

Farandole

The farandole is essentially a hands-joined musical game of follow the leader. Many sources consider it to be an ancient French dance, probably descended from Greek labyrinth dances, and various kinds of spiraling and winding figures are found in many dances from other cultures. The leader is often distinguished in some way – holding a scarf, hat, or decorated pole. In more sophisticated versions, the leader may sing a verse which the others echo, or execute fancy steps which the others must copy.

Formation: Line of dancers, hands joined, leader on left end.

Music: CD #1 ‘Suite de la Gaspésie’, from *Y2Kusturok*, by Patti Kusturok

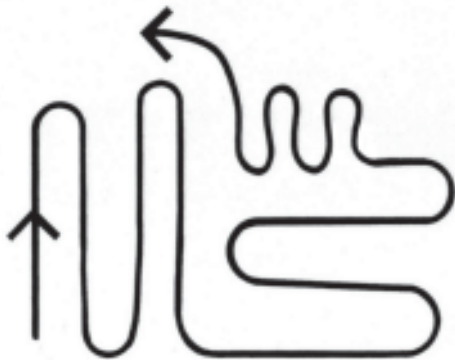
Steps: Skipping, or walking

Leader dances around the available space, creating patterns to amuse and challenge.

Here are some common patterns:

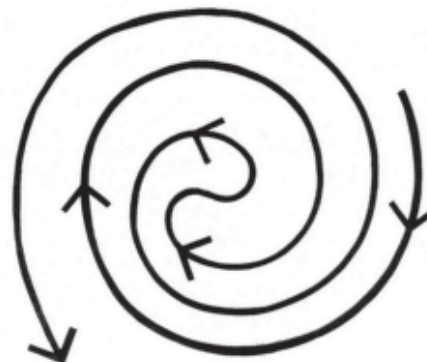
Snake:

Simply dance around the available space, making up patterns.



Spiral:

Lead the line in a spiral toward the centre, then turn over the left shoulder to lead out of the circle.



I often use the spiral figure with large family groups of several hundred dancers. In this situation, it's important to get the whole circle moving before you start the spiral, or the people at the end will have to run to keep up.

Keep your pace quite slow, as things tend to speed up on their own. When you emerge from the spiral, turn to the right and join hands with the last dancer to make a continuous loop.

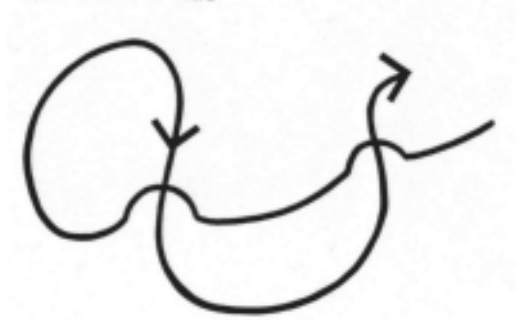
One can learn many things while dancing the farandole: how to invent patterns to creatively use the space, how to adjust your grip when going under arches, the ratio of circumference to diameter, awareness of all the other dancers, how to return to a simple circle shape. I use it frequently as a warm-up or as a creative break when kids are weary of following set patterns.

Rowdy Alert!

With certain stimulation-deprived children, a snaking line has a distressing tendency to turn into a game of crack-the-whip. Although this can be quite a bit of fun, especially for the crackees, it is quite outside the purpose of the dance.

Thread the needle:

Lead the dancers through one or several arches. Note that this will require the dancers to adjust their hands in order to twist around under the arch, and there will be interruptions of the flow.



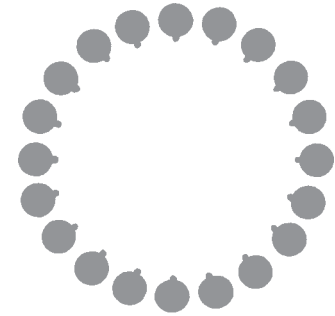
Ball of Wool:

This begins like the spiral. When the centre gets fairly tight, the few (3-4) centre dancers stop moving (keep holding hands!), and **everyone else changes direction**. This will result in a tightly packed (and very friendly) ball. When the outside dancers have completely wrapped the line, the leader ducks down (keep holding hands!) and wiggles out backwards through the crowd. The line will unwind from the centre, just like a ball of wool.

Once you have led several of these variations, it is time to transfer leadership to someone else in your group.

