

Dance Etiquette for Perth International Dance



The following applies to dance sessions (Mondays, Saturdays and Fridays), parties and other Group events and specifically to times allocated for requested dances and in other non-teaching situations.

This dance etiquette is designed to ensure that everyone gets maximum enjoyment out of the dancing. It is based on the observations that it is much easier to follow a person in front of you than someone behind you, and very much easier to lead a person behind you than in front of you.

Note that dance etiquette is suspended during lesson as lessons and teachers specifically cater for those who do not know the dances being taught.

Know when to join a line or circle of dancers

If you do not know a dance, then dance behind the line until you have mastered the steps. You do not have to be step perfect to join a line, but you should have a reasonable idea of direction and speed of travelling steps and in particular know in which direction or directions the dance goes.

If you see a dance that you like and do not know, ask the name, make a note of it and request for it to be taught - there is a book specifically for this purpose.

Know where to join the line

Dances usually lead to the right, occasionally to the left (particularly with French and Hungarian dances) and sometimes the direction of dance changes between left and right during dance. Many dances move in and out.

Watch the dance and do not join at the leading end. Usually this is the right, but sometimes the left and occasionally both! So the safest point at which to join a line is somewhere in the middle.

If the dance has already started and you know the dance, position yourself between 2 dancers somewhere the middle and they should admit you into the line; if they don't then join somewhere else. If you are sure that the dance leads only in one direction, join at the end, where there is no problem about requesting admission. Don't forget to dance behind if you do not know the dance, especially if it's very fast or if it travels a lot.

Be considerate – if it turns out that you are less familiar with the dance than you anticipated - be prepared to drop behind the line and watch someone who knows the dance.

See also our information sheet '**Tips for new folk dancers**'