

What Are the Benefits of Attending Special Dances

Gala, Festivals, Conventions, Dance Weekends, Workshops...

Why should I attend Special Dances?

What can I get out of it?

Will I make a fool of myself?

Every round dancer has asked these questions at one time or another. Trust us when we tell you, that you will not make a fool of yourself, we have all been there and understand.

Why should I attend the Gala and other special dances? The reasons are as varied as the number of people dancing, but some basic benefits are:

1. Increase the amount of floor time spent with your partner. Remember the old saying "practice makes perfect". In reality, practice increases your "body memory" (ability to almost subconsciously execute figures & movements). It also increases your sensitivity of movement with your partner, allowing you to better feel and give leads (remember, only one person should be the leader – ideally this should be the man, but...).
2. Learn/Workshop new and old figures that have been and/or will (95% of the time) be choreographed into other routines. You may not become totally comfortable with the figure, but you have gained useful information and the next time you are exposed to that figure (or another figure in the same class*) it will come more easily.

* For example: Left turn, reverse turn, telemarks, reverse wave, telespin... are all in the same figure class – in this case, the first two steps are virtually identical & the rotation is to the left.
3. Workshop technique. Technique is the mechanics on how a figure should be executed, from the toes on up. Technique does not include "styling", which individualizes figures and actions.
4. Learn/Workshop rhythm characteristics. These are what make one rhythm look and feel different than another rhythm, even when executing the same figure. For example: A waltz flows up and down and glides across the floor, while a jive is springy, energetic, and less rigid, and generally confined to a small amount of floor space.
5. Styling tips. Learn new methods of styling and/or reinforce the styling you already do. Styling normally involves parts of the body that are otherwise not in use while executing a figure; it is something you can do that will not interfere with the proper execution of the figure or action. Styling is always optional.
6. Experience different teaching and cuing methods. Sometimes an instruction worded in a different way can, all of a sudden, make something make sense.
7. Socialization/Fellowship with other people interested in the same thing you are.

There are many other benefits to attending the Gala, the State Festival, and other special dance. Talk to a fellow dancer who does attend these and see what they have to say.

If you are open and receptive to the information presented, even if your instructor does not teach the routine, you have learned and experienced a tremendous amount and gained valuable knowledge.

In addition, as a dancer, you can tape the routine being taught, take it back home, and keep it up on your own. Some dancers are lucky enough to have a recreation center/community center that will allow them to use space at no charge; others work on routines in the living room, basement, garage, and even the driveway (hopefully not a slanted driveway).

Hope to see you at the November CRDA Gala and the other special dances in and around our state.