Can't Jump Josie

I learned this dance at that heaven of heavens, the Lady of the Lake Family Dance week, the day we returned from a lovely long float trip down the St. Joe River. So even though the singer of this song originally floated down the Ohio, we couldn't resist changing it to "old St. Joe". In fact, every town I travel to gets its own verse: in Prince George it's the Nechako, in Port McNeill we float like a fish down the Nimpkish, and in Surrey we float all the week down Old Sawmill Creek.



Suitable for: Kindergarten to Grade Four

Formation: Circle, no partners, hands joined

Music: River Song/Can't Jump Josie (Step Lively #3)

- A Join hands in one large circle and walk slowly to the left.
*We're floating down the river, we're floating down below
We're floating down the river, down the old St. Joe*
- B Two chosen people hold hands and jump up and down in the centre of the circle.
*Two in the middle and you can't jump Josie
Two in the middle and you can't jump Josie
Two in the middle and you can't jump Josie
Oh, Susie Brown!*
- Repeat.
- C The jumpers in the middle form their own circle.
For the next and subsequent verses, the inner circle walks to the right while the outer circle walks to the left, everyone singing the River Song.
Then each person in the centre chooses someone from the outer circle to jump with them. For each round, the number in the centre will (should) double, quickly using up the outside circle. Each time you modify the words in B accordingly. (four in the middle, eight in the middle, etc.) After 16, we usually sing "lots in the middle", instead of trying to say 32 or 64. For the final verse, sing "all in the middle".
After a certain point, the centre circle becomes much larger than the outside one, in which case you can either operate as an arc on the outside, or force the inside circle to squish in so that the few people on the outside can join their hands around them. Cozy!

If you do this dance using your own voices as music, you can take as much time as needed to find new partners and reform the circles. However, the music on the Step Lively CD allows very little time, so you have to choose quickly!

Can't Jump Josie

America

D G D A7

We're float - ing down the riv - er we're float - ing down be - low we're

D Bm Em A7 D

float - ing down the riv - er down the old St. Joe.

D G A7

Two in the mid-dle and you can't jump Jo - sie two in the mid-dle and you can't jump Jo - sie

D D A7 D

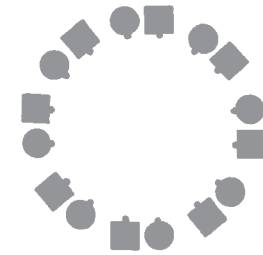
Two in the mid-dle and you can't jump Jo - sie Oh! Su - sie Brown

Goin' to Alberta

You probably already know a version of this fun dance—I've seen half a dozen permutations over the years. I concocted this variation to introduce the youngest dancers to ballroom position and the delights of the polka.

Formation: Circle, partners facing centre

Music: CD #1



Several couples stand in the centre of the circle in **ballroom position**.

Those on the outside join hands and circle to the left, singing:

I was goin' to Alberta, a-goin' to the fair

To dance a little polka with all the people there

Now the dancers in the outside circle also take ballroom position and everyone **polka** in place:

Oh polka in the city, polka in the town

Go on out to the country and polka all around

All point their joined hands toward the floor, then toward the ceiling:

Oh polka to the bottom, polka to the top

All remain in ballroom position and:

Turn around and turn around until you make a stop.

Each of the couples in the centre will now be pointing at a couple in the outside ring. These two couples trade places, and the game begins with new couples in the centre. There's not much time in the music to make this exchange, so you may need to use the pause button until the dancers can trade places quickly.

I don't go into much detail when teaching youngsters to polka. I simply show them the position and what the movement looks like, then encourage them to turn around a bit. The rhythm of the polka music is pretty powerful, and it's amazing how quickly they can approximate a real polka! If you'd like information on how to teach the polka step, see the first dance in "Step Lively 2: Canadian Dance Favourites".

