



Dance Scottish Wellington RSCDS - Wellington

Guidance to choose the right class

Basic Skills

The Basic Skills class is for new dancers and dancers who wish to solidify their knowledge of (basic) steps and formations. Typically, a dancer would be in their first or second year of dancing for this class. You should have some familiarity with the five basic steps used in Scottish Country Dancing:

- Skip Change
- Pas de Basque (setting)
- Slip Step
- Strathspey Travelling
- Strathspey Setting

You should be comfortable with movements such as Hands across, Rights and Lefts, Hands Round, and Figure of eight.

In this class the teacher will focus on improving rhythm and foot positions of the basic steps and cover off the detail (e.g. shape, timing (phrasing) and appropriate use of hands) for formations such as:

- Poussette in quick time
- Reel of three
- Reel of four
- Allemande
- Promenade
- Grand chain
- Ladies chain
- Corners

Intermediate

This class is designed for dancers who are already familiar with core movements of Scottish Country Dancing. Generally dancers would need to have been dancing regularly for over two years to be ready for this class. You should already be able to:

- dance the steps and formations covered in the Basic Skills description above;
- remember and dance through straight-forward dances, after a briefing of a familiar dance, or a walk-through of a dance you have not done before, but for which you know the formations;
- maintain your steps most of the time (rhythm and foot positions);
- phrase formations and use hands correctly most of the time, throughout the full lesson.

The teacher of the Intermediate class will be improving the accuracy of your steps (including transitions between steps), and the level of your technique and phrasing so that you are able to

complete the dance more tidily, maintain the shape of formations and confidently transition from one formation to another.

You will be introduced to more demanding formations such as:

- Double triangles
- Strathspey pousette
- Turn corners and partners
- The Rondel
- Set and link
- Set and rotate
- The Knot

You may be introduced to variations on the formations and steps you already knowe. e.g. Reels on the diagonal, Reels of three on opposite sides, Men's chain.

Advanced

Dancers applying for the Advanced class should already be able to:

- Dance the 5 basic steps with consistently good foot positions and rhythm. Be able to demonstrate the difference in the musical rhythms in Reel, Jig and Strathspey time.
- Demonstrate appropriate transitions between steps
- Dance most of the common formations well without prompting, including formations such as: Double Triangles, Set to and turn corners and Reel of three and Reel of four;
- Dance independently, without relying on others to remind them of formations or where to go in the dance;
- Dance tidily, demonstrating control of the body, good footwork, handing and phrasing throughout the entire duration of the class;

The teacher will be improving your footwork, rhythm, phrasing and technique so that your dancing will be of a high standard. This will involve some constructive individual critiquing of your dancing.

In this class you may cover less commonly danced formations (e.g. Bourrel, The Tournee and The Tourbillon), steps that are used less frequently and work on smooth changes of foot.

The dances in this class may be more challenging with more technique to think about in order to complete them well.

As with any class involving emphasis on footwork and technique, you should be fit and free from injury before the class starts.

Advanced Technique

This class is for those seeking to dance at an exceptional standard, and who are extremely good dancers.

Not every dancer will achieve the standard required to move from advanced to advanced technique. It is important that every dancer in the class meets the standard.

If you apply for this class, you should already:

- Be technically skilled in all aspects of Scottish Country Dancing and be able keep to this standard independently of other dancers;
- Have excellent footwork, handing, phrasing and covering such that your dancing looks controlled, fluid and effortless and be able to maintain that standard for the entire duration of the class;
- Have a thorough knowledge of the basic 5 steps plus the commonly used highland steps. You should have mastered transitions between steps, in particular where a change of foot is required;
- Have a thorough knowledge of most formations and be able to dance them to a very high standard without prompting. For example: Espagnole, Knot and Rondel;
- Be able to dance rhythmically, demonstrating the difference in the musical rhythms in Reel, Jig and Strathspey time.
- Be able to cope with unusual and complex dances.

The teacher will be looking to improve your already accomplished dancing so you should be prepared to receive constructive individual critiquing of your dancing.

This class is physically demanding, so you will need to be free from injury and have a level of physical fitness that will enable you to consistently dance at this very high level for the entire class. Unless you are injured during the class you will be expected to take part fully in the class.

You and the other dancers should be able to get a sense of achievement by dancing with others of a similar very high level.