

Why sports floors are not suited to dance

Dancers at the peak of their careers experience similar physical demands to elite athletes but it doesn't follow that sports floors will meet the requirements of dancers. For dancers, the quality of the dance floor is critical to their health and well-being as it is an essential part of their 'work' environment.



Research studies in recent years have shown that a suitable sprung floor can reduce the high level of injuries experienced by dancers and also extend their careers. Given the importance of the dance floor it is surprising that there are no published standards.

With Harlequin at the forefront, there has been movement towards the adoption of the German standard DIN 18032, which specifies parameters for vertical deformation, impact reduction and ball bounce. Similar tests have also been adopted for the European Standard EN14904, the standard for sports surfaces for multi use sports.

It is common for a sprung floor to be required by those involved in dance, indoor sports and physical recreation. However, the requirements of dancers and sports people differ notably. Some styles of dancing such as ballet require traction from the floor to prevent slips during performance. Too much traction for a basketball player will result in twisted ankles or knees, but will need

the 90% ball bounce specified in DIN 18032 which is irrelevant to a dancer.



Advice and guidance in specifying floors for dance is available from British Harlequin on 01892 514888

or by email at enquiries@harlequinfloors.com or online at www.harlequinfloors.com.

There are many different styles of dance, some performed in hard shoes such as tap and Irish dancing, others in soft shoes such as ballet or indeed barefoot as in much contemporary dance. A social or ballroom dancer will appreciate the slide and speed of a traditionally finished wooden surface, but a barefoot contemporary dancer will fear splinters from such a floor and the tap dancer will be rightly concerned about the damage they will cause.

Harlequin floors have been designed and developed specifically for dance. When tested, Harlequin Activity™ demonstrates a deformation of 3.8mm and Harlequin WoodSpring™ a deformation of 3.3mm against the

minimum DIN Standard 18032-2 requirement of 2.3mm, which is what is achieved by frequently installed multipurpose single batten systems. These systems are, in general, too hard and offer deformation that is too inconsistent for dancing. In broad terms dance floors are softer than sports floors.

The performance surface of floors is also of critical importance. A correctly specified Harlequin surface will provide the right combination of traction or slip resistance.

Contact us now for further information on our range of dance floors.

HARLEQUIN

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