

EVOLUTION OF SQUARE DANCE ATTIRE



B-018

INTRODUCTION

At this particular point in time when just about anything goes - no holds barred – it is nice to know that at a square dance there is something "special" about the way we dress. It is special because ladies look like ladies and you don't need a program to tell the hims from the hers. At a square dance, even a usually plain-appearing damsel becomes a doll decked out in petticoats, colored slippers and a pretty, full-skirted dress. And the male - the man is a man, sparkling in western pants and shirt, perhaps boots or boot-shoes and - ah, yes, a tie - bolo, bow, string or neckerchief - but nevertheless a tie!

Now why is all this such a big deal? Because SQUARE DANCING IS A BIG DEAL! Folks who see you dressed up know you're a square dancer. It's not a uniform; it's your individuality that's showing. There are those who say that the way we dress reflects the way we feel about square dancing.



The contents of this booklet –

1. Evolution of the Square Dance -- indicates that our favorite hobby has come a long way from the 1400's and has been in a state of continuous evolution by the changing of calls, technology, dance facilities, etc. and depicts the various costumes and how they changed as time has progressed.
2. Our Square Dance Image -- points out the importance of our square dance image to the public and other non-dancers.
3. The Club Costume -- a general discussion of the square dance costume.
4. Why Dress Up? -- a section that describes the role played by properly attired dancers.
5. The Class and Square Dance Attire -- provides information concerning the method of introduction of square dance attire to new dancers.
6. The Dress Codes -- discusses the background of dress codes and the need for a dress code.
7. Proper Square Dance Attire -- provides a thorough discussion of what is the proper attire for the square dance activity.
8. Summary
9. Credits -- to the authors and publications used in compiling this booklet.

We hope you find this booklet interesting and enlightening.

EVOLUTION OF THE SQUARE DANCE

Dance, along with music, has always dynamically expressed the spirit and personality of every culture. Modern western dance is part of this global language and its roots run wide and deep. They can be traced to the taverns of Ireland and to the ballrooms of Europe, to the Czarist palaces of Russia and further back still to the fluid tribal rituals of Africa. Representatives from all of these cultures brought their native dances when they landed in America. Widely differing peoples who had little or no exposure to one another gathered and danced on common ground.

A Folk Dance is any dance created by the people without any influence of a choreographer. In other words they just happen. The dance(s) are built up and practiced expressing the characteristic feelings of the people, according to the peculiarities of any racial temperament. According to the genealogical chart, the roots of square dancing started way back in 1450, with two major ancestors, one English and one French. This country has been referred to as the melting pot of the world. People from virtually every European country immigrated to the "new land" during America's first 200 years. The Folk dances of America all have names of patterns that may stem from Russia, Germany, Ireland, Scandinavia, France, England, etc. as these lands gave us many different and varied cultures of dance. They brought with them their customs, languages, skills and their dances. At first, grouped into ethnic concentrations in different parts of the country, they enjoyed their dances in the pure forms of their homelands. As people spread across the land, migrated west and moved from one city to another, the various forms of dance became more and more integrated. The following dance forms influenced the emergence of the American Square Dance into the activity we enjoy today.

The Waltz

The Waltz probably has a lengthy line of history slightly preceding the 13th century. The first tangible waltz tune appeared in 1670 in Vienna, Austria in 1776. However it did not become popular until 1788 when it was introduced on the Viennese stage in an opera. The waltz was said to be introduced to England in 1790. Later it was introduced into France from Germany by the soldiers of Napoleon I sometime around 1805.

The Branle

The Branle is a French Renaissance dance that was well documented in the 1400's. It was a very gay and quick dance, generally danced outdoors. Steps included a winging step and anterior kick and swing, lifting of the leg, twisting of the feet and the side fling of the foot. Generally it was performed in a circle, as our rounds are done today. The Charleston is said to have had its roots in the Branle.



The Courant

A 16th Century Renaissance dance, the Courant was danced in the French courts and lasted well into the 1800's.

The Minuet

The 17th Century Minuet was derived from the Branle. The name Minuet comes from the small steps that were taken during the dance. In its originality, the minuet was a lively, spirited dance, done around the room in the shape of an S. It developed into a slow and stately dance, elegant yet simple. Proper dress and courtesy was highly encouraged. Men would dance with swords on the waist and danced in their awkward boots. Women would sometimes wear riding habits. But the 'Code of Etiquette' created in the late 1600's changed all that. Swords were banished and the exuberant country dances became more graceful. The Minuet was preceded by at least two bows, followed by an offering of the hand, a salute to your partner, a high step and a balance, courtly gestures, bows and curtsies, and kissing here and there! It is said that George Washington's favorite dance was the Minuet.



Morris Dance

Unquestionably, the English ancestor of our modern square dance was the great Morris Dance. It was an exhibition dance done by trained teams of dancers – six men (women did not participate) in two rows of three. Each wore a leather pad of bells fastened around each calf, and because the purpose was to ring the bells, the steps had to be vigorous enough to ring them. There was no caller, and whatever cues were necessary were given by a leader of the six dancers.

Country Dances

Later in the 17th century, Country Dances became all the rage in England. Many were longways or line dances, and some believe that the Contra got its name either from a mispronunciation of "country" or from the fact that the dances were done in two opposing lines. At the same time, people did "rounds", which resembled the choral dances often danced in the naves of English churches.

Contras

The Contras were direct descendants of the English Country Dances. They were danced in long lines of facing dancers, like today's contras. Contras were prompted or cued on the last beats of one phrase so the dancers may start on count one of the next. These line formations utilize virtually the same simple basics used in square dances.

Mescolanzas

Similar to the Contra, the Mescolanzas consisted of two couples standing side by side in one line facing two couples side by side in the opposing line. A number of units were lined in columns up and down the hall. Dancers completed a pattern within their own unit, and then the lines of four progressed on to the next line of four where the dance was repeated. These dances were also cued or prompted in the manner of the Contras and Quadrilles and used a limited number of square dance basics. The weaving through each other in the beginnings of a "mescolanza" was later to become "progressive squares."



The Quadrille

Quadrilles were first introduced in France, about the year 1760. They were performed by two couples, as the French quadrilles only required four people. At a later period, two couples were added to form the sides, and these simply repeated the figures while the first couples rested.

Quadrilles were introduced to England in 1808 and made fashionable by 1813. Originally there were only three kinds of quadrilles: the plain quadrille, the Lancers, and the Caledonians. But as society seemed to tire of these dances, the dance masters introduced the Waltz into the "Square Dance" and produced a new quadrille by altering the old figures to meet the requirements of the added element.

