

# Teaching Principles That Will Help Students Succeed

## I. Four phases to teaching - one each week

### A. Introduce/Preparation for learning (initial teach)

People learn by doing

Do it right the first time.

Do everything in your power to be sure they do it right the first time.

Demonstrate, a great approach for some calls.

Show on black board, a great approach for some other calls.

Try very hard not to let them do it wrong, even once.

People do not like to get embarrassed. When they get embarrassed, they do not feel good about themselves, and therefore they do not like the caller!

### B. Teach

Do not test them to see how many remember from the previous week

Re-teach the call as if no one had ever heard of it before.

### C. Review

The third week that you use a new call, give it a quick verbal review before using it.

### D. Use

During the fourth week, be sure to use calls you have been teaching and reviewing.

This is necessary to set the call into memory properly.

## II. Use a list with four columns, so you can check off each phase.

This reminds you not to forget any.

## III. Goals of teaching

### To train dancers to be able to comfortably enter the local square dance activity

They should be able to respond properly to calls that they will hear, from the formations and arrangements that they are most likely to hear them from

They should not get embarrassed.

**Choose a teaching order that will:**

Teach basic formations early.

Allow dancers to move from one formation to another easily.

Teach harder calls as earlier as possible. This allows as much practice as possible before graduation.

Save the easier calls for the end, since they do not require as much practice time.

Do not teach calls with similar names or with similar actions close together. Leave at least four weeks if at all possible.

This lets dancers learn one action for one name, without anything to confuse it with.

When the similar call is eventually taught, dancers will not have to choose between two partially learned and possibly choose the wrong one.

Calls that are frequently used together should be taught separately.

This insures that each call is learned, not just the pattern of the combined call.

Examples of patterns to avoid (until calls are learned individually):

Flutter Wheel, Sweep 1/4

Lead Right, Circle to a Line

Pass Thru, Wheel and Deal, Double Pass Thru, first couple go left, next go right

Swing Thru, Men Run

Once the calls are learned, individually, use them together in the common patterns so that dancers are familiar with common usage.

**Do not teach all variations of the more difficult calls.**

Teach the most common formations first

i.e. the ones they will need most to survive after graduation.

As time permits, teach additional variations.

Be sure to word each definition generally enough so that when you teach a new variation, you will not be contradicting yourself.