

DANCE

GLOSSARY

Arch – a figure, first introduced in the Norfolk Long Dance where two dancers raise hands and others dance underneath.

- single-handed: hold your partner's nearest hand, and lift your arm up.
- Two-handed: face your partner, take both hands straight in front and lift your arms up.

Back-to-back – a figure where you face your partner and pass right shoulders, step sideways to go behind your partner and come back backwards into your own place passing left shoulders. Usually this takes eight steps, four there and four back.

Blending – moving smoothly from one movement, step or figure into the next so that dancing is 'seamless'.

Call – a brief prompt to remind dancers what comes next spoken in time so that the dancers have heard it before the figure is due to commence.

Cast – a movement which takes two or more dancers away from their present positions, usually by turning the longest way.

Circle – a figure performed with hands joined in a ring in which partners stand side-by-side, each couple facing into the middle. Generally circles are to the left, possibly followed by one to the right. Generally you get eight steps for a circle once round, and another eight for a circle back. Some dances give you a circle half way in four steps.

Couple – a pair of dancers, not necessarily of different sexes.

Cross-hand – a hold consisting of standing beside your partner, both facing in the same direction, hold right hands in right and left in left in front of you. This is commonly used when a couple leads somewhere.

Cross-over – in a long set, members of one line takes hands, lift them up to make arches and move forward, while the other line let go hands and pass underneath the arches. Both lines then turn to face partners.

Figure – a movement or series of movements in a dance, often a geometrical track, executed by some or all of the group to all or part of the music.

Formation – the arrangement of dancers at the start of a dance, also known as the set.

Forward and back – a figure where you dance forward four steps, then back four steps.

Galop – you face your partner, take both hands straight in front, and bounce-step, (sideways scissor-like travelling step) quite energetically in the direction called.

Grand Chain – a figure where you face your partner and pass your partner giving right hand. As you let go of your partner's hand you take the left hand of the person coming

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towards you, and pass them by the left. Keep on passing right and left alternately until told to stop. This will typically be when you meet your partner half way round a square set.

Conventionally this results in the men going anticlockwise round the set and the ladies clockwise.

Honour – the bow/courtesy given as a courtesy movement by dancers to their partners, or others with whom they have been dancing, at the end, and sometimes the beginning and during the dance.

Jig – a tune with a 'skipping' feel (like 'Hickory dickory dock'). The time signature is 6/8, which means each beat is subdivided into three (as in the words 'hickory dickory').

Lead – movement where dancers, usually a pair, go up or down the room.
It may also be the chief dancer(s) in any particular move or figure.

Long set – formation in which partners stand in double file in the size of group
Required to perform the dance.

Partner – the person you're dancing with. If you are side-by-side boys stand on the left and girls on the right.

Phrase – eight bars of music (total of sixteen beats).

Promenade – a figure where you stand side-by-side with your partner, take a crossed-hand hold (right to right and left to left), and dance away, usually in an anticlockwise direction round the room. It's usually in a square or circular set.

Reel – usually flat, driving rhythm of music used for dancing.

Right and left through – this figure starts with two dancers facing another pair, frequently facing across the set to your partner, but sometimes facing up and down the set. You change places with the one you are facing giving right hands as you pass, then turn to your neighbour and change places with them giving left hands, ending up holding left hands and both facing back in to the set.

Set – a group of dancers, usually in couples.

Stars – Stars are turns for usually four people. You should reach out with the given hand and hold hands with the opposite person. A good rule is 'hands at shoulder level for the shortest person in the star'. You should try to catch hold of the other pair's hands with a spare thumb or finger if you can.

- **Left-hand star** – four people touch their left hands together in the middle and dance around for eight steps.
- **Right-hand star** – four people touch their right hands together in the middle and dance around for eight steps.

Usually a right-hand star is followed by a left-hand one.

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Swing – a figure where you face your partner and take a crossed hand hold (i.e. right to right and left to left), and skip around each other, preferably with a clockwise motion.

Timing – fitting each movement to its correct music so that there are no pauses and so that each is completed in time.

Turns – can be either two hands or one.

- **Left-hand turn** – face your partner, take left hands and dance around each other, taking four steps to change places and four to get back to your own place, in a circular movement. This is a sort of turning-point half-way through.
- **Right-hand turn** - face your partner, take right hands and dance around each other, taking four steps to change places and four to get back to your own place, in a roughly circular movement. This is a sort of turning-point half-way through.
- **Two-hand turn** – face your partner, take both hands straight in front and dance around each other, taking four steps to change places and four to get back round to your own place, in a roughly circular movement.