

Why should we line dance?

Excellent news about dancing from a reliable source.

Did you hear about the New England Journal of Medicine report on the effects of recreational activities on mental acuity in aging? Here it is in a nutshell:

The 21-year study of senior citizens, 75 and older, was led by the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City, funded by the National Institute on Aging, and published in the New England Journal of Medicine. Their method for objectively measuring mental acuity in aging was to monitor rates of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease.

They studied cognitive activities such as reading books, writing for pleasure, doing crossword puzzles, playing cards and playing musical instruments. And they studied physical activities like playing tennis or golf, swimming, bicycling, dancing, walking for exercise and doing housework.

One of the surprises of the study was that almost none of the physical activities appeared to offer any protection against dementia. There can be cardiovascular benefits, of course, but the focus of this study was the mind. There was one important exception: the only physical activity to offer protection against dementia was frequent dancing.

- Reading - 35% reduced risk of dementia
- Bicycling and swimming - 0%
- Playing golf - 0%
- Dancing frequently - 76%

That was the greatest risk reduction of any activity studied, cognitive or physical.

Quoting Dr. Joseph Coyle, a Harvard Medical School psychiatrist who wrote an accompanying commentary: "The cerebral cortex and hippocampus, which are critical to these activities, are remarkably plastic, and they rewire themselves based upon their use."

Our brain constantly rewires its neural pathways, as needed. If it doesn't need to, then it won't.

Dance for the HEALTH of it!!

Dancing is proven to:

- Reduce stress and depression
- Increase energy and serotonin
- Improve flexibility, strength, balance and endurance
- Strengthen bones and boosts cardiovascular health
- Increase mental capacity by exercising our cognitive processes
- Create new neural pathways through dynamic and rapid-fire decision making

When my soul is hurting DANCE makes me feel better

When I am overwhelmed DANCE helps me forget for a while

When I face struggles DANCE inspires me to keep going

When I lose confidence DANCE gives it back

I have been given one of the greatest gifts in the world ... DANCE!

Is line dancing good exercise? Yes, Many Studies Say it is.

This is a common question we receive and is often from people who enquiring on behalf of their grandparents. Well, the simple answer is yes.

It is widely known to be one of the best forms of exercise for people with aging bodies.

A Study was conducted by a professor of dance

Many studies have shown there are many great benefits to be had from line dancing. One such study was conducted by a professor of dance named Mynette Aguilar. View the study called Fitness benefits of line dance here

The results of the study showed that line dance helps improve cardiovascular health. Among many other great benefits which we will get to soon, it shows an overall lowering of the resting heart rate, which is known to be a large indicator of the general health of the heart.

Perfect form of workout for the elderly

Line dancing presents itself as the perfect form of exercise for older people because it provides the benefits of an aerobic workout which helps maintain a healthy heart and also provides a platform for you to get involved in a social environment, which is great for mental wellness.

The New England Journal of Medicine conducted a **21-year study and found that dance alone can lower the risk of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia in elderly people.**

This is truly a remarkable study that shows some fascinating results that blew my mind!

It shows that participants over the age of 75 years who engaged in either one of the following activities – once a week – Dance, board games, playing musical instruments and playing board games – had a 7 percent lower risk of suffering from dementia compared to those who didn't.

11 days a month

Even more interesting to note is that those who engaged in the activities we listed above, at least 11 days a month, had a 63 percent lower risk of dementia.

Activities such as cycling, walking, dancing, swimming, playing golf, tennis and even doing the housework were included in the study.

The biggest surprise is that almost none of the physical activities appear to show any added protection against developing dementia.

There was one exception in this study. Out of all the physical activities, the only one to provide protection against developing dementia was frequent dancing.

The result is truly remarkable

The result is truly remarkable, it shows that **frequent dancing can help lower the risk of dementia by a massive 76 percent.** The reason behind this is believed to be that dance involves the most mental effort out of all the physical activities that were included in the study.

Recommended for older people? The answer is a resounding YES.

The benefits of line dancing are clear when it comes to one's *mental and physical* wellbeing. If you are getting on in life and would like to take up some form of physical exercise to get fitter and become more active, we highly recommend giving line dancing a try.

Here's a list of what to expect:

Improve Balance.

After a while, you may notice some improvement in your balance as line dancing will teach you to maintain your own body balance when moving and following the beat of the music.

Improve Your Confidence

One of the major benefits of taking line dancing is the overall improvement in one's self-confidence. This alone can have a huge impact on your life and open new doors that may have seemed out of reach beforehand.

