

AMERICAN MIDWEST *Ballet*



I'm Going to the Ballet

A Social Narrative

I am going to see **American Midwest Ballet's *THE NUTCRACKER*** at the Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center. This booklet will tell me what to expect when I go to see the show.

Where I will go...



I will see **American Midwest Ballet's *THE NUTCRACKER*** at the Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center. I will travel to the Hoff Center by vehicle along with my family, teacher or caregiver.

When we arrive...



If we don't have our tickets yet, we can get them at the box office. I can also check out a sensory kit with things such as headphones to help me during the performance.

I will be prepared for a crowded lobby. It may be noisy.

I may not be able to enter the theater when I arrive, so I may need to wait for the doors to open.



When we arrive...



The helpers at the Hoff Center are called **ushers**. Ushers wear black jackets with a blue sash. I can ask an usher if I have a question or need directions. An usher will take my ticket and give me a program if I want one. If I need a booster seat to see better, an usher can help me with that too.

If I need to use the restroom...

It's best to use the restroom before the performance, at **intermission** (the break in the middle of the show), or after the performance. I can ask my adult to go to the restroom if I need to go during the performance.

The restrooms are across the lobby from the theater, up the steps and around the corner to the left.



If it gets too loud...



I can ask to go to the **quiet space** at any time. There may be a quiet activity I can do there. The quiet space is near the restrooms.

When I am ready to find my seat...



When I enter the **house** (the area of the theater where people sit), it might be a little darker. Sometimes the house is crowded with other people who are excited to see the ballet.

The rows of seats have numbers to help me find my seat. **Row A** is closest to the stage, and **Row N** is the last row.



When I am ready to find my seat...



To get to my seat, I may walk in front of other people, or other people may need to walk in front of me to get to their seats.

People may accidentally bump me while they walk past.

There may be music playing before the show begins.

Before the ballet begins...

Before the performance begins, the **house** will partially darken. Then, someone from American Midwest Ballet will come on stage and talk to the audience through a microphone.

People can clap during the speech. Once the speech is done, it is time for the show to begin!



When the ballet begins...

There will be a recorded announcement about the performance I am about to see. Then, the **house** will go dark. Once the show begins, there will be bright lights onstage, and my eyes may need time to adjust.



During the ballet...



There will be lots of clapping, particularly at the end of a dance or after an especially impressive move!

I can clap too! When the clapping is finished, the audience tries to be quiet so everyone can hear the music.

During the ballet...



There may be loud moments! There may also be some quiet moments.

Sometimes surprising things happen – like performers in the aisles, or paper falling down on the stage to look like snow!

I can ask to go to the **quiet space** if I need a break. If I am attending the sensory-friendly performance, there is reserved space open at the back of the theater if I need to move or stand. If I walk around, I will not walk onto the stage. That's just for the dancers.

When the dancers bow...



At the end of the performance, I can clap if I liked the show. I can also wear my headphones or cover my ears with my hands if it is too loud.



