

# BE SQUARE



## OLD TIME SQUARE DANCE HANDBOOK

*a southern subset*

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Dare To Be Square Caller's handbook. You may be curious about starting or resuscitating social music and dance culture in your area. Read this to gain some context about different types of square dancing, bits of history, and some ideas for it's future. The main purpose of the book is to show basic figures, calling techniques, and dance event organizing tips to begin or further your journey as a caller. You may not be particularly interested in calling, you might just want to play dance music or dance more regularly. The hard truth is that if you want trad squares in your area, with few exceptions, someone will have to learn to call. There are few active callers and even fewer surviving or revival square dances out there. For example, the State of Tennessee has zero remaining regularly occurring old community square dances and only one revival dance. Times are hard and dances few. Things are on an up swing though, as far as revival and young interest are concerned. Hopefully you can help in a small way to preserve and recreate some spectacular times from another era.

It was really nice to have something in writing when I was learning to call. A necessary comfort for most, at first. The old books I found, didn't help me that much. What I needed was to get calls from people who were still calling. That way I could dance a figure before teaching and calling it. I understood most figures in books, but didn't know how to teach them well, if they would be fun to dance, or have any good rhyming lines to keep me in time while calling. So I set out to create this manual for myself as much as other new callers and the sapling revival.

To learn a fiddle tune I jam and jam and jam until the tune is stuck in my head, and then all of a sudden I can play it; at least a good fun approximation of it. My approach for learning to call dances is similar, I dance and dance, until the calls and the motions are flowing right out of me. Some people see that as muddying the waters and not respecting tradition. I see it as practical and the most traditional way one could learn. Traditions are always changing, but the heart of it is hopefully still pumping through the clutter of murky translations. I prefer to learn through experience, trial and error, and immersion. If you want to learn by watching, hit up youtube. If you don't have access to dance much yourself it may be necessary. If you want to listen, beware that many of the old 78s with calls are not quite danceable. They can offer great patter and styles to copy. Sometimes recordings or written lyrics can really help solidify what you already know. With that being said, this handbook does not always spell out, how to do si do or execute more complex figures. It also does not always tell you what intro, break, transitions, or closer that would be good with it. Do what feels right. If it feels awkward you'll switch it up next time. The first draft only served as a notebook for calls and patter. If you didn't already know how to dance the dance or what each of the calls meant, it was not very useful. This version will include some of the instructions for how to execute the figures along side the calls. There will be some tips for how to teach others, but for the most part you'll figure out your own way to teach. Efficient teaching will come with practice...

*"We don't pretend, then, that this book will turn out to be a scholarly thesis on the dance... nor do we dare hope that it will be a quotable authority. All we want is that you and you and you will find something representative in these accounts, something helpful to your own situation, be it trying to replant the country dance seed again in fallow soil, or keeping the plant alive amid the storm and high wind of today's diversions." R. Page*

...To learn how to call, you just have to do it. Will Mentor calls it “flight time.” Figure out the calls to a super simple dance, crank up the music, have a drink, and teach your friends how to dance. All you need is three dancers, yourself, and a rhythmic musician or two. It is great to try it out on people who haven’t danced before because they will be ignorant of your mistakes and have fun anyways. Additionally it is helpful to practice with dancers who do know what they are doing, they won’t need as much prodding or assistance to get going, and can give constructive feedback.

I learned how to call out of necessity. I was playing old time music for a couple years and had never seen a square dance happen in Olympia except for the annual May Day Hoedown. Get that? Annual. That just ain’t enough dancin’. So, I channeled the punk kids into some semblance of a square dance scene. You will likely be learning out of necessity also. There are few folks who are excited to have chilling experiences on stages in front of piles of unruly or demanding dancers. A lot of people get into the playing and dancing because it is not a performance. Traditional square dance calling is quite forgiving. The nerves will fade quickly.

I learned my first few dances as a team at the Dare To Be Square West weekend, 2007. Bill Martin taught us 3 simple dances and the basic calls. We all danced and chimed in with the calls as we memorized them. The method is low pressure. Everyone dances until you can all call in unison. What I learned in this hour long workshop is that you can’t rely on workshops and festivals to learn how to call. They can inspire you though. They will bring out dance and music masters, but for the most part “they” learned just by doing it or when the scheduled caller couldn’t make it. Somebody has to step up to the plate. They can give you some insight and tricks of the trade, but they will not put you up there and turn you into a caller. Unless you try calling, your teachers advice may seem out of context.

This book is meant to be altered, replicated, and distributed by the community. If you have dances or calls to share or just want an electronic copy of this (for easy editing) let me know. I hope to work with a photographer, graphic designer, or illustrator to make this book more pleasing to the eye and functional for new callers. I’d love to have dances in here that offer a good variety of unique figures and that offer an accessible form (easy for beginners and fun for experienced dancers). Hold fast and never let go!

For questions, corrections, ideas, collaborations, or for content submission, write to T-Claw at [calling.t.claw@gmail.com](mailto:calling.t.claw@gmail.com)

## **CALLER’S WORKSHOPS AND WEEKENDS**

DTBSWV May 30-31st 2014 Helvetia, WV

<http://mountaindancetrail.org/>

Cumberland Dance Week July 20-26th 2014 Nancy, KY

[www.cumberlanddanceweek.org](http://www.cumberlanddanceweek.org)

Augusta’s Dance Week August 3-10th 2014 Elkins, WV

<https://augustaheritagecenter.org/dance/>

Dare To Be Square West

[www.daretobesquarewest.org](http://www.daretobesquarewest.org)

DTBS at John C. Campbell Folk School Brasstown, NC

[www.folkschool.org](http://www.folkschool.org)

DTBSTN January 9-12th 2014 Knoxville, TN

[www.jubileearts.org/dtbstn/](http://www.jubileearts.org/dtbstn/)

# RESOURCES

## ARTICLES ABOUT DIFFERENCES IN SQUARES AND CONTRAS

“Community Dances in the Eighties: Dare To Be Square!” ~Phil Jamison

[www.oldtimeherald.org/dare-to-be-square/](http://www.oldtimeherald.org/dare-to-be-square/)

“Old-Time Square Dancing in the 21st Century: Dare to be Square!” ~Phil Jamison

[www.oldtimeherald.org/archive/back\\_issues/volume-9/9-3/dare-2-b-square.html](http://www.oldtimeherald.org/archive/back_issues/volume-9/9-3/dare-2-b-square.html)

“The Squeal Index: Can Old-Time Bands Make It on the Contra-Dance Scene?” ~Joyce Cauthen

[www.oldtimeherald.org/archive/back\\_issues/volume-8/8-1/full\\_dance-squeal-factor.html](http://www.oldtimeherald.org/archive/back_issues/volume-8/8-1/full_dance-squeal-factor.html)

“So What Is It About This Contra Dancing Anyway?” ~Warren Argo

[www.tacomacntradance.org/argovictoryreview.pdf](http://www.tacomacntradance.org/argovictoryreview.pdf)

## NOTE ON DANCE SOURCES

In old-time square dancing the majority of the figures and calls are traditional. This is unlike modern contra dancing or western square dancing where the majority of the dances are not traditional and many of the authors are still alive. The names listed by the dances are the sources I got the dances from. In some cases they were authors that did not list their source. In other cases they did. And some of the dances in this book are from my memories of dancing to certain callers. I did not record them, so just like the ever changing old time tunes, these calls were morphed some by my memory. Not very scientific, I know. In order to muddle things less I will try to provide some sources for further exploration. If someone did write a dance, let me know. If you don't want your name associated with the patten that I put with the calls, let me know. ~T-Claw

## SQUARE DANCE HISTORY YOUTUBE CHANNELS

Good examples of walk-throughs and patten calls for Southern, New England, and Western Squares.

<http://squaredancehistory.vidcaster.com>

[www.youtube.com/user/SquareDanceHistory](http://www.youtube.com/user/SquareDanceHistory)

[www.youtube.com/user/johnmramsay/videos](http://www.youtube.com/user/johnmramsay/videos)

## LINKS FOR SOURCES OF FILM AND WRITTEN DANCES

Seattle Dare To Be Square videos: <http://vimeo.com/9551394>

Bob Dalsemer's book, in online format: [www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/](http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/)

An index of resources Bill Martin put together: <http://bubbaguitar.com/squaretoc/>

Dances For Busy People: [www.d4bp.com/squares.html](http://www.d4bp.com/squares.html)

Some Old Origins: <http://fredfeild.wordpress.com/>

Patrick Napier's Book: [http://www.cdss.org/tl\\_files/cdss/documents/elibrary/napier.pdf](http://www.cdss.org/tl_files/cdss/documents/elibrary/napier.pdf)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SOUTHERN SQUARES

1. Closed formation (square or circle rather than lines)
2. Verse/Chorus structure (figure/break figure)
3. Improvisational (form, timing, music, patten)
4. Visiting couple structure
5. Distinct figures with distinct names; not found in other dances
6. Faster tempo (walking or shuffle step)
7. Live Music

## JOIN CALLER EMAIL LISTS

[trad-dance-callers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:trad-dance-callers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

[dtbs+subscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:dtbs+subscribe@googlegroups.com)

# OLD KING BUBBA'S SUGGESTIONS FOR

## From: Bill Martin

**1** I like scripts for teaching the moves and figures. You can ad lib within the script, but the script is like a foundation. For example, when I teach a right hand turn I use variations on this script: "Join right hands with your partner. Use a thumbs-up arm wrestling grip. Elbows down, joined hands up. Strong arm muscle; don't stretch your arms out. Now walk around each other, pulling away from the center so it feels like riding a merry-go-round." I've worked that out over time so that it tells people what I think they need to know. Its memorized, I can say it automatically, I use pantomime and gestures at the same time, and there are just enough words to get people all the way around each other. You need to come up with your own language that fits your personality and agenda. Personally, I find it a real aid to have a few well thought out boilerplate instructions for the dance elements that are important to me, rather than ad lib and work out stuff on the fly. When you move into the teaching phase, pare down your words. The more you talk the less they listen. Use a little bit different voice for the commands, to separate the basic instruction from the banter. (For instance, I slow down my tempo and simplify my phrases when I change, even in mid-sentence, from chatting to instructing.) Use consistent descriptions from one dance to the next. "Swing" in this walk-through means the same in the next dance, etc. And incorporate the call into your teaching so the dancers aren't surprised and bamboozled when you start shouting "Couple one rip 'n' snort!"

**2** Its fun to make up calls, of course, but you need to recognize your role as a tradition-bearer. The old-fashioned calls are as much a part of square dancing as the fiddling. Its better to have a good repertoire of call lines that you can dip into for variety, rather than make up calls. Wait a few years until you really understand the rhythm and flow of the dancing and the place calling has in that.

**3** Analyze your dances. Know ahead what parts of the dance will need careful or extra teaching so you don't get a nasty surprise when you trot the thing out at the next square dance.

- a. Use physical demonstration (including pantomime) in place of verbal descriptions as much as possible.
- b. Practice any teaching language or demonstration ahead of time, just like you practice the actual calling.
- c. Use demonstrations to isolate and teach the tricky parts.
- d. Just demonstrate short sections, rarely the whole dance. Don't show more than dancers can absorb.

**4** Its okay to use stop-and-go in the first walkthrough. If you've had to do a lot of teaching, walk through the dance a final time without stopping. Go slower than dance tempo, but make it flow along naturally.

# TEACHING SQUARE DANCES



**5** Trust people to get it and they will. Don't be afraid to start the dance. Avoid excessive walk through repetitions, it will never be perfect. People will learn on the fly. (You've heard that rousing cheer when they have finally nailed the dance.)

