

The Why's and How's of Trios

By: Otto Warteman

Let me start by saying, everything you are about to hear and hopefully learn from this presentation is my opinion fostered from years of experience using Trios.

I use trios for several reasons, and they include:

1. They are easy to teach and learn
2. They get the floor moving quickly
3. They are great for starting an evening
4. People can jump in, as long as they have their own trio of dancers, in the middle of the dance.
5. There are partner changes
6. You can transition from a trio to a mixer or couples dance easily.
7. Once you have set the floor (dancers) up for a trio, the dancers will understand the concept of big circle dances, then later when I want to go back to a big circle, they will understand what I want and they form the circle without thinking.
8. If you are tight for space, they take 1/3 less space vs a couples dance or mixer. To make a right hand star or do a Do Sa Do, requires five (5') feet of space. Each person is about two and a half feet wide. If you are making one big circle or rectangle in a normal high school gym with a circumference of 268 feet, will allow you to only dance, 106 dancers without bumping while doing a normal RH Star. In the same gym, using only one circle, you can dance 159 dancers doing a Trio or 212 doing a Mescolanza. Needless to say bumping among teenagers is the fun part of the dance and you can double the number of teens, plus add a second inside circle. I have danced 500 on an outdoor gym floor.
9. They are fun to dance!

The Setup for Trios

I describe the room as having a center point, as if it were the center of the sun and the sun rays radiating out from that center in straight lines. The lines will consist of three people, all in a straight line with their left shoulders pointing towards the sun's center point. I also describe the setup as a wagon wheel, with the center like the hub of the wheel and the spokes as the rays, with the rim forming a circle.

There are two kinds of Trios. The first to use is a single faced line where partner changes occur within the line and with everyone facing counter-clockwise. The second has two lines facing, one clockwise(number two line) and the other counter-clockwise(number one line or lead), in this setup the changes occur as line changes.

I will not be giving you the routines or dances in this presentation, because they are all available in the book "Dancing For Busy People".

First Dance

Theil's Trio and I use "LaBastrique by Jerry Robichaud

Second Dance

I call this dance over and under. I learned it here at CALLERLAB, but I don't know the author nor the title, but I like it.

Intro Walk forward eight

1-8 - - - -, -- Right Hand up Left Hand Under

9-16 - - - -, -- Walk Forward Eight

17-24 - - - -, -- Left Hand Up Right Hand Under

25-32 - - - -, -- All Three Right Hand Star

33-40 - - - -, -- Back By The Left

41-48 - - - -, -- Circle Left

49-54 - - - -, -- Circle Right and Center Person Move Forward To Next Line

55-64 - - - -, -- *repeat* Forward Eight

I use the music "Alabama Jubilee or Waiting on the Robert E. Lee" both by Banjomania, but any good singing call record will do.

Third Dance

At this point I turn every other line around, so that you have two lines facing each other. Those with their left shoulder towards the center of the hall are line "ONE" and those with right shoulders are lines "TWO". I now add Do Sa Do to my teach and start calling patter to the group, such as:

All six circle left or right

All six right hand star or left

Boys only star right or left

Girls only star right or left

Do Sa Do the person in front

One's around Two's

Two's hold hands and arch while one's dive under passing right shoulders with person in front

The two center people place your hands on each others shoulder and duck down low, while the four corners make a right hand star over the top. Or LH Star or Circle Right and Left

Right ends or Left ends, do a Do Sa Do or Stars

Lines do a half Do Sa Do to face a new line

This list can go on and on, but always keep it simple.

Fourth Dance

"Do-Ci-Dizzy" by Bob Howell

I use "Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams" by Dave Taylor on Blue Star

Prompts

Intro - - - -, All six circle left 8 steps

1-8 - - - -, -- Circle Right

9-16 ----, DoSaDo the opposite
17-24 ----, Right ends DoSaDo
25-32 ----, Left ends DoSaDo
33-40 ----, Lines of three DoSaDo
41-48 ----, ----
49-56 ----, Half way more & onto the next
57-64 ----, Circle Six Left
repeat dance

Fifth Dance

“Rattlesnake Trio”

author unknown

I use “I Found A New Baby” by Johnny Wykoff on Blue Star

Intro “Rattlesnake”

1-16 Number one line(lead by the left end person) weaves around left end person of line number two, in front of the center person, behind right end person and then back to home

17-32 Number two line(lead by the left end person) weaves around left end person of line number one, in front of the center person, behind right end person and then back to home

33-40 All six circle left eight steps

41-48 All six circle right eight steps

49-56 Do Sa Do the person in front

57-64 Pass Thru and say “Howdy” to the next line

repeat

Sixth Dance

“Dos Plus One” by Ken Kernen

Use well phrased music of your choice