

## Square Dance Steps And Terminology

### CIRCLE FAMILY

- a. Right
- b. Left

Dance Action: Dancers join hands with adjacent dancers to form a circle and move the circle in the indicated direction, or to the left if no direction was given. The amount to circle may be a specified distance (e.g., Circle Left 1/2 way) or until the next command is given (e.g., Circle Left ... Circle Right).

### FORWARD & BACK

Dance Action: Dancers join hands with those next to them, walk forward 3 steps, pause, walk backwards 3 steps, and pause.

### DO SA DO

Dance Action: Walking a smooth circular path, dancers walk forward, passing right shoulders, slide sideways to the right, walk backwards, passing left shoulders, and slide slightly to the left to return to their starting position.

### SWING

Dance Action: Dancers step forward and slightly to their left, use a ballroom hold, and rotate clockwise as a unit for four or more beats of music. As dancers end the swing, the woman continues turning to her right (unrolling along the man's right arm) until she is facing the same direction as the man.

### PROMENADE FAMILY

- a. Couples (full, 1/2, 3/4 )
- b. Single file
- c. Wrong way

A promenade is a walk around the set by some or all dancers. The active dancers may go as individuals or as couples. They may go in promenade direction (counterclockwise when viewed from above) or wrong way promenade direction. They may travel all the way around the set or a shorter distance. When not all dancers are active, there is a further choice of traveling around the inside or outside of the set. All of these alternatives are determined by the call.

### ALLEMANDE FAMILY

- a. Left
- b. Right
- c. Left arm turn

Right arm turn

In its most general form, an Allemande Left is simply an Arm Turn by the left (plus a Step Thru as the dancers head towards their next dancer interaction).

While Arm Turns are used for general arm turns, Allemande Left is mostly reserved for an Arm Turn with your corner.

## Square Dance Steps and Terminology—continued

**RIGHT & LEFT GRAND FAMILY**

## a. Right &amp; Left Grand

Dance Action: If necessary, men turn up to 90 degrees to face promenade direction and women turn up to 90 degrees to face reverse promenade direction. Dancers blend into a circular formation as they Right Pull By, Left Pull By, Right Pull By, Left Pull By.

## b. Weave the Ring

Dance Action: Dancers do a no-hands Right and Left Grand.

## c. Wrong Way Grand

Dance Action: Same as for Right and Left Grand, except the men go in wrong way promenade direction and women go in promenade direction.

**STAR FAMILY**

## a. Right

## b. Left

Dance Action: The designated dancers form a star by stepping forward if necessary and placing the appropriate hand in the center of the formation. Forming the star may require a dancer to individually turn in place up to 3/8 of a turn.

Dancers turn the star by walking forward in a circle around the center of the star. The distance traveled may be specified in fractions of a star full around, or until some condition is met (e.g., Men Center Left Hand Star, Pick Up Your Partner with an Arm Around, Star Promenade).

**STAR PROMENADE**

Starting formation: 4-dancers star in the center of the set and 4 dancers around the outside of the set.

Dance Action: Directed dancers (e.g., men) form (or are already in) a star and turn it. When they encounter the next directed dancer (e.g., partner) they become a couple, and promenade while retaining the center star.

**PASS THRU**

Dance Action: Dancers move forward, passing right shoulders with each other and end back-to-back.

**SPLIT FAMILY**

Dance Action: The active or directed dancers move forward between the two inactive dancers (splitting them). The inactive dancers move apart to let them through then move back together.

**TURN BACK FAMILY**

Dance Action: The dancer does an individual about-face turn (180 degrees) in place, turning toward partner unless the body flow dictates otherwise. If alone (i.e., no partner), the dancer turns toward the center of the set. If the solo dancer is facing directly toward or away from the center of the set, the turn may be in either direction.

**SEPARATE FAMILY**

Dance Action: The active or designated couple is on Squared Set spots

The dancers turn back-to-back and start walking forward in opposite directions around the outside of the square away from each other until they meet another dancer. The call ends here unless further instructions are given (e.g., "and come back home").

## Square Dance Steps and Terminology—continued

### HALF SASHAY FAMILY

The calls in the Half Sashay family have the two dancers in a couple exchange places while retaining their original facing direction.