**6** Always pay attention to how other callers teach.

New callers tend

to focus on learning new dances from other callers, but its way more important to watch how they teach. Dances are everywhere and a dime a dozen. But there ain't no books on how to teach a crowd to dance. Pick it apart mentally, see what works, make note of what doesn't work. Learn by watching and listening critically. Imagine how you would do it better. You don't need to confront them with their errors, just be aware, and be willing to learn from their example, positive or negative.

**7** Practice, practice, practice your calls and your teaching language. Try them out on your cat. Rehearse the movements you will use to pantomime or demonstrate aspects of the dance. Don't just visualize it, get up and do it physically. Judge your teaching from the viewpoint of a dancer, and be brutal. I've seen more dances bog down while a caller fumbles and bumbles and tries to invent a description of the dance on the fly. Clear teaching before the music starts is way more important than an interesting call during the dance. The teaching should move right along. Experience will enable you to spot what part of your walk-through is not working for a particular crowd.

# HOW TO START A “SCENE”

You may find yourself having been exposed to an enjoyable square dance or old time scene and wanting that in your town. That is probably why you came all the way to Knoxville. Here are some tricks that may help get things rolling.

1. Find out who is around. There were active people in the Pacific Northwest. Even after living out there for a year or two I had no idea that anything was going on. If you find a musician or dancer, they don't necessarily know all or most of what else is going on though they may tell you they do. Hunt hard. Take any allies possible.
2. Hopefully you can find a community organizer/organization to team with, hot musicians/band, fun caller, enthusiastic dancers, social butterfly to bring out people in droves via facebook, and/or a sweet cheap crappy venue. If you don't have all of those things yet, never fear, you can find or create them. It takes time. Patience has never been my strong suit. If you have a little money or a lot of time, this can be done. If there is everything but the venue, do some house parties for the time being. If there are only contra callers, use this manual to teach yourself, or bring someone in from out of town if you have the money. Square dancers are just regular people, and there are many ways to get people out to an event. Though using the term “Square Dance” may shoot you in the foot. A solid band or popular band could be a huge resource. In Nashville, the members of the Hogslop Stringband are all individually social beasts. Aside from their great tunes, they bring the party along with them. If you can find a good organizer or promoter they'll be able to find people and a good venue. If you don't have these people, you may have to dig up some money to pay some folks. Someone has to be an extrovert. You don't want to have your first big event without pulling out all the stops. Set the stage for a successful future.
3. You want your first event to be a smash success. If not, try harder for the next one. What ever venue you settle on should be packed. If it holds 100 people comfortably, you better have 200 people confirmed to come. You need to be sure that a lot of people are coming. It is a total buzz kill to have a dance where the room is empty and you have to keep begging people to dance who aren't ready. You want the dance space full and people socializing in the periphery and waiting anxiously to get in on the next one.
4. To ensure the event has a crowd. Get local sponsors who are invested. Do it as a benefit or as an event part of something bigger. Like a fund-raiser for an arts foundation, historical society, or festival. Give the event greater purpose or meaning. Don't advertise it just as a square dance. Most people have never square danced before and a confused mind says “no.” People have negative connotations associated with square dancing, so you have to trick them in some way to trying it out. Don't let them think of 4th grade or their grandparents. They will be sold once they are there and doing it.
5. Make the events really accessible, but don't beg people online or otherwise. It is hard to balance between free and \$5-\$10. A lot of times people don't value something that is free. They won't commit until its too late. If they have a ticket or a date they are then committed to go . A \$3 cover with free beer could be fun if you have no other way to get people out. “Bring a friend for free” ... “Canned food = free entry” ... “In free with your bicycle helmet” ... “First time free” ... “Second time free” ... “Boys in free” ...

6. Keep people informed. Find a way to keep track of folks who come to the events. People rarely just sign up on an email list. If you have an “email raffle” where it is free to enter you will have much better success. Just find something to give away. Food, drink, cd, tickets to the next dance, or a pie. Don’t waste all that time and money for your first big crowd to disappear and never be seen dancing again. Emails are grassroots gold. My guess is 1000 regional emails = \$300 per event.

7. Publicity, Promotions, Advertising. Get it in the papers, online, radio, posters, and social networking. Don’t waste your event by not reminding people to come. Though if you did massive publicity alone, it still wouldn’t guarantee an audience. Publicity is mostly just reinforcement for people who are already thinking of coming via word of mouth or “the buzz.” Talk to related dance and music communities. Go out on the town and bring a crew so you all seem like a fun group of people. Find linchpins to bring their crew.

8. Document. Have photos/video taken at your first big event so the next one you can show off how fun it looked. Balance the lighting between sterile and cozy.

9. Don’t do it alone. It is impossible for you to be good at all of these things, even if you have time to do them all. Ask any friends or folks connected in related communities to be an organizing team with you. Or just get people to fill small roles like flyering, door shifts, or sound operation.

10. Have fun, be happy, enjoy yourself. Even if things are hectic and crazy or not up to your expectations don’t be a sour rag. Your enjoyment can be infectious. Even if it is an awkward under-attended event try not to let it phase you and it may be easier for other folks to catch that bug.

11. You may have a music community, dance community, drinking community, or otherwise. If your town doesn’t have many players or doesn’t have many dance geeks, these events can help grow the communities where you lack.

12. NEVER LET GO! You can do it. If you fail, try much harder next time. Do not be satiated by a mediocre crowd. Push until you are packed. It is a lot of work to get there, but if you don’t it will not be sustainable.



# SET DANCE TIMELINE OF TRENDS

*This timeline is a trend guideline assembled by an extremist community barn dance enthusiast. The lens is apparent and the research is elementary. That being said, it has hints of the progress and degradation of historical forms. The blanket statements are in no way meant to claim absoluteness. There are many exceptions. One may offer the author suggestions to help hone the dull chisel.*

end of 1600s- There is no definitive evidence for who brought country dancing to who. It probably started in England or France and then travelled to the other. English dance master, John Playford, published a book of country dances including rounds, squares, and longs for four. Throughout 80 years the editions grew to hold 918 dances of which the vast majority were longways and paired with a tune of the same name.

**1700s-** The country set dances spread to the US by way of English Dance Masters and then French Dance Masters. After the Revolutionary War most Americans rejected all things English. New Englanders and French Canadians called it contra or country dance. This included line dances for “as many as will,” and quadrilles, a precursor to American Square dances.

1850- Square Dancing and couple dancing like Waltz and Polka became more popular. Quadrille style up North. In the Appalachian Mountains they were crafting their own version of square dance and music as the secluded Scotch-Irish-German inhabitants mixed with African Americans. Late 1800s- Squares mostly subsided except in rural areas.

1918- Cecil Sharp “discovers” writes about Appalachian square dancing. He calls them “Kentucky Running Sets,” but they probably just said “Hey, lets run a set.” He claimed they were mostly descendants of pre and first edition playford country dances. He was the first main person to study and write about these dances.

1930s-1940s- (First Trad Square Revival) Squares revived along side and in reaction to Jazzy stuff. They most often did not include much contra dancing except in New England. Ralph Page kept it going in New England. Lloyd Shaw taught calling in the West and crafts his own western theme.

1950s and 1960s- (Modern Western Square Dance) Dudley Laufman and Ted Sanella chimed in on the contra train in the North. Modern Western Square Dancing (MWSD) emerges out of the traditional Western squares. The US goes mad for squares. This is still alive today, though struggling, in the federated clubs with canned music, certified callers, and mandatory workshops for beginning dancers.

1970s- Sanella brought the English Country Dance moves, “Hey and Gypsy” to contra dance. Transitional time in contra dancing from having active and inactive couples to general preference of all active symmetrical forms. CALLERLAB forms in 1974 and standardizes the plethora of new MWSD dances and figures alongside the 10 commandments of etiquette.

1970s- (Second Trad Square Revival) Sandy Bradley and some of the Folk Revival old time string bands brought traditional square dancing everywhere they went. Community Dances in the South had lots of squares and clogging.

1980s- (Modern Contra Dancing Emerges) Community folk dancers started to prefer more modern contra dances. Several city dances used gender free calls and/or used gendered commands regardless of gender. This also marks the beginning of the US contra craze. Modern all active sets are king. Community dancers began to favor this over older forms such as traditional contras, traditional squares, and polkas. Community dances in Appalachian cities began to contrafy. There are numerous first hand accounts of callers being booed for calling squares, not hired back, or old time musicians of the region being pushed out of their own community dances.

2000- (Third Trad Square Revival) Some community contra dances are getting a little old after a few decades of dancing. Some have trouble gaining interest from their subsequent generations. Though many contra communities thrive and have a diverse multi-generational attendance. Foghorn Stringband and Bill Martin reinvigorate traditional style square dancing with a wild energy. Young city folks across the country seeking a break from modern life seek out squares for an old fashioned good time. Alcohol, raging old time music, and divergence from the contra culture. Party and music is priority, dance comes 2nd. Small pockets of traditional community square dancing survive.

2010- There are thousands of regularly occurring (weekly, monthly, annual) contra dances across the country. Over 90% of these dances, camps, festivals, and weekends have rejected traditional squares and old time music. At approximately 10% of these dances 1-2 squares (usually MWSD or "Squantras") are attempted. They are usually ill-equipped, ill-performed, or ill-executed reinforcing the notion that contra dancers don't like squares.

Now- There are 10-20 regularly occurring revival square dances in cities across the country. There are many hundreds of regular contra dances. There are still thousands of federated modern square dance clubs. Some younger folks and old stalwarts at contra dances are starting to ask for squares again. There are only a few square dances around the country who have been regularly active throughout the contra craze. There are 2-3 old dances left in Kentucky, not much to speak of in TN, NC, SC, or VA. Ohio and Pennsylvania have not been recently documented. The Midwest may be depleted except for a 10 year run near Columbia, MO and 30 years in Minneapolis. West Virginia is the last frontier of traditional community square dances. They have around half a dozen dances a month.



# CALL IT, WHAT TO

The term “Square Dance,” is loaded. Your average American may think of crinoline, ruffles, pastel cowboy suits, and bolo ties. They may think of the hokey music of there grandparents square dance club. They might conjure up images from grade school PE, cotillion, or ballroom classes. They may think of squares simply as hard or boring contra dances that most people don’t like and for good reason. They also may think it is only a primitive hillbilly activity that they are too “city proper reserved” to be caught doing. Few people have a positive past with square dance. And even fewer folks accurately know what to expect when coming to a revival dance. This may be the reason events are billed different ways than saying “Such and Such Square Dance at Such and Such Place.” Revival dances are trending towards other ways to describe what they do. Barn Dance and Hoedown are common variations, but some folks are more innovative. Psychedelic, Hellacious, Retro, Squeer, Rowdy, Zesty, Techno, Old-Time, Hillbilly, Mountain, Down Home, Hootenanny, Jamboree, Revival, Old-School, and Honky Tonk are a few of the differentiators I have seen. Historically they were called Kitchen Junkets, Assemblies, Shindigs, Hootenannies, Country Dances, Heel-burners, and most commonly just Dancin’.

## WHERE PEOPLE DANCE(D)

### ***GRANGE, VETERANS HALL, FIRE HALL, DANCE HALL, SCHOOL HALL/GYM, BAR, AND BARN***

The places we dance change the nature of the event. I for one am super picky about venues. I have been spoiled by not having to pay for them. Renting halls changes the dynamic. I aim for an under utilized space and one ideally that offers food and drink so they can make their money there and I can pay a band fair. Fancy ballrooms and spiffy concert venues are booked out months in advance or are stiff on their exorbitant fees. They have to be choosy because they are in demand and they have a viable business. Spaces that are community owned are flexible and tend to appreciate you rather than think they are doing you a huge favor.

