

Tips for the new dancer

1. The key to successful square dancing, is listening to the caller and shuffle stepping to the beat of the music. When you feel the ball of your foot making contact with the floor simultaneously with the bass note, you know you are dancing to the music.
2. In order to do the above, you should not talk in the square. When a person speaks in the square, it distracts the other dancers from what the caller is saying and interrupts their train of thought.
3. Practice Square Dance etiquette at all times.
4. Do all the calls as you have been taught.
5. If something isn't clear to you about a call, do not hesitate to ask the caller for clarification. He/she wants to dance successfully.
6. The male partner has to remember not to grab the arm of a female partner and put a clamp hold on it like he was picking up a 50 pound bag of potatoes. The male partner should touch the under forearm of the woman with his palm open, and leave it open. This will prevent any woman from leaving the dance with bruises on her arm.
7. It's a good idea to change your position in the square for the next tip. If you were in the head position last tip, take a side position the next tip.
8. Try to dance in different squares throughout the evening. You'll meet more people and make more friends.
9. Always remember we square dance for fun.
10. When the caller tells you to give yourselves a hand at the end of a tip, do so. But don't forget to have the square turn toward the caller and give him/her a big hand because without him/her you wouldn't be dancing.
11. At the end of the dance remember to line up and thank the caller personally for the fun and enjoyment he/she had made possible.
12. Remember to complete each call before doing the next one. It's important to know how a call starts and how it ends. If you are not sure, ask the caller and he will be happy to explain it.
13. Be aware that at the end of each call you will be facing into the center of the square, parallel with the wall in front of you or facing out of the square, parallel with the wall in front of you.
14. Remember to take the hand of the person beside you at the completion of each call.

15. Try to execute each part of a call to the beat of the music.
16. Once in a square you are expected to remain there as it is discourteous for someone to leave the square unless that person has become ill.
17. It is extremely important no to walk by a square that is forming in order for you to join another square forming across the hall.
18. At the end of each tip don't forget to thank everyone in your square.
19. Another key element in learning to square dance successfully is to relax. Relax and listen to the caller and let yourself flow to the beat of the music.
20. You flow to the music when you shuffle step to the beat.
21. To do the shuffle step, slide your foot just above the floor, let the ball of your foot make contact with the floor first and then your heel. Bend your knee slightly as you do so. This is what makes for smooth dancing.
22. Keep square tight. When promenading, men's left shoulders are almost touching. By doing this you will not have to walk so far and you will be able to dance longer. Men remember, the lady is on the outside and walks farther so take shorter steps so that your partner doesn't have to rush to keep up.
23. Remember not to walk through a square as it is considered discourteous. Always walk around the outside to your position.
24. It is not proper square dance etiquette to pre-plan a square to meet at a certain place on the floor. This can be embarrassing for those in the square and extremely discourteous to other couples wishing to join the square.
25. When the caller drops the needle, everyone should immediately start to square up. Remember, he/she is ready to call so out of courtesy don't keep him/her waiting.

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