

Reasons to Dance **(Reformatted by The ARTS - August 6, 2017)**

1. **Social Aspects** – Square Dancing and Contra Dancing are great ways to meet people in a non-threatening, relaxed social atmosphere. You never know who you are going to meet. Lifelong friendships are formed, and many have met the love of their life. There are clubs for singles, couples, the handicapped, gays and lesbians, campers, and youth, although usually everybody is welcome at all clubs.
2. **Healthy Environment** – Square, Round, and Contra Dance clubs are smoke and alcohol free.
3. **Stress Relief** – Since these three dance forms, Square, Round, and Contra Dancing, are all led by a leader giving commands, you become so focused on the “task at hand” that your other mental worries are forgotten, at least for a couple of hours.
4. **Cardiovascular Fitness** – Dancing is a safe way to exercise. The level of exertion is up to each participant. You can rev it up for a high intensity workout or take it easy for a relaxing, yet beneficial workout. Dancing regularly can lead to a slower heart rate, lower blood pressure, and an improved cholesterol profile.
5. **Body and Brain Boost** – Square, Round, and Contra dancers react to calls as they are given. This forces the body and brain to be tightly coordinated. A number of the calls are memorized which keeps the brain sharp.
6. **Calorie Burn** – Dancing burns between 200 and 400 calories every 30 minutes of dancing. That’s equivalent to walking or riding a bike.
7. **Distance** – The President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports recommends 10,000 steps per day to maintain physical fitness. It is estimated that a typical square dancer can expect to clock 9,000 to 10,000 steps per dance.
8. **Sturdy Bones** – The side-to-side movements of dancing strengthen weight-bearing bones, tibia, fibula, and femur, and help prevent the slow loss of bone mass.
9. **Rehabilitation** – Dancing is a way to get back in the swing of things if you are recovering from an injury. Dancing keeps your joints moving, and is a nice alternative to jogging or other high-intensity activities.
10. **Mental Health** – Studies have shown that activities that involve both physical and mental activity at the same time help to slow the onset of Alzheimer’s disease.
11. **Balance** – Studies have shown that adults who have a history of activities such as dance, tend to have less incidents of falling as they get older.



DANCE YOUR WAY TO A BETTER LIFE

All forms of physical activity are good for the mind, body and soul, and Square Dancing is no exception. Do Sa Do-ing on a regular basis contributes to the following:

- **Cardiovascular Fitness** – Dancing (Round, Contra/Traditional or Square Dance) is a safe way to exercise. The moves are interesting, but the level of exertion is up to each participant. Rev up for a high-intensity workout, or take it slow and easy for a relaxing, yet beneficial, work out. Dancing regularly can lead to a slower heart rate, lower blood pressure and an improved cholesterol profile.
- **Healthy Environment** – Square Dancing clubs are smoke- and alcohol-free. This allows the participants to concentrate on the calls and socialize in a safe environment.
- **Body and Brain Boost** – Square, Round and Contra/Traditional dancers react to the calls as they are given. This forces the body and brain to be tightly coordinated. A number of calls are memorized, which helps keep the mind sharp.
- **Calories Burned** – Dancing burns between 200 and 400 calories in thirty minutes of dancing – that's the equivalent of walking, swimming or riding a bike.
- **Distance** – The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports recommends 10,000 steps per day to maintain physical fitness.
- **Sturdy Bones** – The side-to-side movement of dancing strengthens weight-bearing bones (tibia, fibula and femur), and helps prevent and slow the loss of bone mass.
- **Rehabilitation** – Square Dancing is a great way to get back into the swing of things if you are recovering from an injury. Dancing keeps your joints moving, and is a nice alternative to jogging, or other high-intensity activities.
- **Social Aspects** – You never know who you're going to meet on the dance floor. Some types of dance, such as Contra, require you to switch partners every dance, so it's easy to make friends. Lifetime friendships are formed, and some even meet the love of their lives. There are dancing groups for everybody – handicapped people, gays and lesbians, youth, singles and couples.

