

# BELLY DANCE HABITS QUIZ

Thank you for taking part in the quiz.  
Here are your personalized results.

---

## BECOME A DANCE EXPLORER

Deepen your knowledge beyond the studio

It looks like you are absolutely crushing the practical side of your dance life! You practice consistently, create your own choreographies, and enjoy seeing the progress in your physical skills at this current level of your dance journey. But it is very likely that you are not fully tapping into a deeper understanding of this art form. Yes, simple theory without practical application is boring. But if you only focus on the physical side of dance, you may be missing so much more joy and potential in your dance adventures.

Your next jump in growth as a dancer will come from discovering other sides of the dance world: its historical and cultural environment, modern business aspects of the profession, physiological and mindset blocks. That doesn't mean that you don't need to continue working on your technique, choreographies, and conditioning exercises. It just means that right now your main barrier for getting to the next level will be found beyond the dance studio.

---

Here are some ideas on how to discover the belly dance world beyond the classroom:

- **Start your own dance library.** How much do you know about the history of belly dance? Do you have a real understanding of Egyptian mythology, or the word “Isis” is only associated with wings in your mind? What do you know about the influence of the Ottoman empire in Egypt, Europe and the Balkans? Create a new habit of reading dance-related books on a regular basis. It can be 20-30 minutes daily during your morning coffee, or maybe a couple hours on the weekends. Whatever schedule works for you, but include this activity as a regular part of your life.



- **Conquer those rhythms.** I know many established professional dancers who are ashamed to admit they still have hard times recognizing rhythms in the music. There is no shame in not knowing something, but it's time to fix it. Learn all the main rhythms (there are about 15-20 must-know ones). The next time you are listening to an Oum Kalthoum song, try to identify which rhythms are in the background. That's your new listening habit. After that, expand your study to melodic instruments, maqamat, and maybe even pick an instrument to play yourself: zills, tabla, oud...



- **Make it a hardcore rule to always translate songs you are dancing to.** This is something that hopefully you did from the very beginning of your dance journey, but as beginners we sometimes are not told about the importance of doing it, or we try to get around it because of our laziness... Well, not anymore. This should be a mandatory part of your choreographing process before you even step into the studio. If you want to take it to the next level, try to learn and memorize transliteration of the song, so you can easily recognize each line of the lyrics in different song arrangements. You may even consider taking language classes for this task.
- **Enroll in different lectures and conferences.** Of course, you should continue working on your dance technique, but don't completely avoid those 'talking' classes. Make sure that every month or so, you get into some theory-based classes in order to expand your horizons. It could be history related, or maybe about principles of choreographies, or a business class for dancers. Anything that seems interesting to you, and can compliment your physical activities.



- **Start listening to podcasts.** Of course, the Belly Dance Life podcast is a great resource, but there are other belly dance podcasts too. Choose one that appeals to you, and think of when you can simply plug your headsets during the day. It's not an extra activity to add. You can easily multitask and listen while you do other things. Maybe while you are cooking? Or cleaning, doing dishes, working on costumes? Listening to other people's experience will give you not only additional knowledge, but inspiration and ideas too.
- **Follow insta accounts of people who share interesting content, not just photos/videos.** Instagram is a platform for blogging. Use its full potential instead of simply scrolling your feed. This can give you more relevant up-to-date ideas, compared to the historical books that you are already collecting in your library.
- **Explore various folklore styles.** We keep hearing the importance of knowing folklore in order to be a good belly dancer. You don't need to like it, and you don't even need to perform folklore dances. But belly dance is deeply based on folklore and folk steps, so learning different traditional styles will absolutely enhance and enrich your belly dancing.
- **Consider performing at restaurants.** This is not necessarily about cash income, or building a professional career. Performing in a restaurant will give you an invaluable experience of dealing with different types of audiences. It will provide you with an understanding of how this art form is perceived by the general public, and how you can contribute to popularizing it. But most importantly it will push you to think outside of your comfort zone. There is a misconception that treating your art as a business will destroy the nature and essence of the art itself, as if suddenly you will stop being an artist. In some ways, belly dance historically is a form of entertaining art, so developing a healthy business mindset can enhance your appreciation of the dance itself. So think about the idea of expanding your current dance activities to restaurant shows, or maybe private gigs, teaching classes, or selling related services. Anything that involves the business aspect of the field.



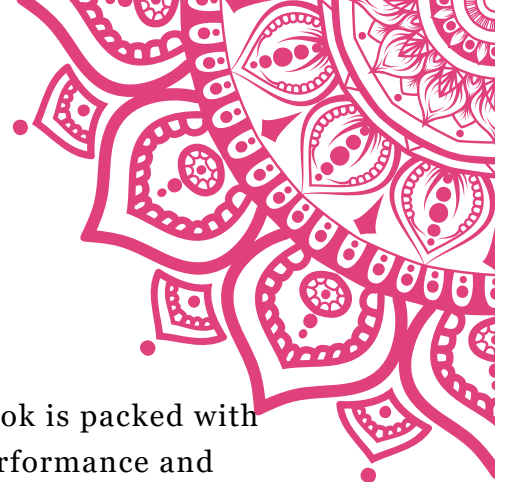
- **Start growing your own social media account.** Putting yourself out there will help with performance anxiety. Fear of negative comments will help with post-show critique from teachers or competition judges. Knowing that your practice videos are on the Internet will push you to polish your dance even harder. Keeping an interesting Instagram blog will encourage you to find your own voice in dance, and dance-related questions. And don't worry, Instagram is not only for already professional dancers. Simply share your current journey as it is, and see what benefits social media can bring to your dance.
- **Work on your mindset blocks, dive into your personal psychology.** Dance is the expression of your emotions through movements. And I'm talking not only about the meaning of a song, or which mood you are trying to create with your presentation. With dance you have to face your deeper emotions, those that you've stored in your body for years. Any suppressed anger, any unhealed emotional trauma, any unresolved conflict, or constant guilt and anxiety... they all leave marks in our body: tensed shoulders, painful hip joints, tendency for frequent injuries. It shapes our muscles. Someone can't get shimmies for a while, but maybe their arm work is fluid and mesmerizing. Another person may not experience any difficulties at all with shimmies, but their chest area is super tense. Have you ever thought about why the same muscles react differently in different people, even though they do the same movements? Along with obvious biological factors, there is an additional layer of emotional baggage that we all carry with us... Maybe it's time to dig in.

