

## SECRET HINTS TO KEEP FROM BREAKING DOWN

(1) Always have your set lined up with the walls. The human race is straight-line oriented, and most square dance calls end in parallel formations. It is much easier to see formations if the set is parallel with the walls in the hall, instead of at an angle.

Often a set will become slightly offset from being lined up with walls as a result of doing a series of calls. Then a Cast Off or other turning motion call may cause some people to become disoriented and break down on a call they would normally do well. Also, if the caller says to Promenade and then has the heads or sides Wheel Around, it is almost certain that the set will not be lined up with walls.

Solution: Take it upon yourself to make slight adjustments on the next one or two calls to get the set aligned with walls. One person can cause the whole set to adjust, so you be that person. How do you do this? An example might be to overdo the Courtesy Turn on a Right & Left Thru to add a few degrees, or you could do slightly less than a full Courtesy Turn on the call. Another example might be to do Touch 1/4 slightly more or less. An easy way is just to adjust yourself and partner in facing lines, because the others will usually go along, especially if they have been trained to take hands.

An obvious sign of good dancers is that they make an adjustment to become lined up with walls any time the set is not this way. When I call and I see dancers making an adjustment to line up with the walls, I know these are the stronger dancers and will watch them the rest of the dance.

Unfortunately, many dancers have never been told the importance of being lined up with walls. If this idea was taught in beginners class, there would be far fewer breakdowns all along the way.

(2) When the caller says "Promenade, don't slow down," whisper to your partner whether you are heads or sides. This is primarily the boy's responsibility, because at Mainstream and Plus the girls assumes the identity of the boy with whom she is dancing.

Why the whisper? Because you know that 99% of the time the next call will be "Heads (or sides) Wheel Around." If you do not know what you are, you will be slow in reacting to the call, which could result in the square breaking down on the next call because you are not in position to do it. I see these breakdowns happen all the time, and they could be eliminated simply by being prepared when you know the caller is going to say for someone to Wheel Around. Also, if you know whether you are a head or side and you are NOT told to Wheel Around, then you will be ready to tell the couple in front of you to do the call if they are slow in reacting.