

## Some suggestions for helping you learn! Courtesy of Paula Messier

**1. Ask questions!** Ask for a step or sequence to be repeated if you don't get it. Don't be embarrassed by asking. Others probably need the same help and may just be too self-conscious to ask! Instructors want to help, but we can't if we don't know you're having a problem. The speed and detail in which we may be teaching at any class varies depending on the level of the majority of the people on the floor at that time. Always try to come to an appropriate level class.

**2. Be patient!** You would be one in a million if you walked onto the dance floor for the first time & could instantly do it perfectly. Take home step sheets, if offered, or obtain copies from any of the listed links on my line dance pages. Practice the dances if you really want to get into this type of dancing fully. At least walk them at home even if you don't have the music. Repetition helps. No one is perfect. Just think of those little "errors" as new variations. Don't give up!

**3. Come often to classes!** If you really want to become proficient, come on a regular basis. If you can find a class or a place to dance, try twice a week. Use what you want to learn.

**4. Take the alternatives!** If you're new to this sport, and it is a sport, most instructors will give easy alternatives for the more intricate steps. Take them. Add the original steps back in when you're more comfortable with the dance. Keep your steps small. You will be able to maintain your balance better & be able to "fix" your problems more easily. Keep your knees "soft" (don't lock the knees). You will be able to make transitions more quickly.

**5. Turn technique!** Learn good turn technique. It's really a must. We do so much in line and couple dancing. Turning takes practice. Sorry. There's no easy way to learn except "do it". Practice all the many kinds of turns, progressive (such as pivots ""term for couples turn", spirals, chaine') and stationary (chase "aka pivot to line dancers", paddle, etc).

**6. Learn terminology!** It will seem like a foreign language at first. And of course there is that pesky lag time between when you hear the words and the meaning gets to your feet. And then you still need to actually "move your feet". Don't worry, it will come. Be patient. See "[Basic Dance Steps](#)" page on this website.

**7. Music variety!** Line dancing is no longer just "country". It's done to all kinds of music from pop to Latin, to rock, to rock n' roll, gospel, you name it there's probably a line dance to it. If you don't like the song that's on right now, then wait 3 or 4 minutes and I'll bet you will like the next one. It depends on where you dance as to what the mix will be. My classes are generally quite a variety!!

**8. Dance floor etiquette!** Dance floor etiquette! Rules will change somewhat from place to place so be sure to check out where you dance for the specific ones you need to know. These are "general" and a good starting place. The goal is to safely & efficiently use all the space available to the best advantage. Everyone is there to have a good time and wants to be safe. Think of the floor as to having lanes on the outside edge all the way around (like a horse track). The outside lane (closest to the rail) is the fast lane. Most experienced couple dancers will be dancing here. The inner lane is the slower lane (less experienced, partner dances, etc). You will be tempted, as a newcomer to couple dancing, to want to stay as close to the "exit" as possible. You may get run over that way! Stay to the inner lane and if you need to stop altogether then move to the center of the floor. These lanes travel in counter clockwise direction. Do not travel in a clockwise direction. This is the line of dance (CCW). Stationary dances and line dances are usually done in the center of the floor. Some clubs call out what dance you should be doing. Line dancers please do not extend your lines into those outside lines as some couple may be doing a progressive couple dance (such as two step) to a line dance song (music is music). Couple dancers, do not cut corners as many of the stationary dances and line will be traveling back & forth and while not in one spot for the moment will be back in a moment. Dances travel!! Pay attention is a new place as to the direction that a line dance is started. Different clubs, different directions. Please remember when people are turning it is much harder to watch for other dancers. Defensive dancing is important in crowded situations to avoid any injuries. Do not stand on the dance floor to hold conversations. Do not bring food or drinks onto the dance floor. If you bump into other dancers, no matter who is at fault, apologize quickly. Be careful. No one is perfect.

**Take care and hope to see you on the dance floor!**