

# Ask Rabi'a

## Stage Appearance

Dear Rabi'a,

I've recently started performing and have heard comments that that I am a good dancer but that I do not have a good stage appearance. What does this mean?

Newbie performer

Dear Newbie,

We've all heard about stage presence, but not so much about stage appearance. Just because you can dance, does not mean that you are ready for the stage. Stage appearance is a combination of several things – costume, make-up, hair, expression.



says “unprofessional” like seeing a dancer in her underwear, which is what an uncovered bra is.

The belt should fit snugly around the hips covering the skirt, pants or panties. Your costume should also be appropriate to the venue and type of dance that you are performing.



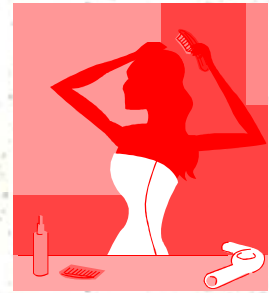
### Make-up

It does not matter that you are a natural girl and do not wear make-up in your regular life; it is a must when you are performing. People come to a belly-

dance performance to see exotic women dancing and to be transported to another place and you cannot do that if you look like you are going out to the grocery store. You don't need to use tons of products ... eye liner, mascara and lipstick will make a world of difference. If you do not know how to properly apply make-up, get a friend who does to give you lessons or do your make-up for you.

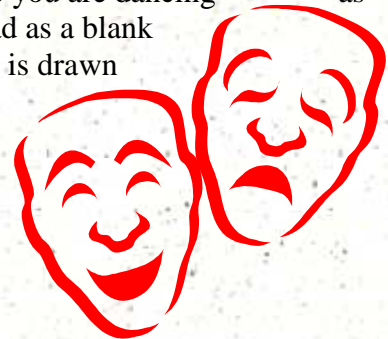
### Hair

There are those who believe that bellydancers should have long black hair. My only rule is that a dancer's hair should be clean and attractive. If your hair is short, you can add interest with all sorts of head adornments. Nothing kills the visual for me more than ratty hair.



### Expression

A dancer with a blank expression on her face is a real bore to watch. When you practice dancing, you should also practice your facial expressions. If you practice smiling, it will come much more naturally when you are scared stiff on stage and the audience won't know you are scared stiff. I'm not advocating a Cheshire cat grin the entire time you are dancing as this will look as bad as a blank face. The audience is drawn to a dancer who looks like she is enjoying herself.



Do you see yourself in any of the above? Tweak that and the comments about your stage appearance should be more positive.