

# *Showcase Dance Productions*

## *Dance Shoe Master List*

### **HARD SHOES**

#### **SHOE BRANDS**

Good brands to go with: Fays, Rutherford, Feis Fayre, Corr's, Ryan & O'Donnell, Hullachan. These brands make exclusively Irish dancing shoes so their shoes are almost always well made. Avoid brands like Capezio or other mainstream dance shoe brands, since they don't have as much experience making Irish dance shoes, and their shoes tend to be poorly made.

#### **SOLE COLOR**

*Please avoid hard plastic soles, as they are too inflexible.*

Tan — Stiff soles, very little flexibility. Best for beginner-intermediate hard shoe.

Gary — Medium flexibility. Best for intermediate-advanced hard shoe.

Black — Most flexibility. Best for intermediate-advanced hard shoe. If your dancer is age 12 or over, I recommend this type of sole.

#### **HEELS**

Some hard shoes have heels that have a slight bump, or “bubble” on the inner part of the heel. This makes it easier to hit clicks. Recommended, but not necessary.

#### **STRAPS**

The front strap on the hard shoes sometimes come in two colors: black and white. Please get black straps.

#### **FIT**

Hard shoes should fit snugly on the dancer's feet. A good rule of thumb is to go 2 sizes down from the dancer's street shoe size (so a US ladies size 8 would be a Irish size 6), and then try going a half size down. Shoes should feel snug, but not cause the dancer's toes to curl.

Loose shoes are harder to dance in and are more likely to cause injury. Also, hard shoes stretch over time! If your dancer's feet have stopped growing, make sure the shoes fit snugly.

## SOFT SHOES

### **BRANDS**

Good brands to go with: Fays, Rutherford, Feis Fayre, Corr's, Ryan & O'Donnell, Hullachan. These brands make exclusively Irish dancing shoes so their shoes are almost always well made. Avoid brands like Capezio or other mainstream dance shoe brands, since they don't have as much experience making Irish dance shoes and their shoes tend to be poorly made.

### **SOLE COLOR**

Tan — Stiff soles, limited flexibility. Good for beginners.

Black — Very flexible, good for any dancer. Sometimes the sole will be split into two pieces, or just have one piece on the toe. This is just a variation in style and doesn't matter too much.

### **FIT**

Soft shoes should fit snugly on the dancer's feet. Like with hard shoes, start by sizing two sizes down from the dancer's street shoe size to find your Irish size (US ladies 8 = Irish size 6), and then sizing down  $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 sizes. Soft shoes should feel snug, but not cause the dancer's toes to curl.

When the toe is pointed, there should not be any big gaps between the end of the toes and the tip of the shoe. Also, soft shoes break in and stretch out quite quickly, especially the more they are worn.