The Cotillion

The Cotillion or French dances were a French Folk or Square dance done in the early 18th Century, and is claimed to have been in vogue before the Quadrilles. The Cotillion originated in the West Indies in the 1700's. It was introduced in New York about the year 1844 as the German Cotillion. To make a distinction between the Quadrille (which was also called the Cotillion) and this dance, the dance became known as the "German."

The word Cotte was a short petticoat worn by the peasants and the dance was so called because the ladies raised their dresses while dancing the lively figures, and thus exposed to view their feet and white petticoats (like the can-can).

At some Cotillions of old it was customary for a lady to hold a lighted candle, and when the lady was approached to dance by other than one gentleman, the loser of the two would hold the candle until the lady had finished her dance with whom she accepted. That's where the saying "hold a candle to you" came from.

By the end of the 19th Century, the Cotillion was popular in England and Scotland. It was danced by eight persons, nearly all figures were lively, and required the entire set to take part at once. Many different dances would be performed as well as rounds. By this time hundreds of named patterns had been developed. Today's ballroom dances (Jive, Foxtrot, Waltz, Mambo, etc.) are step-children of the Cotillion patterns.



The Lancers

The Lancers is one of the most elegant dances and it, too, is a Quadrille. We think of the Lancers as a military dance, with the ladies in hoop skirts and the men resplendent in the uniforms of the day. It is really a program of five dances: the 1st in 6/8 time, the 2nd in 2/4, the 3rd and 4th in 6/8, and the 5th in 4/4 time. Our happiest inheritance from the Lancers is the Grand Square, which is the 5th figure. The Lancers became extremely popular when they arrived in America.

Polka

The Polka can be traced back to 1822 in Czech. It was introduced into the ballrooms of France and England in 1843 by Cellarius, and led to the inauguration of the present style of round dancing. It had been in vogue but a short time when a musical and theatrical gentleman forwarded the music and description of the dance to the proprietor of the New York Daily Aurora. He presented the music to a ballet-master at the National Theatre. It was first danced in America at that theatre in May, 1844.



Mountain Dances

From the highlands in the southern portions of America and up through a part of the eastern seaboard, we find a form of country dancing which has had a great bearing on the evolution of American Square Dancing. These dances came to this country directly from England and were also known as Kentucky Running Sets, Tennessee Mountain Dances and Appalachian Circles. Dances started in one big ring with the dancers circling left or right, swinging, doing a grand right and left and promenading around the circumference of the circle.

Play Parties

There was a time when dancing was forbidden in some parts of America. Often this stand came from certain church groups that proclaimed that "dancing was wrong" because it was done to the accompaniment of the fiddle, and the fiddle was synonymous with sinnin' and carryin' on, and was the instrument of the devil. While such strong beliefs discouraged people from dancing, the youth, as in any generation, were not to be deprived of some form of dance and thus discovered or invented singing games or "Play Parties." The principle of the Play Party was to learn a set pattern, and then as the participants sang the words, everybody did the routine. Many of the Play Parties resembled the Contra dance or Virginia reel and included some square dance basics, such as an allemande left and a grand right and left, although they were not identified by those names. There was no drinking, young ladies and gentlemen were mannerly, and no young man would have ever thought about putting his arm around a girl's waist!

Kitchen Junkets

The New England brand of friendliness in the mid 1800's was accurately expressed in the Kitchen Junket. These were family and neighborly gatherings taking place in someone's home, where the largest room, usually the kitchen, would be the scene of a party. For the first tip no caller was necessary, for everyone old and young alike knew the dance by heart. After the first tip, different members of the group took their turn at calling the squares and contras of the region. The Kitchen Junket was a pure American form and is an excellent example of the friendliness and neighborliness that is the tradition of American Square Dancing.





Barn Dances



The Barn Dance originated in Scotland in the 1860's. It was also known as the "Pas de Quatre" which basically was a generic term for American Folk Dancing in rural communities or the "poor people's ballroom" of the time. It has been said to have first reared its head at the Gaiety Theater when Meyer Lutz composed the tune "Pas de Quatre." These parties were usually thrown after the raising of a barn or would be given as a birthday party, homecoming or wedding. These dances were to merge with square dancing in the United States.

Barn dances were popular until about 1899 as farmers and common folk would usually not be invited to the fancier balls of the upper class. In the 1930's, Radio stations such as the WLS National Barn Dance Radio Show, broadcasted many country and western songs as well as featuring many country artists of the day which would add the main link to combine Country music, Barn dancing and Square Dancing together. Barn Dances consisted of Waltzes, Virginia Reels, Corn Husking Dances, Jugs, Buck, Schottische, and more.

Reels

There are many types of reels, such as the Scottish Reel, Virginia Reel, etc. The dance was first published in England in 1685 by Sir Roger De Coverly. Whether it was originated here or in England, we are not sure and it really doesn't matter. What matters is that it has been enjoyed since colonial times both in the United States and around the world. When one thinks about the Virginia Reel, one thinks about the colonial period in American history through the great movement to settle the west.

The Paul Jones

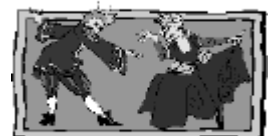
Because of the social aspects of dancing, different forms of mixers were frequently interjected into the old time programs. Looking at square dancing in the past, no square dance was considered complete without some of these partner-changing, mixer-type interludes.

The Couple Dances

From the earliest accounts of dancing in America, Rounds or Couple Dances were customarily an integral part of the square dance picture. The early minuets and gavottes led into other dances, such as the schottisches, polkas, varsouviannas and waltzes. These were freestyle, do-your-own-thing, dances that were a joy to dance or watch.

The Waltz Quadrille

The Waltz Quadrille is definitely an American dance form done in a square formation to waltz rhythm. They were basically old country dances.



The Grand March

Scarcely a dance of any size or significance was considered "officially started" without a Grand March.

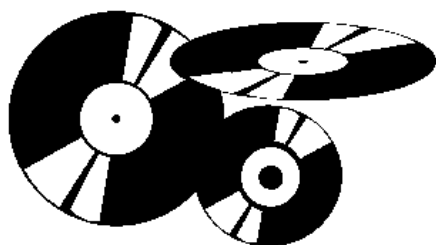
During the 1800's we were more of a dancing nation than we are today. Everybody who was able danced and no one stayed home. Babies were brought in baskets, while the small fry formed their own set in a corner or on the side.

They danced in taverns, town halls, barns, at roof raisings and any other excuse they could think of. They built dance halls right into their houses. If they didn't have anything better, they danced in the kitchen or the largest room available. More than a century ago, they traveled by sleigh, hayrack, buggy or horse to enjoy the same type of dancing as we do today.

