

AN INTRODUCTION TO
**SCOTTISH
COUNTRY DANCING**

6 DANCES FOR BEGINNERS



INTRODUCTION

- This pack is designed to provide teachers/youth leaders with everything they need to teach basic Scottish Country Dance
- Included inside -
Teacher's notes, with illustrated, step by step instruction for 6 easy dances and a CD of suitable music - a perfect recipe for a fun and rewarding activity for pupil and teacher alike!
- Scottish Country Dance is an ideal way for children and young people to develop their social skills and self confidence whilst having fun and keeping fit at the same time!



This pack has been produced by the Ulster-Scots Community Network & Belfast Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society with financial assistance from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Ulster-Scots Agency.
NB. The terms and diagrams used in this publication may not reflect traditional methods of Scottish Country Dance instruction. Instead, this guide is designed to allow complete beginners to understand and teach the featured basic dances. More detailed technical instruction, further teaching packs and illustrated books can be obtained from -
RSCDS 12 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh, EH3 7AF or online at www.rscds.org

WHAT...?

Scottish Country Dancing

- Scottish Country Dance has a long and interesting history. As far back as the 1500's the figure dances of the countryside were extremely popular and many were danced to traditional Scottish or Irish folk tunes.
- These folk dances were combined with some even older Scottish dance traditions and with influences from Europe, resulting in a rich mix of traditions which have shaped what we recognise today as Scottish Country Dance.
- The First World War (1914-1918) effectively meant the loss of a generation in many areas and as a result Scottish Country Dancing experienced a period of decline.
- The tradition's revival is largely due to the dedication of Mrs Ysobel Stewart and Miss Jean Milligan who, in the 1920's began to research, collect and record the old dances.
- The Scottish Country Dance Society was formed in Glasgow in 1923 and thirty years later, the prefix "Royal" was conferred in 1953.
- The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society today has 23,000 members worldwide who belong to 170 Branches and 500 affiliated groups.
- In Ulster, the cultural traditions of Scotland have always played an important role in many local communities. The Plantation of Ulster in the early 1600's and the continual movement of people between Ulster and Scotland has meant the poetry, language, architecture, music and dance traditions of Scotland are very much part of our identity.
- Scottish Country Dance in Ulster can be traced back to the earliest folk dances brought here by travellers both before, during and after the organised plantations of Ulster, largely in many areas by Scots.

Scottish Country Dance has always been used in schools as a form of physical exercise

and has seen a remarkable resurgence in popularity in many countries around the world.

The Belfast Branch was formed in 1946 and is completely supportive of Scottish Country Dancing being introduced into Schools and Youth Clubs, in fact anywhere young people gather and would like some form of enjoyable exercise.

There is no better form of 'work-out' as every muscle in your body is used, including your smile!

Scottish Country Dancing is a very social activity which gives lots of opportunities to meet new friends. Unlike Scottish Highland Dancing which is largely a solo activity, Country Dance is normally danced in sets of at least six dancers.

Scottish Country Dance Classes can be found throughout Ulster and are a great way to keep fit, socialise and have fun with friends.

It is hoped this brief insight into Scottish Country Dance will be a huge success and will encourage young people to 'get up and dance'



DOES SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE FULFIL THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE REVISED NI CURRICULUM?

KEY STAGE 1

The statutory minimum content for Dance as part of the KS1 Physical Education Curriculum is set out below -

Pupils should be enabled to:

- use different parts of the body to explore personal and general space and to move using simple actions ✓
- listen to & move in response to, different stimuli and accompaniments; ✓
- move in a controlled manner, at different speeds and in different directions, using different levels in space, (high, low), and different strengths (heavy, light) ✓
- perform simple steps and movements to given rhythms and musical phrases ✓
- create, practise, remember and perform simple movement sequences ✓
- develop their movements progressively individually and in pairs ✓



KEY STAGE 2

The statutory minimum content for Dance as part of the KS2 Physical Education Curriculum is set out below -

Pupils should be enabled to:

- progress from using simple movements and gestures, towards developing these into a structured, sequenced and co-ordinated set of movements using variables such as space, direction and speed ✓
- develop their movements progressively individually; in pairs; in trios; small groups; and larger groups ✓
- develop more effective use of space levels, directions, speed and strength ✓
- move with increased control, co-ordination and poise, using a variety of actions and gestures which communicate ideas and feelings ✓
- create, practise and perform movement sequences, using a variety of stimuli and to an audience ✓
- structure dances with clear beginnings, middles and ends ✓
- perform a selection of simple folk dances ✓

There are also many skills which comply with some requirements of the Arts and PDMU Areas of Learning too!

**SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING
CLEARLY TICKS ALL THE BOXES !**

WHY...?

Personal skills which are developed include...

- rhythm and co ordination
- patterns and sequences
- teamwork
- patience/standing still
- social skills
- interpreting music into movement
- recognising fast/slow tempos

Health benefits include.....

- stimulating mental and physical activity
- aids healthy lifestyle
- a great way to fill part of the recommended 60 minutes of daily exercise for children

Benefits for teachers/leaders

- group activity
- indoor activity – ideal winter exercise
- children must listen at all times
- structured and progressive learning
- suitable for a wide range of ages and abilities

HOW...?

Teacher's Notes - Getting started...

Rhythm -

First of all let the children listen the music CD - rhythm and music go hand in hand. Now encourage a rhythmic reaction – either clapping or stamping feet.

Next, try clapping for four bars – then listening for four bars. Most music for Scottish Country Dancing is in 8 bar phrases and the ability to hear when a phrase starts and finishes is really important later in the process.

(There are tracks at the end of the CD which contain short extracts with 8 bar phrases and counting patterns)

Movement –

Once everyone can identify the rhythm, practice travelling in time with the music – walk, skip or run. Practice making shapes – circles, squares or figures of eight while moving in time with the music.



Hands –

Scottish Country Dance is a social activity and taking hands is an integral part of most dances. Hands are held using a loose “how do you do” grip – as opposed to interlinking fingers which can lead to safety issues.

Leading Position or “Right to Right” (See illustration opposite)

Standing side by side - Couples join right hands in a standard handshake grip

“Promenade Hold”

Standing side by side - Couples join right hands in a standard handshake grip then join left hands underneath.

