

FUEL YOUR PERFORMANCE

STUDIO BY TIERNEY



5 NUTRITION ESSENTIALS

01 The Ballet Athlete Mindset

As dancers, our bodies are our instruments — every movement, jump, and line depends on how we fuel them. Proper nutrition isn't about restriction or chasing perfection; it's about giving your body what it needs to perform with strength, focus, and artistry.

Whether you're in full-time training, performing on stage, or returning to the studio after time away, this guide will help you understand how to fuel with purpose — so you can train harder, recover faster, and dance at your best.



Elite ballet training demands physical power, mental endurance, and emotional resilience. To meet those demands, you must think like an athlete — not a dieter.

Fuel supports performance. Energy in allows energy out. When we under-fuel, we risk fatigue, injury, and burnout. When we nourish properly, we unlock our full potential — stronger turns, cleaner lines, sharper focus.

02

Building Your Performance Plate

*Healthy doesn't have to be complicated.
Small, nourishing choices add up to big
energy - even on the busiest of days.*



Every meal is a chance to support your training. A balanced “performance plate” typically includes:

- **Carbohydrates** – your main energy source. Think oats, rice, potatoes, fruit, whole grains.
- **Protein** – for muscle repair and recovery. Include eggs, fish, lean meats, tofu, beans, or yoghurt.
- **Fats** – for hormone balance, joint health, and endurance. Choose avocado, nuts, olive oil, and seeds.
- **Colour** – vegetables and fruit provide antioxidants that reduce inflammation and support immunity.

Training day tip:

☀️ Heavier on carbohydrates before and after class or rehearsals.

Rest day tip:

☀️ Slightly more protein and colour to support repair and recovery.

1. **Ballet Smoothie:** Handful of strawberries, 200ml almond milk, 1 tbsp oats, 1 tsp chia seeds > Blend & Enjoy
2. **Nut Butter Rice Cakes:** Spread with almond or peanut butter + banana + 1 tsp chia seeds
3. **Wrap & Roll:** Wholemeal wrap, hummus, handful of spinach, ½ sliced cucumber, ½ cup roast chickpeas/chicken > Wrap it up!
4. **Energy Bites:** 1 tbsp Almond butter, 1 tbsp oats, 1 tsp cacao powder, 1 tsp flaxseed > Mix, roll & refrigerate
5. **One Tray Wonder:** Chop 1 large sweet potato, 1 courgette and protein of your choice (eg chicken, chickpeas), drizzle olive oil > Bake for 20 mins.



03

Hydration

Water isn't just for quenching your thirst—it's your secret weapon for stamina, focus, and recovery. Dehydration can lead to fatigue, muscle cramps and slower performance, even if your nutrition is on point. Sip water throughout the day and even consider adding electrolytes during long, more intense dancing days or hot days to replenish what you sweat out.

Pro tip: Start your morning with a glass of water before coffee or breakfast—it wakes up your system and sets the tone for energized movement. I like to add lemon or cucumber to mine for that extra boost!

04 The 'Energy Before Exercise' Trick

Eating a snack 30–60 minutes before exercising is a smart and widely recommended strategy to boost energy and get the most out of your body.. I'll explain why it's so beneficial here!

It provides quick energy and a light snack with easily digestible carbs (like a banana, toast with honey, or a homemade granola bar) gives your body readily available glucose, which fuels your muscles during exercise. Exercising on an empty stomach, especially after fasting overnight, can cause low blood sugar, leading to dizziness, fatigue, or reduced stamina, which we definitely don't want. Finally, If you include a small amount of protein (e.g., Greek yogurt, nut butter) in your snack that helps prevent your body from breaking down muscle for energy during workouts.

Why 30–60 Minutes?

This window gives your body enough time to digest the snack so that nutrients are available during your class/rehearsal, but not so much time that your blood sugar drops again. The ideal timing can vary a bit depending on the snack size and type.



05

Plan Your Meals Ahead



Meal planning has been a game changer for me as someone with a packed schedule. It ensures I get proper nutrition and the right balance of protein, fibre, and healthy fats every day. When meals are ready ahead of time, you avoid skipping meals or reaching for quick, sugary fixes that lead to energy slumps. Thoughtful planning makes it easier to stay consistent with portion sizes and nutrients, especially on those chaotic days, no scrambling to decide what to cook and even better if you can prep ahead.

Fridays are my meal plan days, ready for my weekly shop on Sunday. Choose a day that works for you and give it a go. Here's a sample day meal plan!

Meal	Example
Breakfast	Egg omelette with spinach & mushroom
Snack	Ballet Smoothie
Lunch	Wrap & Roll
Snack	Energy bite or rice cake
Dinner	One tray wonder + Salad