

Welcome to the Wonderful World of

Line Dancing

A Beginners Guide and Information



Instructors Name: _____

Instructors Contact details: _____

First Issue June 2018

Index:



Section 1 **Getting Started—some tips on what you will need**

Section 2 **A Brief History and Definition of Line Dance**

Section 3 **Dance Floor Etiquette**

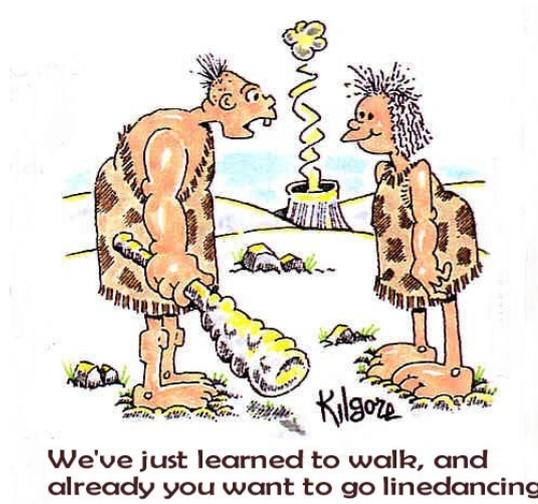
Section 4 **Finding Where There are Classes and Socials**

Section 5 **Some Basic Line Dance Steps**

Section 6 **Step Sheets**

Section 7 **Useful On Line Links**

Section 8 **Instructor's list of Common Beginners Dances**



Introduction

Welcome to Line Dancing.

This booklet has been designed to provide information, and to answer many questions beginner line dancers have.

Line dancing has so many positives:

Improved fitness

Improved muscle tone and strength

Stronger bones and reduced risk of osteoporosis

Better coordination, agility and flexibility

Improved balance

A wonderful way to make new friends

Improved memory and mental functioning

Greater self confidence

Increased energy

Stress reduction and Depression diminishment

You don't need a partner

It can even help you to live longer



Section 1

GETTING STARTED

Beginners often feel self-conscious and awkward – don't worry – we all felt like that as beginners. Instructors and dancers around you will be patient.

- * Up the front of the class is the best place to be where you can see the instructor's feet, and don't be afraid to ask if you would like to repeat any steps you aren't sure of.
- * Wear shoes that allow your feet to slide over the floor, rather than grip. Some dances have turns or twists and smooth soled shoes assist these moves.
- * Try to keep your steps small (no more than shoulder width) which will help you to keep your balance and also keep in time with the music.
- * Bring water to class. It may be so much fun that you don't notice – but dancing is exercise – and you'll get warm and need to keep hydrated.
- * Don't judge line dancing on 1 lesson. Commit to at least 4 weeks of coming to class before deciding if it's for you. Repetition is how we learn best and that means you will improve each time you do a dance. After 4 weeks you should notice that you are finding dances much easier to learn.
- * Don't be afraid to ask questions. If the instructor is busy and you can't find time at class, ask for their contact details and email your questions, or ask an experienced dancer who may be able to help you.
- * Everybody learns differently, some need to watch, others to do the dance multiple times for it to sink in etc. If you like to read instructions, there are 'step sheets' for every line dance. These are a set of instructions that take you through the dance step by step. These are available online—check the section for useful online links. Your instructor can give you advice on how to read a step sheet.
- * Some Instructors have weekly emails with the dances and video/step sheet links for the next weeks classes. This can be useful to remind yourself of dance names and how they start.
- * Everybody also learns at different paces. Some are happy to do beginner dances always, while others want to try harder dances after a while. When you feel ready to try harder dances, talk to your instructor.

Dance.
It's cheaper than therapy.



**LIFE IS BETTER
WHEN YOU CAN
LINE DANCE**

Section 2

A Brief History of Line Dancing

Line dancing is said to have originated in the USA in the 1970's and was initially popular to Disco music (think The Brooklyn Hustle), as well as Country music. There are some earlier examples of line dances from the 1950's but certainly the disco era was when the line dance gained popularity.

The 1980's saw dozens of line dances created for country songs after the film 'Urban Cowboy' spurred renewed interest in country culture. But it was Billy Ray Cyrus and his 1992 hit 'Achy Breaky Heart' that really catapulted western line dancing into the mainstream.

Line dances in current times are done to most genres of music, including current pop, rock and country.

What is Line Dancing

A line dance is a choreographed repeated sequence of steps danced by a group of people facing the same direction in lines or rows.

