

Original

SQUARE DANCE NOTES

The following descriptions of square dance terms and figures are not intended for any other purpose than to serve as a refresher for persons who have already learned and danced them in the Folk Dance Class. No one can be expected "to learn to square dance" by simply using these notes.

It must be remembered also that terms and styling vary from area to area and one conforms to the area where he finds himself. In the case of our folks, fun is our first goal, but following closely, I feel, should be the feeling of the music to the extent that it "tells" them what to do. In order to help the leaders, I have given a certain number of beats or counts for each figure. This number is usually eight or a multiple of 8 and is considered a "phrase" of music. SOLDERS JOY, BLACKBERRY QUADRILLE, LITTLE BROWN JUG, SKIP TO MY LOU, CAPTAIN JINKS, GLISE SHERBROOK, BUFFALO GAL, TEN LITTLE INDIANS, and *THE BEAR WENT OVER THE MOUNTAIN are examples of music which may be used to practice and combine in various patterns and combinations the following square dance figures. Folks know many of these tunes and can sing them while practicing figures and create simple combinations which they themselves can learn to call. If it is necessary to have the dancers count when they are learning, be sure to eliminate this before it becomes a habit because our purpose is to have them "feel" the music and dance to it. That makes it more fun too!

It is customary for someone to "call" a square dance. Today there are many recorded "called dances" or square dances with "calls". It is fun, however, to have a "live" caller and even more fun to have a small orchestra or "live" music, as this is called. * It is perfectly permissible also to have some one in each set call for his own set, since many combinations of figures may be done to the same music.

THE SQUARE DANCE SET is composed of four couples each facing into the center from a different side of a hollow square. Couples numbers one and three are head couples. In this area couple number one usually has back to music and caller. Head couples face each other. Couple number two is to the right of couple number one and faces couple number four. Two and four are side couples.

*Dayton,
Ohio*

HONOR OR SALUTE TO PARTNERS: Dancers turn toward each other and smile (they should be smiling throughout the dance), boys nod their heads politely and girls, holding their skirts and placing one foot just behind the other, bend both knees slightly. A dance is often begun by honoring partners and corners. When couples face the center of the set the gentleman's partner is on his right. His corner is on his left. Although many hand positions are permissible in square dancing, it is always in good taste for the gentleman's hands to be free at his sides and for the girl to do the same or to hold her skirts.

CIRCLE LEFT OR CIRCLE RIGHT: All couples or designated dancers join hands and dance in the direction indicated, usually eight or sixteen counts.

FORWARD AND BACK: Couples join nearest hands and take four steps forward and four steps back (8 counts).

DO-SI-DO: Partners facing. They advance passing right shoulders, continuing on around each other back to back and back up into original position passing left shoulders. 8 counts

* *Little Brown Jug - Tape*

* *Also known as "We Wont Go Home until Morning Tape"*
*

SQUARE DANCE NOTES CONTINUED

BUZZ SWING: Hook right elbows with partner or take social dance position (latter is used most often and preferred here), right hips adjacent, keeping right feet close together (parallel but pointing in opposite direction) and using left feet to push around as if riding a skooter.

below right hands.

PROMENADE: Face partner and join right hands. Now join left hands. With both hands joined and crossed in this way face line of dance (counter clockwise direction around set or around room). Hold joined hands about chest high and slightly out from body and dance forward as directed by the call.

ALLEMANDE LEFT: Corners face each other, take left hands, turn around once and return to original position. 8 counts.

ALLEMANDE RIGHT: The same as allemande left except right hands are joined. This figure is usually done with one's own partner or with the lady on the right beyond the gentleman's partner. 8 counts.

GRAND RIGHT AND LEFT: From a partners-facing-center formation of a set or circle, partners turn to face each other. Join right hands with partner, right shoulder pass, dropping hands, take left hands with the next person, drop left hands, pass by left shoulders and take next person by the right hand. Drop hands, pass by right shoulders taking the next person by the left hand. Drop hands, pass and join hands by the right with the next. If doing a square dance, this would be your partner. (You will observe that the men have traveled around the set in a counter clockwise direction, while all the girls have traveled clockwise). The caller may ask you to pass your partner and continue the grand right and left back to your home position where you will again meet your partner, or more often when you have reached your partner first time, the call will come to promenade home. You would then follow the above directions for Promenade.

LADIES CHAIN: Two couples facing. The girls advance toward each other and give right hands. Drop right hands and pass by right shoulders. Each gives left hand to boy she meets who puts right arm around girl's waist, turning her forward and ~~half-way~~ around so that they are facing the other couple ~~again~~. Figure is repeated to return the girls to their original places. 8 counts each way. 16 counts for complete figure.

RIGHT AND LEFT THROUGH: Two couples who are facing each other advance, drop hands, and pass each other by the right shoulders (pass through or pass right shoulders with the opposites). After passing through the gentleman takes the girl's left hand in his left hand, puts his right hand around her waist and turns her forward and ~~half-way~~ around so that they are again facing the couple they passed. The figure is now repeated in order to return the couples to their starting position. 8 counts each way. 16 counts for complete figure.

Please bear in mind that these are not complete notations, simply reminders of what we did in class. Whatever you do, have fun!

Grace Wolff
2357 Willowgrove Ave
Dayton, Ohio 45409