

Dance Party

By Bill Harrison

Questions to ask prior to the dance party:

1. How many people will be attending?
2. Is this event for young kids and what age, Father/Daughter, adults, wedding?
3. Is the event inside or outside?
4. Will a power supply be made available nearby?
5. Could a small table be made available for me to use?
6. Is there other entertainment such as DJ or Band?
7. How many hours of calling is expected?
8. Are they looking for more than square dancing?
9. Will alcohol be served prior or during the event?
10. Can you provide me with emergency contact cell #?
11. What state and town will this be in?

Preparing for the Party Dance

A Dance Party is an event where you do not have to be “definition conscious” to get the dancers to accomplish the moves in square dancing. The object is to get those attending dancing and having fun with a little dance material that will not stress them in the learning process.

One approach is to get everyone in a big circle using up-tempo music.

Using a big circle and the Sicilian Circle method fits all ages for a Dance Party.

Once they are in the circle, you can start to introduce them to two person calls such as Stars, Dosado, Pass Thru, Promenade. When promenading have one couple step up beside the couple in front and promenade as a line of 4 and have the two couples Bend the Line or while promenading have every other couple Wheel Around.

If using the Wheel Around approach you will have a Sicilian Circle where two couples can work with each other allowing the couples to travel to other couples.

If using the line of 4 where you bend the line, you have two couples to work with.

The dancers in this formation cannot progress as easily as they can in the Sicilian Circle. If you decide to have the couples travel to another couple you will need to use circles such as circle $\frac{3}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$ in order to create the Sicilian Circle.

Use calls such as Right/Left hand Stars, 2 person/4person Stars, Circle 2 person/4 person, Dosado, Pass Thru, Face In to the Center, Big Circles, circling left/right, Single File Promenade, Promenade.

Always progress the couples so they will dance with others from the event.

One of the main goals of a square dance party is getting the new dancers to experience what a real square dance feels like from a squared set. This can be accomplished many ways.

A Grand March can be a fun, unique way to establish squares.

Having the lines of four mentioned earlier meeting with another line of four and circling eight dancers to create a square is also an effective way to establish squares.

Another method that can be used is to have the couples Scatter Promenade then pick up three more couples to circle with until everyone is filled in squaring each couple to a wall.

If there are extra couples, you can have them participate by having them tap in. Having a few extra helpers standing by can be very helpful to fill in the remaining odd set so all the new dancers are on the floor.

Once you have everyone in squares, practice using the same calls mentioned earlier. Many combinations of easy Basic calls can create enough material to entertain these new dancers without overburdening them with too many calls.

Zeros and Equivalents can still be added.

If you use a Pass Thru followed by a Wheel Around, this becomes a great substitute for Right and Left Thru.

Here are a couple of neat little routines using the circling action:

Couple #1 Walk over to face Couple #2 and Circle 4 all the way around, Number 1 man pick up Couple #3 and circle 6 all the way around, Number 1 man pick up Couple #4 and circle 8 people. You can repeat this with Couple #2 walking over to Couple #3 and circling 4 and so on.

Heads Circle 4 all the way around and then make a right hand star all the way around.

Now have the Sides Promenade all the way around. Ask everyone to do this routine at the same time.

Another to get everyone involved is to make one line with Men in one line and Ladies in another facing side walls. The more people you have may require a couple of sets of these lines. Here is the routine:

Go Forward and Back,

Right Elbow (Back to where you started), Left Elbow (Back to where you started)

Two Handed Swing (circle left back to where you started), Two Hand Reverse Swing

Do Si Do, Reverse Do Si Do

Note the two end dancers closet to the caller is Couple Number 1, So have Couple Number One still facing side walls Side Step dance all the way down to the end of the line and back to where they started.

All peel away single file and at the other end of the line Couple Number 1 make an Arch and everyone ducks under to the end of the line close to the caller, all face side walls. We have a new couple number 1 and start the routine from beginning by going forward and back, Right elbow, Left elbow and so on.

Remember, it is a party night not a square dance. Enjoy the simple things for a successful party night.