In the early 1900's a sort of decay set into American dancing for about 25 years. Quadrilles and contras died, with only the schottische living on in school dances. The true square dance that had evolved, all but disappeared except in farming areas. Callers, who were remembering what their dads had done, were remembering less and less, forgetting how to prompt and instead, called with the action instead of leading it.

Then in the 1920's, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Ford came into the picture to preserve a great American folk activity, with the money necessary to save it. They built a dance hall with a teakwood floor and crystal chandeliers in Greenfield Village, Dearborn, Michigan and hired Benjamin Lovett as a teacher and dancing master. Lovett wrote a book in 1926 entitled "Good Morning - After a Sleep of Twenty Five Years" containing the revival of dancing, including everything the American square dance was missing. Square dance attire was very formal with long gowns and white gloves. Ford put the world on wheels, but he and Lovett put many Americans on the dance floor.

In 1936, a man in Colorado by the name of Lloyd "Pappy" Shaw, after reading the Benjamin Lovett book, worked on the theory that dancing should be an essential part of a child's education. He began summer classes for teachers, where they in return set up classes in their communities and square dancing was reborn. He taught dances to his high school students and developed an exhibition team called "The Cheyenne Mountain Dancers" that toured America in 1937 and awakened a fresh interest in the American Square Dance.



World War II in the 1940's brought a lot of moving from farms to the cities and the requesting of country style music and the square dance. Development of public address systems, record companies turning out records with music and calls, and new clubs and more dancers evolving, created the need for more callers, more halls - then beginner lessons of 10 to 12 weeks, with a form of recreation that could be learned by people who had never danced before.

Calling and dancing techniques were in a state of constant change as the American Square Dance evolved. "Bird in the Cage," "Dive for the Oyster" or "Take a Little Peek" were figures danced by the dancers. Typical calling of yesteryear included:





Wipe off your tie, pull down your vest
And dance with the one you love the best

Roll the barrel, tap the keg
Save the oyster, break the egg

Open the book, write the check
Turn inside out, go on to the next

Go around the lady, do the figure eight
Back around the gent and don't be late

Chase the rabbit, chase the squirrel
Chase the pretty girl around the world

Chase the rabbit, chase the 'coon
Chase that big boy around the room

Do si do and a little more show
Chicken in the bread pan peckin' out dough

Granny will your dog bite, "No child no"
One more change and on you go

Swing your little sage-hen 'round and 'round
'Til the heel of your boot makes a hole in the ground

Rope the cow, brand the calf
Swing your honey once and a half

Do si do don't you know
You can't catch a rabbit 'till it comes a snow

Do si do on a heel and toe
It's one more change then home you go

With the right foot up and the left foot down
Make that big boot jar the ground

Hurry up cowboy, don't be slow
You won't go to heaven if you don't do sa do

Promenade two and promenade four
Keep that calico off the floor

Meet in the center, buckle up eight
Make a line and keep it straight



All circle left, keep time to the fiddle
First Gent and Fourth Lady, Thread the needle in the middle

Lift arms up high and straighten the line
California twirl, promenade so fine

Make a Spinning Wheel, roll it along
Now turn back, you done gone wrong

Make a Spinning Wheel, roll it around
With the right foot up and the left one down

Ladies to their seats and gents all foller
Thank the fiddler and kiss the caller



Compare these calls with those of today. Have the calls changed much over the years? You bet they have! We have come a long way since these calls were popular and routine. Calls have changed considerably and so has the square dance attire.

EVOLUTION OF SQUARE DANCE ATTIRE



Depending upon your attitude toward history, you have probably decided that the first lady of prehistoric times either wore a fig leaf jumper, a duster of green wooly rhinoceros hide or nothing at all. Whatever it was, she undoubtedly complained that the lady in the next cave was better provided for. "Henrietta Ug," she probably complained to her husband, "always has something new. There she was, only this morning, oozing by in a brand new lavender baboon cocktail frock, with zebra tippetts yet.

There I was in that ancient warthog housedress I've had for at least seven moons. It isn't as though I don't keep a neat cavern and chew your moccasins and keep the children dirty and nice, goodness knows, for all the thanks I get."

Well goodness knows this situation has continued down the long and tortuous pathway of the history of woman's fashions and continues today in its implacable and completely mysterious way.

Our square dance dresses of today can trace their history back to the elegant ballrooms of France and the grand manors of England. In those countries the minuet, polka, waltz, and quadrille were danced. As people immigrated to America they brought their customs, dress and dance with them. Gowns were made of damask, taffeta, silk or fine muslin. The fullness in the skirt was obtained by wearing a hoop skirt underneath. Coiffures were often high and possibly powdered. It was an era of stately music, stately dances and stately dress.





We move forward a hundred years and the move to open the West is on. Days are long and hard with both men and women settling the land, working in the fields, and tending the livestock. Women grow their own flax to make linen, use wool from their sheep to spin yarn, weave their own material and dye it with dyes made from roots and berries. There was not much time for gaiety so every occasion was used for socializing. Barn-raising, weddings and holidays were prime examples when gatherings were held. Often people came from miles around to see their neighbors, catch up on the news and dance the night away. These dances were held in kitchens, barns, out-of-doors, even in the saloons. Women's dresses were long; starched petticoats and floor length pantaloons were worn underneath. The costuming allowed free and exuberant movements in the squares, circles and couple dances.

The vagaries and fancies of woman's dress appear to be guided by only one identifiable factor: change. Well, yes, but not really so true when applied to square dance dresses. The square dance dress has not varied greatly in general character in the activity with the marked exception that everything has more or less receded from the extremities.

In the early 1900's the dress varied with the social status of the participants. During the 1920 Henry Ford era, in Lovett Hall complete with teakwood floor, crystal chandeliers and formal straight chairs on either side, formal attire was mandatory with ladies in long gowns and white gloves. For the men, high-heeled boots were very much in favor, with a flowing bow tie or neckerchief. It wasn't until 1936, when Lloyd "Pappy" Shaw started the modern square dance movement with the fluffy skirts and western-style clothes, that these became the standard dress code.



Following World War II, there was a resurgence in square dancing across the United States. Ladies remembered the long dresses of the earlier years. Dresses were straight and worn without a petticoat. This was what was available and what our forbearers had worn. In the late '40's the length came up to just above the ankles and starched petticoats and pantalets were added as were long sleeves and high necks. Cotton was the fabric used which meant hours of ironing, not only the dress but the petticoat as well. The man who tucked his trousers into his boots roughly was a regular guy while the one who put them in evenly was a dude.