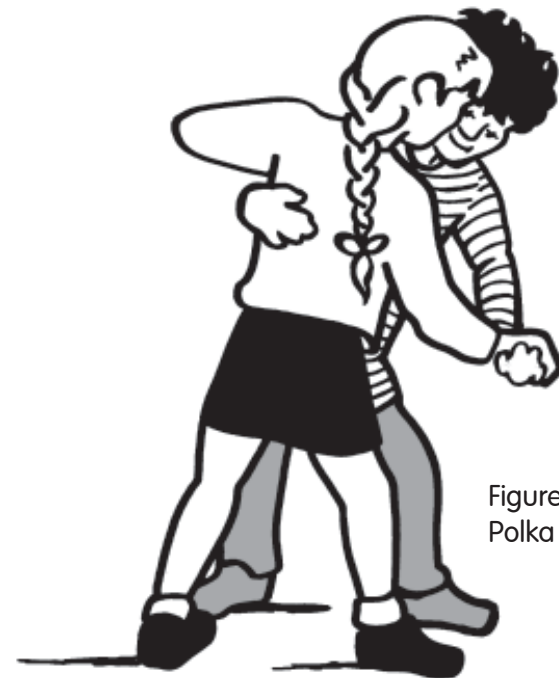


Figure 1:
Polka to the bottom

Goin' to Alberta

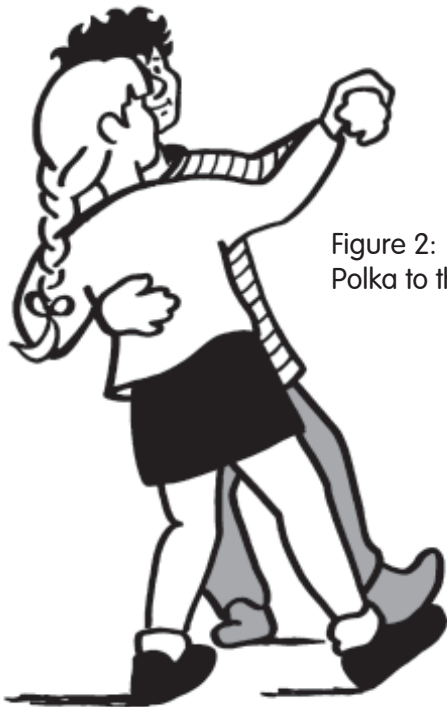
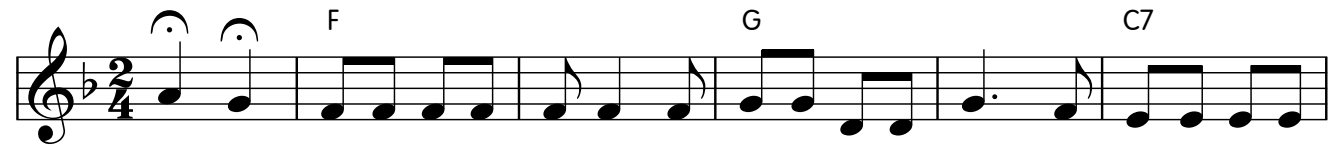


Figure 2:
Polka to the top



I was go-in' to Al - ber - ta a - go - in' to the fair to dance a lit - tle



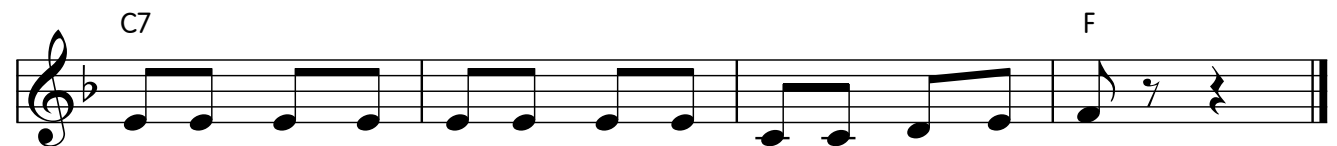
pol - ka with all the peo - ple there Oh! Pol - ka in the cit - y pol - ka in the
Pol - ka in the eve - ning on the par - ty side of
Pol - ka with my unc - le and then with Aunt - ie



town_____ Go on out to the coun - try and pol - ka all a - round. Oh!
town Where the guys and gals all__ grab their pals and pol - ka all a - round.
Sue If_____ you will be my__ part - ner_____ I'll pol - ka down with you!



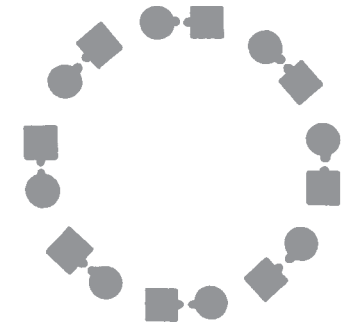
Pol - ka to the bot - tom_____ pol - ka to the top, and



turn a - round and turn a - round un - til you make a stop!

Kinderpolka

I first learned this dance, under the name Children's Polka, from the collection for elementary schools produced by the Lloyd Shaw Foundation. Since then I've found it in many sources and, of course, have taken considerable liberties with it. With care, it can be successfully taught to a kindergarten class, although it's probably most effective with grades one through four. Lots of fun at a community dance, too — everybody loves the scolding that happens in part C.