CALLER'S CORNER

A Caller is a person who directs the dance pattern for Square and Contra dancing by calling the figures. This requires knowledge of the calls, a good sense of rhythm and an outgoing personality. Calling Square Dances can also involve singing. Years of training are needed to perfect calling skills.



DANCING IS FOR EVERYONE

If you can walk, you can dance. The activities of Square, Round and Contra/Traditional Dancing welcome all ages and ethnicities.

Community dance groups can be found all over the world.

Anyone with the desire to dance simply needs a little motivation to move and to find fellow dancers. Square Dancing has become so popular and well-liked that 33 U.S. states have designated it their Official State Dance. Whether you are interested in Square, Round, or Contra/Traditional Dancing, local dance groups are waiting for you to join the fun.

For information, check on the internet at www.arts-dance.org or www.you2candance.com



HISTORICAL TIMELINE

WHAT WE STAND FOR

Individuals passionate about the dance activity formed a coalition called ARTS (Alliance of Round, Traditional and Square Dance) to promote awareness and growth of contemporary Square, Round, Contra and Traditional Dance.

We invite you to join us in this fun, healthy and affordable activity. See for yourselves how worry and depression fade into the background, along with the day-to-day stresses of modern life.

We hope you dance!

DANCING DEFINED

Round Dancing

A ballroom-type dance characterized by revolving movements where all dance the same steps in time with the music.

www.roundalab.com

Square Dancing

Modern Square Dancing is where four couples form squares and dance as a group.

www.dosado.com or
www.you2candance.com

Contra/Traditional Dance

Several folk dance styles in which couples dance in two facing lines, and other formations.

www.contralab.net

To locate fellow dancers in your area and learn how to dance, please visit www.arts-dance.org, www.you2candance.com, or contact:

FUN FACTOIDS ABOUT SQUARE DANCING

- Benjamin Lovett, a master of dance, was the first caller to be recorded.
- The first Square Dance record was produced by Thomas Edison – Henry Ford requested that he record Benjamin Lovett calling Square Dancing.
- One of the first musicals to feature Square Dancing was “Let’s Dance.”

1400s–1500s	Round and Square Dancing appear in all parts of Europe.
1600s	Across all levels of society, dancing groups were abundant under the name “English Country Dancing.”
1651	The first book about Square and Round Dancing, “The English Dancing Master” – plain and easy rules for the dancing of country dances, with tunes of each dance – is published in 17 editions from 1651 to 1728, and contains 918 dances.
1700	Contra-style Dancing becomes the most favored form of dance.
Early 1800s	Square or Quadrille becomes the most popular forms of dancing, and a mainstay of the upper class.
Late 1800s	Western Dance is disrupted by Ragtime and Jazz, and is only performed by laggards in New England, Appalachia and the American West.
1920s	Henry Ford revives the old style of dancing and builds a ballroom in Michigan. He hires a dancing master, Benjamin Lovett, to run classes.
1926	Henry Ford and Benjamin Lovett publishes “Good Morning,” a book that provided inspiration and material on dancing.
1939	Dr. Lloyd “Pappy” Shaw publishes his first definitive book on Western Square Dancing, “Cowboy Dances.”
1916–1951	“Pappy” Shaw, as superintendent of Cheyenne Mountain School in Colorado Springs, teaches his students to dance. A talented group of them tour the United States, creating great interest in Square Dancing, which takes off and grows like wildfire.
1952	The first National Square Dance Convention® is held in Riverside, California, drawing more than 5,000 dancers.
1973	SSDUSA, The Singles Square Dancers, USA, Inc. is established to serve the single square dancer community.
1974	CALLERLAB, the International Association of Square Dance Callers, holds its first convention.
1976	The 25th National Square Dance Convention® is held in Anaheim, California and attracts nearly 40,000 dancers.
1977	ROUNDALAB, the International Association of Round Dance Teachers is organized.
1981	USDA, the United Square Dancers of America is formed to represent and serve the needs of Square Dancers throughout the United States.
1983	IAGSDC, the International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs is established to serve the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and heterosexual dancer community throughout the world.
1986	CONTRALAB, the International Association of Contra Callers, is formed.
2003	All Join Hands Foundation, Ltd , a charitable organization dedicated to supporting the funding of projects that will preserve and promote Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered (GLBT) square dancing and other associated dance forms, is created. ARTS-Dance, the Alliance of Round, Traditional and Square Dance, Inc. (ARTS-Dance) is formed.