House parties or private structures that are owned by a sympathizer or active participant are fun for a minuscule money related event. But then the burden is placed on the host. They are also not so “public.” It is also a lot of work to play, call, organize, promote, or host an event. Eventually people burn out because they are just not that extroverted and giving. Grange Halls, Veterans Halls, and other Fraternal Halls pepper some parts of the country. On average they aren’t used often. Memberships are declining and the hall once vibrant now is used for infrequent member weddings. They appreciate fresh energy and potential new members. Fire Halls, School Halls, or Non-Profit educational barn settings may cut you a deal too but they are in it to raise money for their organization. Some places are paid off or funded in other ways and are happy to do the community service of hosting a family friendly event just for the good of the community. That’s what they do. Proper venues, in nice parts of cities are hard to work with. They have to keep their calendars open for big touring bands who bring in \$15-\$50 a ticket. That means it is hard for them to value a regular dance event with light drinkers, \$5 covers, and a slow up curve on the attendance graph. The sound cost/issues may knock you out and you can kiss weekends goodbye. I like to do a week night event so that there isn’t as much competition, and so that working musicians can more readily be involved. I cringe at the thought of a fledgling event being jerked around by a bar/venue owner or hall booker. Get creative.

# A WAY TO: BEGIN AN EVENT

## AND SOME CONTEXT ON THE CLIMATE

I start most of my dances with a little beginner workshop. This is an important comfort for those out on a limb, the trying something new nervously crowd. I just try to get everyone out to join hands in a big circle. Don't be super desperate or demanding. I like to emphasize that no partners are necessary yet. I like to teach the first part without the intimidation of asking someone to dance for the first time, and without gender boundaries. Do what ever possible to get as many people to hold hands in a circle. A scary thing, I know. Have them introduce themselves to their neighbors. Get them to raise their hands if they have not square danced much before. Then get them to choose one of their two neighbors to be their temporary dance partner.

*"Hold your partners hand in the air. Drop your other neighbor's hand. Anyone without a partner please step into the middle of the ring to help facilitate finding another dancer. Anyone can dance with anyone right now, there are no gender roles in this first dance. Face your partner, now turn around and face your corner. 'Say hello corner.' Face your partner again."*

I teach them to do si do. Sometimes I do a corner see saw (left shoulder do si do). Back to their partners for a "right hand around" with a gentle arm wrestling grip (allemande right). Then depending on how beginner or how hectic the room is I decide to go back to the corner or stay with partner for a "left hand around." Then I teach them a two hand swing and the promenade. The big set, circle to the left, circle right, into the middle. Have them try it with music. Then it is up to you to launch into finding partners, teaching gender roles, 4 couple square orientation, and ball room position swing or "buzz-step swing." I most often like to start with a two couple square if the crowds general experience level is low. Then I will later delve

into the four couple square formation. And gender roles after that. Just choose the first couple dances symmetrical so there are not different roles. The groups I work with tend to necessitate 45 minutes or so of:

- Beginner Circle Dance workshop
- "Asking partners" for two couple squares or Virginia reel (or the like)
- "Right Hand Across" variation suited to competency of the group by this point (elbows, swinging corners etc)
- MonkeyintheMiddleorTwoLittleSisters

You can then introduce simple dances for the rest of the night. The majority of the dancers around are so fledgling that I rarely get to attempt tricky dances. Dances like "Right Hand High, Left Hand Low" or "Duck and Dive" or "Push Pa, Shove Ma" seldom get air time with me. They take a while to teach well. Even if you have over 50% experienced dancers, they are likely not experienced at square dancing. I try to avoid teaching for more than a couple minutes and I usually pare down a dance to its shortest and simplest version first.

If you have beginner crowd as I almost always do, they have not come to dance for 3 hours straight. Most of the folks may hold their attention for only a few dances in a night. Not to mention the physicality of dancin' so fast. I advocate for less committal dances and durations. I am not interested in organizing events that only cater to dance geeks. A broader community event is what interests me.



# EVENT PROGRAMMING

How do you plan to organize a nights worth of dancing? If you have made it through a few parties and are semi-comfortable with calling you may be ready to choreograph dances and whole evenings worth of dancing. Keep dance geeks interested and beginners competent without talking too much. For a given dance you want to balance the length of the sections and the difficulty of the sections. I like a dance where people dance so fast and hard they need breaks or for it to be short in duration. The basic structure includes an Introduction, Main Figure and Break Figure alternating, Possible 2nd Figure or a Closer.

Judge the relative length of the sections. If you have a really long section make sure the rest are short. If you have two long sections, leave out the opener, closer, and/or breaks. If you are planning an involved closer then chose a short dance to go with it. If the dance felt too short and people are still really feelin' it, you have yourself a pristine opportunity to tack on a sweet closer, repeat or flop part of the dance as a bonus. If it is draggin' on and the music is too slow or fast or the dancers are falling apart, it may be best to kill it before its pre-planned summation.

Identify which figures are difficult or tough to teach quickly. Don't put two together. You don't want wandering minds or blabbering times. Be aware of figures that sound similar in the way they are called. Such as "Four Leaf Clover," "Peek-a-boo Over," "Sow the Clover," "Duck for the Oyster," and "Take a Peek." Never pair them together. If you have a tricky main figure, use an effortless break figure. If you have a difficult break figure, pair it with a simple dance. Try out a simple version of a figure early in the night, and later you can expand upon it. Such as starting the night with Right Left Grand without an allemande or a visiting couple dance where it does not accumulate. Avoid pairing figures that both involve lots of swinging or that form similar shapes and use same motions.

Your program should be bare bones until it is obvious most of the dancer's got what is going on. It is very satisfying to push things to the point where most people execute the surprises or hard figures without pause. And it is totally fine when things don't work. It is funny. Play around with your patter and surprise change-ups, just enough to make things feel light hearted and take away the pressure of doing something "right." It is ecstasy when even tricks/switch-ups/surprises fall right in time. Steer clear of folk dance recreation attitude and performance if you want to have a community party.

Briefly introduce your dance and its source, but don't go on and on about it. Most people won't care. Let folks know if it is going to be a mixer. That way they aren't disappointed when they'd been trying to dance with a special someone all night. Let folks know what figure you are thinking of or take suggestions. I personally never go to dances and dance the whole time, so I am choosy with which dances and partners I have. Most people won't care at all though.

Throughout the course of the night try to break things up to keep it interesting. Incorporate as many couple dances as possible. It can be kind of grating to have some shrill dance master bossing you around and calling for hours on end. People sometimes need a break so couple dances are nice. They may necessitate a 2 min instruction, then people can dance and talk without someone yelling over top everything. Also take a long break or two for people to chat. You can put couple dance music on the PA if the band isn't capable or needs a break. You can plan special activities like a pie-walk, clogging workshop, limbo, or kids talent show. These things will differentiate your event from an event that is only for dance geeks. Contra, Western Squares, Swing, Salsa, etc are all dance dance dance. So much so, it is hard for non-dancers to get into it and have a good time.

# POLITICS OF SQUARE DANCE

Topics such as cultural appropriation, gender binary, patriarchy, economic accessibility, non-religious specific community gathering, alcohol, historical/cultural preservation and challenging passive entertainment industry are some that come to mind.

I will start with cultural appropriation since this was one of my first personal ethical inquiries. To start that, one may need a little more background on my experience. I came of age in the Pacific Northwest old time music and dance community. I had barely been exposed to the stuff in Nashville before I left the nest to pursue a more radical and appropriate lifestyle for myself. I could not deal with the food desert, SUV culture, conservative sprawl land. Little did I, my Tennessee punk friends, or my family know that I would turn into a sort of new age country gentleman so far away from the South. As you can imagine this brings up confusing feelings. Most of my leisure, lust, and livelihood became the traditions I wish I were exposed to in my upbringing. In reality it would have been mostly impossible to get the exposure. Social old time music and dance had pretty much tapered off in middle Tennessee by the time I was old enough to remember. I don't know when most people stopped playing together and bumping at dance halls around Nashville because there is little evidence left. Why can't/don't people dance in Music City USA? People watch country music as if it were a painting on a wall or a sappy orchestra. I pondered the fact that I was from a region but had no direct roots to the music and dance that preceded me. I don't know who exactly to blame for letting the fire go out and not trying harder to pass on the torch to my generation.

I came to the realization that my interests and cultural yearnings were at least once removed. There are people alive who grew up with country music and dance but the regular functions and community activities have mostly disappeared around the city. I surmise due to aging leadership. I returned to the South expecting to find something, but after several years, no good discoveries have been made. This brings me to a strong feeling of importance in the work I do to revive this culture. That makes it easier when exploring appropriation. Because even if it is, it doesn't matter much because there aren't many folks to complain. It sounds strange, but there wouldn't be much square dancing in my home state if it weren't for me trying to bring it back. And I wouldn't even know to bring it back if it weren't for them west coasters. It sounds egotistical but I am just bitter for not having any place to pick it up directly. I want some old middle Tennessee grandpas to come out of the woodwork. But, is it cultural appropriation? I think for all intensive purposes, it is not. The tunes and dance are usually shared openly with visitors to a community function. They may be hesitant of strangers at first, but the dancin' stifles any inhibition quickly. Traditional community dancing and fiddle music spread as the country was re-settled. It is not one people's dance or music. And the people's whose it is are fading fast. The memories will disappear faster. So as long as there is inherent respect in preserving the practices, more power to ya. I think the downsides are overshadowed by the urgency. The downsides are plenty. The folk revival really changed things, for better or worse. Check out Appalshop's film, "Stranger with a Camera." Reflect on the watered down middle class city people's "roundpeak" tunes and songs.

If the traditions are not living it is hard to steal them. The revival serves to recreate the fun best we know how. But few of us grew up with it and there is little left to immerse oneself into. Having respect for the aural tradition and seeking out and preserving the last surviving roots is important. It seems daunting though if one doesn't have the

# POLITICS CONT.

means and freedom to travel. Not to mention a local community dance to regularly participate with. What has been most important thus far in my journey is the practicum. How do we create a thriving event series with the hopes of an eventual strong community? It requires some adjustments. Events I attempt to emulate are from smaller more rural community gatherings. The people there are more or less the same body of folks attending regularly, they all know each other and know how to dance with each other. Take that and put it in the context of an open dynamic event in cities. Different people every time, new dances, callers, venues, it is hard to make it feel like a cozy community. That changes the nature of the event, so care must be taken to attempt a respectful recreation. For more on this, see the page on “City Dance.” For the most part sharing these traditions does not lead to the regurgitation of offensive stereotypes, but should be handled appropriately.

Cultural traditions are always shared and changing. It gets sticky when people view the dances or tunes as exotically southern or “hillbilly.” There has been centuries of misinformation and generalizations of mountain people or rural people. People wrongly think all the folks who created and carry these traditions are dull, uneducated, dirty, drunk, unhealthy, unfriendly, false friendly, gun flashing psychos, toothless, shoeless, hyper-conservative Christian or devil worshiping, poor, or uncivilized. We all have to come to terms with the prejudice we’ve be fed. Whether it be directly from family or passively by the media. It is fine to appreciate the grittiness, the whiteness, or the non-white influences and tradition bearers. It is not ok to appreciate the history in jest. It is not cool to put on a costume or act like a hillbilly. Joking about the tune names and origins is tricky too. Racist tune names of the day were commonplace. If discussing said tunes, do so with temperance. Don’t be a city goer in the South or otherwise who repeats stupid comments in a fake southern draw. Don’t be that guy.



