

TEN SIMPLE RULES FOR ENJOYABLE SQUARE DANCING (slightly modified, from Jean wood's 'Well Rounded Square' magazine)

♪ **HOLD HANDS.** If you are beside someone, take hands. It helps to see your position and formation. If you can't see it you can't dance it.

♪ **DON'T LET YOURSELF BE INTIMIDATED!** Stand your ground. If you think you are right, stay there. Usually, the person that is trying to turn you is the one that is wrong.

♪ **STAY WHERE YOU ARE.** Don't look around to see where the other dancers are and try to make yourself fit the pattern. In all position dancing you may not be in a normal situation. Leave it to the caller to get you out.

♪ **BE GENTLE.** Don't cause bruises or broken bones. All holds should really be touches only, never a death grip. Usually a strong grip is the sign of a weak or inexperienced dancer.

♪ **LOOK AT THE CALL ITSELF, NOT JUST A POSITION.**
See what the call does. Where does it start, where does it end, and what are the different positions doing? If you want practice on a particular call, just ask the caller.

♪ **LEARN YOUR RIGHT FROM YOUR LEFT.** This is the hardest part for many dancers. Find a trick that works for you. It must be quick and simple.(ring or watch on left ?)

♪ **DANCE TO THE MUSIC.** We are dancing one step per beat of music! The calls have a designated number of beats and you need all of them to be smooth. Dancing fast will make the movement jerky; moving too slowly will cause breakdowns since you will not be ready for the next call.

♪ **LISTEN.** You can't talk and listen at the same time. Most breakdowns among good dancers happen because they didn't hear the call.

♪ **FOLLOW THE LEADER.** If you get lost, look for an empty spot in the square and fill it. It is better to be wrong than not dancing at all. If there is a strong dancer in the square, ask where to go.

♪ **GET INTO LINE.** During a patter, If your square breaks down, get into facing lines. The approved way to get into lines is to square up and then the heads slide to the right to form a line with the sides. The caller will usually have you moving again within four or five calls.

“Only square up and wait for a swing and promenade” if broken down during a singing call.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR SQUARE DANCING from

‘Well Rounded Square’ magazine

1. Thou shalt square dance only for the fun which thee will find in it.
2. Thou shalt not be a snob, considering thyself too good to dance with any and all, sitting out the mixers, or leaving a square lest thou be required to dance with those whom thou deem most unworthy of thy talents, for the gods of retribution are zealous gods and will visit their mischief upon thee, and thou wilt be the one to goof the square.
3. Thou shalt be exuberant, but shall act thy age. Do not offend others by thy high-flung legs.
4. Thou shalt go abroad and dance with other callers so thy opinions expressed as merit of this one and that one are based on facts.
5. Thou shall not let the stranger in thy midst sit on the sidelines and cool his or her heels, nor fail to speak to him or her.
6. Thou shall bathe diligently that the sweet aroma of soap and shaving lotion may assail the nostril of thy associates.
7. Thou shalt take care that the words of thy mouth are not scented with garlic or beer.
8. Thou shalt honor thy club and give loyally, for it thou canst not do this, it were better to separate thyself from it and join thyself to another whose methods, members, and callers are more to thy liking.
9. Thou shalt not kill thy club with bickering and fault-finding.
10. Thou shalt not forget that thou were once a beginner, too.

Lost Squares

If a square breaks down, the fastest way to resume dancing is to form normal (he/she/he/she) facing lines and watch for the rest of the floor to reach this formation. The caller will recognize when the broken square is in lines, and will assist them by taking the rest of the floor to lines and then calling “Everybody Go Forward and Back” before the next call. Dancers must learn that this movement allows them to resume dancing, but they may not end up with their own partner at the end of the sequence. They should be instructed to finish the sequence with their “new” partner and corner and “fix” partners & corners as they return to home.

Dancers may form lines by the following:

1. Return to home position as soon as possible.
2. Then the head ladies will take their corner's hand and head couples will back out to form lines at the sides of the square.
3. On the caller's command, "EVERYBODY go forward and back", they enter into the dance pattern.

Emergency Call for Medical Aid – ECMA

If a medical emergency arises in your square, one person should go to the aid of the stricken dancer while the other six link hands and form a stretched-out circle around the fallen dancer. Their upraised hands are a signal to the caller to seek help for that square. Other dancers in the area should step away from the ring and help clear a path to the door.

Angels

When you become a class ANGEL, there are some simple rules to remember:

BE ON TIME: You may be the cause of three other couples sitting out during a teaching tip.

BE OBSERVANT: Make sure that every student is in a square during the teaching tip. BUT don't wait for them to square up. Invite them into your square.

DO NOT TALK IN THE SQUARE: when the caller is giving instructions. Learning to listen to the caller's commands requires concentration. No person can listen to two persons at a time. All should be listening to the same caller.

DANCING STYLES: Some dancing styles that dancers have adopted is out of place in class. Basics should be kept in pure form. The proper Do Sa Do, hand and arm holds, a quick touch to acknowledge positing, and no short cuts will ensure new dancers of the proper position for the next call.

ANGELS ARE HELPERS, NOT PUSHERS: Students must understand when they are being taught, they must learn to react to each command. To gently guide someone is fine, but we accomplish nothing for the student if he/she has been pushed through an action and doesn't know what was supposed to be done. Angels' action should be gentle but firm.

LET THE CALLER KNOW: if a dancer has not grasped the concept of a call after a reasonable time. The caller can review the call during the next tip. You don't have to "teach" a call during a break, just let them relax.

DRESS FOR STUDENTS: Do not encourage students to "go right out" and buy square dance clothing. As you know clothing can be expensive. Their first dance will be soon enough.

DANCES ABOVE A NEW DANCERS EXPERIENCE: "Come on, we will pull you through" works great at the right time, but could discourage new dancers that are not quite ready. Dancing above your level can be a little frightening.

DANCE WITH THEM: Do you want to keep the new student in your club? Then you must dance with them, talk with them during breaks, encourage them. One of the biggest complaints heard from new dancers is that they are not sure the old club members want them.

Source: <http://www.mssquaredance.com>