SAGE Swingers
October 27, 2002
Dear Square Dance Friends,



In the various square dance magazines and web sites you can read how square dance clubs and national organizations have plans for advertising square dancing, for “improving” our public image, for altering the basic dance program and for growing memberships. For the SAGE Swingers in Brunswick, Maine the process began with a change in philosophy.

What are the club’s goals for its dancers? We think this can determine how you go about gaining and keeping new members. Our goals today are different from what they might have been five and ten years ago. For example, at SAGE Swingers some of our goals are:

- 1) To grow the club by getting more new members
- 2) To make sure people are having a good time learning to dance.
- 3) Insure that new members return.

Here are some of the “old” goals we no longer strive for.

- 1) We do not feel people need to graduate from a Mainstream program by a certain date.
- 2) Classes do not have to start in September only.
- 3) Learning to dance is not a race to see how quickly you can get to Plus or A-1
- 4) We tend to downplay classic square dance clothes and make sure people know it’s optional

These ideas express themselves many ways in how we recruit and how we treat new dancers. We do start a class in September, but we also start one in January.

With the help of our club caller, Bill Fulton and his wife, Norma, we try to make our dancing as low key and fun as possible. We have recognized that in order to keep new dancers interested there have to be many opportunities for them to dance, and that means more Mainstream dances. SAGE Swingers has been scheduling more and more Mainstream dances and we search for Mainstream dances on the schedule for our club to support. If you want to get and keep new dancers, Mainstream is the place to be

We’ve tried every one of the methods described in the attached material to recruit for our club. No single one of them has brought in mobs of people but, taken together, they’ve helped us build some classes of two and three squares and graduate 39 dancers over two years. The Fall class of 2002 has witnessed a continuation of the club’s success with 28 additional dancers participating in the first two free workshops and 18 remaining through October. The additional regular support of club members has helped us dance with 5 to 8 squares at every workshop this year.

We have prepared a handout that describes the methods we use for the operation of our club. They have worked for us. The CALLERLAB Foundation has offered to make copies available via electronic mail as a .PDF file or via regular mail as a paper copy to anyone who requests them, please contact the Foundation: Phone (321) 639-0039; E-mail: FoundationFL@aol.com for more information.

See you in a square,
Brian Beckman
Randy Randall

SAGE Swingers Success Methods

The number one way to bring in new dancers is to invite them.

No other method for getting new members has proven better than a personal invitation from club members. We all know this. We also have proved it by taking surveys of new dancers over the past three years. 80% of all our new members came because one of our club members asked them. This is consistent with the statewide surveys the Committee for Promotion of Square and Round Dancing (CPSRD) has conducted in Maine for the past 5 years which show 70% of dancers arrive at a workshop as a result of contact from friends and family.

We also know that not everyone is a natural salesperson, so we have done some things to help make it easier for club members to invite friends, neighbors, fellow workers and even strangers.

Recruiting Committee

We have a recruiting committee of 5 people. These folks are responsible for recruiting programs, strategies, and advertising. Club members can pass on the names and addresses of possible new club members, and the recruiters take responsibility for contacting the potential candidates. All club members need do is verify that someone they know is interested and then give the names to the committee. The committee contacts these people by phone and by mailing out materials and invitations to the upcoming class



Information Handout.

The recruiting committee provides simple information booklets that club members can leave with friends and neighbors. This helps when trying to explain what square dancing is and answers questions about how to dress. See sample enclosed.

Tickets to free workshops.

We also print "free tickets" which give the date, times and locations for the free workshops. It's easy for a club member to hand these out when they invite someone to come. The "ticket" acts as a reminder of the workshop and also puts a little obligation on the newcomers to use their free pass.

Telethon.

The recruiting committee held a one evening telethon, in which we gathered at a local business office (donated by a club member) and called both old and new club members inviting them all to the first workshops of the season. A side benefit of this is it established contact with many longtime club members who may be inactive and let the club show an interest in their health, and their well being. This was a lot of fun as we made all the calls in one two hour session. Coffee, donuts and cookies kept the committee energized.