Learning that new routine will give you a sense of accomplishment and drive you forward to the next dance routine with a renewed sense of pride and confidence.

Improve Coordination

Dancing helps improve coordination as there are many things to focus on at the same time. Learning to move in perfect sync with the beat can be a challenge but can also be very rewarding once achieved.

Meet New Friends

Line dancing at the local studio or club is the perfect environment to meet new people and make new friends.

Combat Loneliness

Loneliness can be a major issue for elderly men and women and joining a local club can often be the perfect solution to add a little happiness into our life.

We hope you found this post helpful.

<https://danceandfitness.co.uk/is-line-dancing-good-exercise/>

Dance is a great form of exercise that provides many physical and mental benefits that can:

- Help improve the condition of your heart and lungs
- Increase your muscular strength, endurance and motor fitness
- Increased aerobic fitness
- Improve overall muscle tone and strength
- Help with weight management
- Increase bone strength and reduce the risk of osteoporosis
- Improve your coordination, agility, and flexibility
- Improved overall balance and spatial awareness
- Improve physical confidence
- Help increase mental functioning
- Helps improve general and psychological wellbeing
- Boost your self-confidence and self-esteem
- Can improve social skills

Beginners Line Dancers Guide

Your First Steps

Linedancing is a choreographed style of dancing. That means, variations and mistakes aside, when you step out a linedance, you are following a sequence of steps that have been conceived by the choreographer or choreographers. Rather than write out a dance sheet or learn a dance step by step, choreographers and linedancers have come up with names for short sequences of steps - thus instead of saying "step to the side, cross behind, step to the side, step together", one merely says "vine". While this does make things a *lot* easier, quicker and simpler for instructors, choreographers and dancers alike, it does have the unfortunate result that linedancing is full of jargon. And like any activity that is full of jargon, unless you know the jargon, ie: the names for at least the basic step sequences, you will, without doubt, be totally clueless when you first try to learn a dance.

When you start off at a beginner class it is the task of the instructor not only to teach you dances and to boost your confidence, but just as importantly, to also teach you at least the basic step sequences. Of course teaching these step sequences is usually done as part of teaching a dance - the instructor will teach a series of steps and then inform the class the name for that sequence. As the class improves, the teacher will increasingly just use the step description. Very rarely an instructor will teach a particular step sequence by itself - back when I first started I remember my then instructor getting the whole class in a circle and then practicing shuffles, around and around and around, until we'd gotten it right. Remembering the named step sequences is actually more important than trying to learn a particular dance - while dances come into popularity and then vanish into oblivion, the step sequences are eternal - at least as eternal as linedancing, long may that be! Progressing from novice to beginner to intermediate and finally to advanced is really a matter of learning more and increasingly complex step sequences and putting them together.

Some step sequences are syncopated, others are not. A non-syncopated step sequence is one where each step in the sequence is done on successive beats of the music. Syncopation is where you do two steps in the one beat. Syncopation is usually not part of beginner level dancing, however there are a few syncopated step sequences which can be found in beginner level dances.

Phrasing & Counts

Line dances are usually phrased as either an 8-beat dance or a 6-beat dance, the latter being known as waltzes. You should not confuse a linedance "waltz" with a ballroom waltz - whilst some linedance waltzes are very similar to ballroom waltzes (especially when done as a partnered dance), others are anything but. One of the fastest dances I've ever learnt was, amazingly enough, a waltz - simply because it was a 6-beat dance. Strictly speaking, it is the song that is phrased in either 6 or 8 beat and this phrasing is imposed on the dance, but since this is written for line dancers, not musicians, I'll not worry about the distinction.

Whether a linedance is a 6-beat or an 8-beat phrased dance, it can be broken up into blocks or 6 or 8 counts - something that is immediately obvious when you look at a dance sheet (there are exceptions, but that's the choreographer playing games). A beginner dance is usually 32 counts long (for an 8-beat phrased dance) or 4 lots of 8 counts. Most waltzes are 48 counts, beginner or not.

Starting Tips

If you are a beginner, the following is a list of suggestions that may make learning to linedance easier, less frustrating and more enjoyable. Many of the points I have scoured from various sources, others are the result of my own learning experience.

Be patient! Rome wasn't built in a day - don't expect to be dancing with the best of 'em after just one lesson. For most folks it takes about three weeks before they are confident with their first dance. If it takes longer, don't worry - how quickly it takes you to pick it up initially has little bearing on how good you'll be a year on.