Starting and Finishing a dance –

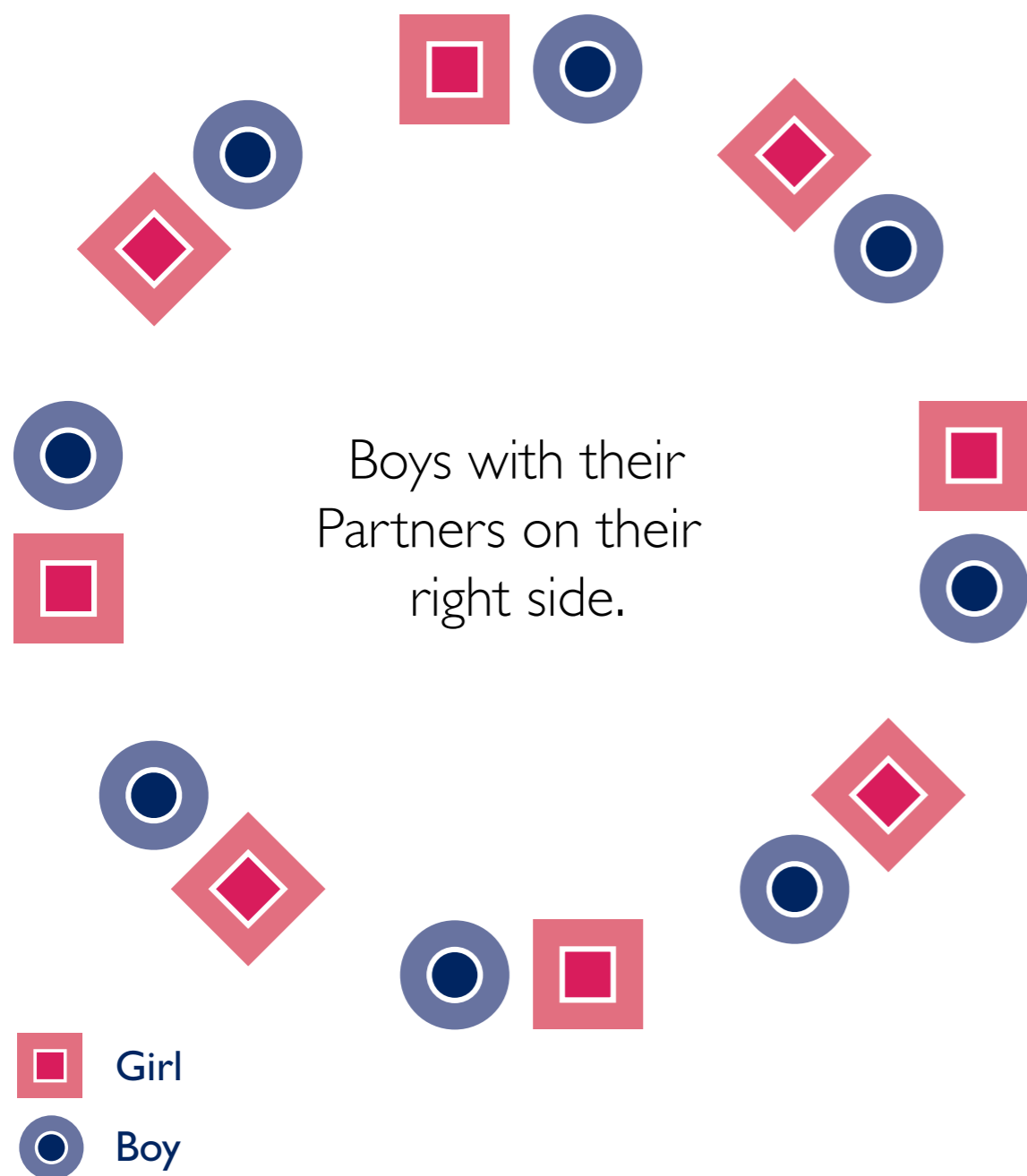
It’s traditional that when musicians play a chord at the beginning and end of the dance the dancers bow/curtsey to one another as a way of saying “I’m pleased to dance with you” and “Thank you” to their partner.



Leading Position or “Right to Right”



“Promenade Hold”



DANCE!

This section contains six easily learnt dances – each which introduce new formations, holds and steps.

DANCE I

The Ferry Boat - 5x32 bar Jig

Select track 1 from CD

An easy dance using CIRCLE formation.

Dancers are in a large circle - boy has girl on his right hand side

Bars 1-8

Girls skip forward for 4 steps into the centre and then backward for 4 steps into their place.

Everyone joins hands and circles to the left using eight slip steps (a slipping movement to the side with toes turned out and heels meeting).

Bars 9-16

Boys skip forward for 4 steps into the centre and then backward for 4 steps into their place.

Everyone joins hands and circles to the right using eight slip steps.