# NON-WHITE PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

Let me start off by saying that I am a large, powerful, straight, white man. People listen to me, move out of my way, and are afraid of me. I have an healthy dose of entitlement and some strong opinions. That being said, I do try to be sensitive and aware in my daily life to put people at ease. I am friendly whenever I can be. I will write and share what I have experienced through my own lens. I hope to learn of my ignorance through the feedback I get from readers. Hopefully this will spur conversations to help us move towards greater understanding of the segregation and institutional racism that still exists. How that relates to square dance is a difficult topic. Can social dance and music bridge the gaps? Can we have a truly representative community event, a sort of micro-cosm of a neighborhood, city, or town where we live? I struggle with the whiteness of my trade and simultaneously appreciate being a part of a semi-white American cultural tradition. I think it is special for its non-white influences (those that have not been well documented in history) and concurrently for its mostly white practice. I want to be into something white or formerly Western European so I don't have to pretend to be something more exotic. My generation of white kids has approached an all time low of cultural identity, brainwashed into a passive entertainment consumption lifestyle. I am talking about the 80's bread, white bread, individualists, lets be weird or too cool for school, rock n roll pool. That is a fun type of freedom, but can leave one ungrounded. Many people don't know there neighbors, aren't involved in a church, and simply have no idea they are missing a real sense of community. Without that validation and support, one can feel isolated and unchecked for societal norms. Bad things can happen when you get too insular. That was sort of a tangent.

Some claim that old-time hillbilly dance and music has always been a white thing. They may otherwise say that it is a racist activity as they falsely assume rural people are all racist. It is not true. Many rural towns in America, to this day, have a heavy majority of white folks. That does not mean that at a community dance would inherently be unwelcoming to non-white neighbors. However, I don't deny the reality of that dynamic particularly in the past or in secluded places. It surely still occurs at a dance just as commonly as it happens otherwise in a mixing society. In all my years of experience, assimilation occurs fairly smoothly. There is inherent awkwardness in being the odd person in a bunch, so as a caller, organizer, or semi-aware participant I try to be extra welcoming and observant. I like to make sure new folks and people who don't fit in with the average are well are taken care of. Of course you don't want to be super obvious you have pinned them. That goes for first-timers, old or young folks, disabled people, non-hetero, or non-white folks. Folks like Henry Ford and Lloyd Shaw appreciated and promoted square dance as a good clean and wholesome alternative to jazz music and popular dances of the day. Their efforts did resuscitate or recreate a fading square dance tradition, but it also helped to whiten the experience and image. There were Spanish, African, and Native roots to the square dance they likely did not know much about. There were concurrent living square dance traditions in non-white communities as well as non-anglos participating in majority white square dances throughout history. Unfortunately solid documentation is tough. Especially of Southern Mountain dance. People just did it, and didn't think to right it down. It is undeniable. As one may expect, surviving examples of non-white majority square dance are even more hidden from the general public view than traditional square dance itself.

# RACE

In my opinion, the reason why the southern tunes and dance were so rhythmic and infectious was from the sharing back and forth with non-white immigrants and slaves. They were just as big in the creation and perpetuation of the distinctly American music and dance forms as where Whites. Just as we would be without blues and jazz. I think it is why it resonates with me. You can still see trends in the tone geographically. Up in New England the sound and dance has a much more Western European feel. More English and French. Perhaps because there were less non-white populations settling there than in other parts of the country. As you head further South the gentility and melody start to give way to the rustic rhythms of dance and music commonly known as Southern or rural. There is distinct blending of African and Scotch-Irish music and dance traditions. That is where my personal tastes lie. The notey stuff is cool but not what I want to be around most of the time. Gimme that good ole grizzly hillbilly holler blues any day.

*“There can be no denying that Blacks played a major part in the development of American step dances (clogging, jazz, and tap). If their banjo got deep into the mountains, so could their music and dance styles.” ~Frank Bonner*

After several spells of square dance popularity in cities across the US and elsewhere we may be approaching a more diverse audience than before the civil war. Cities are metropolitan. People are mixing socially more all the time, not to mention crossing bloodlines. The United States will no longer be majority white within 30 years. Neighborhoods are often segregated based upon ethnicity and class. The square dance should have people meeting in the middle and making friends across these dividers. Privilege, fear, capitalism, and gentrification I won't get in to. All the same, the open friendly environment a city based revival community dance is conducive to a more diverse crowd. Can square dance be a vehicle for a truly multi cultural social event? After a century of being a majority white tradition the tides may be changing. Swing dance has been revived in cities with all types experiencing the fervor. Look out for squares.



# SQUEER DANZ

Gender is becoming less seldom viewed as a strict binary. Awareness of transgendered folks and having a less patriarchal regiment to a dance program is key for the city country dance revival. Currently, the most thriving western square dance clubs, blues dances, and two-step/line dance clubs are coming out of the GLBT community. Who would have thought that centuries of overt instruction for proper Ladies and Gentlemen would be subverted?

It is good to have symmetrical dances in your bag of tricks so, when appropriate, you don't have to be hollering to all the Ladies and Gents in a room that is otherwise. If you do still want to use gender roles it is good to make clear that anyone is welcome to dance either role. You can additionally call them ladles and jellyspoons or maybes and gentlefins to lighten the mood. Especially if you're calling for a substantially gay or disproportionate crowd. Having a few neck ties or pink bandannas can also be useful for folks wanting to be more obvious about which role they are playing on a given dance. One can also attempt calls by using other terms such as leads or follows.

At a regular square dance, if two ladies attend together they may want to dance with each other, so don't assume they would rather split up boy-girl, boy-girl, as you personally may prefer. Feel free to ask, but not insist. Let the increased confusion be for the good of a light hearted evening.

There are also plenty of dances that are easy to call without having to prompt using gendered terms. Here's a list of dances that work well in this format.

**MAIN FIGURES:** 9 Pin, Adam and Steve, Birdie in a Cage, Bumpy Daisy, Center Point Break, Divide the Ring, Duck for the Oyster, Four Leaf Clover, French Barn Dance, Heel Toe Polka, Monkey in the Middle, Sow the Clover, Nervous Breakdown, Peek a boo Over, Push Ma Shove Pa, Take a Little Peek, Uptown Downtown, Virginia Reel

**BREAKS:** Ball of Yarn, Cinnamon Roll, Do Saw Do, Millipede, Rip and Snort, Simple Break Figure, Simple RLG

Accessibility is key to getting your event off the ground. Teaming up with an already established community could be fun. An LGBT student group, rugby team, roller derby, or other team could be a great in. Watch your rear, its gettin crazy in here, find a partner, set down your beer, stand squeer, have no fear, and the call's you'll hear...



# PATRIARCHY

Patriarchy is related to gender and homophobia. It is something we have all experienced from one side or another. Whether we know it or not. Hardly anyone wants to be bossed around by bossy man. This comes to light via venue administrators, know-it-all dancers, and uncool callers. How should someone react to unsolicited advances or rudeness from another dancer? There is lots you can do and practice personally. There are measures an organizer or caller can take as well. I will do my best to cover some ground and provide tips for what you can do to eradicate the man hate. An unfortunately all too common occurrence and deterrent for women in social dancing (and going to bars) is the creeper. Unfortunately with eccentric folk dances come eccentric people. They are not always as well equipped with social skills as one might hope. Sometimes boundaries fade when you get older. Hell, I am only 28, and I let myself go sometimes. At times it seems people don't have that innate understanding from their upbringing. Whatever it is, when one can't count on another to read clear body language signals, what should they do?

There are some things you can try aside from simply dropping out. There is some pressure in set dancing or for that matter, couple dancing too, to stay with your partner until the end of the song. With a set dance, it can throw your entire set out of whack if one person or a couple drops out. If that's what you need to do. Go for it. They will find a replacement from the sidelines and catch up. Or they may fall apart and have to wait for the next one. Who cares? That is not that big of a deal. There are more subtle ways to deal with things too. Some of them can be found in the "Debby Downers," section. You may also have the courage to be direct with someone. Move their hand or body where it feels comfortable or take a step back. Switching to a rigid or floppy posture could help. Tell them what you don't like, frankly, and in fear they usually back off. If you are physically or mentally uncomfortable with a dance or dancer, do what you can to take care of yourself.

You do not have to agree to dance with someone if you don't want to. You may respond with, "No thanks," "Not now," with an obviously uninterested tone, or "I already have a partner." It is only polite to ask someone to dance twice. If they are pleading, it is beyond the good fun of trying to entice shy people onto the dance floor. Really, one uninterested "No" should be enough. However, some people feel it is their duty to get everyone to dance. Especially if they are cute and shy. I seek to find ways to minimize that discomfort in the dance hall. Holler if you've got more tips.



These types of dude bros show up on occasion. For the purpose of this book I'll label these characters Debby's Downers. It is rare to run in to these chumps, so don't let this frighten you from wanting to go out and dance. The purpose of mentioning them here is so you might be better prepared to deal with a situation should one arise. \*The labels are not real people or real names so try not to take offense if your name shows up. See the listings on the next page...

# DEBBY'S DOWNERS

**Patriarchal Patrick:** Bossy pants, no fun allowed police, scowl pal, and pushy know-it-alls. You know the type. They like to be in charge and hear themselves talk. They assume they know better than you or the caller, most often they don't. There is a fine line between this character and a fella who politely guides folks to greater dance greatness. The best thing you can do here is blow it off or call them out.

**Twirly Teddy:** When your lead incessantly twirls you to a point of uncomfortable and unsafe dizziness... You know the scene. Contra dancers love to twirl and be twirled. Square dancing is often too fast for twirls. It can also really mess up the timing of the dance for the other dancers. It can take away the fun of the flow if inappropriately executed. More often than not it isn't appropriate in square dancing. Aside from that, you may not want to be twirled. One easy way to stop the twirls is to not let them raise your arm up to twirl you under. If you keep your arms below your neck it is impossible to be twirled, for the most part. If it doesn't get the point across, just ask for less twirls.

**Rough Housing Ralph:** Some people like to goof off while square dancing. That's awesome in my book, but, to a degree. Some people like to dance really fast and hard. This is fine as long as their partners and other dancers affected are alright with it. If your partner is jerking you around or swinging to fast, ask them to slow down or tell them you are dizzy.

**Dumb Derrick:** Some people learn quicker than others. For someone with little spatial awareness and without a working understanding of general concepts of the dance, they can lead you into a trap. If your lead can't lead, you may need to back lead. Do what you can to avoid stepping on people or banging into things. In the space in between the dances offer them some polite critique.

**Drunken Denny:** I am in the minority who advocate for the appropriate use of alcohol at barn dances and city dances. Many dance communities wrote the stuff off centuries ago, because of too many fights. It is a good clean fun alternative. I get it. Fights haven't been a problem at any of my dances. It aids in social lubrication and takes the edge off when trying to dance in public. It also allows for centrally located venues in cities where otherwise you'd be stuck outside of town at a less affordable place. If they sell enough food or drink, eventually they won't charge you for the use of their space. But, it is possible you could run into someone too drunk to dance. Most often they happened upon the dance, or are a regular bar rat that has gained chemical courage. If they are not able to listen and dance to the calls or music, it might be best to take them off the dance floor.

**Too Close Clarence:** Prolonged hugs, inappropriate glances, and verbal solicitations can happen. It is best to be prepared. I have even heard rumor of a person getting their nipple pinched twice in one night. If you encounter this kind of creeper inform the event organizers immediately so no one else need be invaded. If you are an organizer you will likely need to disband them. In Louisville one character got 3 warnings and probations before a permanent ban.

**Backwards Bob:** Some people are mixed up with their rights and lefts, clockwise and counter clockwise, lead and follow positions, corner and partner. Remind them when they're mixed up. Good luck. Be a strong back lead.

**Scary Stare Sam:** "Gypsy," is a term in modern contra dancing when you walk around your partner while staring into their eyes. I hate it. It is a terrible name and a creepy move. What if I want to dance with someone and not stare into their eyes? Some people also say one should look at their partners eyes to counteract dizziness from swinging. That's fine, but after a few nights of dancing you should get used to the swinging. I look at nothing. Other people try to find points in the room, that makes me dizzier. I only want to stare into the eyes of a friend I love, not a random dance partner. I have heard rumor of a fowl man who turned his partners face with his hand to make her stare at him. How inappropriate can these guys get?