Suitable for: Kindergarten to Grade Four

Formation: Single circle, facing partner and holding both hands

Music: Kinderpolka (Step Lively #2)

- A Holding hands with partner, take two sideways steps (step-close, step-close) towards the centre of the circle, then stamp three times.
One step, two step, stamp-stamp-stamp
In the same manner, take two sideways steps away from the centre of the circle.
One step, two step, stamp-stamp-stamp
Repeat all of the above.
- B Clap your own knees twice, clap your own hands twice, then clap both of your partner's hands three times. Repeat.
Knees knees, clap clap, one-two-three
Knees knees, clap clap, one-two-three
- C Placing your left hand on your right elbow, shake right finger at partner three times, then change hands and shake your left finger three times, saying:
Nya! nya! nya!
Nya! nya! nya!
- D Take a couple of steps forward, passing partner by the right shoulder.
Join hands with new partner.

Kinderpolka

Germany

G D7

1 step and 2 step stamp stamp stamp 1 step and 2 step

G D7 G

stamp stamp stamp

G D7 G

Knees,knees and clap clap 1 - 2 - 3 knees,knees and clap clap 1 - 2 - 3

D7 G

Nya nya nya! Nya nya nya! Pass through to new partner



Figure 2: Nya! Nya! Nya!

Grand March

I first remember doing the Grand March at wedding dances when I was a very young child, and always found it very magical. The dancers would line up in couples beginning with the bridal couple, followed by their attendants (there were lots of them in those days), then their parents, family and the rest of the guests. When the dance was finished, there would be a line of sixteen at the front consisting of the entire wedding party with the bride and groom in the middle. Very impressive!

Suitable for: Grade One and up

Formation: Couples in **promenade position** in a line down the centre of the room

Music: Any march, polka, jig or reel

The form of this dance is ultimately up to the leaders, who may choose to execute any of the following figures:

1. Promenade: Lead the dancers down one side of the room, up the centre, down the other side, and once more up the centre.

2. Cast off: The lead couple marches up the centre, separates from each other with all others following, and march individually down the sides. When they meet at the end, they rejoin promenade position and once more dance up the centre.

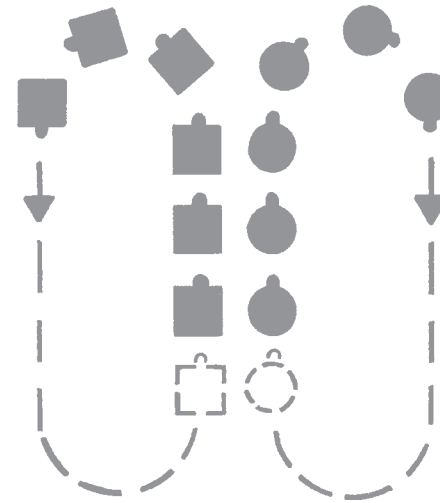
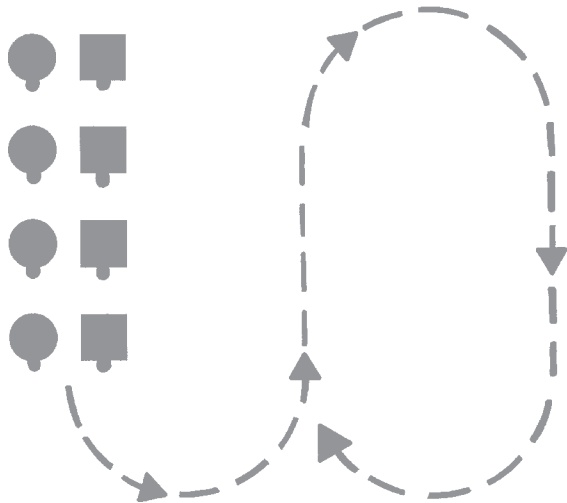
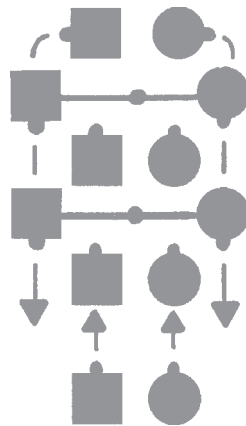