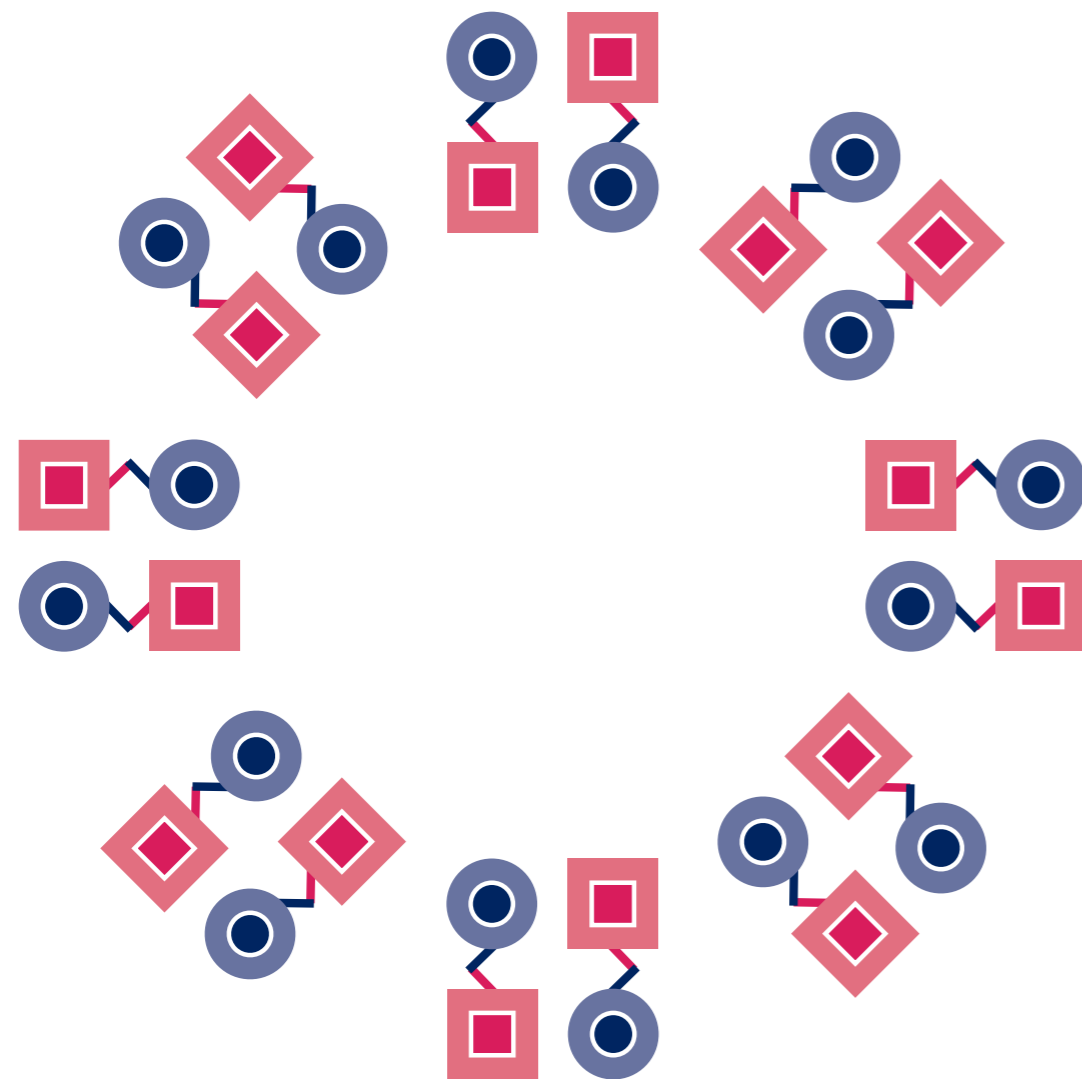
Bars 17-24

Turn to face your partner – join right hands and turn for four steps - once right round finishing back at your own place. Join left hands and turn for four steps – finishing with the boy on the inside of the circle - joining with the girl in a promenade hold (see diagram on page 9) - then all face anti-clockwise

Bars 25-32

All “promenade” round the circle using seven skipping steps and on the last step, turn to face the centre - ready to repeat the dance again.

Couples (Round the Room)



DANCE 2.

Fiona's Fancy - 4x32 bar Reel

Select track 2 from CD
(Devised by Dorothy Bell)

A round the room dance, couple face couple, boy has girl on right hand side

Bars 1-8

Everyone place right hand into the middle at shoulder height and dance round in a "wheel" for 4 bars. At the end of the phrase, turn in and change hands before dancing 4 steps in the opposite direction, everyone releases hands and returns to original place.

Bars 9-16

The two couple set now forms a circle joining left and right hands at shoulder height - circles eight slips steps to the left and eight to the right.

Bars 17-20

Girls give right hands to each other and turn for four bars – then back to place.

