

UPSC 2020

General Studies Mains – I

Art & Culture Notes

Topic – Indian Classical Dances - Facts for UPSC Art & Culture

Bharat Muni's book Natya Shastra is the first famous source to mention dance. India has various forms of dances including classical dances and folk dances. Knowing about Indian Classical Dances is important for the [IAS Exam](#), as it holds importance for the Art & Culture syllabus of GS-I.

This article will briefly provide you with relevant facts about classical dance from the UPSC Exam perspective.

What are the 8 Classical Dances of India?

The table below mentions the eight classical dances of India:

Indian Classical Dances		
S.No	Name of Classical Dance	Place of Classical Dance
1	Bharatanatyam	Tamil Nadu
2	Kathak	Northern India
3	Kathakali	Kerala
4	Kuchipudi	Andhra Pradesh
5	Manipuri	Manipur
6	Mohiniyattam	Kerala
7	Odissi	Odisha
8	Sattriya	Assam

What are the aspects of Classical Dance?

The facts about related to the aspects of Classical Dance are mentioned in the table below:

Indian Classical Dance

What are the two basic aspects of Classical Dance?	There are two basic aspects of Natya Shastra: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lasya • Tandava
What is Lasya?	It denotes grace, bhava, rasa and abhinaya. It is symbolic to the feminine features of dance as an art form
What is Tandava?	This is symbolic to the male aspects of dance and has more emphasis on rhythm and movement
What are the three basic elements of a classical dance act?	There are three basic elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nritta - These are the basic dance steps and are performed rhythmically but devoid of any expression or mood • Natya - It means dramatic representations and refers to the story that is elaborated through the dance recital • Nritya - refers to the sentiment and the emotions evoked through dance. It includes the mime and the different methods of expression including mudras in the dance
What is Guru-Shishya Paramapara?	It forms the core of the Indian Classical Dance forms. The basic meaning is that each dance form is related to a Guru (Teacher) and he/she transfers that knowledge of dance to a Shishya (Student.)

9 Rasa of Classical Dance

There nine rasas of the classical dances are:

Classical Dance - 9 Rasas	
Rasas	Attributes
Shringaara	Love
Roudra	Anger
Bibhatsa	Disgust
Veera	Heroism
Shaant	Peace and Tranquility
Hasya	Laughter and Comedy
Karuna	Tragedy
Bhayanak	Horror
Adbhuta	Wonder

Indian Classical Dance - Chhau

Sangeet Natak Academy (India's National Academy) recognizes only eight classical dances of India, however, the Ministry of Culture also considers Chhau Dance as a classical dance of India, making the total number of classical dances in India as nine.

A few important points on Chhau Dance are as mentioned:

1. The word 'Chaya' gives meaning to Chhau Dance. Chaya means shadow.
2. As a mask dance, Chhau dance is denoted.
3. Energetic martial art movements are basic feature of Chhau Dance
4. Serpent Dance, Peacock Dance are a few narrations used in Chhau Dance
5. There are three kinds of Chhau Dance:
 - a. Saraikella - This Chhau Dance is famous in Jharkhand
 - b. Mayurbhanj - This Chhau Dance is famous in Odisha
 - c. Purulia - This Chhau Dance is famous in West Bengal
6. Mayurbhanj Chhau Dance does not use masks.
7. Chhau Dance was inscribed in the UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

Candidates preparing for [UPSC 2020](#) can also read a few other important Art & Culture related topics from the links given in the table below:

List of Indian Dance Forms	Puppetry in India	Six Schools of Hindu Philosophy
Tribal Paintings of India	Folk Music in India	UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritages in India