

Dance Floor Etiquette

Today's dancers should use certain rules of dance etiquette. Public dance venues often have an over-crowded scene causing dancers to move closely in a crowded area, stepping on each other and executing moves that occasionally put another dancer at risk. To observe the proper rules of etiquette, be aware of the other dancers and the space that you have. Execute your moves accordingly. Practice moves beforehand, so that you don't do anything that may put another dancer at risk.

Get a feel for your partner. Can they follow the moves that you are leading? If not, don't lead them. **Dance at the level of the least experienced of the dance partnership.** Dance easier steps as to avoid embarrassment or accident. Do not try to teach your dance partner new dance steps and figures. Leave that to qualified professional dance instructors.

The dance floor is divided into lanes. Sometimes there are different dances going on at the same time on the floor. Fast outside lane, the slower inside lane and the stationary middle.

The Fast Lane: The outside lanes are for progressive dancing which include the Country 2-Step, Foxtrot, Polka, and Waltz. The outside of the floor should be left for the faster progressive dancers to move around.

The Slower Lane: The slower progressive dancers should stay inside the outside fast lane, closer to the center, and let the faster dancers pass on the outside.

The Middle Floor: The center of the floor is reserved for stationary dances (also called spot dance, and slot dances). These include dances such as the Cha-cha, East Coast Swing, Jitterbug, Jive, Lindy, Mambo, Rumba, Salsa, Simple Swing (single rhythm), and West Coast Swing.

The Line of Dance:

- The progressive dances such as the Country 2-Step, Foxtrot, Polka, and Waltz move around the outside circumference of the dance floor in a counter-clockwise direction, known as the line of dance.
- Certain patterns of the progressive dances are non-progressive in nature and should only be dance in the corners of the dance floor or in the center of the dance floor away from the outer lanes. These include figures such as the popular box step, sways, dips, and any other dance movement that does not keep a progressive flow.
- The Tangos include the American Tango, the International Tango, and the Argentine Tango. They are directional dances.
 - The American Tango is a directional dance with movement that should move from corner to corner of the dance floor.
 - The International Tango is a directional dance with movements that should move in a counter-clockwise direction of dance floor.
 - The Argentine Tango is spot dance that uses a spot of the dance floor that is extended by flowing movements.

Movement of Spot Dances and Slot Dances:

- The Swing Dances such as East Coast Swing, Jitterbug, Jive, and Lindy have movements that are danced in a star formation in varying directions around a 360 degree circle.
- The Latin Dances such as Cha-cha, Mambo, and Salsa have movements that are danced in a slot (rectangle) that faces wall to wall of the dance floor. If the dance starts using East-West floor patterns, then the dance's direction should not suddenly change to North-South floor patterns.
- The West Coast Swing is danced in a slot that faces wall to wall of the dance floor. If the dance starts using East-West floor patterns, then the dance's direction should not suddenly change to North-South floor patterns.

Bumping, Crashing and Stepping on Toes:

- When entering the dance floor it is the responsibility of incoming couples to stay out of the way of the couples already dancing.
- The man should vary the moves used according to the density of the crowd on the floor. Men need to be prepared for emergency moves to quickly lead them away from a collision.
- On a crowded floor keep the steps small and keep elbows to yourself.
- Most ladies enjoy a variety of dance moves but they do not like it to collide with other couples. Ladies can also help by looking over the man's shoulder for possible collisions. Try a resistant pull on his shoulder to alert him.
- Be nice to your fellow dancers and try not to bump into them. Nothing looks worse than great dancers bumping into other dancers.
- It is the man's job to lead, so it is his job to keep an eye out for traffic.
- If you do cause a wreck, smile and look apologetic. You will usually get a smile or nod in return.

Avoid Bad Attention:

- Avoid arguments on the floor. Resist the urge to argue with your partner about who blew it. Everyone makes mistakes; just smile and keep going.

When the Song Ends:

- Applaud the band and thank your partner for the dance.
- Be a gentleman and escort the lady back to her seat. Do not leave her stranded on the dance floor, just because you are in a hurry to find a partner for the next dance.
- Do not stand on the dance floor to socialize.

Attitude –The Most Important:

- A good attitude will allow you to have fun and a good time on the dance floor. No one else can do that for you.
- Pay attention to your partner, keep eye contact and try to smile. Nobody wants to dance with an inattentive man or woman.