Bars 21-24

Boys give left hands to each other and turn for four bars – then back to place

Bars 25-28

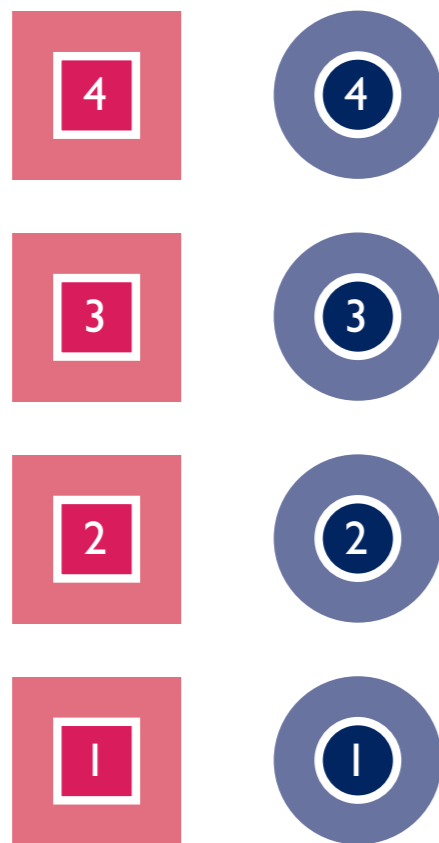
Boy facing opposite girl (and vice versa) all dance "back to back" - dance forward passing right shoulder to right shoulder; pass each other; then pass left shoulder to left shoulder returning to original place.

Bars 29-32

Join "near hand" (hand closest to your partner) with own partners, slip step to the left for 3 steps then dance forward so that the couple progress past their original opposite couple.

Dancers now slip step to the right 3 steps so that they are now facing a new couple ready to repeat the dance again.

Long Set



Top

DANCE 3

The Belfast Jig - 4x32 bar Jig

Select track 3 from CD

Bars 1-8

Couples 1 and 2 dance a right hand wheel for 4 bars then a left hand wheel for four bars and return back to original place.

Bars 9-16

First couple joining two hands slip or gallop down the middle of the line using eight slip steps and back to the top using eight more slip steps.

Bars 17-20

Top couple "casts off" (boy turns left, girl turns right - moving behind the lines of boys and girls proceed to the bottom of the set below couple 4)

All couples join hands and move up towards the top – this allows the Set to stay in the same place on the floor – the new top couple will be in the same spot as the original couple.

Bars 21-24

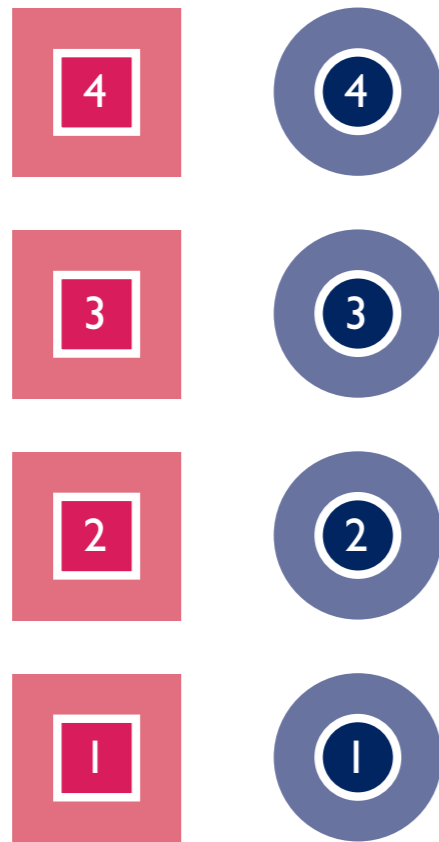
All couples give their partner their right hands - turn for four bars and return to place

