

Beginners Guide To Line Dance

Your First Steps

Line dancing is a choreographed style of dancing. That means, variations and mistakes aside, when you step out a line dance, you are following a sequence of steps that have been conceived by the choreographer or choreographers.

When you start off at a beginner class it is the task of the instructor not only to teach you dances and to boost your confidence, but just as importantly, to also teach you at least the basic step sequences. Of course teaching these step sequences is usually done as part of teaching a dance - the instructor will teach a series of steps and then inform the class the name for that sequence. As the class improves, the teacher will increasingly just use the step description. Very rarely an instructor will teach a particular step sequence by itself.

Starting Tips

If you are a beginner, the following is a list of suggestions that may make learning to line dance easier, less frustrating and more enjoyable. Many of the points we have scoured from various sources, others are the result of our own learning experience.

Be patient! Rome wasn't built in a day - don't expect to be dancing with the best of 'em after just one lesson. For most folks it takes about three weeks before they are confident with their first dance. If it takes longer, don't worry - how quickly it takes you to pick it up initially has little bearing on how good you'll be a year on.

Practice, practice, practice! Practice may not make perfect, but it will increase your confidence and help you learn a dance. Don't just practice the dance in class - run thru' it at home, at work, at school .. anywhere and anytime you have the chance (and the room). Also practice the basic steps .. vines, shuffles etc.. Balance is important. Keep your body straight and your centre of weight over the foot your weight is on.

Don't be afraid to ask for help. Remember, If you are having trouble with a particular step or can't seem to pick up a dance and need more help, ask the instructor. Everyone started off as a novice.

Proper footwear is very important. No, we don't mean you all have to all wear dancing shoes, rather you need to wear shoes or boots that are comfortable. Leather soled footwear is best, but not compulsory - especially for beginners.

When you go to your first class make sure it's a beginner class and introduce yourself to the instructor beforehand, making a point of telling them you are a novice. When the class starts, the best place is up the front, in the middle. Yes, you can hide up the back, but that makes it harder to see the instructor and more importantly, the instructor's feet.

If you bump into someone, briefly apologise and keep on dancing. Bumps, and worse, are a fact of life on the dance floor. No matter how good you may be, you'll still occasionally bump into people.

Above all come along, have fun and make friends

Ray Hodson