

DANCING INTO FALL: WHY SHOULD WE LINE DANCE?

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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.

The results of the study showed that line dance helps improve cardiovascular health. Among many other great benefits, it shows an overall lowering of the resting heart rate.

The perfect form of exercise for older people, line dancing 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.



Line dancing 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.

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.

See tips and tricks of the line dancing trade on the next page.

"I HAVE BEEN DOING COUNTRY LINE DANCING FOR ABOUT TWO YEARS NOW. WHEN I FIRST PLANNED TO GO, I HAD NO IDEA WHAT I WAS GETTING MYSELF INTO. OTHER THAN THE FACT THAT I WOULD BE DANCING, I DIDN'T REALLY DO ANY RESEARCH ON WHAT COUNTRY LINE DANCING REALLY IS.

PRETTY MUCH, IF YOU THINK IT'S GOING TO BE A "HOE DOWN" OF SQUARE DANCING, YOU'RE WRONG. LINE DANCING IS DONE ACROSS THE GLOBE, GOING AS FAR AS GERMANY. THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF DANCES DONE AND TAUGHT AROUND THE WORLD BY MILLIONS OF CHOREOGRAPHERS (MYSELF INCLUDED). "



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 line dance "waltz" with a ballroom waltz - while some line dance waltzes are very similar to ballroom waltzes (especially when done as a partnered dance), others are anything but. One of the fastest dances I ever learned was, amazingly enough, a waltz - simply because it was a 6-beat dance.

STARTING TIPS

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).

HOW DANCING WILL AFFECT YOUR WELLBEING

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 to:

- 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
- Help improve general and psychological wellbeing
- Boost your self-confidence and self-esteem
- Improve social skills