

Dance Friendly

Most of us have a good attitude about our responsibilities to others. We are habitually polite and respectful. We turn off our cell phones at church, movies and concerts. We go out of our way to assist someone who needs a bit of help with a doorway, an elevator, or a cart of groceries. We stoop down or reach up to assist the elderly or otherwise limited shopper at the grocery store. We hold doors for others even when it will make us further back in the waiting line at a restaurant. And we certainly would not presume to disrupt a joyful occasion such as a dance. Therefore, impoliteness and disrespect on the dance floor is probably because of ignorance and ineptness rather than attitude. **This flyer is for those whose attitude is admirable and who would be glad to know more about how to Dance Friendly.**

Line of Dance guidelines represent "rules of the road" for dancers which, like rules for vehicular traffic, keep dancers moving comfortably at their elected pace, minimizing interference and collision, and enabling the maximum number of people to enjoy their preferred style of dancing in a diverse, yet polite and respectful, environment.

Progressive dances, such as Waltz, Texas Two-Step, Foxtrot, Quickstep, Polka, and Tango, move **counterclockwise** along the periphery of the dance floor. The faster dancers use the outer lanes, and the slower dancers use the inner lanes. Those wishing to execute a figure that does not move along the lanes go to the center of the dance floor so as not to interfere with traffic. Essentially we behave on the dance floor much like we do on the roadways, adjust our position according to our velocity, and we never go against the direction of traffic.

Spot dances, such as Rumba, Cha-Cha, Salsa, Mambo, Swing, Bolero, and Hustle, are danced in a relatively small area. Each couple occupies an area on the dance floor that should be respected by other dancers, and they, too, should be respectful and remain in their selected area. However, even though the music might indicate a spot dance, some dancers might prefer a progressive style, so the outer lane of the dance floor should be left open whenever possible, and even if occupied for a spot dance, spot dancers near the edge of the floor should remain willing to move aside to enable progressive dancers to pass.

Beginners who often need to stop and regroup should move to the center of the floor rather than the edges or corners. In the center you may stop, discuss your problems, practice, and know that you will rarely interfere with other dancers. You are also less likely to be identified as beginners, and you are more likely to be approached politely by experienced dancers willing to assist.

Only dancers should be on the dance floor, even during band breaks. If want to stand and talk, do so away from the dance floor. Leave the dance floor to the dancers, who might wish to take advantage of intermission to practice a new variation or work on a problem when there is less likelihood of interfering with other dancers.

Follow these protocols, and the dance will be more enjoyable for all. You might be surprised at how enjoyable a crowded dance floor can be when all dancers are following the line of dance, and how frustrating even a sparsely populated dance floor can be when they are not.

You are in Texas, so please, Drive Friendly and Dance Friendly.