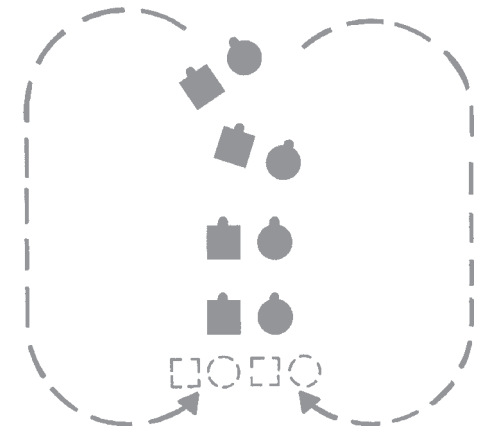


Figure 11: Promenade position



3. Turn the snake inside out: The lead couple, followed by the rest, turn around and make a simple (one hand each) arch which they then walk over the heads of the others in line. When they reach the end of the line, they tunnel through back up to the top.

This move is a lesson in cooperation: heads must be kept low and the arches held as high as possible to keep the flow happening. For this reason I discourage two toddlers from pairing up and tell them that it is okay to let go of your arch if you and your partner are too short.



4. Cast off twos, fours, eights, sixteens: Lead couple marches up the centre of the room and when they reach the top, they promenade together to the left. The second couple goes right, the third couple left, and so on, each couple going the opposite direction from the couple in front of them.

When the first and second couples meet at the back of the hall, they join hands in a line of four and promenade together up the hall. Now the alternating happens with four people going each direction, who then meet at the back to make eight, and then one last time for lines of sixteen.

Notes to Leaders: This dance requires very little instruction and teaches many things: the promenade position, following the couple in front, a sense of the possibilities of shape on the dance floor. A great deal of cooperation is needed for the more advanced moves, and everyone has to be on their toes to make the casting off work well.

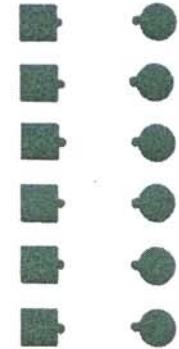
It is also useful for getting a large group into the formation you want. For instance, if you finish in one long line of couples, they have only to face their partners and take a step away to be in formation for a longways set. To form two longways sets, cast off to fours, have the two couples drop hands in the middle, take a sideways step away from the other couple then face their partner. And so on.

Sweets o' May

A longways variation of Sweets o' May first appeared in the journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society in 1977. By the time Dudley Laufman learned it a few years later, the form had changed to what you see here. It's one of my all-time favourite dances to use both in schools and at adult dance parties. If you're up for more of a challenge, there is a very common and more complex version of this dance done in square formation.

Formation: Longways set of 5 or 6 couples

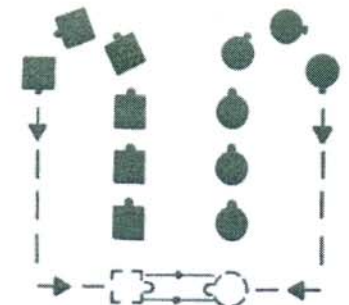
Music: CD #20



When this dance is done by adults, convention would have the men's line on the right and the women's line on the left, from the caller's perspective. However, I don't recommend boy/girl partners for dancers in the primary grades, and usually opt for designating the lines as Lions/Tigers or Stars/Moons or Manitoba/Saskatchewan.

For ease of description, I will use girls and boys.

- A1 All the girls join hands and with a sliding step, they gallop toward the **top** and around the line of standing boys. (16 beats)
- A2 The boys then join hands and gallop around the girls' line. (16 beats)
- B1, B2 All face towards the top and **cast off** to the right and the left, away from your partner, following the person in front of you. When the first couple reaches the foot of the set, they make a two-handed arch. The next and subsequent couples take their partner by the hand, go through the arch, and dance back up to the top of the set. Those who make the arch remain at the **bottom** of the set. (32 beats) See figure 17.
- C All clap twice, stamp twice, clap twice, stamp twice. (8 beats)
Two hand turn with partner once around. (8 beats)
All clap twice, stamp twice, clap twice, stamp twice (8 beats)
All turn single, and rejoin hands to start over. (8 beats)



Sweets o' May

The musical score for "Sweets o' May" is written in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. It consists of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody starts with a repeat sign. The second staff continues the melody with a first and second ending. The third staff features a repeat sign and a change in rhythm. The fourth staff also has a first and second ending. The fifth staff includes accents over the first two notes. The sixth staff concludes the piece with a final G chord and a repeat sign.