Practice, practice, practice! Practice may not make perfect, but it will increase your confidence and help you learn a dance. Don't just practice the dance in class - run through it at home, at work, at school .. anywhere and anytime you have the chance (and the room). Also practice the basic steps .. vines, shuffles etc. Grab a copy of the dance sheet - either off the net or from the instructor to help you practice away from class. Balance is important. Keep your body straight and your center of weight over the foot your weight is on. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

Remember, YOU are paying the instructor to teach YOU how to linedance. If you are having trouble with a particular step or can't seem to pick up a dance and need more help, ask the instructor. After all, that's what you are paying them for. And don't hope that someone else will ask that "stupid question" you really need answered - if everyone is hoping someone else will yell for help, no one will ask and the instructor will probably think no one is having trouble. Don't be discouraged if you seem to be the worst dancer in the class - everyone started off as a novice.

Today's two left-foot stumbler may be tomorrow's champion. No, you don't need a partner.

Proper footwear is very important. No, I don't mean y'all have to all wear cowboy boots, rather you need to wear shoes or boots that are comfortable and provide just the right amount of traction. Leather soled footwear is best, but not compulsory - especially for beginners. For my first year or so I wore a pair of sneakers whose tread had been worn flat. If there is too much traction (ie: grip), then your ankles will be quite sore afterwards (this is also the case if the floor is in a poor way). If there is not enough traction, then you'll be slip-sliding all over the floor and, for a beginner, that'll likely mean an occasional fall. If the floor is too slippery for your footwear, there are various types of tape which you can put on the soles - ask around, someone will be able to tell you what's available locally. I use "fabric tape" which I get from the local hardware store. If the floor has too much grip (eg: a poor wax job or lots of spilt drinks), talcum powder works wonders - however be sure it's the floor and not your footwear and be warned that some clubs don't permit this (it's also a no-no at a social). Other than that, common sense should dictate your choice of footwear. Remember, you are dancing on a wooden floor so anything that could damage the floor is a no-no. High heels are also a big no-no - apart from the damage to the floor, they're a killer on your feet while dancing. Oh, and the rest of your outfit is entirely up to you. When you go to your first class make sure it's a beginner class and introduce yourself to the instructor beforehand, making a point of telling them you are a novice. When the class starts, the best place is up the front, in the middle. Yes, you can hide up the back, but that makes it harder to see the instructor and more importantly, the instructor's feet. If you bump into someone, briefly apologize and keep on dancing. Bumps, and worse, are a fact of life on the dance floor. No matter how good you may be, you'll still occasionally bump into people or fall over. I've seen people trip over whilst competing - far more embarrassing than doing the same in class!

This article is reproduced from roots-boots.net

27 Sep 2007

31 Reasons You Know You're a Linedancer

1. You always start counting with 5,6,7,8. [or 4,5,6.]
2. You Grape Vine down your Super Market Aisles.
3. You have a Neon Light Tan Line.
4. You have a separate closet for your dance clothes.
5. Mumble things in your sleep like "One more time".
6. Know you can't eat anything off a Grape Vine.
7. Know the difference between Sheplers, Cheyenne, and Drysdales, or even know what they are.
8. Wear a belt buckle that costs more than your first car.
9. Try to purchase a Hamburger with some "Kick-Ball-Change"
10. You own one or more pair of Bowling Shoes and don't have a ball, and can't find the alley.
11. Watch Friday night T.V. on Sunday.
12. The bar you dance at goes broke because you only order water.
13. Foreplay is 5, 6, 7, 8.
14. Your hands go into your pockets every time you hear country music.
15. Your boots match your outfit.
16. Your work boots have Fringe.
17. You break your leg building a dance hall.
18. You look up while dancing and everyone else is doing the wrong dance.
19. You watch your feet while dancing.
20. Perspiration drips off the end of your nose.
21. You ride 10 miles on a mountain bike and still go dancing that night.
22. You don't have a willing partner.
23. Your wife stomps her foot and you don't pay attention.
24. A Trashy Women is a dance, not someone you find in a bar.
25. Ty England is a performer, not a geographical location.
26. Garth Brooks is a singer, not a retirement community.
27. Pigeon toes don't refer to birds.
28. You don't fish with a swivel.
29. A jazz box is not a New Orleans honky tonk.
30. Patty Loveless is a person, not a condition.
31. You talk with your feet and not your hands.

Source: Unknown

Line Dancing Terminology

BALL CHANGE

A quick rock step using the ball of the foot using an “&” count.

BRUSH

The free leg moves forward or backward letting the ball of the foot make contact with the floor. There is not a weight change!

CHA CHA

3 steps done in any direction taking only 2 beats of music. See triple step.