**Stinky Steven:** I don't know what to do about over the top smelly people. Everyone is going to be sweating and emitting some body odor. I would just steer clear if someone is way over the top.

**Homo phobic Henry:** While dancing the "lady's" part I once had a guy refuse to swing me or barely touch me at all. He said "I don't do that." If only for all those insecure people out there I strongly encourage dancing the opposite role from what you are used to from time to time. It will make you a better dancer and maybe ruffle a prude.

# CITY DANCE

*“Modern country dancing has been responsible for a friendship of town and country, young and old, beginner and veteran, ‘high’ and ‘low’ - your husband dances with the maid, your daughter with a Polish mill hand and you may be teamed up with the oldest inhabitant, and all of you may be in the same set together. It’s a workable democracy, a rare find in these democratic days.”*

~Beth Tolman and Ralph Page, 1937

The same holds true today. Here, I will talk more about bringing country dance to the city rather than city folks to the country. The dance and music brings people together in a real way. That’s why I love it. It is better even than when a town’s sports team is winning big. People from all walks of life really pull together. The events I have experienced and do a great deal to promote have all sorts and all ages holding hands and smiling. A rare activity in this modern individualistic day. In the United States we spend more time looking at the ground or the screen than our neighbors eyes or the sky. I, for one, am monster guilty. When having an event at a neighborhood bar or hall, it is nice to figure out how to invite the folks from the neighborhood. That can assist in it becoming more of a community dance and encourage a more diverse gathering. Talk to the neighborhood association and keep on the lookout for a social linchpin.

There are some notable changes in the program from a typical rural community dance. They often include but are not limited to alcohol, gender awareness, cultural and ethnic diversity, sexual predators, generational norms, patriarchy, the challenges of unskilled dancers, theft, money, and steering clear of a dance uni-focus.

*“The steps to good dancing are (1) community recognition of its value; (2) provision of teaching proper form to young people; (3) good music and (4) rigorous elimination of rowdiness and drinking. Its folk nature demands this strict control, for one offensive person can spoil the fun for the whole group.”* ~Lynn Rohrbough

I advocate for most things that are “rowdiness.” But I don’t deny “the rowdies” spoiling fun from time to time. Controlled chaos can be a good thing. The historical preservation of “international folk dance,” modern contra dance, and western club square dance attract a certain type. Often a geeky dance obsessed crowd. That is cool, I am a geek too, but they can get particular and inadvertently or purposely close themselves off to new blood. It disrupts their flow to have babies bouncing aimlessly everywhere. To their own detriment resupplying their ranks is becoming hard and the eccentric dance parties are aging and fading. They should be invited to your event, in pleasant spirits, but not counted upon to be a majority of the crowd at a revival event. My prescription for a revival community dance style event in a city is to have a majority “regular people” with little or no social dance and music experience. This makes the new folks more comfortable because most folks are messing up and having fun anyways. On the contrary, it does help to have some experienced dance geeks in the crowd to aid in everyone learning more rapidly.

*“The pleasure of dancing seems to lie in the flow of movement to live music and in sociability rather than in intellectually stimulating, highly complex patterns. Variety comes not from the caller’s commands but from improvisation and embellishment by the dancers upon the familiar basic movements. This may take the form of extra twirls, fancy footwork or vigorous swings, all within the established framework of the dance.”* ~Bob Dalsemer

I have developed a preference to infantile dance quality for the gain of an accessible but exciting reintroduction to country dance and music. Though, it is still a dream to have a crew or community or players, callers, and dancers that live near each other that can really perfect a pleasure and style such as a 40 year running rural community dance.

I don’t really know if sustainable regions of city dance revivals is a more culturally and historically meaningful goal or a selfish one. I think it is good to have for social progress, and can be a great platform for community engagement within cities. It is a gateway for the other dance geek factions. It is helping gain interest in old American music. It is a great tool for grassroots ice breaking boundary pushing. It fits right along side the DIY, find and deepen your roots, local food, home craft, grow your own, down-home fun lifestyle. So it certainly is selfish, but my self wants a greater good and hospitable land for them all.

# TRAVELING, MONEY, & VENUES

*"It is an increasingly rare and wonderful sight to see teachers and their students, parents and their children, brothers and sisters all dancing together at the community hall on Saturday night."* Bob Dalsemer

For that reason and to those ends, I travel with little financial gain. I am hell bent on trying to organize regions of cities to be able to sustain local dances. After all, contra dance did it. It is hard work and their ain't much money in it. I want to be able to pass the torch, or god forbid simply attend a dance myself. Sure, I love being able to travel and see friends, but I am road weary. It always seems we are on the cusp of something greater. If we could just get a handful of cities able to support their own regular monthly square dance they would all reap the benefits of each other. A band or caller could travel between them and actually make ends meet. A car-full of dancers could visit the other towns dance and provide encouragement that they are part of something bigger, a growing revival. Each town has their own struggles and usually feel stuck where they're at. Finding young people, affordable venues, good callers, hot bands, decent sound, monies, a sweet social promoter, or having low general attendance levels are some of the plagues. Many dances are almost there. So close. Louisville is the first town I have lived in that was able to flourish after my departure. Keeping the attendance regularly at 100+ is a main milestone hurdle for most places. I suspect that most other issues would resolve over time. Enough willing organizers, enough money to pay bands, callers, sound, venue, etc. Once you have enough steam to have a monthly dance, it is just consistency from there on out. The numbers should grow if you play the cards right. Some folks try more than monthly or with the same band or caller every time. I recommend against that because it doesn't seem special, and you could always go next time without missing much. There are other ways to make each event unique though. Couple dance music, cake/pie walk, competitions, workshops, open-mic, decorations, snacks, record sale, etc. Assure people that they are indeed missing out if they don't make it out.

I'd love a network of spots in each main region to coordinate. Anywhere from a Thursday to a Monday on up to a 10 day or 2 week circuit. This would make it financially viable for a caller or band to travel and for the individual dances. Good music and calls are key for the overall energy. You gotta switch things up sometimes. Most importantly it would amp up the excitement. The sharing of tunes, friends, dancers, dances, etc. Towns without a caller, such as Knoxville could get callers more easily. Touring bands could visit community dances and pay their way. Full time musicians often have something to bring to the table hobbyists don't. If each dance were 2-4 hours apart it would be ideal. This could help new towns establish dances too as long as there is a local organizer, everything but the venue could be brought to them. I propose something like this for my home region: WED Chattanooga, THUR Knoxville, FRI Nashville, SAT Bowling Green, SUN Bloomington, MON Indianapolis, TUES Cincinnati, WED Berea, and THUR Louisville and then a team could go on up to the midwest to start another circuit. Some of those cities are not fully established with a regular revival dance, but one-offs or nights off could be default in the mean time. Often bands could play a contra dance, country night, or house show to fill gaps too. Ya gotta start somewhere.

Is it worth all of that? Places such as Seattle, Minneapolis, DC, and Portland are the heavy hitters. Kalamazoo, Blacksburg, LA, Oakland, and Durham can hold their own too, but that's about it. The aforementioned have enough callers, bands, venues, and organizers to serve themselves. They don't really need to support other regional dances to succeed. But coming from living in four different cities without a traditional square dance I feel like an underdog. How can those so well established, help the others? Should they care? Coordinating for ease of a tour could be one way to help. Siphoning off a percentage to help fledgling dances establish could help. Weigh the pay structure so that folks from out of town are acknowledged as having more expenses than locals. Grants maybe. Fundraiser weekend. There is definitely something to be said for wanting to have a hyper-local dance. It is only possible in a place with ample components, but it can be healthy and sustainable in its own way. You don't want to develop a preference for exotic bands and callers.

# MONEY CONT

...And you don't want to get so big that it requires a board of directors. CDSS and CALLERLAB do great work, but I can't see it not changing the revival too much to organize at that capacity. Some towns feel stuck renting halls for hundreds of dollars. Some necessitate borrowing and hauling bulky sound systems. Some have horrendous fluorescent lighting. Some have sticky concrete floors, no cover from the weather, or support beams in the way. I can't fathom why Nashville or Chicago are unable to find a suitable venue. My prescription for a good venue is an underutilized but already public space. Some community centers, churches, grange halls will allow BYOB which is good when trying to get out the youngins. My favorite type would be a crumby bar with an old hall attached. Old fraternal organizations like Eagles, Amvets, Rotary, Bingo Halls or the Moose struggle with falling membership and aging members. They may not understand what you mean by square dance at first and will treat it as though you are hosting a private event and quote you a fat non-member hourly rate. That is not sustainable. That won't cut it in the long run. But do what you have to do for the first time or two to win them over. Negotiate a bar or food guarantee that you can supplement with the cover if necessary. Or, wait until the second time to bargain. Once they see the vibrant energy you bring to the place they will be sold. Better yet, see if they are interested in hiring you to put on an event for their members with it still being open to the public. The members could get in free, or you could have the event be a fund-raiser for their organization or one they sympathize with. I know many examples of good team ups with VFWs, Eagles, and Amvets. They could provide a reference if your local chapter is skeptical. Why pay a band or caller, when it could be a free event with open band and calling? Time will tell.



# OLD TIME MUSIC

## & HOW TO WORK WITH BANDS

There are differences between old time musicians and dance bands.

*"OLD-TIME MUSIC: Traditional American tunes and songs with blended Euro and Afro origins; usually performed acoustically and often on fiddle and banjo."*

Cheesy music is a common occurrence at many contra dances. Terrible records are used at western style club dances. Sometimes a western caller EQs the music so that all you can hear is the bass footstep beat and some even turn the music almost all the way off during each call they make. Good old time American fiddle tunes are one of the big things that sets us apart. Banjos too. Sure it costs more money to hire a band. Records are for the radio and keyboards should have stayed in the 80's. Use the best band you can find. Those with the most infectious dance beat or with the most popular musicians (if popular for being awesome friendly people). Those with the most draw or experience playing for dances are good choices. Use them to really get crankin' on a first big event or to seal the deal. Use a cheap to free pickup band if necessary. Alternate between the two models to make an affordable series. Offering up mediocre music is a sure road to using records to dance in purgatory. Use a popular band if available because they will pad your numbers with their friends if clearly asked to do so. Use a decent sound system with a competent operator. There is no need for feedback. Halls may be hard, but enjoyment therein is harder. I am a miserable man when the sound is dead pan. I have always wanted to team up with a local quilting group and have them display at an event. It would be beautiful and it improves sound quality in those cinder block glassy halls and lofts.

Coordinating with a dance band is a trade, in and of itself. It sometimes helps to know their repertoire. Especially if you have never worked with them before, give them a call. Make sure they know plenty of fast dance tunes. Know which key is best for your vocal range. Encourage major keys and be weary of minor/modal/Mixolydian. Tunes don't necessarily need to be 64 beats or 32 bars. It is best the melody be in four or eight beat increments/phrases, like the calls. Crooked tunes are not usually good dance tunes as much as us modern city folk old timers would like to think. Good dance tunes are only a small percentage of the tunes out there. Listen for when an old timer says something about it being a good dance tune or reference books for lists of tunes commonly played at your type of dance. I like ones with big obvious chord changes so I can easily sing along and know where we are at. A smooth ending is not mandatory but nice if it plays out that way.