E-mail access.

The recruiting committee members also receive e-mail's from club members with possible new dancers names, addresses and their e-mail addresses. Again this makes it easy for the club members to pass along the names of possible new class members.

Pipeline List

Even as our workshops are taking place, we have a prospect sheet where all the dancers can jot down the names of potential new dancers. This formal list becomes the foundation for next season's recruiting and ensures candidates for filling the pipeline with new dancers.

Recruiting Competition

The recruiting committee sponsors a competition within the club for members who bring in the most new dancers. We've done this by posting a large white board on which we've drawn squares with four empty spots. When club members bring in names of new dancers we mark them in to fill up the squares. Everyone gets a kick out of seeing the square fill up each week with the names of new people. We try to set a goal of "One Full Square" and when that's filled we start a second and third.

In-club recognition - president's prize.

The Club President sponsored a prize for the club couple which brought in the most new people to a class. Last year this was two T-shirts with the Club logo screen-printed.

Fun nights/ refreshments:

We offer two free workshops or "fun" nights where people are invited to come try square dancing. When these folks arrive at the gym we have them sign in, and give them a name tag. The sign up sheet gives us information for follow up calls, mailing and the newsletter. We have club members near the door and the sign up table to meet and greet newcomers.

Skits/ songs.

The recruiting committee tries to keep recruiting on the minds of all the club members by reminding them with songs and skits. One motivated committee member wrote a recruiting song to the tune of "Take me out to the ball game." Kind of goofy, but people learned quickly how to sing it, and it just reinforced the idea that we were all recruiting. Recruiting members can put on quick two minute skits that might address issues such as how we dress, or when the free workshops occur. These are all quick activities designed to keep up club members' enthusiasm and build awareness.



Newsletter and web broadcasts:

The recruiting committee publicizes information about recruiting and the "fun" nights in both the club newsletter and by broadcasts over the Internet. A simple reminder might be "We're on TV! Look for your square dance club on Channel 7."

Dinner and a taxi.

Probably the ultimate example of club members' dedication to bringing in new members is when they offer to meet the new folks for dinner before the first workshops and then bring them along to the "fun" nights. When this fits people's schedules and personalities such an evening really pays dividends in gaining committed new dancers for your club.

Multi-entry classes

Even when friends seemed willing to accept our invitations, we often found our class schedule was inappropriate for them. It became clear to us that a class opportunity after the Christmas holidays would suit many more people. We also found that club members seemed to be more enthusiastic and available to recruit for the winter class vs. Recruiting for a fall class after an inactive summer.

We've tried every one of these methods for SAGE Swingers recruiting. No single item has been responsible for bringing in mobs of people, but taken together, they've helped us build some classes of two and three squares and graduate 39 dancers over two years. The Fall class of 2002 has witnessed a continuation of the club's success with 28 additional dancers participating in the first two free workshops and 18 remaining through October. The additional regular support of our club members has helped us dance with 5 to 8 squares at every workshop this year.

SAGE Swingers Success Methods

The number two way to gain new dancers is get the word out.

Advertise. There are lots of ways to advertise, but clubs usually are limited for budgets so we have to use free advertising and the time and creativity of club members. We build our advertising around a few themes such as "Fun, Fitness, Friendship" and "Why treadmill when you can dance?" The CPSRD (Committee for Promotion of Square and Round Dancing) for the past two years has offered to reimburse clubs in Maine for advertising expenses they may incur up to \$300 for both a Fall and Winter class.

Local newspaper activity calendar

Almost all the local papers offer some kind of community calendar where you can advertise square dance lessons. Since SAGE Swingers wanted to reach a broader audience we chose to say "Square Dancing for Mid-Coast Maine", rather than just Bath and Brunswick. The newspapers will usually let you e-mail your announcement rather than having to actually take it to the paper.



Another freebie in the papers is usually a "news brief" or "community brief", a short one or two paragraph article which describes something interesting happening in the community. Members of the recruiting committee wrote such articles for the "Times Record", "Coastal Journal" and "Harpwell Anchor".