CHASSE'

Meaning “to the side”- This is a series of side steps done in a straight timing of 1,2,3,4, etc or can be syncopated with “&” counts. Moves right or left only!

CLOCKWISE

Right turn also called a “Natural” turn.

COUNTERCLOCKWISE

Left turn also called a “Reverse” turn.

DRAW or DRAG

Draw is to slide the free foot toward the weighted foot in any direction keeping the toe down to the floor (feet do not have to come together). Drag is to slide the free foot toward the weighted foot with the toe up - heel in contact with the floor (this will limit directional movement).

FOOT POSITIONS

Depending on the organization, can be 5 to 9 positions of the feet which make up all dance patterns.

1st position - feet together

2nd position - feet apart

3rd position - heel of one foot to the instep of the other foot

4th position - one foot passing the other either fwd or bk

5th position - toe of one foot to the heel of the other

Can also have extended 3rd and ext 5th and crossed 1st and 2nd.

FOOTWORK

This refers to the part of the foot that touches the floor first.

GRAPEVINE

A side step, cross behind, step side - usually finished off with either a touch, stomp, kick, or hitch as you bring your feet together. Technically the side step is in 2 nd position, the cross behind is actually a back step in 5 th position, then another side step in 2 nd position. You are not really crossing one foot behind the other one - it just has that illusion. Can move to the right or left - side movements only.

HITCH KICK aka KICK - BALL - CHANGE

This is a “Ball Change” that is preceded by a loose, low kick usually forward. Counted as 1&2 or 3&4.

HOP

A jump on one foot

HOP CHANGE

Not a real term. The reason this is not real is because it is impossible to jump up in the air, change foot positions and land in a different position without some other movements occurring that negate the use of the term “Hop”. This is not the “Russian Saber Dance”. The correct terminology would be “Touch, ball Change”- same as “Kick ball Change” but with a touch instead.

IN PLACE

To shift weight or touch without traveling in any direction - 1st position

KICK

A lifting of the leg off the floor and moving forward or backward. Can be done using a straight leg or using a bend of the knee

LOCK

A crossing of the feet danced moving forward or backward using a crossed 1st position or a 5th position.

PIVOT

A turn that travels - In the early days of line dancing the term was used in-correctly to actually describe a twisting or swiveling action and it stuck. A pivot is a turn that travels from point A to point B. We tend to call this a “Traveling Pivot”.

POINT

Extend the free leg either forward, backward or to the side with the toe either touching the floor, or extended in air.

POLKA STEP

See Triple Step or Shuffle Step.

ROCK

An exchange of weight from one foot to the other. Can be danced in any foot position. Usually a rock step in a dance will signal a change of direction.

SCOOT aka “HITCH” or “CHUG”

A slide of the weighted foot either forward, backward or to the side while lifting the knee of the free leg. Depending on where the free leg is placed either next to the calf of the weighted leg, or with the knees apart or forward will determine whether this is a “Hitch” (next to calf) or “Chug” (knee forward). Also see “HOP”.

SCUFF

Same as “Brush” except that the heel is used instead of the toe. (only done forward or to the side).

SLIDE

Same as “Draw or Drag”

STEP

Placing the foot on the floor with weight.

STOMP – Placing the foot on the floor forcefully enough to make an audible sound. Can be done with or without a weight change. Usually, if the action does not have a weight change it is called a “Stomp Up” or “Stamp”, reserving the word “Stomp” for the actions that involve changing weight. Can use whole foot, heel, or ball. For further study, look up “Flamenco Footwork”.

SWIVEL

A swivel is a turn that stays in place. This is the real action of the “Pivot Turn”. Can involve 1/2, ¼, ¾ twisting turns or Twists in place.

TAP

This is placing the foot on the floor without weight. Generally the toe is the part of the foot that makes contact with the floor.

TRIPLE STEP

This is 3 steps that take only 2 beats of music. Can be danced in place, side to side, or forward and back. This is element that makes up a Cha Cha step, a Shuffle step or a Polka step. It is the timing and styling that determine the component. In a Cha Cha the steps are held for ½ beat, ½ beat, 1 whole beat. For a Shuffle or Polka step the timing is ¾ beat, ¼ beat, 1 whole beat. There is a slight stutter on the shuffle and polka but not on the Cha Cha. The count is 1&2 or 3&4.

WEAVE

This is similar to a Grapevine, but involves crossing in front as well as behind. Usually a minimum of 6 counts unless the pattern starts right off with the cross instead of a side movement.

WEIGHT CHANGE

To move from one foot to the other.

This article is reproduced from Alberta Education - 27 Sep 2007

Revised by Max Perry - 17 Sep 2015