I hope you got inspired with some of the suggestions! Don't try to implement them all at once. Choose one or two that spoke to you the most, and implement them right now. Then in a month add one or two more, and so on. Gradual change has more chances for success, but your commitment needs to be consistent. Good luck with it!



## **ACTION-STEPS REVIEW:**

- **Start your own dance library.** Create a new habit of reading dance-related books on a regular basis.
- **Conquer those rhythms.** Learn all the main rhythms (there are about 15-20 must-know ones), and next time you are listening to an Oum Kalthoum song, try to identify which rhythms are in the background. That's your new listening habit. After that, expand your study to melodic instruments, maqamat, and maybe even pick an instrument to play yourself: zills, tabla or oud...
- **Make it a hardcore rule to always translate songs you are dancing to.** If you want to take it to the next level, try to learn and memorize transliteration of the song, so you can easily recognize each line of the lyrics in different song arrangements. You may even consider taking language classes for this task.
- **Enroll in different lectures and conferences.** Make sure that every month or so, you get into some theory-based classes in order to expand your horizons.
- **Start listening to podcasts.**
- **Follow Instagram accounts of people who share interesting content, not just photos/videos.**
- **Explore various folklore styles.** You don't need to like it, and you don't even need to perform folklore dances. But learning different traditional styles will absolutely enhance and enrich your belly dancing.
- **Consider performing at restaurants.** It will push you to think outside of your comfort zone. There is a misconception that treating your art as a business will destroy the nature and essence of the art itself, as if suddenly you will stop being an artist.
- **Start growing your own social media account.** Instagram is not only for already professional dancers. Simply share your current journey as it is, and see what benefits social media can bring to your dance.
- **Work on your mindset blocks, dive into your personal psychology.** Dance is the expression of your emotions through movements. Any suppressed anger, any unhealed emotional trauma, any unresolved conflict, or constant guilt and anxiety... they all leave marks in our body.



## **SUGGESTED BOOK:**

“Limitless” by Jim Kwik. This ultimate brain-training book is packed with practical techniques to help you level-up your mental performance and transform your life.

---

## **RELATED EPISODES OF THE BELLY DANCE LIFE PODCAST:**

[Ep 237. Meher Malik: Spirituality, Sexuality & How Dance Can Help To Process Your Trauma](#)

[Ep 236. Nisaa \(Heather D. Ward\): Detaching Opinions From Historical Realities](#)

[Ep 232. Morocco \(Aunt Rocky\): Performing, Teaching & Researching Since 1960](#)

[Ep 211. Jasirah: How to Find New Business Ideas as a Dancer](#)

[Ep 147. Badriyah: Dreaming Big, Digging Deep!](#)

[Ep 82. Katerina Shereen: The Importance of Your Mindset for a Long-Term Dance Career](#)

[Ep 38. Samantha Burnstein: Can Folklore Be Authentic on Stage?](#)

[Ep 31. Jillina Carlano: How Food Can Influence Your Dance](#)

[Ep 28. Nada El Masriya: How Studying Folklore Can Make You a Better Belly Dancer](#)

[Ep 11. Valerick Molinary: Different Ways to Develop Your Belly Dance Career](#)

---

## **SUGGESTED ARTICLES:**

[A List of My Favourite Belly Dance Books](#)

[25 Must-Know Tarab Songs](#)

[My Favorite Podcasts](#)

[Main Mistakes in Trying to Recognize Rhythms](#)

[What do you need to start doing belly dance gigs?](#)

[Dealing With Performance Anxiety](#)



## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR THE IANA DANCE CLUB MEMBERS:**

The Iana Dance Club is an online platform that offers 300+ video tutorials in the format of 20-min technique drills, choreography breakdowns, 3 to 10-week intensives, and in-depth full-length courses. If you are not a member of the club, you can join it for a 7-day free trial, and explore all the tools available there.

- You have access to my entire **Business Course For Belly Dancers** that will challenge your money mindset around art, and give you a step-by-step guide to approaching your gigs life.
- Explore a variety of intensives about **creativity and dealing with performance anxiety**: The Power of Imagination and Archetypes of Egyptian Goddesses in Dance
- **The Cairo Belly Dance Guide** will expand your understanding of Egyptian style and the current Egyptian dance scene.
- The intensive on **Identifying Rhythms** will help you to finally master the knowledge of rhythms. You can continue your music exploration afterwards in our **Music Corner** with Pedro Bonatto.



**iana Dance  
Club**

## SHARE YOUR PROGRESS:

I hope you've enjoyed this quiz, and found these suggestions useful and inspiring. You can save this pdf with all tips, and refer to it throughout the year to refresh ideas. Consider retaking this quiz after you implement all of the suggestions above, because you may need to shift your focus to other areas as your dance journey unfolds. Don't forget to share the quiz with your friends, and use hashtag #bellydancehabits to share about your training progress. Follow me on Instagram (@iana\_dance) for more tips on habits, training and all aspects of your belly dance life.



[www.ianadanceClub.com/quiz](http://www.ianadanceClub.com/quiz)