The sequence is commonly 32, 48 or 64 'counts' repeated during the song and sometimes the choreographer adds a 'tag' or 're-start' to better fit the dance to the music it is being danced to. A count generally equals one musical beat.

Line dances consist of a number of 'walls'. A wall is a direction the dancers face.

In a 1 wall dance, dancers face the same direction at the end of the sequence as they did at the start.

**YOU DON'T STOP
DANCING
BECAUSE YOU GROW OLD**

In a 2 wall dance, dancers will start at the front and finish at the back.

**YOU GROW OLD
BECAUSE YOU STOP
DANCING**

In a 4 wall dance, dancers will dance the sequence of steps to each wall in turn—either clockwise or anti clockwise.

Section 3

Dance Floor Etiquette



Line dance Etiquette is just common sense guidance to ensure enjoyment for all dancers on the floor.

- ◇ Orderly lines are a good idea, and staggered if possible so maximum dancers can see the instructors feet
- ◇ No food or drink on the dance floor
- ◇ Please listen when the instructor is talking, there will be time to chat during the break or after class.
- ◇ If you are moving onto the floor and a dance has started—join the end of a line rather than walk through people dancing.
- ◇ If you are leaving the floor during a dance, take the shortest exit route
- ◇ Be mindful of those dancers around you, apologise if any ‘crashes’ occur and be patient with others who may learn at a slightly slower rate than you.

Section 4

Classes and Socials

How to find Classes in your area

What are Socials and how do you find them?

Many people start line dancing and then realise that 1 class a week just isn't enough for them. Your Instructor may have other classes that fit with your schedule, but there are likely to be other nearby teachers and classes also. It can be a good thing to have more than 1 Instructor, as this will mean extra variety in the dances you learn.

<http://thebeat.co.nz/> is a great place to start looking for other classes in your area. Or ask the experienced dancers around you if they attend other classes.

Socials are held by most instructors during the year. This gives dancers the opportunity to attend a 3 or 4 hour session on a weekend and line dance without the instructor calling out instructions. There are often dress up themes and prizes along with raffle ticket sales. It is a good chance to socialise with the others in your class and often meet line dancers from other classes. Many socials have a ‘split floor’ which means there will be a beginner dance done at the front of the hall and a harder dance done at the back, giving a wider group of dance skills the opportunity to dance at the same time.

If you aren't sure whether you are experienced enough to attend a social—ask your instructor. There are even some socials that are specifically for beginners.

Social information can also be found on The Beat NZ website.



Section 5

Some Basic Line Dance Steps

FAN

2 count move. The toe of the foot is moved out to the side and back.

GRAPEVINE

4 count move. A travelling step to the side, or on a diagonal. Stepping to the side, then free foot crosses behind, then step to the side again and usually finished off with a touch, stomp, kick, hitch, brush or a turn.

HEEL TAPS

Tap the heel of the unweighted foot forward, then step beside other foot.

HIP BUMPS

Usually done standing with feet slightly apart, put weight on alternate feet whilst bending opposite knee. Hip of weighted foot will naturally 'bump' out.

HITCH

Raise knee so foot comes off the floor (without pointing toe).

JAZZ BOX

4 count move, starting with either foot (example is Right Jazz Box)

Counts 1 & 2 Cross R over L foot, step back on L foot,

Counts 3 & 4 Step to the side on R foot, step L foot beside R foot.

KICK BALL CHANGE

Counted as 1&2. Kick first foot forward, step ball of first foot beside opposite foot, and then transfer weight to opposite foot.

LOCK STEP

Like a vine moving forward. Step forward on 1st foot, step 2nd foot behind, step 1st foot forward.

PIVOT TURN

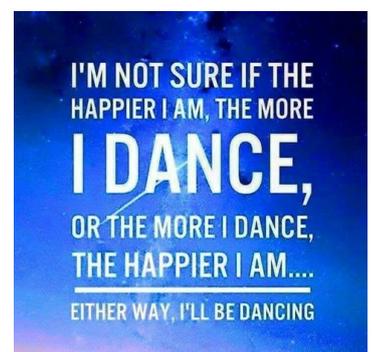
2 count move. Stepping forward and turning either 90 or 180 degrees by pivoting on the ball of the opposite foot.

ROCK-RECOVER

2 count move. Take directional step with first foot, putting weight onto it (count 1), then return weight to opposite foot (count 2).

ROCKING CHAIR

4 count move. Rock weight forward on foot 1, replace weight on foot 2 in place, rock weight back on foot 1, replace weight on foot 2 in place.