Be clear about the pace you want and the signals for speed up or slow down. Let them know if you want "potatoes." 4 or 8 bars of intro. Be clear with the cut off signals. Hand slicing throat motion, "the foot," or 1 finger for one more time through the tune. Be clear if you want them to do the whole tune once more, or to end at the end of the 2nd A or B section, whatever they are currently on, or be super obvious if you want to kill it at the end of the main phrase/part they are on. Know who the lead musician is that you should principally communicate with. Winking at a mandolinist may not help stop the train. Make sure the dancers appreciate and acknowledge the musicians. Promote their merch or other gigs if applicable. You need a good strong rhythm guitar or bass player as much as a great fiddler. Especially with new dancers. Their legs are wonky and will wiggle off the melody if you don't crunch things out. A band that is capable of more than breakdown reels is a valuable asset. Polkas, waltzes, schottisches, two-steps, and the like were once a main fixture at many community dances. The concept of lets go dance square sets for 3 hours with a courtesy waltz and 5 minute break is a new invention. I don't like hollering or being hollered at for the whole evening.

**SQUARE DANCE** Otherwise known as a 4 Couple Set, KY Running Set, Running Set, Square Set, Square, or Set. It has the same formation regardless of its name. 4 couples face in at each other, squared up with the walls of the hall. Most communities orient the numbered couples 1-4 counterclockwise starting with couple 1 having their backs to band/caller, couple 2 to couple one's right, and so on numbering counter clockwise around. Couples 1 and 3 face and are the head couples, 2 and 4 are the sides. The gentlemen (or whomever is playing the "Gent's" role) stand to the left of their partner, the ladies on right. Various categories of traditional 4 couple square dances may include but are not limited to: visiting couple, visiting couple cumulative, visiting person, heads/sides active, alternating couple lead (non visiting figure), and lines of three with two lone people. Modern Western Club Square Dance (MWSD), French Quadrilles, Irish Set Dance, Uncalled Lancers, Cuadrillas, and Singing Squares are related and are their own kind of tradition, but are not included in the "traditional square dance" umbrella for the purpose of this instruction manual. With visiting couple squares you can teach the dance where the lead couple visits and leaves or visits and takes a couple or person along with them in a trail behind or as part of a growing circle. Also particular squares are conducive for inactive couples doing the figure at the same time as the active couples if they are restless (and the hall is big enough), or having the one couple follow up when the active has reached their final visit. That is your call when you choreograph a dance. See "Glenville," or "Goodwin." pattern for nice visiting couple patterns.

**SMALL SET** Otherwise known as a Minor Set, Sub Set, Scatter Dance, Two Couple Dance, Kentucky Running Set, Running Set, Set, Small Square, Box Figures, Couple up Four (4 people), or Couple Mixers. 2 couples in a ring, most often a "couple mixer" where you meet new couples as the dance progresses. Can be a part of a Big Set, Square Set, scattered randomly or on their own. All traditional Southern origin dances are made up of these except for some big set figures. 4 couple dances that are not visiting in character are practiced at traditional Southern dances but usually have different origins.

**BIG SET** Otherwise known as a Sicilian Circle, Grand Circle, or Large Circle Dance. Often used as an intro or closer before or after dividing into Small Sets. There are multiple ways of progressing to new couples around the big set.

**MIXER** Any dance: large circle, square, big set, scatter dance/running set, or longways set where you get new partners throughout the dance.

**LONGWAYS SET** Otherwise known as a English Country Dance, Reel or Contra. All contra dances are in this formation. Some longways sets do not follow the rules of a modern contra dance. Some have you face your partner across the set (proper), some have you facing another couple up and down the set (improper), some have you facing another couple across the set (becket). Some of this may be quite useful to incorporate into a square dance program if for only "Long lines up and back," encourages everyone to get in time with each other and the music.

**COUPLE DANCE** Otherwise known as Social, Partner, or Round Dance. **ETC** 3,5,6,7 couples dances, 5 person dances, 4 couples+1 person mixer, circle dance without partners, 3 person big set mixer. Do you have of another formation?

# SMALL SETS

## SOUTHERN 2 COUPLE FIGURES

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You Swing Mine, I'll Swing Yours

Only one source for each figure is listed. The cited caller or publisher did not invent the dance. They were part of an aural tradition. The focus is to document all of the distinct Appalachian figures. This is over half of them and the rest will be published in volume two some time in 2014. All the dances are for 2 couples, but can be used in a square set or big set in most cases. The charts display the basic movements and calls. They do not describe the way in which dancers can transition to the next couple or how/when they would swing their opposites and partners. Many communities varied widely in these transitions.



## Birdie in the Cage

Call	Description
Cage the bird, pretty little bird	The first gent and second couple make a ring with the first lady inside. The ring moves to the left. The "bird" should turn 'round and 'round acting like a "live bird" and not a "dead duck."
Bird hop out and the owl hop in	The first lady goes out of the ring and joins hands with the second couple while the first gent gets into the ring. The ring still moves to the left. (The remark about the "live bird" and "dead duck" holds for him also.)
Four hands up and gone again	The first gent goes out of the ring and joins hands with the other dancers between the first and second ladies. His partner is on his right. All circle four to the left.

### Alternative Patter

Birdie in the cage, 3 hands around, make your big foot jar the ground. Bird flies out, crow(buzzard) hops in, I'll take my tonic with bathtub gin.

### Notes

*Owl is sometimes called "Crow" -- if so, Caw! Caw! If "Owl" is Scottish he may "Hoot"!*

### Other Notes

This figure is better done in a cumulative square set. That way there is more room to flap and squawk when circled by 5 or 7 people. In some traditions the active bird is turned in by their left hand person, still holding all hands, but tied into the middle of the casge with arms crossed.

Source	"Kentucky Mountain Square Dancing" p.18
Published	1949, Napier
Caller	Patrick E. Napier
Locale	Berea, KY
Succeeded By	Dave Napier
Other Names for Figure	Cage the Bird, Bird in a Cage
Figure Type	Small Set



## Chase the Rabbit

Call	Description
Chase the rabbit, chase the squirrel	Both couples drop hands and odd gent chases his partner between the even couple and around the even lady and back to place.
Chase that pretty girl 'round the world	<i>Patter or Filler</i>
Chase the possum, chase the coon	Odd lady chases her partner between the even couple and around the even gent and back to place. Wait for next call.
Chase that critter over the moon	<i>Patter or Filler</i>

### Alternative Patter/Calls

...chase that bad boy 'round the room. Chase the possum, chase the fox, chase that hobo out of his socks.

### Notes

Some call this where you can chase your partner anywhere for 16 beats.

Source	"Dancing with Lou, Mountain Style" p. 3
Published	19??, Maiuri
Caller	Lou Maiuri
Locale	Summersville, WV
Preceeded By	
Other Names for Figure	Lady 'round the lady and the gent also, Figure Eight
Figure Type	Small Set

## Elbow Swing

Call	Description
Gents to the center with an elbow swing	All drop hands, gents move to the center with a right elbow swing.
On to the opposite, same old thing	Gents do a left elbow swing with the corner.
Gents to the center with an elbow swing	Gents to the center with a right elbow swing again.
Back to your own with a turkey wing	Gent go to your partner with a left elbow swing.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

Gents to the middle, right elbow swing, corner girl with a turkey wing, back to the middle with a right elbow, now your own if you're not too slow

### Notes

Source	"Dancing with Lou, Mountain Style" p. 34
Published	19??, Maiuri
Caller	Lou Maiuri
Locale	Summersville, WV
Succeeded By	
Other Names for Figure	Turkey Wing
Figure Type	Small Set

## Double Bow Knot

Call	Description
Circle left	Both couples join hands and circle to the left once around.
Dive and shoot that double bow knot	Gent 1 lets go of lady 2's hand and walks under an arch made by lady 1 and gent 2 passing around and behind lady 1 and back to place. Lady 2, following her partner passes beneath her own right arm without dropping hands. (unwinding her own arch)
<i>Under the next arch, don't get caught</i>	Gent 1 followed by lady 1 walk beneath an arch made by couple 2 passing around and behind gent 2 and back to place. Then gent 2 follows lady 1 beneath his own right arm without releasing hands. Gent two unwinds without letting go.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

#### Notes

This is a nice dance to take a break from calling. Once you teach it, it sort of does itself. Not conducive to a lot of patter.

Source	"The Appalachian Square Dance" p. 43
Published	1955, Smith
Caller	Frank Smith
Locale	Berea, KY
Succeeded By	
Other Names for Figure	Thread the Needle, Lace the Shoe, Grapevine Twist, Ocean Wave
Figure Type	Small Set

## Figure Eight

Call	Description
Figure eight, don't be late, lady 'round the lady, gent 'round the gent	All drop hands. Odd lady goes around the even lady passing in front of the odd gent as the odd gent goes around the even gent. Odd partners are now in opposite home positions.
Swing right hands	Odd couples face each other, join right forearms and swing clockwise around one time.
Lady 'round the gent, gent 'round the lady	Odd lady goes around the even gent passing in front of the odd gent as he goes around the even lady.
Swing all four	Odd and even gents swing partners.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

#### Notes

Source	"Dancing with Lou, Mountain Style" p. 34
Published	19??, Maiuri
Caller	Lou Maiuri
Locale	Summersville, WV
Succeeded By	
Other Names for Figure	Lady around the lady, gent around the gent
Figure Type	Small, Square, or Big Set

## Eight Hands Across (Basket)

Call	Description
Eight hands across	This is a familiar basket figure. The two men join hands while the two women do the same, joining their hands beneath the men's hands.
Circle left, back to the right	The two couples circle left and right in that position.
Ladies bow and the gents know how	The men raise their joined hands up over the women's heads, bringing them down behind the women's backs to about waist level. The women then do the same and all four circle left in this basket position with a walking step.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

Gents to the middle, arms across, ladies duck under, hold on tight and swing like thunder. Arms across and then I'll ask it, do you know how to weave the basket? Gents to the middle, form a ring, ladies duck under that thing, turn it to the left in a basket swing. In the basket, you may try, if their not shy, to let the ladies fly.

### Notes

In New Creek, WV they end the main figure by breaking the basket, swing opposites, and then swing partners. If this figure is done with more than two couples the gents form a ring. The ladies duck under and make their own ring in the middle before raising the ring of arches over the gents shoulders. Additionally, when doing the figure with more than two couples it is less confusing if the circle left and right are omitted.

Source	<a href="http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/newcreek.html">http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/newcreek.html</a>
Published	1977, Dalsemer
Caller	John Welch
Locale	New Creek, WV
Succeeded By	Harley Hogbin, Harry Steele
Other Names for Figure	Swing Like Thunder, Ladies Bow Gents Know How, Weave the Basket, California Show Basket, Four Hands Across
Figure Type	Small Set

## Lady 'Round the Lady (Gent Also)

Call	Description
Lady 'round the lady and the gent also	The first lady, followed by the first gent, leads between the second couple, and to the left around the second lady.
Lady 'round the gent but the gent don't go	The first lady, this time alone, leads between the second couple and goes to the right around the second gent. The first gent dances in place.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

Lady around the lady and the gent follows

### Notes

There is a variation. "And the gent solo." He just dances in place and waits for the lady. It is nice to have the active couple swing at the end of the figure because he is anxiously awaiting her in both versions.

Source	Kentucky Mountain Square Dancing p. 25
Published	1949, Napier
Caller	Patrick E. Napier
Locale	Berea, KY

## Four Leaf Clover

Call	Description
Odd couples do the four leaf clover	With all hands joined in circle of 4, odd couple moves under the arch between even couple. As soon as they pass the arch, they make an arch of their own and turning away from each other move under their own arch. This formation now resembles a four leaf clover.
The even couples turn it over	Odd couple makes an arch, and even couple moves under the arch, then making an arch of their own, turns away from each other, turning under their own arch and they are back in place.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

Couple 1 four leaf clover, turn it around, then turn it back over.

