

Angels are special!

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Angels are extremely important to the success of training new dancers and in helping hesitant, experienced dancers "brush up." Angels can make or break the learning experience.

"Rule number one" is **HAVE FUN!** This certainly includes smiling, laughing and making new dancers feel welcome.

Greatly encourage new dancers to pay attention to the caller/instructor. Remember that angels need to be attentive too. (Granted this can be difficult for angels who naturally want to be overly helpful.) Concentrate on what the caller is trying to teach. Talking while the caller is teaching is rude, counter-productive, and very confusing to the new dancer. Remember, this is "lesson time" for new students. If you identify a problem, raise your hand and ask the caller to go through that move again.

Visit with the new dancers between tips. Include them in your conversations and make them feel welcome. Share your experiences and tell them why you like square dancing. Use this time to review calls they are unsure of. Gather other dancers to assist and ask the caller to help. The caller will know precise definitions, starting and ending positions, etc.

Offer encouragement to your students. Compliment them on their progress at every opportunity. Encouragement is a great motivator.

Do's

- Be ready to help demonstrate a call if asked.
- Keep squares small during "promenades."
- If you have ideas that would be helpful, inform the caller.
- Be patient with repetition. Some folks really need it.
- Be aware of latecomers who may need to get into a square.
- "Grand Square" is precisely 32 beats! Do not do the galloping and rounding off corners during lessons.
- No thumb holds in "waves" or "alamo style." Simply cross palms/fingers with open hands.
- No hand squeezing or hard gripping. Be firm but GENTLE! And, do not maintain a handhold any longer than absolutely necessary to complete a call.
- Do not grab, push or pull a dancer who is positioned incorrectly or facing the wrong way. This is bad form, can irritate the other person, and can lead to injury. Simply pointing or gently touching hands may be all that is necessary.
- Do not swing until swinging is taught.
- Do not twirl until it is taught--this means you--> fellas!
- Do not do "angel to angel" swinging or twirling until it is taught. It is confusing to students and something they think they need to know.
- If new dancers or experienced dancers pull their hands down in swinging or twirling situations, it means they do not want to or cannot do that action.
- Do not "bug" new dancers to join your club. They may live closer to--or have friends in--another club so are attending your lessons due to time or other conflicts.
- If appropriate, invite new graduates to attend dances with you. Let them know of upcoming events. Carpool when possible.

Thank you for your concern, dedications, patience, and willingness to support square dancing! Angels are special!