SCUFF/BRUSH

The free foot swings forwards/backwards lightly brushing the floor.

SHUFFLE/TRIPLE STEP

3 steps to 2 counts of music, ie. step-together-step. Usually moving forwards or backwards. A sideways shuffle is generally called a 'Chasse'

STOMP

Put whole foot firmly (audibly) on floor with weight. The same move without weight is called a 'Stomp Up'

STRUTS

2 count move. Heel Strut – heel touches floor first and without lifting the foot, then put the toe down. Toe Strut – toe touches the floor first and without lifting the foot, then put the heel down.

TAP

Place foot on floor without weight, generally the toe makes contact with the floor.

WEAVE

4 counts or more. Similar to a Grapevine, but involving crossing in front as well as behind.

Section 6



Step Sheets

What are they, and how to read one

Not all step sheets are created equal, however most modern sheets have a formula that makes them relatively similar.

The banner part of a step sheet lists important general information such as:

The dance count: this is how many beats of music before the dance step sequence repeats. In broad terms, if a dance is 32 count there will be a sequence of 32 steps, over 32 beats of the song and which repeat throughout the piece of music.

Walls: Line dances consist of a number of 'walls'. A wall is a direction the dancers face. (See section 2)

Level: The level of experience needed

Choreographer & Music – The music the dance was choreographed to, although often dances are danced to alternative music.

Below the banner we come to the actual steps that make up the dance.

A step sheet will be broken down into sections of 8 counts. IE in a 32 count dance there will be 4 x sections of 8.

Each section has a heading which is the 8 counts in a nutshell, below the heading the steps are broken down even further with the count beside them.

Knowing the names of steps will help to be able to read a step sheet, but generally reading step sheets is a skill that develops over time. Don't worry if you have trouble. Ask your instructor for help.

Section 7

Useful On Line Links

<http://thebeat.co.nz/>

This link is to New Zealand's line dance site. It includes lots of information about local classes, what socials are on and a lot of other useful information including an online version of this booklet.

<https://www.copperknob.co.uk/>

This link gives access to worldwide line dance step sheets and videos—often demonstration and tutorial videos. There are currently over 91,000 dances on this website



Dance Shoes:

Many experienced dancers wear shoes specifically designed for dancing. These have special features for extra flexibility, shock absorption, arch support and they often have 'pivot points' that allow for spinning/turning with ease. The websites below are for reputable dance shoe businesses used frequently by line dancers.

<http://www.dance2go.co.nz/Default.aspx>

<https://mariesdanceboutique.com/>

<https://www.katz-dancewear.co.uk/>

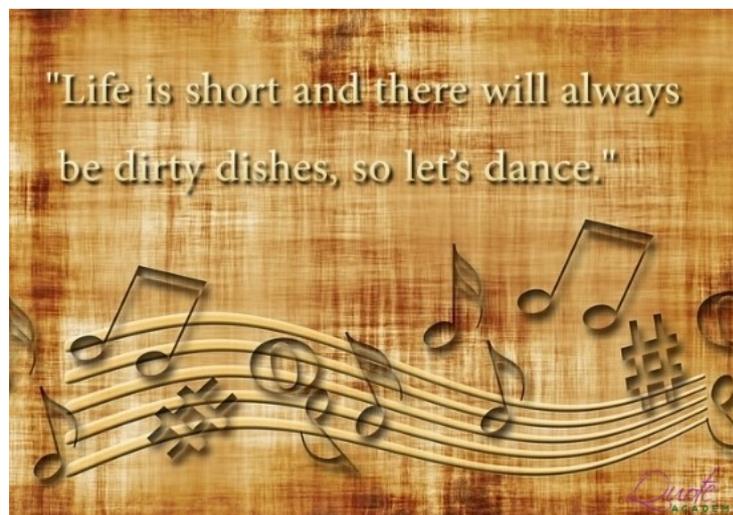


Section 8

Some Common Beginner Dances

Speak to your instructor for a list of dances that are commonly done at class and potentially found in other local classes.

You can list them below—and then look them up on the Copperknob.co.uk website and watch demonstration videos.



NOTES:





THE EXPERT IN
ANYTHING WAS ONCE A
BEGINNER

This booklet has been compiled by Sue Wellesley-Davies with valuable contributions from Sharon Running, Bob Redstone and others and with thanks to Mike and Chrissie from The Beat online for placing this information on their website.

If you spot any errors—or have any suggestions, please contact: countryheartbeatdance@xtra.co.nz