By the early 1950's, the squaw dress was discovered. Some of the newer cottons could be washed, crushed together while wet, and pulled through something tubular, like a stocking, or tied at intervals. When dry, a three or four-tiered skirt would present a pleated look, much like the skirts worn by Indian women. Miles and miles of rickrack were used as trim, which made these dresses weigh eight or nine pounds. Imagine dancing all night in a dress weighing eight or nine pounds. Meanwhile square dance hemlines had gone up to ankle or calf length and pantalettes to below-the-knee bloomers. By the late 1950's, some of the embossed cottons could be washed carefully and be presentable without ironing.



In the 1960's, came the nylons, nylon net, Dacron, polyester and novelty blends that did not have to be ironed. The "drip-dry" era was in full swing. So were the petticoats. Layers of nylon net were used for the petticoats, which held the dresses out beautifully. The hemlines were rising and now we have fancy-pants, with row after row of lace trickling down the leg.



Along with the 1970's came the border prints. These prints can be used not only with the print providing the decoration around the bottom of the skirt, but working the design into the bodice and sleeves. Skirt lengths got shorter and it became a matter of personal choice as to the length. Petticoats also got fuller and with the hemline creeping up the thigh, the look began to be more like that of a tutu-skirted ballerina. Many young girls and exhibition groups have kept the tutu look.



The 1980's gave us a return to the fancier dress. Most of the patterns feature rows of ruffles, lace and ribbons with very fuller skirts and petticoats. The colors were bright and eye catching. Border prints were still going strong. Many women started wearing color-coordinated dresses, petticoats and pettipants. The length of the dress and the pettipants was left to the dancer's good taste and ranged from knee-length to the "sissy britches" style. Most of the costumes were still permanent press or "drip-dry" and required little, if any, touch-up with the iron.

Modern square dance clothes are no longer "authentic covered wagon" type. There are now acres of petticoats, puff sleeves or no sleeves at all, the sweetheart neckline, and the dipping, swooping, plunging or scooping neckline is very much with us. Ballerina slippers replaced the Mary Janes and low-heeled pumps.

Which brings us to the area known as underclothing, referred to blushing by our grandmothers as "unmentionables," defined by Charles Dickens and Mr. Pickwick as "small clothes" and spoken of rather prissily by the term "underthings." Technically the term "underwear" is as accurate as anything, since what is being referred to is usually worn under something else. Thus we find that undervests, undershirts, underpants and such become automatically eligible, as do shifts, shorts, chemises, BVDs, bloomers, teddy bears, corsets, girdles and slips. The following are descriptions of body styles that have been worn under square dance dresses:

1. THE PANTALOOON - Ankle-length, cotton, eyelet, embroidery at ankle.
2. THE PANTALETTE - Somewhat shorter usually than the pantaloon. Frill or ruffle at bottom of each leg. White or colors.
3. THE CAPRI UNDERGARMENT - Similar in length to the pantalette but is usually of any material except white cotton. May be loaded with rickrack, often of gold or silver. Rather snugly fit.
4. THE ALOON - What remains when the pantaloon is shortened. At one time considered quite fashionable in some quarters. Comfortable but disillusioning. Worn with panties.

5. PANTS - Note that the term "aloon" disappears as the knee appears. The pants are usually cotton but not usually white and very often without ruffling.
6. SISSY BRITCHES - Most controversy seems to stem from these items, affected largely by females with beautiful anterior or ventral appendages but often by the opposite. Often gussied up with bits of ribbon, ruffling, and embroidery.
7. PANTIES - Short pants.
8. WHISPS, BRIEFS, GOSSAMERS, ETC. - Not usually associated with proper attire for square dancing.

As square dancing grew out of the fad stage into a solid, stable activity, fashion, too, came into its own as a recognized costume. Tailored, western-cut trousers and western shirts for the men - today available in a wide variety of colors and fabrics - identify the male square dancer to the world.



Perhaps the ladies, though, deserve the nod for having played such a large part in the change of character or evolution of our costume. Taking advantage of the many choices of material and colors available to hem and calling upon their innate knowledge of styling, the female square dancer has visually lifted square dancing from the red barn scene and placed it in a category of beauty and grace.

A swirling floor of full skirts, bouffant petticoats and modest pettipants have long attracted the photographic eye and resulted in good publicity for our hobby. Many a costumed dancer seen by a non-participant has resulted in his joining a class. Neat and gaily attired club members have been able to open halls for the square dance activity, which had been previously denied due to an ugly misconception of the hobby.

Now, regrettably, a lack of proper costuming is being seen and is doing much harm to the picture of square dancing which so many have sought to build and protect over the years. Within the last few years some square dance classes have included ladies wearing mini-skirts, spandex, pants and shorts, while the men were in walking shorts, T-shirts or, as reported by some areas, even came shirtless. Of course the responsibility here lies foursquare on the shoulders of the caller/teacher and club leaders.

Soon on the heels of this trend came a laxness in some established clubs, workshops, festivals and an institute where "anything goes" was accepted. It wasn't long before this caused problems and finally "thinking" dancers and leaders began to lock horns with the situation. In some instances dancers dropped out of clubs where leadership declined to accept responsibility and correct the lack of proper dress. In other cases, clubs and festivals included information about dress in their fliers or on placards at the door. "Full square dance attire requested" left nothing for argument. Some associations began a re-education of leadership, who in turn recognized the importance of early indoctrination about costuming with new dancers.

Regretfully during this era of thoughtless dressing, publicity taken at various square dance events and run in local newspapers or on film has downgraded the public image of square dancing. Now we find, not the barn dance label being tacked on the activity, as much as a "sloppy" reference. Think back to the years when we had to educate the public that square dancing was not a hillbilly activity; that we did not have straw sticking out of our ears, a jug on the floor, nor did we wear bib overalls. If we let a slipshod attitude today of, "Oh well, let everyone do (wear) his own thing" prevail in square dancing, we're likely to find ourselves facing a colossal task of salesmanship.

Square dance clothing truly has a practical purpose as well as an aesthetic one. The full skirts allow total movement when dancing and give ample fabric to work with in various square dance movements and patterns. They lift both the man and the woman mentally as well as physically out of the day-to-day business into a gay and joyous atmosphere. And what with current easy-care fabrics, washing, ironing, and packing are no longer a problem. The beautiful outfits with sparkling accessories are a part of the square dance activity and something we can all be proud of. Let's take a stand and wear and display our costumes at all square dance events.

