

CALLERS CORNER

A forum for the exchange of information
between Callers & Dancers

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YES, I'm still here!

I received an email from a 'faithful' reader who was 'surprised' that I wasn't getting much mail and at the same time did send me along a number of questions. THANK YOU! So, for now, I will keep this column going and respond to those questions, trusting that, at the same time, it will provide answers to you 'silent' readers that are out there.

SURELY this must be more of you that have questions about this great activity that we all enjoy? Does every tip you dance go perfectly? If not why not? Do you observe actions or behaviour that annoy you or cause you to ask why? Does the Caller do or say something you don't understand? Do you wonder 'why' your Caller does things a certain way? Do you ever wonder 'what to do' when something 'different' happens? These may be questions that you have in your mind, which many others may also be wondering about.

So why not 'ask the Caller' about them? Drop me a note with your questions and I'll endeavour to answer them as best I can. Remember folks, there's NO such thing as a stupid question although there can be some really dumb answers !! I'll try and avoid doing that !!

Questions, comments, etc. can be sent directly to me by email or by "snail mail" to the Square Time Editor, who'll pass it along.

Email: askthecaller@squaresandrounds.com



ASK THE CALLER

So here's a couple of those 'new' questions. Granted some may have been answered previously, but they always bear repeating - especially now that we have a great crop of NEW Dancers !!

Q1: *I have noticed that when promenading, some squares stop before others. Who should determine when to stop?*

A1: *This 'phenomenon' is seen continually & although I did address this in a previous column, it's repeated here for emphasis & further clarification.....*

PROMENADE - Don't cut it short !!

During Patter, this is not a problem. But, where you do see it most prevalent is during Singing Calls. Though most dancers probably don't realize it, the choreography that your Caller is using - generally, for the Promenade - gives you up to 16 beats (steps) of music to get from 'where you are (now)' to 'home'. Let's say you're 2 steps past home when you hear 'Promenade', then you'll use 14 of the available 16 to get there - no problem! But, if you're 6 steps from home & stop there, then you're standing doing nothing for 10 more beats of music. The 'general' rule of thumb is simply this - if you're *'more than'* half-way' (ie: 8 steps) from home, then Promenade home - if less, then 'keep going' - all the way around.

What would you rather do, stand or dance?

From 'behind' *my* mike, IMHO, this cutting short of promenades disrupts the flow of the dancing, causing dancers to be 'out of synch' with the rhythm of the music & thus not enjoying the "dance" as much as they could.

So, who determines when to stop? **The #1 man in the square.** If the #1 man stops at 'his home', then the rest of the square assumes whatever position you're now in - whether it's heads or sides - whether you're crossed or not (more on this another time). Often you'll see the #1 man put up a hand which says "we're stopping now".

Q2: When a square breaks down, some dancers get into lines, others square up at home. Which is correct?

A2: Actually, both are... BUT for different reasons, as explained below.

HOME or LINES which is correct?

When your square breaks down, what **do you do**? The “rule” is very simple, and **in both cases, do it quickly** so that you can get back to dancing. It really doesn't matter who's dancing with whom, as long as you're dancing and not standing around trying to sort each other out!

Whether it's “HOME” or “LINES” depends on whether it happens during a Patter or Singer.

PATTER - If your square breaks down during a ‘Patter’ call, then **form two- lines of 4** (ie: B,G,B,G), facing each other and parallel to one wall. Do that quickly and then wait for the caller to “pick you up”. Callers do spot a square that's broken down, but can't do anything to help you until you've got yourselves into lines. Once there, the Caller will ‘adjust’ the dancing to bring the whole floor to “lines of four”, whereupon you can start dancing again!! WAIT until you hear the Caller clearly say ‘lines of four’.....& then get back to dancing.

SINGER - with *Singing* calls, square your set up quickly, and wait until you hear an Allemande left, or Promenade, or any call that can be done from a squared set

In both cases, the key is to quickly move into position and get ready to start dancing again – after all, **isn't that what you'd rather be doing ??**



WHAT THE
CALLER
SEES !!



Message to all Experienced Dancers!

Some reminders regarding the NEW DANCERS that you're now dancing with!

Remember that our newest dancers only know what your Caller has taught them- ie: the “Basics” of each move they've learned to date. What else they may learn ‘on the fly’ comes from YOU, the experienced dancers. They will ‘rely’ on you and ‘trust’ that you are showing them the ‘right’ stuff. PLEASE help your Caller by ensuring they get only the ‘basics’!

By that I mean.....

- **Don't “twirl” new dancers either after or during Swing &/or Promenade. Keep the moves ‘simple’ - the fancy bits can come later.**
- **Do Grand Square correctly - no fancy sliding sideways etc. AND ensure that it takes the full 32 beats !**
- **No “bumps & grinds” during Right & Left Grand or Weave the Ring.**
- **Swing ONCE ONLY (ie: 6 beats), unless the Caller directs otherwise.**
- **Keep your Promenades “tight” - don't take the long routes...**
- **Don't cut Promenades short - (see previous item in this column)**

And - Never Forget that “you were once a beginner too !”

REMEMBER TO SMILE, IT'S CONTAGIOUS !!



Cheers Geoff