

## The Learning Curve

Scottish Country Dancing is a challenging hobby to take up. It involves learning new steps (skip-change, pas de basque and strathspey) listening to several unfamiliar rhythms of music, (reels, jigs, strathspeys) learning a whole new vocabulary (setting, casting, hands across, hands round etc.) and that is just for starters. It can all be a bit overwhelming but do not be discouraged. Most likely you have already learned a lot more than you think.

I have recently been reviewing the formations and dances which we, in the basic class, have learned and comparing them to the recommended steps and formations for Beginner dancers. The recommended list includes all of the standard steps which we have completed but are still working to perfect.

Here are the formations recommended for Beginner dancers:

Turning,	Stepping up and down
Down the middle and up,	Bow and Curtsey
Circling	Rights and Lefts
Hands across	Allemande
Casting off	Advance and retire
Promenade	Simple reels of 3
Figures of eight	Grand Chain

We have completed all of the above. The challenge is now to become so familiar with the patterns and combinations of these formations that we instantly know what they mean. It will happen! To help yourself become more familiar with these basic patterns try dancing with as many “more experienced” dancers as possible. Challenge yourself to remember what the terminology means. Concentrate on the progressions and stay in communication with your partner (preferably the non-verbal type of communication). Listen to the teacher!

Continue to enjoy and have fun with the learning curve – onwards and upwards.

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