OUR SQUARE DANCE IMAGE

For many years square dancing was referred to as "barn dancing" and while historically there may be some fact to this title, the contemporary activity has had to labor long and hard to remove this misconception of the general public. Our square dance image is created by what the non-dancing public sees, reads and hears about square dancing. Unfortunately not all publicity about our dancing creates a good image. A good image is one that appeals to a person even to the point of making that person want to participate in the activity.

Television programs or movies that show square dancing as boisterous, brawling, drinking individuals hopping and jumping in a shoot-em-up environment are not good portrayals of our western square dance activity. This type of activity may have been exciting in the rural territories many years ago but certainly not in our times. But how does the viewer know the difference between the olden days and the current square dance to form a proper image of our hobby? Our square dance costume and behavior describes the difference. Guns, knives, jugs, dirty rag-tag clothing, clodhopper boots are not part of the current costumes. Therefore, with our current square dance attire - you ARE what you APPEAR to be!



One of the bonuses of the square dance activity is the fun of beautiful costuming - both for the gentleman and the lady. When we ignore proper square dance attire or do not take advantage of looking our very best, we tarnish the square dance image we present to the public. Our "image" could be lost if the dress situation is just allowed to slide away from us. Remember that square dancing is somewhere "special to go" and not just "somewhere else to go." Be proud of the image that traditional square dancing represents AND DRESS THE PART!!!



THE SQUARE DANCE COSTUME

What should a square dance dress be like? Today's square dance clothes are not "authentic covered wagon, hillbilly, or Li'l Abner" type of dresses. They are also not our everyday street wear. They are lively and much more frivolous. They are truly a costume appropriate for our square dance hobby.

Here are some comments (pro and con) we have all heard regarding our traditional square dance costume:

I have had trouble trying to recruit possible interested square dancers because of square dance clothing.

Some of the older women feel they would look "silly" in the current square dance styles.

In 42 years, we cannot recall a single person who was embarrassed by their clothing nor have we heard complaints, other than maybe some husbands who can't understand why their wives need so many different outfits.

I feel that the younger people are not really comfortable with the traditional square dance attire.

The older dancers don't always wear square dance clothes.

Our club caller or club officers never told us what the correct dress was.

I'm in my forties, and frankly it took me over a year to be willing to buy a full petticoat.

I wonder how some people would feel about a black tie party – would they be embarrassed to wear long gowns and tux? Maybe cut offs and halter-tops are more to their taste.

It is too hot to wear those clothes.

We are dancing for fun; the kind of clothes we wear doesn't matter.

I suffered through numerous glares and stares at not being in proper attire, but being a single dancer and not sure if I would be able to stay in square dancing without a permanent partner, I wasn't willing to invest the money required for a square dance costume.

I can't afford two wardrobes in my closet.

Younger people like to be more casual.

New dancers are intimidated by the clothes, both from an economic and style viewpoint.

Please don't abolish our beautiful outfits.

You'll never get me in those clothes.

There might be a cause/effect relationship between the public's reluctance to join new dancer classes and our square dance costume.

I wish I could believe that wearing street clothes to classes and club functions would result in dramatically increased numbers of new dancers, but I don't.

I came into square dancing because I was fascinated by the beautiful costumes.

My husband and I were attracted to square dancing when we sat in the spectator stands at a National Convention. We were fascinated by the kaleidoscope of the swirling dress and shirts.

I like everything about this recreation as long as I can dress as I want to.

I love square dance clothes. To me, they are the prettiest, gayest, most comfortable and most becoming clothes I have ever worn.

No matter how tired I may be, or how near we come to deciding to stay home just this once, the moment I get into those full skirts and fluffy petticoats and soft slippers, I am ready to go.

No matter how far from perfect your figure may be, there is a square dance style that will make you look attractive.

Square dance dresses may be as individual as the person who wears them. The costume most acceptable for square dancing is cool, comfortable, not too tight nor too loose, and functional. It should be becoming to you. It should look well on the dance floor, both in color and movement. It should be practical, so that it may be worn regularly without its upkeep becoming a burden.

In choosing a color, remember that you want it to be attractive on you but also look well on the floor. White and pastel colors, as well as bright colors, contrast with men's clothes and dress up a crowd. Dark backgrounds are all right when accented by white or light colors, if the accents are bold enough. Some plaids and prints hold their colors at a distance but others lose their identity and blend to a dull brown or gray. Be sure to look at any material from a distance before buying it.



The type of dress you make will depend on where and how often you are going to dance. Basically there are three types: club dresses; simpler dresses (for workshops, morning sessions at conventions and places where you dance a little and talk a lot); and party dresses (for the times you want to make a big occasion of a dance.)



The style of your dress is unlimited. Look around at other dancers and see what appeals to you. Consider what looks well on you before you start to sew. Skirts may be a full circle, gored, gathered, tiered, A-shape, flounced, aproned, prairie, etc. Bodices may have a boat neck, round neck, V-neck, square neck, high neck, have a collar, no collar, be trimmed, no trim, etc. Sleeves may be puffed, short and straight, three-quarter, bell, butterfly, petal, etc. And by the time you make combinations of all these, you can see there is no end to what you can design yourself.

Underpinnings are a fun part of the activity as well as a must to make you and your dress look your very best. Petticoats come in a variety of fabrics and widths, all the way to 100 yards or more. The fullness you select will depend on the fullness of your square dance dress. Your petticoat should be an inch to an inch-and-a-half shorter than your dress and be full enough to make a beautiful twirl when your partner swings you. If your dress is a sheer or a light fabric, consider wearing an opaque full circle skirt, either in white or a light, blending color. This will allow your dress to hang smoothly. Your regular petticoat may be worn under this to give you your desired fullness.

Pettipants come in short sissy pants and then graduate down in length to just above the knee. A traditional, floor-length dress usually includes pantaloons or mid-calf pantalettes. Remember, you may not see what you have on (or do not have on) under your petticoat, but the spectators and dancers sitting on the sidelines will be very knowledgeable about your underpinnings, or lack of them. Decorum, good taste and attractiveness go hand in hand.

The basic, casual starting costume for the man should be lightweight, absorbent, long-sleeved shirt, slacks and comfortable leather-soled shoes. The lady's casual starting outfit might be a lightweight, full skirt and blouse or a dress with an easy skirt. Avoid bare backs or midriffs. Flat, comfortable leather-soled shoes or ones with a sliver of a heel that slide easily fit the bill. Adding a full petticoat will come next. A dress-up costume for the man includes a bit of color in a western shirt or vest, collar tips, western belt, string tie, gambler tie, sparkling bow and flare ties, nylon or silk kerchief knotted and worn with open collar, pants and boots or boot shoes. Dressing the part adds to the joy of square dancing.