Bars 25-32

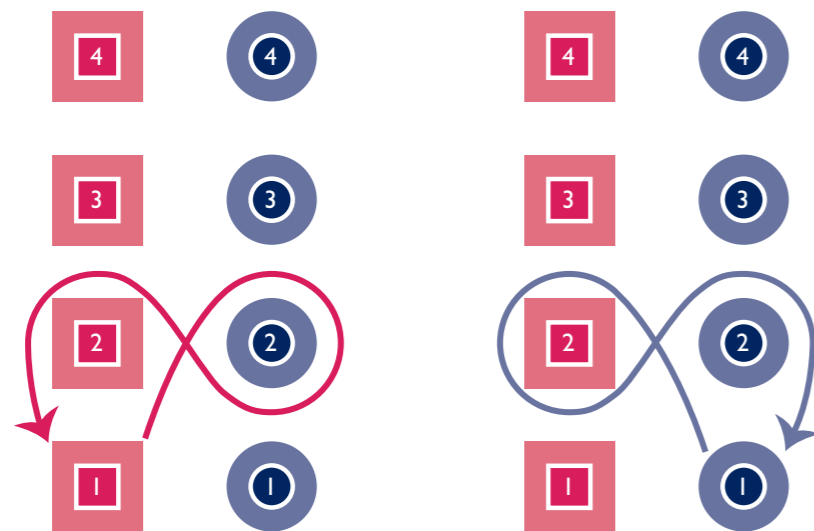
All join hands in a circle and dance left for eight slip steps and back to the right for eight steps – finishing back in original Long Set formation.

Repeat the dance with a new top couple

Long Set



Top



DANCE 4

The Linen Looms - 4x32 bar Reel

Select track 4 from CD

Bars 1-8

First couple dance a "Figure of eight" through and round the second couple. Girl 1 crosses in front of Boy 1. (See diagram)

Bars 9-16

First couple join right hands – and lead down the middle for four steps and back up to original place for four steps.

Bars 17-20

Top couple "casts off" (boy turns left, girls turn right - moving down behind the lines of boys and girls proceed to the bottom of the set)
Couples 2,3 and 4 follow the path of couple 1.

Bars 21-24

At the bottom of the set – the first couple join both hands and lift their arms to make an arch, other couples dance under the arch and up to new places – Couple 2 is now at the top.

Bars 25-28

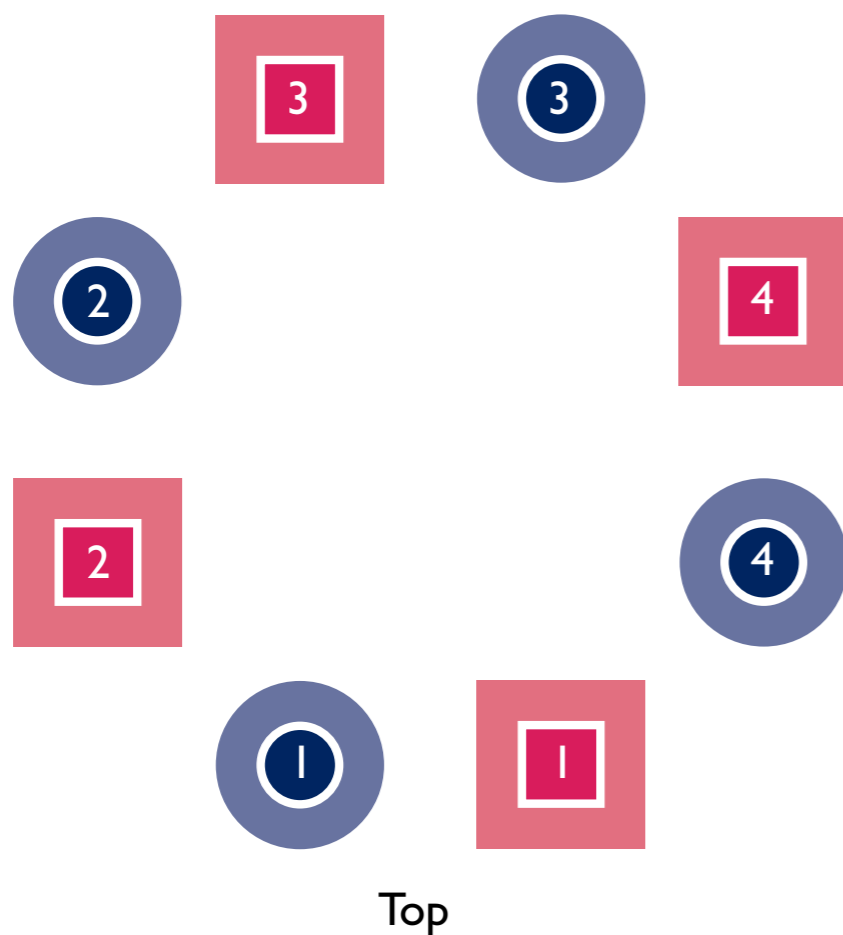
All clap with the music for 8 beats.

