

# Social Square Dance (SSD) in a Nutshell

(A Quick Introduction for Callers and Club Leaders)

**What is SSD?** A CALLERLAB-approved “alternate entry-level destination dance program, intended for use without requiring any change to any other dance program.”

**SSD uses a 50-call subset of Basic/Mainstream (“MS”) chosen to maximize dance variety, fun & easy learning.**

A comprehensive *SSD Teaching Guide*, available [here](#), helps callers make SSD fun for all dancers.

## SSD Approach – More Than Just a Call List

- Bring back a focus on the social and entertainment aspects of square dancing at the entry level to attract and retain a broader base of casual dancers.
- Make classes more accessible (shorter, easier, multiple times per year).
- Provide ongoing dancing, with variety, at this entry level.
- Many dancers will be content to stay with SSD. As needed, make SSD-to-Plus classes available for a bridge to Plus for avid learners who wish to learn more.

## Three Pillars of SSD

### SHORTER

**12-14 weeks, 2-4 times/year**

Less of a commitment

Stop Holiday attrition

Prospects can start quicker

**Friends bring friends** to next class

### SOCIAL

**Emphasis on social bonding**

Less focus on technicalities

Most beginners’ goal is to learn just enough for some fun dancing

(Avid learners take later classes)

### **Let Them DANCE!**

**Integrate spirited dancing quickly**

Minimize “LEARN Mode”

Focus on entertainment

**Fun dancing for all dancers**

Provide SSD dancing year-round

## SSD Benefits

⇒ Easier to recruit for shorter classes

⇒ Retain more new members by supporting casual dancers

⇒ Growth through multiple classes per year

⇒ Leave “escalator” to Plus for those best suited

## SSD Implementation – Many Options

There are lots of ways to structure an SSD program. Existing clubs can modify or extend their current programs according to their circumstances. New groups dedicated to SSD can be formed. Both can work together.

- ◆ Multi-level clubs can easily replace Basic or MS with SSD as their entry level, offering SSD-to-Plus classes as needed.
- ◆ Plus clubs can add SSD sessions and/or work with nearby SSD groups to offer SSD-to-Plus classes to avid learners.
- ◆ MS-only groups might refocus on SSD alone or expand to support both SSD and either MS or Plus.

In all cases, the SSD activity should be self-contained (not just a stepping-stone to Plus), supporting ongoing SSD dancing. Treat SSD dancers as first-class club members. Make SSD-to-Plus classes available to avid learners when they are ready.

## SSD at Fly-Ins/Festivals/Conventions

Following SSD’s approval by CALLERLAB, and supported by numerous success stories, many clubs are launching new SSD programs. As a result, the 2022 & 2023 IAGSDC Conventions have committed to feature SSD halls and specialty tips (also suitable for MS dancers). Other Festivals and Fly-Ins are expected to follow suit as more clubs embrace SSD.

## Learn More

SSD FAQ (highly recommended): <https://knowledge.callerlab.org/ssd-faq-frequently-asked-questions/>

North Shore Squares’ Success Story: <https://knowledge.callerlab.org/north-shore-squares-zero-to-50-in-18-months/>

Alphabetical SSD Call List: <https://knowledge.callerlab.org/sustainable-square-dance-ssd-alphabetical-call-list/>

Full SSD Teaching Guide: <https://knowledge.callerlab.org/ssd-teaching-guide/>

Much more at the CALLERLAB Knowledge Base: <https://knowledge.callerlab.org/ssdocs/>