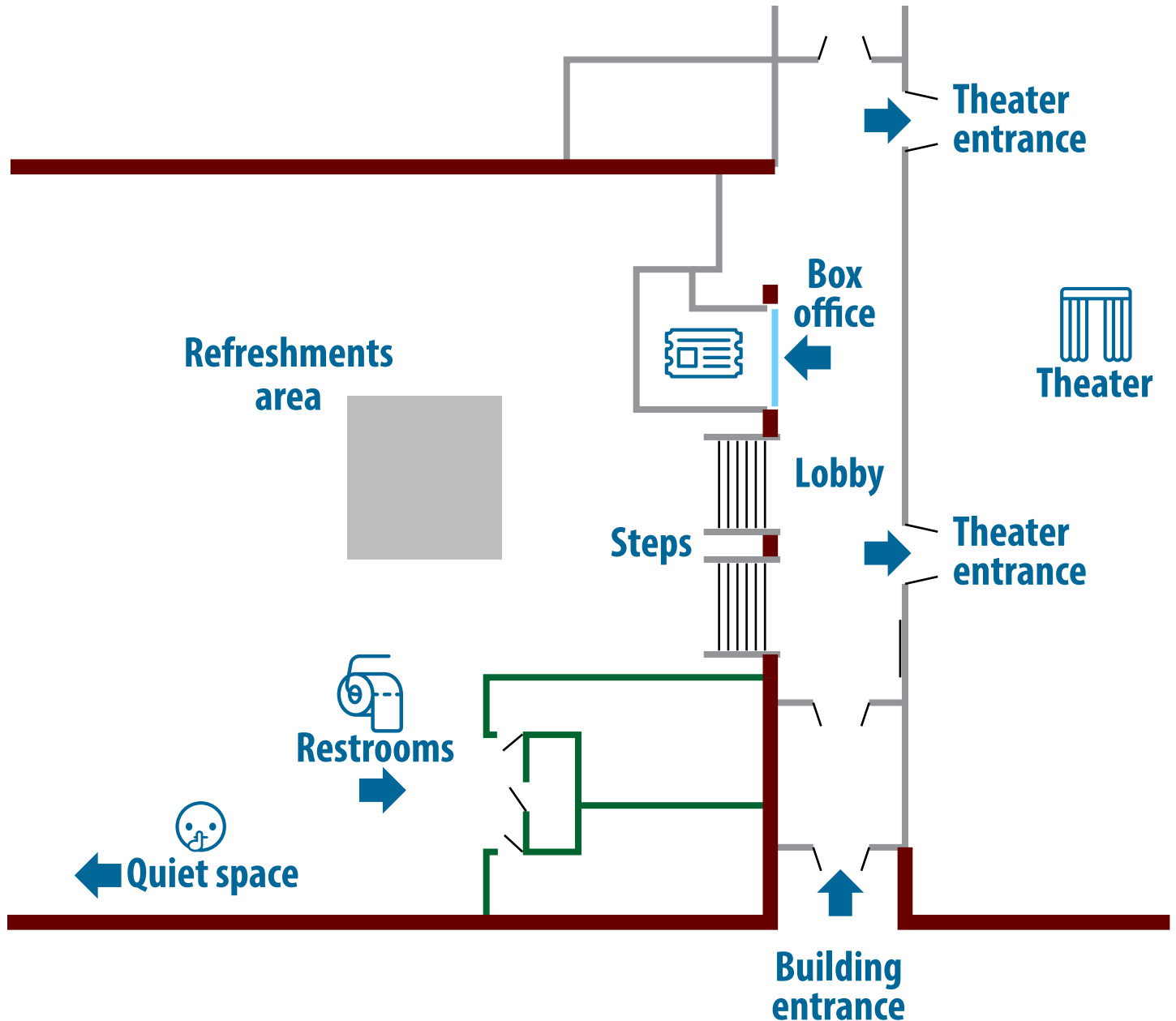
As I get ready to leave...

The lights will come back on. I will look around and make sure I have collected all my things. Then I will use the aisle and exit through the doors. If I checked out a sensory kit, I will return it to the box office.

American Midwest Ballet hopes I enjoy the ballet!



A map of the Hoff Center lobby...



On the next pages, I will learn about the characters in the story of **The Nutcracker!**

CHARACTERS IN THE STORY

I know that *The Nutcracker* is a story. The things I will see on the stage are part of the story, not things that are real. The performers are pretending to do the things that happen in the story. They wear costumes to make the story more colorful and exciting. If things seem too exciting, I can take a break and come back to the story later.



CLARA

The main character in the story is a girl named Clara. In the story, she falls asleep after a party and goes on a wonderful trip in her dreams.



UNCLE DROSSELMAYER

Drosselmeyer is Clara's favorite uncle. He is famous for making mechanical things and telling exciting tales. He wears a patch over one eye.



THE NUTCRACKER

Drosselmeyer tells Clara a tale about the Nutcracker. He is a prince who was turned into a wooden soldier by a magic spell. He is waiting for someone to undo the magic so he can go back to being a prince.



THE MICE

In Clara's dream, there are giant mice! They will tease and tickle her. The performers say the mouse characters are fun to play because they get to pretend to be animals.



THE RAT QUEEN

The Rat Queen is the leader of the mice. She does not like the Nutcracker and gets angry when he appears. I will see the Nutcracker and some toy soldiers get in a fight with the Rat Queen and her mice.



NUTCRACKER PRINCE

Clara stops the fight between the Rat Queen and the Nutcracker. Clara's bravery has undone the magic spell, and the Nutcracker has turned back into a prince!



THE LAND OF SNOW

Clara visits the Land of Snow. In this land, performers dressed in white swirl and spin as if they were snowflakes dancing in the air. Clara meets the Snow Queen and King, who dance to welcome her.



THE SUGARPLUM FAIRY

Clara visits the Kingdom of Sweets and meets its ruler, the Sugarplum Fairy.

The Sugarplum Fairy invites her friends to entertain Clara by dancing for her. The dancers include many different characters, including Santa.



CLARA AWAKENS

Clara begins to get sleepy. When she awakens, she is back in her own house with the nutcracker Drosselmeyer gave her, and she realizes she had a wonderful dream!