Square dance dresses give a truly feminine look and through various patterns, materials and trims compliment any lady's figure. Petticoats come in many choices of fabrics, colors and fullness. Some type of pettipants is worn to add an appreciated decorum to the activity.

A well-groomed square dancer - man or lady - is a joy to behold and more than one individual has been attracted to the activity by the colorful shirts and bouffant dresses. The cost of square dance attire can fit any budget. Those with imagination have sewn delightful dresses from sale curtains for as little as \$1.95. At the other end of the scale, a man's full western suit can be comparably priced to a good wool suit.

Dressing should fit three essentials: comfort, consideration and utility. Square dancing is active, so clothes and shoes should fit comfortably. Consideration for others calls for certain minimum requirements. Long ago somebody realized that the contact of perspiring arms between two dancing partners left a lot to be desired and long-sleeved shirts for the men became an accepted, courteous custom. A small hand towel worn on the man's belt is a popular item for perspiring dancers. Any jewelry worn should not scratch others or snag some delicate fabric. Clothes should reflect the values we place on square dancing by being clean and presentable. The utility of modern-day fabrics makes this a simple task.

No one can deny that the costume is as much a part of our National Folk Dance heritage as the allemande left. To protect the square dance activity, many clubs, classes, vacation institutes and conventions require "proper attire" at their activities. Proper attire is the basic costume. It is not slacks or shorts for the lady, nor t-shirts and tennis shoes for the man. Costuming should never become competitive. Some dancers have more time than others to make dresses or more money to spend on clothing. You'll find a number of manufacturers who make attractive outfits for both the man and the lady, including shoes and boots in various price ranges. Be yourself in your dressing as long as you dress appropriately. Who is responsible for the keeping of the square dance dress tradition? All of us! Just as square dancing is one enormously wonderful, cooperative activity, the dress is also part of that cooperation. Believe it or not, while clothes may not make the square dancer - they help!

WHY DRESS UP?

Special costuming for dancing of yesteryear was unheard of. People simply wore the type of clothing that was in vogue at the time. Today our activity is blessed with a costume that is colorful, attractive and suitable to our type of dance. Whether elaborate square dance costuming intrigues you or lean toward the more simple attire, you will find that dressing the part will contribute to your enjoyment.

Dressing for square dancing is not putting on a uniform so much as it is stepping into a role that makes square dance night something special, something different from the general run-of-the-mill workday or evening out at the movies. This does not mean that one needs to go out and spend a lot of money on a fancy dress and equally fancy western pants and shirt. Of course, as parties come along and as we get invited to visit clubs and eventually even join a club of our own, the fun of costuming comes into the picture. Individuality is the name of the game. You can be conservative if you wish or you can use this opportunity to wear the bright and colorful costumes that liven up a square dance hall.

Some clubs have a standard club costume for special events and all members will dress in the club costume to visit another club or attend a special event. Why dress alike? A club costume denotes a special group, and demonstrates pride in your club, pride in your fellow dancers and lets other dancers know "we are a special team of dancers." When we travel, either to visit another club, to a convention or a festival, our club outfits are a way of showing mass support by our club for the event. But, club costumes could restrict an individual from dressing the way he or she feels best. The same dress, looking spiffy on one slim lady, may look less than complimentary on another. However, this can be overcome by selecting the particular fabric and leaving it to each individual club member to design her own dress which would solve the problem of fitting various figures.



Why we should dress up for square dancing is explained in the following article:

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Let's all be defenders of the outfit that sets us apart from everyone else - our square dance outfits. It is a privilege and a responsibility to wear the traditional costume and outfits that symbolize our activity.

The very nature of square dancing outfits sets us apart from the general public. We are square dancers! It's good advertising for what we do and enjoy! People who haven't had the privilege of square dancing are captivated by the outfits and often ask questions. What an opportunity to introduce them to square dancing and encourage them to attend a class.

Football players don't play in shorts and baseball players don't just wear pads. Postal employees wear their uniform, office people wear 'street' clothes, truck drivers wear appropriate dress, and so square dancers should wear square dance clothes. (Author Unknown)

THE CLASS & SQUARE DANCE ATTIRE

The tremendous burden placed on a caller to teach the new dancers all of the calls and proper technique of square dancing often precludes the caller from promoting proper square dance costuming. Costuming is one thing that must be covered. Newcomers cannot be expected to know how to dress the first night. Nor can they be expected to purchase or make an outfit immediately. But proper indoctrination by the caller or club leader, during the first few nights of class, will serve as a guidepost as to how to dress, why to dress and where to buy square dance outfits or the sharing of patterns for those who sew.

A few suggestions to help the club leaders and caller are listed below:

1. The first few nights of a beginner class, the caller, his wife and any club members who are assisting should dress in SIMPLE square dance attire. This establishes the idea that there is a costume for square dancing. It will also not overwhelm the new dancers early in the class sessions.
2. Prepare a bulletin board at home with all kinds of information and hints about clothes, records, deodorants, friendliness, etc. and bring it to the class regularly. Change the information on it frequently so the class members will get in the habit of reading it.
3. Make a display of clothing for men and women so that the class can examine and discuss this with you. Be prepared to answer questions as to why street wear is not suitable for certain square dance events. Street wear may be acceptable at picnics, campouts, etc. but not at formal square dances.
4. Put out take-home copies of square dance magazines, special dance announcements, etc. on a display table so that class and club members will be educated to the overall picture of the activity.

5. Prepare a sewing display of square dance patterns, mimeographed sheets discussing gored or tiered skirts, sleeve designs, etc. Have a club member knowledgeable in sewing available to answer questions and create general enthusiasm. Visit the "Sew & Save" at any National Convention to gather patterns, sewing hints and points of contact for sewing activities.
6. Early in the class sessions, mention that you'll be having a "full dress" party night before the class is over. By mentioning it early, class members can think toward sources for square dance shirts, ties, dresses, etc. as possible birthday or anniversary gifts.
7. Consider a Recycle or Costume Sale one evening, similar to a Garage Sale. Have club members bring any square dance item they wish to donate or sell, pricing everything very low, say no higher than \$5.00 or \$10.00 for better quality items. Of course everything should be in good, clean condition. The money may be kept by the donor or placed in a fund for the class' special party.
8. A "silent" auction can be fun and generate good fellowship. Clean square dance clothing is brought in, displayed and tagged with sheets of paper. After studying everything, if a class member wants to buy something, he puts his name and a bid on the paper. A second person might put a larger bid below the first one, etc. At a given time, announced previously, bids are closed and the last bidder claims the articles. This should be supervised so bidding does not go too high.