Dance Action: Dancers exchange places without changing facing directions. Dancer on the right side steps to the left while the dancer on the left steps back, side steps to the right, then steps forward, ending as a couple.

#### b. Rollaway

Dance Action: From a couple, the dancer on the right (or the directed dancer) "rolls" across in front of the other dancer, turning a full 360 degrees to end on the other side, as the other dancer steps back and then forward, adjusting sideways as necessary, to move smoothly into a vacated position. At the completion of the call, the dancers have exchanged positions.

#### c. Ladies In, Men Sashay

Dance Action: From a circle Left, the ladies step forward and pause while the men continue to move to the left, behind, and past one lady. The ladies now step back and rejoin hands in a circle with the men. From a Circle Right, the men move to the right.

### COURTESY TURN

Starting formation: couple, facing dancers. (limited at Basic and Mainstream to couples with man on left, woman on right.) The man (left hand dancer) takes the lady's (right hand dancer) left hand (palm down) in his left (palm up) and places his right hand in the small of the lady's back. Working as a unit, the couple turns around with the left hand dancer backing up and right hand dancer walking forward. Unless otherwise specified, the couple faces the center of the set or the center of the formation in which it is working.

### LADIES CHAIN FAMILY

#### a. Two ladies (reg & 3/4)

#### b. Four ladies (reg & 1/4)

a. TWO LADIES CHAIN: Starting formation: facing couples (man on left, lady on right). The ladies step forward, extend right hands to each other and pull by. Each man steps forward and to the right, turning left to face the same direction as the lady beside him. The lady extends a left hand to the man for a courtesy turn. Couples end facing each other.

b. FOUR LADIES CHAIN: Starting formation: square or circle of 8 dancers. Similar to two ladies chain except that all four ladies step to the center and form a right hand star. They turn the star halfway around to their opposite men. All courtesy turn to face the center of the set.

TWO (or FOUR) LADIES CHAIN THREE QUARTERS: Starting formation: facing couples, a square or circle of 8 dancers. The directed ladies step to the center, form a right hand star and turn the star three quarters. All courtesy turn to face the center of the set.

### LEAD RIGHT

Dance action: Directed couple(s), working as a unit, move forward along a 90 degree arc to face the couple (or wall) to their right.

### RIGHT and LEFT THRU

Dance action: Right Pull By; Courtesy Turn

## Square Dance Steps and Terminology—continued

**CIRCLE TO A LINE**

Starting formation: facing couples. Couples circle left one half (180 degrees). The lead dancer in the couple who started on the inside (man's position) releases the left handhold, but retains the handhold of the dancer on his right to become the left end dancer of the line. The released dancer moves forward under the raised arm arch formed by the dancer and the adjacent dancer to become the right end dancer in the line.

**BEND THE LINE**

Dance action: Each half of the line, working as a unit, turns 90 degrees to face the center of the formation.

**DOUBLE PASS THRU**

Starting formation: double pass thru. Dancers move forward, passing right shoulders with two other dancers to finish facing away from the center of the set in a completed double pass thru formation.

**GRAND SQUARE**

Starting formation: square. A call that has the sides doing one part while at the same time the heads are doing another. Heads move forward into the square (4 steps), turning one quarter (90 degrees) on the fourth step to lace partners and back away to the sides of the square (4 steps). Turn one quarter (90 degrees) to face the original opposites. Back away to the corners of the square (4 steps) and turn one quarter (90 degrees) to face original partners and walk forward to home (4 steps). Do not turn. (Total to here: 16 steps.)

From this point the action is reversed. Heads back away from their partners (4 steps), turning one quarter (90 degrees) on the fourth step and walk forward to the opposites (4 steps). Turn one quarter and walk forward into the center toward partners (4 steps). Turn one quarter (90 degrees) to face opposites and back up to home (total 32 steps). While the head couples are doing the first 16 steps, the sides start by facing their partners to back away and do the second 16 steps. Completing this, the sides do the first 16 steps, while the heads are doing the last 16. The principle of walking three steps and then turning (or reversing) on the fourth step is followed throughout. This call may be broken into fractional parts by the caller directing the number of steps required. The call may also start with the heads, or other designated dancers, directed to face.