### Notes

Maiuri nor Napiers' calls don't incorporate turn the clover shape around to the left. Frank Smith and Hilary Johnson do use the circling. This figure is hard to teach. It is usually better to demonstrate. The circling is up to you.

Source	"Dancing with Lou, Mountain Style" p. 26
Published	19??, Maiuri
Caller	Lou Maiuri
Locale	Summersville, WV
Preceeded By	
Other Names for Figure	
Figure Type	Small Set

## Georgia Rang-a-Tang

Call	Description
Gents face your corner for a Georgia Rang-a-Tang	Both gents face your corner girl and join right hands with her. From this position the gents are going to walk a figure 8 pattern around the girls. Gents, as you make the figure 8, turn the girls, first your corner by the right, then your partner by the left. Back to your corner by the right, then back to your partner by the left.
I'll swing yours, you swing mine	Swing your corners
Yours is fine, gimme back mine	Swing your partners

### Alternative Patter/Calls

With your corner right hand around, partner by the left, corner by the right, partner by the left.

### Notes

This is a really satisfying figure, but hard to teach to fledgling dancers. Definately demonstrate and be willing to let some fall behind. Hopefully they will dance with other couples that will help teach them.

Source	"Dancing with Lou, Mountain Style" p. 28
Published	19??, Maiuri
Caller	Lou Maiuri
Locale	Summersville, WV
Succeeded By	
Other Names for Figure	Georgy Alabam, North Carolina Dosido, Do Si Do

## Ladies Do-Si-Do (Little More Dough)

Call	Description
Ladies do-si-do	From the circle of four the two women drop hands with the men and cross over passing left shoulder to left shoulder, exchanging places but facing out, away from the circle. They rejoin hands with the men and circle to what is now their right and the men's left.
Now you gents a little more dough	Men drop hands with their partners who are now on their left side and turn their opposites by the right hand halfway around so that the circle is reformed with the women facing in and the men facing out. All four then circle in the opposite direction, that is, to the women's right and to the men's left.
Opposite lady, give a little hug	Corners swing
Now your own, that little brown jug	Partners swing

### Alternative Patter/Calls

#### Notes

The only type of do-si-do figure used by Ellen & Eugene Ratcliffe of Blue Grass, VA. Dunmore and Blue Grass are 35 miles apart.

Source	<a href="http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/dunmore.html">http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/dunmore.html</a>
Published	1977, Dalsemer
Caller	Buck Carpenter
Locale	Dunmore, WV
Succeeded By	James Carpenter
Other Names for Figure	
Figure Type	Small Set

## Roll the Barrel

Call	Description
Odd couple, roll the barrel	Odd couple moves under the even couple's arch. As the odds go through the arch, the evens turn under their own arch. This leaves everyone facing out but still holding hands in the 8-hand circle.
Even couple, roll the barrel	Odd couple makes an arch as the even couple dances backward under the arch. The odd couple turns under their own arch. This brings everyone back to their starting place.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

Roll the barrel, roll the sea, roll that pretty one back to me.

#### Notes

This can be the 3rd part of a duck for the oyster figure.

Source	"Dancing with Lou, Mountain Style" p. 32
Published	19??, Maiuri
Caller	Lou Maiuri
Locale	Summersville, WV

## Mountaineer Loop

Call	Description
Do the mountaineer loop	The two couples take hands four and circle left once around. The second couple raise their inside hands to make an arch. The first couple goes under the arch, drop hands (only the first couple drop hands), the first gent goes to his left around the second lady while the first lady goes to her right around the second gent. The second gent turns lady while the first lady goes to her right around the second gent. The second gent turns clockwise under his right arm while the second lady turns counter-clockwise under her left arm.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

<b>Notes</b>	
There is a variation where after the main figure the gent goes under his lady's arch and then the lady goes under the gents arch when he comes back around. Kind of like a curly-q.	
Source	Kentucky Mountain Square Dancing p.26
Published	1949, Napier
Caller	Patrick E. Napier
Locale	Berea, KY
Succeeded By	
Other Names for Figure	Cowboy Loop, Buffalo Loop, Rip and Snort, Mountaineer Loop

## Little Side Door

Call	Description
Little side door	Introduction
Around that couple, lady in the lead	First couple goes around the second couple counter clockwise (around gent 2)
Gent falls through and takes the lead	Lady 1 goes all the way around as gent 1 cuts through couple 2
Lady falls through the little side door	Lady 1 cuts through couple 2 and gent one goes all the way around
Couple one swings a little bit more	Couple one meets with a swing at their home spot

### Alternative Patter/Calls

<b>Notes</b>	
This is fun to try in a 4 couple cumulative square. You pick each couple up as you progress. The same lady and then gent break the circle and lead the others around and through the next couple. The second half of the main figure can be omitted by just having them swing instead of having the gent take the lead.	
Source	"The Appalachian Square Dance" p. 51
Published	1955, Smith
Caller	Frank Smith
Locale	Berea, KY
Succeeded By	
Other Names for Figure	Little Side Door, Two Around Two, Old Side Door, Outside the Door
Figure Type	Small Set

## Ocean Wave

Call	Description
Oceay up	The first couple take hands in the promenade position (right in right over left in left) and move four steps forward between the second couple. The second couple move forward four steps on the outside of the first couple.
Oceay back	The first couple turns in place, still holding hands, and move four steps forward between the second couple, to their original places. The second lady and second gent turn and move back to their original places.
Oceay around the outside track	This call-line is the same as OCEAY UP and OCEAY BACK and means that the second couple will take hands in the promenade position and move between the first couple, turn and come back to place; while the first gent and first lady goes on the outside track ... (The two couples reverse action). VARIATION: While the second couple is moving forward and back as above, the first couple moves forward and continues around the second couple, the first lady and first gent passing right shoulder behind the second couple. Two hand turn when they meet. The first couple crosses trails.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

#### Notes

Similar to the english country dance, "Nancy's Fancy."

Source	Kentucky Mountain Square Dancing p.51
Published	1949, Napier
Caller	Patrick E. Napier
Locale	Berea, KY
Succeeded By	Dave Napier
Other Names for the Figure	Garden Gate, Oceay Up, Butterfly
Figure Type	Small, Square, or Big Set

## Peek-a-Boo Over

Call	Description
Couple 1 peek a boo over	
The other 2 you peek a boo	

### Alternative Patter/Calls

#### Notes

Source	"Dancing with Lou, Mountain Style" p. 33
Published	19??, Maiuri
Caller	Lou Maiuri
Locale	Summersville, WV

## Quick Change Four

Call	Description
Right hand to your partner and a quick change four	The dancers at Dunmore explain "quick change four" to newcomers as a grand right and left for two couples. Both couples start facing partners, give right hand to partner and pass by, give left hand to opposite and pass by, give right hand to partner, pass by again and swing opposites.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

Notes	
The movement is similar to "square thru, three hands" in club square dancing, "rights and lefts" in Scottish country dancing and "three changes of a circular hey, giving hands" in English country dancing.	
Source	<a href="http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/dunmore.html">http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/dunmore.html</a>
Published	1977, Dalsemer
Caller	Buck Carpenter
Locale	Dunmore, WV
Succeeded By	James Carpenter
Other Names for Figure	
Figure Type	Small Set

## Right Hands Across

Call	Description
Right hand shake and how are you?	Shake right hands diagonally across with the other couple and dance around to the left. (Right hand star)
Left hand back and how-de-do	All change hands and walk to the right. (Left hand star)
Ladies change	The ladies still holding left hands, give a slight pull, drop hands and change places.
And the gents the same	The gents have dropped hands and change places passing by the right shoulder.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

Right hand shake across, say "How do you do?" Left hand 'cross say "Fine Thank You!" Partner with a right elbow, corner with a left elbow, swing your own if your not too slow.	
Notes	
Similar to the english country dance, "Bonnets So Blue." Can be done without the place changing. "Star Swap," has the meen dropping hands and the ladies keep turning with left hands. Then they swing their opposite.	
Source	"The Appalachian Square Dance" p. 54
Published	1955, Smith
Caller	Frank Smith
Locale	Berea, KY
Succeeded By	
Other Names for Figure	Gents Fall Back, Star Swap, Right Hand Star, Right Hands Across, Right Hand Shake, Right Hands Cross

## Swing at the Wall

Call	Description
Around that couple and swing at the wall	The No. 2 couple stands in place while the No. 1 man walks to the left and behind the No. 2 girl while the No. 1 girl walks to the right around the No. 2 man. Couple No. 1 swings.
Back to the center and swing in the hall	Gent No. 1 and Lady No. 1 return to their place in the same manner from which they came. Then they swing.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

Couple 1 swing in the rear, in to the middle and swing your dear. ~Wendy Graham.  
Odds around and swing at the wall, now split that couple and swing in the hall, around that couple and swing once more, back through the middle and swing all four (or couple/circle up four). ~Lou Maiuri

### Notes

Source	"The Appalachian Square Dance" p. 54
Published	1955, Smith
Caller	Frank Smith
Locale	Berea, KY
Succeeded By	
Other Names for Figure	Swing in the Rear, Swing at the Wall, Swing When You Meet
Figure Type	Small Set



## Take a Little Peep

Call	Description
Round that couple and take a peep	The even couple keeps inside hands and moves forward a few steps as the odd couple peeks around them.
Back to the center and oh how sweet	They back up to place as the odd couple returns. Only the odd couple swings.
Back around and peep once more	They peek again in the same way.
In to the center and couple up four (or swing all four)	In this variation when the odd couple returns from the second peek the two couples circle left before swinging opposites and then partners. One could skip the circle left and have everyone swing their partners.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

Couple number 1, take a little peek, in to the middle and swing your sweet, around that couple and peek once more, everybody swing all four.

### Notes

In a square set you could have the active couple peek once around their right hand couple, opposite couple, and left hand couple.

Source	<a href="http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/dunmore.html">http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/dunmore.html</a>
Published	1977, Dalsemer
Caller	Buck Carpenter
Locale	Dunmore, WV
Succeeded By	James Carpenter
Other Names for Figure	Take a Little Peep, Take a Little Peek, Take a Peep, Take a Peek
Figure Type	Small Set

## You Swing Mine, I'll Swing Yours

Call	Description
You swing mine, I'll swing yours	Everyone swings their opposite (corner)
Gimme back mine, I'll give you back yours	Everyone swings their partner

### Alternative Patter/Calls

I'll swing yours, you swing mine, yours is fine but gimme back mine. Yours is a nickel, mine's a dime, gimme back mine any old time. Swing your corner like swingin' on a gate, now your own if your not too late ~Bill Ohse

### Notes

Most of the time one would arrange a small set to do the main figure and if it doesn't already involve lots of swinging they would add a figure like this. That serves for everyone to swing their corner and partner before moving along.

Source	<a href="http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/dunmore.html">http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/dunmore.html</a>
Published	1977, Dalsemer
Caller	Buck Carpenter
Locale	Dunmore, WV
Succeeded By	James Carpenter
Other Names for Figure	I'll Swing Yours, You Swing Mine

## Wild Goose Chase

Call	Description
Wild goose chase	Introduction
Break to the left around this lady	The first gent takes his partner's left hand in his right and leads her between the second couple, around behind the second lady (counter-clockwise). The first couple continues with a small loop clockwise in the center of the floor. This makes half of a figure eight. (a "mini" figure 8)
Break to the right and around old crazy	The first gent, still holding his partner's left hand in his right, then leads her between the second couple, around to his right (clockwise) behind the second gent and back to the first couple's original place. This completes the figure eight.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

Break to the left and around this lady, back to the right and around the gent, watch old bald head, see where he went, circle four in the middle of the floor, round and round and round you go, break that and on you go (or "with a do si do") - Gent 1 take your lady by the wrist around lady 2 with a grapevine twist, do it once more with a woah haw gee, around gent 2 from Tennessee.