Bars 29-32

Facing partner, dance "back to back" (See Dance 2)

Repeat the dance again with the new top couple

Square Set



DANCE 5

The Cavehill Jig - 4x48 bar Jig

Select track 5 from CD

Bars 1-8

All the girls turn out of the square to their right and going behind their partner dance right round the outside of the set clockwise back to their place.

Bars 9-16

All the boys turn out of the square to their left and going behind their partner dance round the outside of the set anti-clockwise back to their place.

Bars 17-24

1st and 3rd couples join hands and move forward into the centre for two steps. Everyone clap 1,2,3, 4,5,6 then 1st and 3rd couples retire two steps back to original place
All clap 1,2,3,4,5,6

Bars 25-32

Now the 2nd and 4th couples dance - repeating bars 17-24.

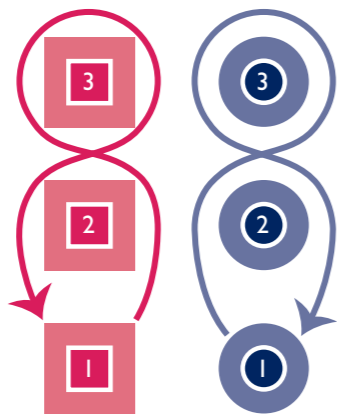
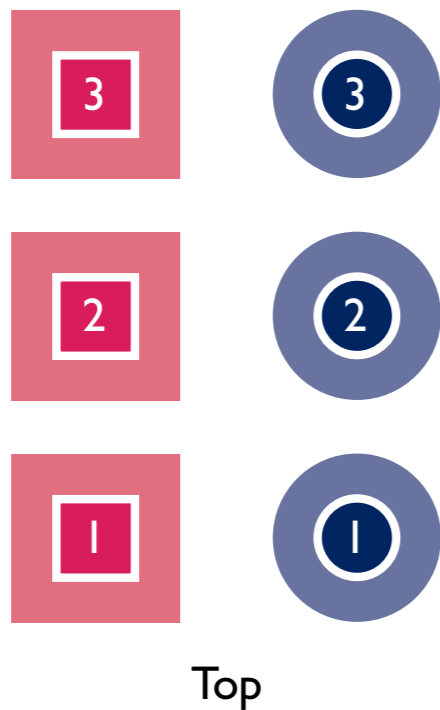
Bars 32-40

All turn to face partners and join right hands to dance a "Grand Chain" This means moving round the circle in the direction you are facing - firstly taking the right hand of your partner then taking the left hand of the next person you meet and so on until you have returned to original place.

Bars 40-48

All circle to the left for eight slip steps and then eight slip steps to the right back to original place.

Long Set



DANCE 6

The Waterfront Reel - 6x32 bar Reel

Select track 6 from CD

Bars 1-8

1st couple dance a "Figure of Eight on the Sidelines" (See diagram).

Bars 9-16

1st couple dance down the middle of the set using "right hand in right hand" hold (Page 8). At the bottom, turn in towards each other and dance back stopping at the top of the set – staying in the middle of the floor; ie. not returning to place. 2nd couple then move in behind them ready to dance a "promenade".

Bars 17-24

Using the "promenade" hold, 1st and 2nd couples dance up to the top, turn left and dance down towards the third couple. Turn left again just before the third couple and dance back up the middle to the top returning to own places.

Bars 25-32

1st couple take right hands and cross - "casting off" to take the place of couple 2 – who move up into number 1 position.

1st couple take left hands and cross - "casting off" to take the place of couple 3 – who move up into number 2 position.

Repeat the dance with the new top couple.

Produced by



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