

**Fitt SS. *Dance Kinesiology*. 2nd ed. New York: Schirmer Books, 1996.  
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### **Overview**

*Dance Kinesiology* was the first comprehensive textbook designed to teach dancers anatomy and kinesiology as it applies to dancing. The emphasis is on topics that have practical value to dancers who are training for a career in dance. Following a brief introduction, the skeletal system is described from the ground up: Foot & leg through radius, ulna & hand. Individual differences and topics of special concern to dancers are described in ways that encourage dancers to build on their strengths and work around their structural limitations. As muscles are layered onto the skeletal structure, their special function in dance movement is described and muscular imbalances that are common in dance are explained along with recommendations for mitigating them. Overviews of physiology, somatotyping, and movement behavior are offered in three brief chapters before a series of six chapters describe applications of the information presented in the first four sections (e.g., promoting movement efficiency, reducing injury risk, conditioning for dance). The 54-page chapter on dance conditioning includes dance-specific exercises with diagrams and description, program outlines for general dancer fitness, and descriptions of special exercises that address specific challenges common in dance.

### **How I use this text in my own classes:**

*Dance Kinesiology* is the required text for our second year, undergraduate dance kinesiology course at Florida State University. We read 85-90% of the chapters and spend some time developing skills that include identifying bones, landmarks and muscles, and analyzing movement to determine the muscle groups active in specific dance movements. A study guide and video clips available elsewhere on the DSSE web site guide our work in the course. The emphasis in this course is on applying the information and skills to the dancers' own bodies. A handful of the undergraduate dancers join our first year graduate students the next year in a course that emphasizes using the principles of anatomy and kinesiology to train other dancers. The background the undergraduate dancers develop in the course that uses the Fitt text gives them an advantage in the seminar they take later with our graduate students. What I especially like about this text is the emphasis on practical and useable information, as well as the author's encouragement to take a constructive approach to using it.

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