### Notes

Works well as a cumulative 4 couple square.

Source	Kentucky Mountain Square Dancing p.34
Published	1949, Napier
Caller	Patrick E. Napier
Locale	Berea, KY
Succeeded By	Dave Napier
Other Names for Figure	Grapevine Twist
Figure Type	Small Set

## Shoot the Buffalo

Call	Description
Shoot the buffalo	Without letting go: the second couple arch and the first man dive through; he lifts his left arm and backs under the arch it makes with his corner (i.e. he does a half turn right); first man circle left home unwinding the set by pulling his partner through the arch, the second couple follow through with second woman going under last.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

### Notes

Similar to Roll the Barrel, Dig for the Oyster, and Mountaineer Loop.

Source	<a href="http://round.soc.srcf.net/round/dances/krs/guts">http://round.soc.srcf.net/round/dances/krs/guts</a>
Published	n/a
Caller	Bob Dalsemer
Locale	Brasstown, NC

## 6 Hands 'Round, Lady Walk the Circle

Call	Description
6 hands 'round, lady walk the circle	The odd man joins in a ring of three with the even couple. They circle left while the odd lady walks counterclockwise around the three as they circle. The circle may thus turn two or three times around before the caller calls "swing your opposite." At that call the circle of three continues to rotate until the even man is opposite the odd woman and can easily go directly into the swing. The dancers always try to effect smooth transitions from circles to swings and swings to circles.
Swing your opposite	Gents swing their corner lady and finish with her on the right so as to send her back to her partner.
Swing your partner	All 4 (everyone) swing

### Alternative Patter/Calls

6 hands around, lady 1 walk the town, swing your corner upside down, swing your partner and try to frown

### Notes

Source	<a href="http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/newcreek.html">http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/newcreek.html</a>
Published	1977, Dalsemer
Caller	John Welch
Locale	New Creek, WV
Succeeded By	Harley Hogbin
Other Names for Figure	
Figure Type	Small Set

## Round That Couple, Through That Couple

Call	Description
Round that couple, through that couple	The odd couple separates, meets behind the even couple, joins hands and dances back to the center between the members of the even couple.
And swing	The odd couple swings.
Through that couple, around that couple	Again joining hands the odd couple goes between the even couple, separates and returns to original places.
Everybody swing	All swing partners.

### Alternative Patter/Calls

Round the outside, through the inside. Through the middle, around the fiddle.

### Notes

This figure is a variation of the familiar "Take a Little Peek." It is also similar to "Swing at the Wall."

Source	<a href="http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/newcreek.html">http://www.cdss.org/elibrary/wvasquares/newcreek.html</a>
Published	1977, Dalsemer
Caller	John Welch
Locale	New Creek, WV
Succeeded By	Harley Hogbin, Harry Steele

# BREAK FIGURES

The break figures in this section are mostly for square sets, but some could be used in big sets as well. This volume only contains the patter. In the next edition they will include instructions as well. Intro and closer calls are in this section as well.



# INTRO CALLS

All into your places, brighten up your faces  
Tighten up your laces for a good long haul!

Circle right just a little, into the middle to the sound of the fiddle  
All join hands and circle south, let a little moonshine in your mouth  
Pull up your pants, pull down your vest, swing the one you love the best

First you whistle and then you sing, all join hands and form a ring  
Or... Join your hands, from a ring, circle left while you shout and sing

Honor your partners and corners all, square your sets and listen to the call  
Honor your partner sides address, join your hands and circle left  
Reverse back about a mile, lady in the lead and the gent run wild

All jump up and never come down, swing your honey go round and round  
And promenade around the town, jaybird sittin' on frozen ground

2, 4, 6, 8, circle left and don't be late, back you go with a heel and a toe  
Circle right and circle low  
1,3,5,9, circle left you'll do just fine

Up the river, down the bend, join your hands, we're goin' again!  
Swing your partner high and low, swing 'em till they holler woah

Scratch your heel and save your toe, then promenade(o) around the row  
Pop your whip and jerk that line lets all start dancin', have a good time

On your heel and on your toe, stomp your feet and away we go  
Look at your honey, bow and smile, join you hands and circle a mile  
Back to the right you're goin' wrong, ladies in the lead, gents come along

Face your partners, give'em a smile, step right up and swing awhile  
Face your partners, smile and grin, step back up and swing again

Hold your breath, and from a circle, circle fast 'til your face turns purple  
Breathe it in, shout and grin, circle up fast and we'll go again  
And bring the caller some lemonade

“Break Patter 1”

From: Bill Ohse

Now we're home, now we're straight (safe)

Lets all join hands circle up eight, circle left

Swing your corner girl, now swing your own

Go to your corner with a left allemande, allemande left with your left hand

Come right back, right left grand

In and out and around you go, hurry up boys don't be slow

Promenade with the one you know

“Break Patter 2”

From: Bill Ohse

Turn that corner with a left allemande, allemande your corner now

Partner right when she comes round, grand chain 8, go around the town

“Break Patter 3”

From: Bill Ohse

Now we're home, now we're safe, all joins hands circle up eight

Swing that corner like swingin on a gate

Now swing your own if your not too late

And you put her on the right and promenade straight

“Transition Patter 1”

From: Eugene Ratcliffe

Move on over to the next ol' two, Couple up four like you used to do

“Transition Patter 2”

From: Eugene Ratcliffe

Move on over to the couple next door, Join your hands and circle four

“Lady Get Around”

Lady 1 to C2, swing someone, swing a few

Lady 1 to C3, swing someone or swing me

Lady 1 to C4, its your choice, once more

Now swing your partner around the floor

“Pass One Man”

Join hands and circle left, Other way back, go single file

Ladies turn back gents follow, Ladies turn out, pass one man

Give the next one your left hand, Back to your partner right left grand

### “Gent’s Don’t Go”

Join hands and circle left, Other way back, go single file

Ladies turn back gents follow, Ladies turn out, gents don’t go  
(you can go to a corner allemande to a RLG if you want)

Find your partner and promeno

(or swing your partner or corner something then partner, depends on which direction/hands are in for which allemande you do)

### “Sausage Grinder”

Allemande left your corner, Allemande right your partner

Swing your corner with all your might, Put that lady on your right

### “Do Saw Do”

Face your partner, do si do, Chicken in the bread pan scratchin’ out dough  
or (granny does your dog bite, no child no)

On the corner, see saw, Go back home and swing your taw  
(or swing your partners one and all)

### “Big Grand”

All eight balance, all eight swing, Swing your partner pretty little thing  
Allemande left to the corner you go, Grand chain eight around the row  
Wave the ocean wave the sea (pass their partners once)

Wave that pretty one back to me and promenade

### “Rip and Snort”

Couple 1 you rip and snort, Down the middle and cut them off short

Split the apple split the pear, Everybody get on out of there

Make an arch couple 2, Couple 3 dive through that’s what you do

Couple 1 make an arch, couple 4 shoot through

Everyone home and swing your dude (boo)

### “Ladies Travel Switcheroo”

Couple one to the right of the square

Circle left, don’t be scared, circle right, hold on tight

Swing the opposite with all your might

Gent brings that gal on to the next, circle up left

Swing the opposite, leave the last one there

Bring that girl on to, the right of the square, circle left with the next

Swing the opposite, then everybody swing your partner, one that’s left

### “Box the Gnat”

Face your partner shake right hands, Pass on by with a right left grand  
Meet your partner, box the gnat, Right left grand on the reverse track  
Promenade (or box the gnat to home spots or reverse RLG back again)

### “Ladies (or gents) to the Middle, Back to Back” or ”Bunch of Gals”

Ladies to the middle, back to back, gents go ‘round that outside track  
Meet your partner (that one), pass them by, take the next one on the fly  
(4 times)(gents to the middle also works)

### “Star Hand Grand”

Gents to the middle with a right hand star  
Other way back with a left hand star  
Right to your partner with a right left grand  
Pass your partner by, swing them on the other side

### “Gents to the Middle”

Gents to the middle, back on out, Gents go in and circle about  
Gents for a right hand star, Allemande left your corner  
Back to your partner with your right hand, right left grand  
Around the outside, meet your partner pass her by  
Swing them on the other side

### “In and Out with a Half Sashay”

In to the middle and back that way, Roll away with a half sashay (3 times)  
In to the middle and back once more, swing your partner right off the floor  
or In to the middle one more time, swing your partner stay in line  
(Gents pull the ladies in front of them into their corners position as everyone is backing out of the middle)

### “Ladies to the Middle and the Gents Sashay”

(Ladies take two steps in and two steps out and the gents keep traveling around the outside of the ring. The go one place and take hands of both ladies backing out beside them.) Repeat four times and swing your partner.

### “Swingin’ on a Gate”

Swing yer corner like swingin’ on a gate, Now your own if yer not too late  
Allemande left on your left hand (corner), dance on into a right left grand  
Hand over hand, go around the ring, meet your partner, pretty little thing  
And promenade

### “Little Red Wagon“

Allemande left with your left hand

Right hand to your partner, right left grand

Here we go in a little red wagon

The hind wheels off and the axle's draggin'

Meet your own and promenade, Promenade 8 till you come straight

### “Four Ladies Chain”

Four ladies chain across the set, Chain right back your not through yet

Turn around with your left hand, And promenade with your ol' man

### “Pretty Little Ring”

Ring ring, pretty little ring, break that ring with a corner swing

Ring ring, pretty little ring, break that O and swing your beaux

Now promeney and promeneux head back home that's what you do

Or promeney and promeknow head back home and knead the dough

### “Double Bow Knot” (Big Circle Dance)

“Weave the Basket” (Big Circle or 4 Couple Square)

### “Star Promenade”

Ladies to the center and back to the bar

Gents to the middle with a right hand star

A right hand star in the middle of the hall

Come back by the left to your partners all

And promenade around the hall

### “Star RLG”

Ladies to the center and back to the bar

Gents to the middle with a right hand star

Back by the left in the middle of the land

Meet your own go right and left grand

Hand over hand around the hall

Meet your partners and promenade all

### “Simple Break Figure”

Do si do your partner, See saw your corner

Allemande right your partner, Allemande left your corner

Swing your partner

“Ladies to the Center go Back to Back”

Ladies to the center go back to back, gents go around the railroad track  
Elbow swing the one you swung, pick up the next one on the rung  
(Swing the next and ladies go back in)(Repeat 3 more times)

“Patter Break”

Circle Eight till you get straight, knock down Sal and pick up Kate  
The other way back, same old eight, don't be slow, don't be late  
Swing your gal like your swingin' on a gate

“Simple RLG”

Face your partner, shake right hands, pass on by with a right left grand  
Pass them once and around you go, next time you meet you promeno

“Let Them Go, Then Do Si Do”

Circle left, circle right single file, Ladies turn out gents follow  
Ladies turn back, let them go, Meet your partner do si do  
Swing your corner, swing your own

“Jump! Jump!”

All join hands and circle to the left (8 beats)  
Other back and circle to the right (8 beats)  
Circle to the left, circle to the right (4 beats)  
To the left, to the right (2 beats)  
To the left, to the right, to the left, to the right (1 beat)  
Now you Jump! Jump! Jump! Jump! Jump! Jump! Jump! Jump!

“Ladies Roll Back”

Promenade 8 and don't slow down  
Keep on walking your partner around  
Gals roll back to the next in line, keep on walking, you keep in time (x4)  
Ladies roll back... until your back with your own and you promenade home

“Star Promenade, Ladies Twirl Behind”

Gents left hand star, Pick up your own, Star promenade  
Ladies twirl to the gent behind (4 times)  
Head couples arch promenade under

Thank you folks that's it, that's all, if you forgot my name it is T-Claw

# DARE TO