All the extra activity within a class promotes friendships and fun and supplies the sociability that is so very important to help cement dancers into our square dance movement. Get good fashion habits formed early and these new dancers will be ready for club membership after graduation with the proper square dancing attire.

DRESS CODES

Square dance dress codes can arouse people to extremes. It happens. A situation once developed at a Saturday morning session at a festival. Some came in shorts, slacks, and T-shirts. They were ejected. Not a pleasant thought or act.

At some festivals, attire is more controlled than at others. In those cases it is usually very clearly specified on the advance fliers. If it is not, the sponsors can be accused of being arbitrary. If it is, the dancers who do not conform can be accused of being non-conformist.

Nobody likes to turn someone away from a dance, but sponsors realize that they cannot make exceptions. The old saying, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" applies to dress codes. At someone else's dance, their dress code rules are part of the deal or price for their dance.

The argument for retaining the present dress code (as represented by the code at the National Convention) goes something like this: Men should wear long sleeved shirts to avoid the sweaty-arm-contact syndrome. Beyond this we get into style. Square dance heritage has ladies in skirts and petticoats and men in long sleeved western shirts and pants. It just looks like square dancing.



Ladies' dresses - length, fullness, etc. are clearly matters of style. Some people wear clothes that other people view as unattractive. Most men over 45 don't look good in shorts - especially with boots. Many ladies also do not look too good in shorts. Why would people wear unattractive clothes? First, they don't believe their style is unappealing. Second, they suspect it, but their own comfort is a higher priority. Third, they like to be different. Fourth, they like to torque the system - to see how firm or soft the rules are.

The arguments in favor of changing to a more open dress code are, first it is more economical. Second, young people - whom we dearly want and need - view traditional square dance dress as outdated and unstylish. Third, an open dress code is more convenient. Fourth, casual dress is more comfortable.

A counter argument to an open code is that the uniqueness of the square dance will suffer. If everyone came as they pleased, the spectacle of a floor full of colorfully dressed dancers would suffer. Square dancing is, more than anything else, a community of people. In any dealings with people, there are certain rules and etiquette that must be followed. For instance, you wouldn't go to a fancy dress ball wearing jeans and a T-shirt, and conversely, you wouldn't go to a sporting event in an evening gown or tuxedo. These events by custom and common sense have their own dress code. Square dancing, likewise, has, over the years, developed a dress code. That dress code is more complex than most and this very complexity prompts the controversies and misunderstandings. Some common sense rules should help clarify the situation.

1. When in Rome, do as the Romans do - if you are visiting a club where you know how they usually dress, dress likewise. It will make you more comfortable and make the club friendlier because they will see that you respect their preferences. If you have doubts, wear traditional square dance attire (petticoats and square dance dresses for women; pants and long sleeved western style shirts for men).
2. At evening dances and special events, dress in the traditional square dance attire (unless otherwise specified). Evening dances are parties and it is considerate to dress up for a party (rather than to dress down).
3. At day dances, where the level is advanced or challenge, you are probably safe to dress casually, but it is never wrong to dress traditionally. A simple advance phone call can answer the dress code for these dances.
4. At all times, dress neatly; never dress down for a dance.

One square dance dress code will not fit all square dance situations. Different dress codes apply to different types of events and facilities - convention, camping, festival, picnic, theme party, club dance, barn, civic center, gym, church, etc. Dress codes therefore must be flexible and dependent on the rules established by the sponsor of the event. Most of this is common sense. Unfortunately, when common sense is not followed by some, sponsoring organizations need to make and advertise in advance their desired dress code rules.





PROPER SQUARE DANCE ATTIRE

What is "Proper Square Dance Attire"? Many dancers and leaders use terms such as "traditional", "western", "proper", "casual", "club", and "country" attire, but have not clearly defined each of these terms. "Proper Square Dance Attire" has changed many times through the years and probably will continue to change as years go by. "Proper Attire" has generally been accepted through use and prevailing fashion, not from something written down and decided on by vote of anyone.

There are many different situations that determine the proper square dance attire. For example: Would you wear the same identical square dance attire at a National Convention, club picnic, club dance, barn dance, theme party, exhibition, demonstration, etc.? My guess is probably not! Each of these functions would probably have a separate set of rules or guidelines for "Proper Square Dance Attire." Proper attire for a club picnic or camp-out would not be proper for a National Convention. So "Proper Square Dance Attire" could easily have several different definitions.

Spectators attending any convention, large festival or club activity never fail to be impressed by the beautifully dressed dancers who form an exciting and colorful picture. And because this traditional costume is seen so much now, even a non-dancer recognizes a square dancer when he is dressed appropriately. It has become a TRADEMARK. Just one person in shorts, undershirt, spandex, ragged, dirty, and torn jeans could destroy the exciting and colorful picture at a square dance. When you are in square dance dress, YOU represent the entire worldwide activity. YOU ARE square dancing!

Perhaps the National Square Dance Convention is responsible for establishing the first official dress code for square dance attire. At the 1968 National Convention in Omaha, Nebraska, the weather was hot, however the heat was no excuse for some dancers to be appearing on the dance floor wearing short shorts, undershirts, and bare feet. Since that unpleasant situation, the National Square Dance Convention has had a dress code printed on all registration forms stating:

PROPER SQUARE DANCE ATTIRE IS REQUIRED AT ALL NATIONAL SQUARE DANCE CONVENTIONS

What is it that makes the National Square Dance Convention unique to the hosting city? IT'S OUR ATTIRE - on the dance floor and on the street. Most everyone knows when a National Square Dance Convention is in town, because of the colorful costumes worn by the dancers. You would not know when the Rotary, Kiwanis, or Lions' Clubs are meeting because they are dressed the same as everyone else.

The basic dress code for men is long sleeve shirts with tie and trousers (if jeans, neat and clean), while for the ladies, a full-skirted dress, or full skirt and blouse, with crinoline is acceptable and pettipants. However, many dancers enjoy dressing up a little more than the basic dress code calls for. The men will wear western cut suits and trousers, western style shirts, some with floral design, wide leather belts with ornate buckles, sparkling ties or impressive bolos, along with attractive jewelry, and fancy leather western style boots.



J.R. Ewing, of "Dallas" fame came upon the scene with his western cowboy hat and multi-feathered hatband, which is a stylish piece of head gear, but should be worn outdoors, and not on the dance floor any more than one would wear combat boots to bed. No western cowboy hats on the dance floor please, as some unsuspecting dancer could very easily receive an eye injury from the brim of the hat. It has already happened more than once. Hats for the caller on stage may be appropriate if that is part of his "calling card." The caller should remove his hat when on the dance floor.

