrachooda, Thrishoolakaha
- **Samyuktha Hasta Sloka** (**Double hand gestures**):
  - Anjalishcha, Kapothashcha, Karkatah, Svasthikasthathaa, Dolahasthah, Pushpaputaha, Uthsangah, Shivalingakaha, Kataaavardhanashchaiva, Karthareesvasthikasthathaa, Shakatam, Shanka, Chakrecha, Samputhah, Paasha, Keelakau (Keelako), Mathsyah, Koormo, Varaahashcha, Garudo, Naagabandhakaha, Khatvaa, Berundakaakeshcha, Avahithasthathatheivacha
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<td>Any short dance piece (around 3 minutes)</td>
<td>• Any slokas, Bajans, instrumental piece or any other appropriate music for classical dance can be used giving importance to adavus and mudras learned so far</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nadai</td>
<td>• The basic Bharatanatyam walk which involves lifting the feet while slightly lowering the body. The feet are then placed down heel first and the body is raised back up.</td>
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<td>Intermediate Adavus</td>
<td>o <em>Tat Tai Tam</em> (<em>Sutral Adavu</em>) - combination of Tattu, Nattu, Swasthika and Paichaal (jump).</td>
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<td>o <em>Paichaal Adavu</em> – using leaps and jumps</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Dhit taiyuam Tat Taa Tai</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Karthari Adavu</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Kathi Adavu</td>
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<td>o <em>Kuthu Adavu</em> (<em>Ettu adavu</em>) – Tat Tai Ta Ha – striking the toes of both feet simultaneously, with a slight jump</td>
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| Head Movements (This may be taught with a sloka or other ways deemed appropriate by the instructor) | Samam - keeping the head motionless and the eyes in a fixed gaze  
Udvāhitam - head tilted up  
Adhomukham - downcast or bowing down in greeting  
Āloliyam - moving the head in a circular motion  
Dhutam - moving the head from side to side  
Kampitam - moving the head up and down  
Parāvṛttam - turning the head away in malice  
Utkṣiptam - turning the head to one side and raise it up  
Parivāhitam - swaying the head from side to side in a wave-like motion |
|---|---|
| Eye Movements (This may be taught with a sloka or other ways deemed appropriate by the instructor) | Samam - eyes are motionless and straight or even  
Ālokitam - circular movement of eyes  
Sāci - looking askance  
Prālokitam - glancing towards both the sides with wide eyes  
Nimīlitam - half-closed eyes  
Ullokītām - eyes raised in upward glance  
Anuvrttam - speedily moving the eyes up and down  
Avalokitam - eyes downcast |
| Neck Movements (This may be taught with a sloka or other ways deemed appropriate by the instructor) | Sundarī - neck movement horizontally on both sides  
Tiraścinā - an upward and downward movement of the neck on both sides, suggesting the gliding of the snake  
Parivāritā - movement from right to left  
Prakampita - moving the neck forward and backward |
### Syllabus: Level 3 (Beginner -3 )

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<td>Any short dance piece (around 3 minutes)</td>
<td>o Any slokas, Bajans, instrumental piece or any other appropriate music for classical dance can be used giving importance to adavus and mudras learned in Level 2</td>
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| **Advanced Adavus** | o *Tai Tai tat Ta* - combination of Tattu, Nattu, and resting on toes  
| | o *Sarukkal Adavu* - sliding  
| | o *Mandi Adavu* - done in Muzhumandi position; Tham Ti tham kitathaka Tai Ta Tai  
| | o *Makuta Adavu* (*theermana adavu*) - usually as an end for the sequence;  
| | ▪ Tadhinigina Thome with Ta Hatha Jhau Tari Ta  
| | ▪ *Kitta Takka Dhari Kirtta Thome*  
| | o *Thatti Mettu* - strike the ground, raise the heel, and re-strike, resting the toes on the ground; *Trishram* (Tha Ki Tta), *Chatushram* (Tha Ka Dhi mi), *Khandam*, (ThaKa Tha kit a), *Mishram* (3+4 or 4+3), *Sankeernam* (4+5 or 5+4)  
| | o *Tadh Dhit Ta* - single unit step; generally used as a connecting unit |
| **Advanced warm-up techniques** | o Surya Namaskar or other comparable warm-up routines |
| **Review the Entire Adavus with special focus on 3rd speed** | o All basic, intermediate, and advanced adavus reviewed earlier in third speed |
| **Alarippu** | A Bharatanatyam recital usually begins with Alarippu, a short invocatory piece in which the dancer pays obeisance to the guru, the Gods, and the spectators. Alarippu literally means "flowering". The movements indicate the gradual blooming or opening out of the dancer's body (like a flower) in readiness for the following dances. On a practical level, this is similar to a warm-up exercise for the dancer, and for the audience an opportunity to appraise her technical skill and finesse. The act is entirely based on rhythm and is focused on relaxing the body of the dancer, thereby relaxing her mind and symbolizes her awakening. |

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<td>Jatiswaram</td>
<td>o Jatiswaram depicts pure dance (nritta) in which the performer weaves several patterns on a basic musical composition. It is distinguished from other musical compositions by having no words of poetry (geet) in it. Because of this characteristic it does not express any bhava (emotion). The beauty of Jatiswaram is the presentation of control over rhythm (thalam) through tempo (laya), by the movements of major limbs of the body (ang-sanchalan) and feet (pada-sanchalan)</td>
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| Expressions     | o This includes an understanding and the **BASIC** ability to do the *Navarasas*.  
1. *Sringaram* – Love, Delight  
2. *Hasyam* – Laughter  
3. *Karuna* – Compassion  
4. *Raudram* – Fury  
5. *Viram* – Bravery/Courage  
6. *Bhayanakam* – Fear  
7. *Bibhatsam* – Revulsion/Disgust  
8. *Adbhutam* – Awe, Wonder  
9. *Shantam* – Serene |
| Sabdam          | o In Sabdam the dancer performs to a devotional song (bhakti geet) and introduces abhinaya. The end sequence of this short number consists of pure dance (nritta). Sabdam has been rightly described as a "piece of abhinaya with a fringe of pure dance running all around it and between it." It is a delightful item of expressional dance (abhinaya) to the accompaniment of a song in praise of the glory of god (or a royal patron). |