

“Tips for Your Tips”

A series devoted to helping you become a more confident dancer

Who Am I?

Identifying Your Place in Your Square

In our daily lives, we play many parts: parent, child, co-worker, friend. We are all these “people” simultaneously. The same is true in your square: center/end of your formation, left-/right-hand dancer of your couple, facing in/out of your formation. Since each call’s definition assigns moves to designated dancers, it is necessary to identify “who” you are at a given moment in order to execute your part(s). Sometimes, standing still is your “part.” Keep in mind that as dancers move in response to a call, “who” you are in your square’s formation will continually change.

Am I a center or an end? Lines, waves, and columns have centers and ends. In a line or wave, centers touch two people’s hands, while ends touch only one person. Some calls designate specific dancers (centers Trade, ends Circulate). During Bend the Line, the bend occurs after the center dancers drop hands with each other. Trade By has a different action assigned to the centers versus the ends of the formation.

Am I part of the left- or right-hand couple in an out-facing line? During Wheel and Deal, the right-hand couple wheels in front of the left-hand couple.

Am I the left- (the beau) or right- (the belle) hand dancer in my couple at this moment? This is *not* the same as boy or girl. During a Courtesy Turn or Wheel Around, the left hand dancer backs up while the right hand dancer walks forward. Flutterwheel is initiated by the right-hand dancer, Reverse Flutterwheel by the left-hand dancer.

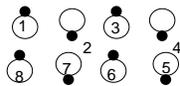
Which is my box? Lines, waves, and columns can be split into two adjacent boxes of four dancers, or the center box may be designated. During Split Circulate, a dancer must be careful not to cross over into the adjacent box.

Am I facing in (a trailer) or out (a leader) of my box/formation? During Scoot Back, the in-facing dancer does the Turn Thru while the out-facing dancer does the Run. Walk and Dodge is another good example of trailers and leaders.

For each diagram below, I have identified which dancers are each “part.”

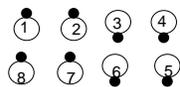
Note: Dancer positions in the diagrams are gender neutral. An excellent exercise: Pick one dancer at a time and identify how many “parts” that person is playing in each diagram. This will help you more easily see “who” you are when you are in a square. Happy dancing!

Jan Thompson



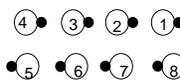
Parallel Right-Hand Waves

Ends – 1458; Centers – 2367; Split Boxes – 1278, 3456; Facing Out – 17, 35; Facing In – 28, 46



Parallel Two-Faced Lines

Ends – 1458; Centers – 2367; Left-Hand Dancers – 1458; Right-Hand Dancers – 2367; Split Boxes – 1278, 3456; Facing Out – 12, 56; Facing In – 34, 78



Right-Hand Column

Ends – 1458; Centers – 2367; Split Boxes – 1278, 3456; Facing Out of Split Boxes – 17, 35; Facing In to Split Boxes – 28, 46