

Welcome New Dancers!

by Tim Marriner

First, we would like to thank you for attending our open house session. We hope you enjoy this introduction into the world of Modern Western Square Dancing. The benefits of the activity are social, physical, and mental. All kinds of people get together for the fun and fellowship the activity brings, building networks of friends. A two-hour dance can equal 2 1/2 miles of brisk exercise. Yes, it is an aerobic activity and you need agility to move to the music and equilibrium to swing with the rest. Concentration on the figures and routines will release stress. You get all of this set to music that is sure to put a smile on your face. Now how's that for interactive entertainment?

Next, we would like to provide you with a few guidelines that will assure further enjoyment.

1. Square Dancing is FUN! Your instructors will be doing their best to help you realize this from the very first session.
2. Square dancing is a casual activity. You need no formal introduction to those you have not met. There are no strangers among square dancers. We are all on a first name basis. It's friendlier that way; so please wear your Name Tag.
3. Later you may wish to dress "western"; but for the classes, just dress comfortably. Ladies wear cool cotton dresses (or comfortable slacks) and flat or low heeled shoes. Gents wear comfortable slacks and long sleeve shirts. Coats or hats are not necessary.
4. Square dancing is a close contact sport. Please use good judgement in your choice of jewelry, belt buckles, etc.; sharp or rough edges may scratch or catch on someone's clothing.
5. On a very delicate subject; physical exercise or possibly the slight nervous tension of learning may cause perspiration. Your use of a deodorant might be advisable to avoid the embarrassment of body odors offensive to others.
6. On a personal note; the use of alcoholic beverages, just prior to or during a square dance, is frowned upon. The odor and affect creates discomfort for others and will inhibit dance performance.
7. Gents-remember, you have both strength and weight advantage over the ladies and you should always be conscious that the ladies do not like to be handled roughly even in your enthusiasm. Let them enjoy dancing too! Sometimes the ladies can over grip hands too!
8. **IMPORTANT: Listen carefully to instructions and be sincere in your efforts to follow directions. GOOD LISTENERS LEARN EASIER!**
9. Please refrain from any extra talking while the dancing. It will interfere with your ability to hear the calls and others around you.
10. If during the class you do not understand an instruction, do not hesitate to ask for additional explanation from the caller.
11. Please silence cell phones. The ring or texting while dancing will break concentration.
12. Please be on time for every class. Review starts with the first dance.

Square dancing is an activity that you learn over a period of time. The dance calls are building blocks that grow as you learn. Sooner than you think, you will be dancing to the calls.

ENJOY YOURSELF AND HAVE FUN!!

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