

# Square dance: Review/Skill Sheet Grading

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Participation	/24
Skill development and application	/6
Use of strategy	/6
Knowledge	/6
Fitness	/12

## Skill 1: Rhythm

- Listens to music
- Claps with the beat
- Moves with the beat

## Skill 2: Promenade

- Faces counter clockwise
- Joins hands with partner
- Completes the circle

## Skill 3: Grand Right and Left

- Gives right hand to partner
- Meets and passes each person with correct hand

## Skill 4: Completes various patterns correctly

- Star
- Do-sa-do
- Courtesy turn
- Allemande Left

- ✓ Is able to use skills in following directions
- ✓ is able to use skills in finding the rhythm
- ✓ is able to clap in time to the music

Total skill development and application \_\_\_\_\_ /6 \_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ Knows what to do as each call is made
- ✓ Cooperates with partner
- ✓ Acts in a socially acceptable manner

Total strategy \_\_\_\_\_ /6 \_\_\_\_\_

## Vocabulary:

Patter call: Directions given with a “folksy” embellishment.

Singing call: Directions are sung along with lines from the song.

Promenade: Walk around the square

Corner: the Girl to the boy’s left (left hand lady)

Partner: The person you are dancing with

Square: The formation of four couples

Opposite: Person directly across the square from you

**History:** The square dance is an American institution. It began in New England when the first settlers and the immigrant groups that followed, brought with them their various national dances,

which we now call folk dances, but which were the popular dances of the day in the countries of their origin - the schottische, the quadrille, the jigs and reels and the minuet, to name a few. After a week of toil in building new homes and carving homes out of virgin forest, the settlers would gather in the community center on Saturday evening and enjoy dancing their old-world favorites. As the communities grew and people of different backgrounds intermingled, so did their dances. As the repertoire increased, it became increasingly difficult for the average person to remember the various movements.

In almost any group, however, there would be at least one extrovert, the hail-fellow-well-met, the life-of-the-party type, with a knack for remembering the dance figures. With typical Yankee ingenuity, the settlers let this person cue or prompt them in case they happened to forget what came next. In due course, the prompter (or figure caller, as he became known) acquired a repertoire of various colorful sayings or patter that he could intersperse with the cues. Quite often he would learn the dances of other communities and he would teach them to the group. Some of these men were quite ingenious and developed dances and routines of their own, including dances for groups of four couples. This is the manner in which square dancing and its director (or caller) developed.

As the population spread southward and westward, so did the dances. Lacking the organized recreation of today, the hardworking pioneers felt a need for an activity that would provide recreation as well as social contact with neighbors. Square dancing filled this need. The only requirements were a wooden floor, music and a caller. A barn, somebody's living room, the town hall or, in later years, the grange hall provided the place. A caller was not always a basic requirement. If one was around, fine; if not, they did dances that they remembered or that someone in the group could prompt. As far as music was concerned, there was always someone on hand who could play a guitar, a fiddle or an accordion.