You might also see if there's a columnist in the paper who covers community activities and have that person mention the square dance classes in the column. Here in the mid-coast area, Gloria Smith writes a column called "In Our Time" which is aimed at people 50 years and older. Gloria was kind enough to write a little bit about both our fall and winter classes.

Paid ads in papers.

You can also pay for advertising in the local paper. Sometimes the papers offer specials in which your ad can appear multiple times or in different regional papers for a special price. Such an ad will typically cost in the range of \$200 to \$300. Our surveys have showed more new dancers saw the free ads than any paid adds we published.

Public access TV.

Most communities served by cable TV have a local access channel and adds for non-profits are free. Here in the Brunswick/ Bath area we have channels 7 and 14. Once we found the correct contact we were able to e-mail our copy and our club logo and the technician at the studio put these parts into a panel to show on the cable. Once they've created a panel, they can save it, and use most of it again for your winter or fall recruiting campaign, changing perhaps just the dates. We were a little surprised to find that a number of our new students did see our TV add. We usually ask the channel to run the ad for 4 weeks prior to the start of our class.



Radio/TV :

Our experience with radio is limited, but most local stations offer free public service announcements. In most cases their lead time is lengthy, so you need to supply them with your announcement 4 and 5 weeks in advance. CPSRD tried paid radio and TV ads in the past and the results were very hard to measure, but we know from discussions that very few new dancers came to workshops as a result of these ads.

Flyers/Posters

Homemade flyers and posters are the mainstay of our community advertising. Today with the software and clip art available to home PC's, club members can print some eye catching posters. Our challenge has been to keep things simple and not have the graphics get in the way of the message. The recruiting committee members will put flyers on community bulletin boards, and club members can put them up in their churches, clubs and workplaces, when that's allowed. For us the "hot" spot is the stairwell at Reny's Store in Bath. Nearly everyone in the mid coast area goes down those stairs some time in a month! The usual places for putting up posters are grocery stores, book stores, hardware stores, health clubs and churches. We also use libraries, doctor's offices, the hospitals, Bowdoin College, the high school, and restaurants. We have tried stapling "free tickets" to the posters so people can just tear off a ticket instead of having to write down the information.

Internet:

There are a number of square dance web sites which relate to dancing in Maine and you can advertise your classes there. The CPSRD has a site. We also use the Maine Arts web site.



Directed Mass mailing.

Home PC's and word-processing programs make it easy to do mass mailings. We usually target two groups: one is inactive club members and the other is local social clubs and organizations. The two mailings to about 100 addresses cost about \$40 for postage, paper and envelopes. The inactive mailing goes to students who may have started dancing but dropped out for some reason. It also goes to inactive club members and graduates who have not returned for the new season. The nature of the message is that everyone wants to see them and please come visit. The second mailing goes to churches, service clubs, youth groups, garden clubs, gym teachers, home schoolers - just about anyone we think might be interested in square dancing. We pull the names and addresses out of the phone book and off the Internet.

Demonstrations/exhibitions

Getting a gang together these days to do a demonstration is often difficult. But we have danced at the Bath Heritage Days, and St. John's Bazaar. Cumberland Fair each year also invites square dancers to come for an afternoon. So the opportunities are there if you can get the dancers. The trick is to have some brochures, flyers or tickets on hand to give out when by standers express an interest in learning. We have had some success with inviting the public to come watch a demonstration dance particularly when refreshments are part of the evening.



Speakers:

When we send letters to local clubs and organizations we also make the offer to have a club couple come talk to the group or organization. So far no one has taken us up on the offer. Although we are fortunate to have a number of club members who also belong to Rotary and Kiwanas, and their involvement with those service clubs has helped keep square dancing on the list of community activities.

Community education/recreation.

There are a select number of organizations with goals that mesh with ours, and that will run announcements for us in their catalogs and newsletters. 55 Plus for example in Brunswick has been gracious about letting us put an ad in their newsletter "What's Happening On the Hill". Community Recreation programs and Continuing Ed such as Merrymeeting Bay also will run ads for us in their newsletters. A couple of the local churches also put our announcements in their parish newsletters.