The ladies really put the frosting on the cake with their colorful dress of many shades, multi-ruffled crinolines, matching pettipants and slippers, making these delightful feminine costumes contribute so much beauty and dignity to our image. Many of our ladies make their own square dance dresses, with matching shirts for their dancing partner, while others purchase attractive ready-to-wear dresses, circular skirts, and peasant blouses, from a host of vendors, many of whom are on hand at a National Convention. Now with the introduction of Country/Western dancing at the National Square Dance Conventions, the long Prairie Skirts, without the full petticoats, has been included in the "Proper Square Dance" costume.

Since the international, national, state and area square dance organizations cannot dictate to member clubs or organizations, who establishes and monitors the dress code for conventions, festivals, and club dances? The organizers or sponsors of these events should establish the dress code desired for their event. The theme, location and surrounding environment may influence the dress code or the relaxation of code for the events.

Everyone wears a name badge!

We have seen that there is no hard, fast, written, definition of "Proper Square Dance Attire" or "Dress Code" that will fit all occasions and events at the club, area, state, national or international levels. The "Dress Code" is flexible and depends on the event being sponsored. The sponsors set the Dress Code for their individual functions and monitor and enforce the code as they may desire.

In response to many requests for an official definition of "Proper Square Dance Attire," the following dress code has been developed and enforced at many National Square Dance Conventions and serves as the most recent Convention Dress Code of the Square Dance activity:

1. **SQUARE & ROUND DANCERS ATTIRE:**

Ladies - Square dance dress, or square dance skirt and blouse, or prairie skirt. Crinoline slips and pettipants are recommended with square dance attire but not with prairie skirts. No pants, shorts or T-shirts on square and round dance floors.

Men - Long sleeve shirts and long pants a must, bolo or square dance tie recommended. Western attire recommended. No short sleeves, T-shirts, or shorts allowed on square and round dance floors.



2. **CONTRA DANCERS ATTIRE:**

Ladies - Regular floor length contra dresses or same attire as the square and round dancers wear.

Men - Same as for square and round dancers.

3. **CLOGGING ATTIRE:**

Traditional clogging outfits for both male and female. Square and Round Dance attire is also permitted.

Females - Clogging/Square dance dress of reasonable length. Blouse/Skirt ensemble of reasonable length. Wear petticoat (optional in Clogging Halls), pettipants, and proper dance shoes with taps (taps worn only in the clogging hall). No pants, jeans, shorts or T-shirts.

Males - Western style shirts (long or short sleeves), long pants or nice clean jeans, bolo tie or scarf tie (optional), proper dance shoes with taps (taps worn only in the clogging hall). No shorts or T-shirts.

4. **COUNTRY WESTERN ATTIRE:**

Male and Female - Country and western outfits but no short shorts allowed. Square and round dance attire is also permitted.

All dancers will be permitted in any hall, but need to be dressed in proper attire to dance in that hall.

Live Lively -



Square Dance!



SUMMARY

Evolution and change are inevitable, constant processes and square dancing is no exception. Witness the changing movements and costumes over the years. Modern square dance clothes are no longer "Authentic Covered Wagon" type. Men wear well-fitting western shirts, bolo or scarf ties, western pants or jeans, and boots or comfortable leather or non-marking soft-soled shoes. Women may be as individual as they like in their dress, letting their imagination run free. Sleeves, necklines, skirts, trims, colors, combinations, there is no limit! Some of the choices that we have today include denim western dresses, prairie skirts, belts, and accessories to change and mix and match outfits. Dance shoes are available in many styles, heel heights and colors. The choice is yours. Good taste in underpinnings, in skirt lengths and necklines should always be considered. What looks well on the wearer and to the beholder is the criteria.

When we want to show people what we represent, we wear the square dance costume that distinguishes us from those not in our activity. It is a matter of pride. You are special because of the way you dress. You feel the part of the clothes you wear. Our square dance activity has a combination of informal fellowship and friendliness, sprinkled with some finesse and good manners. The reason our square dance activity has outlived so many other styles is the close adherence to rules of the dress code and behavior on a national scale. We may be the only national organization in which no two costumes are intended to be alike, yet all represent the same hobby. We may also be the largest and friendliest group of exclusive folks in the country. You can be exclusive without being a snob, but let's keep it exclusive with pride in our dress and behavior, not only at citywide functions, but any occasion that might be viewed by the public.

How do we maintain proper attire? First, as club leaders we must instill in the dancers the pride in good dress, looking good to not only their spouses and their friends, but also to the general public. Start with the classes and carry it through to the clubs. Club dresses with men's attire to match are another way. Maybe having an annual Mr. and Mrs. Square Dancer of a club would be another way, with one of the necessary qualifications being proper attire at all times.

We have a wonderful heritage in square dance dresses to look back on. Who can tell what the future will bring. Evolution and changes can be good, but let's not allow change from such a beautifully exquisite tradition to deteriorate to street, work and business level of sameness. We live for expectation and in pride. We should expect ourselves, and each other, to fulfill this responsibility of tradition. The general public expects it and pride in our activity's customs should stimulate our desire to dress as square dancers - not in clothes showing no relation or respect to the National Folk Dance of America.

Credits: From the original printing in 1997 – Mike & Mary Ann Alexander, Harold & Lil Bausch, Cathy Burdick, Walt Cole, Delores Lever, Floyd & Clare Lively, Lorraine Melrose, Becky Osgood, Walt Smith, Vic & Peg Wills, Madeline Allen, Charles & Margaret Bills, Betty Casey, Bill & Bobbie Davis, Lois Lew, Lou Longo, Jack Murtha, Nita Smith, Steve Stephens, American Square Dance Magazine, Square Dancing Magazine, National Squares.

Additional References:

- StreetSwing's Dance History Archives – www.streetswing.com
- NTA Newsletter, November 1997
- www.homepages.apci.net
- History of Square Dancing - <http://www.easdc.de/history/sheindex/htm>. Some text taken from essays by Dorothy Shaw, Bob Osgood and Kenny Reese.



PROPER ATTIRE
THEME PARTY

PROPER ATTIRE
CLUB DANCE

PROPER ATTIRE
CONVENTION

THE SQUARE DANCERS PLEDGE

“With all my ability I will do my best to help keep square dancing the enjoyable, wholesome, friendly and inspiring activity I know it to be. This I pledge in the sincere desire that it may grow naturally and unexploited in the coming years and be available to all those who seek the opportunity for friendship, fun and harmony – through square dancing.”

This Booklet was developed by the Education Committee of the
UNITED SQUARE DANCERS OF AMERICA, INC.

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