**CALIFORNIA TWIRL**

Starting formation: Normal Couple only

Dance Action: Dancers raise joined hands to form an arch and exchange places with each other by having the woman walk forward and under the arch along a tight left-turning semi-circle. The man walks a slightly wider right-turning semi-circle. Dancers have exchanged places, passing right shoulders, and are both facing in the opposite direction from which they started.

**DIVE THRU**

Starting formation: Facing Couples (at least one of which is normal)

Dance Action: One couple makes an arch by raising their joined hands, while the other couple ducks under the arch. Both move forward. The couple making the arch does a California Twirl.

## Square Dance Steps and Terminology—continued

### **STAR THRU**

Starting formation: Facing Dancers (man facing woman)

Dance Action: Man places his right hand against woman's left hand, palm to palm with fingers up, to make an arch. As the dancers move forward the woman does a one quarter (90 degrees) left face turn under the arch, while the man does a one quarter (90 degrees) turn to the right moving past the woman.

### **SQUARE THRU FAMILY**

(1-5 hands)

Starting formation: facing couples. **SQUARE THRU:** Facing dancers Join right hands and pull by. Turn in one quarter (90 degrees) (a one-quarter Square Thru has been completed), join left hands and pull by (a half Square Thru has been completed). Turn in one quarter (90 degrees) and join right hands with facing dancer and pull by. (A three quarter Square Thru has been completed.) Turn in one quarter (90 degrees), join left hands and pull by, but do not turn. (A full Square Thru has been completed.)

### **ALL AROUND THE LEFT-HAND LADY**

Starting formation: squared set, in-facing circle of 8

Dance Action: Dancers face their corners. Walking forward and around each other while keeping right shoulders adjacent, dancers return to their original position, with their backs toward their corner.

### **SEE SAW**

Starting formation: square or circle. Each dancer walks forward and around the partner keeping left shoulders adjacent, then steps forward to face the corner. (**Note:** This call is to be used *only* in conjunction with **WALK AROUND THE CORNER**).

Styling: Same as in **WALK AROUND THE CORNER** except that left shoulders are kept adjacent and left hand and shoulder should be kept forward.

### **BOX THE GNAT**

Starting formation: facing dancers (man and lady). Dancers step forward, join and then raise their right hands. The lady steps forward and does a left-face U-turn back under the raised joined hands, as the man walks forward and around the lady while doing a right-face U-turn back. Dancers end facing each other, each in the other's starting position.

### **DO PASO**

Dance Action: Left Arm Turn with partner until facing corner and release armhold. Right Arm Turn with corner until facing partner and release armhold. If there is no further instruction, Courtesy Turn partner to end facing the center of the set. Otherwise, follow the next instruction, which will start with a Left Arm Turn with Partner, or with a left-handed Facing Dancer call.

### **ALLEMANDE THAR**

An allemande thar star is a formation and may be formed at the end of any left arm turn by the center dancers (or those directed) forming a right hand box star and backing -up. Each outside dancer holds the left forearm of a center dancer and walks forward.

### **WRONG WAY THAR**

A wrong way thar may be formed at the end of any right arm turn by the center dancers (or those directed) forming a left hand box star and backing up. Outside dancers hold the right forearm of the center dancer and walk forward.

## Square Dance Steps and Terminology—continued

**SHOOT THE STAR**

Starting formation: thar or wrong way thar. The handholds forming the center star are released as each center dancer and the adjacent outside dancer arm turn one half (180 degrees) or full (360 degrees) as directed. If half or full is not directed, the arm turn is one half.

**SLIP THE CLUTCH**

Starting formation: thar or wrong way thar. Dancers in the center of the thar stop and, while retaining the star, release arm holds with the dancers beside them. Everyone then moves forward within the circle in which he was traveling while in the thar.

**COUPLES WHEEL AROUND**

Starting formation: couple. The couple, working as a unit, turns around (180 degrees). The left hand dancer backs up while the right hand dancer moves forward. The pivot point is the handhold between the two dancers.

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