Adapting Singing Calls
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Our goal should be to give the dancers a "wind in face" experience without having to rush thru a sequence or to stand and wait for the sequence to begin.

When would you want / need to adapt a singing call figure?
1) New dancer situation
    Adapt to the progress of the class. I do singing calls from the first tip. I prefer my classes to be like a dance format.
2) Good music you like but the cue sheet with the record doesn't fit the program you are calling.
3) Older dancers
4) Cue sheet figure timed too tight for the experience level of the dancers you are calling for.
5) Figure doesn't work. Check all figures for timing and promenade starting position / quadrant (more on this later).
6) Dancers get behind. "short time"
7) Chance to record a singing call.
8) Variety

All singing call have 7 sequences: Opener; Two Figures; Break; Two Figures; closer. Most are 64 beat sequences, there have been a few rare exceptions. Each sequence is much like our hash tips. They have a get in, figure and a get out, but are much more structured to fit the 64 beat time frame.

Let's take a look at the structure when adapting a sing call.

Quadrants: When thinking of our square, think of it being over laid with a compass, with north at the top. When looking at the square I like to think of the # 1 couple being in the south quadrant.

For an example, let's use, what I refer to as a standard Ferris Wheel figure.
Heads Promenade Half. Square Thru 4, Right & Left Thru, Veer left, Ferris Wheel, Square Thru 3, Swing Corner, Promenade.

At this time the Basic – Mainstream Timing Chart will become your best friend, as well as when you are reviewing / adapting any other singing call figure.

Heads Promenade Half   From a static square it takes 8 beats
        64 – 8 = 56 beats left

Square Thru 4   8 beats
        56 – 8 = 48 beats left

Right & Left Thru   6 beats
        48 – 6 = 42 beats left

Veer Left   2 beats
        42 – 2 = 40 beats left

Ferris Wheel   6 beats
        40 – 6 = 34 beats left

Square Thru 3   6 beats
        34 – 6 = 28 beats

Swing Corner   4 – 8 beats, let's use an average of 6
        28 – 6 = 22 beats.

Promenade Home   20 beats
        You start your swing in the west quadrant. Dancers have been taught if you are 1 /4 of the way or less from home they are to go all the way around. Four beats for 1/4 promenade and 16 beats for the full promenade

You have 2 beats left, Very short waiting time. It could be said this is about as nearly perfect timed as you can get for "experienced' dancers on a good dance surface. Without a doubt a "wind in the face" experience

What could be the downside of perfect timing:
1) The caller doesn't prompt the call ahead and takes the first 3 – 4 beats for himself to deliver the call. This is a bad habit for those of us who like to hear ourselves sing all of the tag lines.
2) The floor has a 'hickup'.
    a) They haven't finished the previous sequence for whatever reason.
    b) Sticky or carpeted floor
    c) Inexperience dancers
    d) Figure is different / difficult
    e) Figure doesn't flow

Is it necessary for us to write all our own singing calls? NO! there are many sources available. Figures from other record cue sheets and books of singing call figures. The important things are to make sure of the timing so that dancers are not standing waiting for the next sequence to begin and the figure flows, kinesiology. When you have written or found a figure you like, walk it and count the beats to make sure it works.

A caller should also be well acquainted with the phrasing of the music to be able to deliver the calls in a correctly timed manner.

Variety: Take a look at how many figures, including our hash tips that start with *Heads Square Thru 4* or *Heads Promenade Halfway.* Too many of us are guilty. How about *Heads Box the Gnat* or *Heads Touch 1/4, Boys Run.* These are just two examples of a box setup.

Attachment:
CALLERLAB: Timing – The Basic Mainstream Programs

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