

DANCE FLOOR COURTESY

By Anthony S. Natale

If all dancers were to observe dance floor etiquette and technique, the dance floor would be able to accommodate up to its maximum capacity and still permit movement and more enjoyment. When the dance floor is overcrowded, all dancers should sit some numbers out to ease the situation.

In progressive dances, such as the Fox Trot, Waltz, Peabody, and Tango for example, the rule is to move around the floor only in a counter clockwise direction. This also includes the patterns which take the man backwards. In spot dances, such as the Swing/Lindy, Rumba, Mambo, and Cha-Cha for example, the couple should try to keep as much as possible in and round the small area where they began dancing. Other dancers' space should be respected!

When the dance music is such that it permits more than one type of dance, such as the Fox Trot or Swing/Lindy, the Swing/Lindy dancers should go toward the center of the dance floor thereby making it possible for the Fox Trot dancers to move freely around the outside of the dance floor. Dance patterns in which the forward movement is temporarily suspended should be executed in the center or fringes of the dance floor, unless one is sure the dance flow will not be impeded.

Those not dancing should walk around the dance floor to their destination. Dancers, instead of cutting across the floor either to dance or exit, dance around instead. Those getting on the dance floor should not interfere with those already dancing simply because it is convenient. Couples should not stop on the dance floor to make conversation, argue, or discuss the working of a dance pattern.

The way one dances and the selection of dance patterns should be governed by the size of the dance floor and the traffic. It is incumbent upon all dancers to be alert and watch out for others when changing imaginary lanes or executing a maneuver which may put them in someone else's path. Like in driving, dancers should use good judgment.

Cool manners dictate that you apologize when you accidentally bump or kick someone. It is quite annoying to be cut off, bumped, or hurt by overly enthusiastic, unformed, or inconsiderate and sometimes inebriated dancers who do not observe good dance floor etiquette and technique.

This article was printed in the May/June 1998 issue of Amateur Dancer. Dr. Natale was trained by the Arthur Murray studios and taught for them in the early '50s. Upon leaving he pursued a varied career in education lasting 30 years until retiring in 1986.

On September 12, 2005, Anthony Natale gave permission for our chapters to use his article in print, on websites providing they show credit to Anthony Natale. His email address is: asndance@aol.com.