Chords and markings for each staff:

- Staff 1: G, D, G, Am, D
- Staff 2: G, D, G, D7, 1.G D7, 2.G
- Staff 3: Am, E7
- Staff 4: Am, Am, E7, 1.Am, 2.Am
- Staff 5: G, D7, G
- Staff 6: C, D7, 1.G, 2.G D7, Last time G

Gypsy Circle

This dance is a bit of a hybrid — I've learned three different versions over the years from students and teachers around British Columbia. It always felt like something was missing, so I added the fast part, which the kids just love. I've done this dance with a wide range of ages, (from grade 2 to adult), and it's always a favourite.

Formation: Circle, partners facing centre

Music: CD #25

CHORUS: Arms bent, hands shoulder high with palms pressed against those of the person on either side. Beginning with the left foot, take four slow walking steps to the left.

Come and join the gypsy circle,

In four walking steps (left, right, left, right), **turn single** to the left and reform original circle.

Dancing round the fire while the fiddles play.

Repeat the chorus.

SWAYING FIGURE: With hands still held high, individually take four slow steps into the centre of the circle, swaying right and left and snapping fingers on the off beat: (step-snap R, step-snap L, step-snap R, step-snap L).

Happy is today for we have

Lower hands to knee height, palms up, and with small steps, back up into place.

food to eat.

Repeat the swaying, snapping and backing up. End with two stamps in original place.

So we sway our bodies and we stamp our feet.

CHORUS: Again, with slightly different words:

Come and join the gypsy circle

Dancing round the fire 'til the break of day.

FAST FIGURE: All face centre, fold hands on chest (as in the dosido) and take 7 steps toward the centre, kicking feet forward with legs straight. On the eighth beat, throw hands up and shout Hey! (8 beats)

Repeat back to original position in the circle. (8 beats)

Hook right arms with partner, raise the left arm, and swing around until the Hey! (8 beats)

Repeat, linking left arms. (8 beats)

Assume original position to start the chorus again.

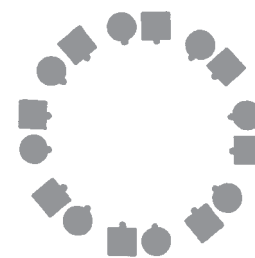


Figure 23:
Right arm swing

Gypsy Circle

Come and join the gyp - sy cir - cle danc - ing round the fire while the
 fid - dles play. Come and join the gyp - sy cir - cle danc - ing round the fire while the
 fid - dles play. Hap - py is to - day for we have food to eat
 So we sway our bod - ies and we stamp our feet! Come and join the
 gyp - sy cir - cle danc - ing round the fire till the break of day.

Dm A7
 Dm A7
 Dm Dm Gm
 C7 F A7 Dm
 A7 Dm
 Dm A7 Dm A7
 Slower

To add a bit of challenge to this dance, or to gussy it up as a performance piece, there is much room for more advanced choreography. If it were me, I would leave the chorus as is and play with the swaying figure and the fast figure. If you consider concentric circles and partners moving in opposite directions, the possibilities are endless.

Weaver's Galopede *by John Reay*

This is my adaptation of one of the great dances found in the Barn Dance Book by John Reay of Surrey, England and is used with his permission. I love the imagery in this dance, with the Thread the Needle in part A, shuttle action in B1, and tying off the threads with a final swing. It can be difficult to keep to firm phrasing when there are sets of different lengths, so I tend to be quite loose with it. However, once they get the idea, each set can continue at their own pace.

Suitable for: Grade Three to adult

Formation: Longways set of five or six couples

Music: Any 32-bar jig, reel or march (Step Lively #1,10,11,or13)

- A1 All join hands along the lines, and the two people at the bottom of the set join hands to form a U-shape. The first two people in the men's line form the eye of the needle by raising their joined hands to make an arch. The first woman then leads the whole line through this arch, around to the left and back into place. The second person in the arch will have to turn under their own arm to return to the original formation. (16 beats)
- A2 The figure is then repeated with the first two women making the eye and the first man acting as the needle. (16 beats)
- B1 The **top couple** join both hands and **sashay** to the **bottom of the set**. The others then trade places with their partners by passing right shoulders. (8 beats)
- First couple then sashay back up to the top of the set and all cross back to original positions, again by the right shoulder. (8 beats)
- B2 Top couple then sashay one last time to the bottom of the set and stay there. (4 beats)
- All swing partners, then reform the U-shape to begin again. (12 beats)

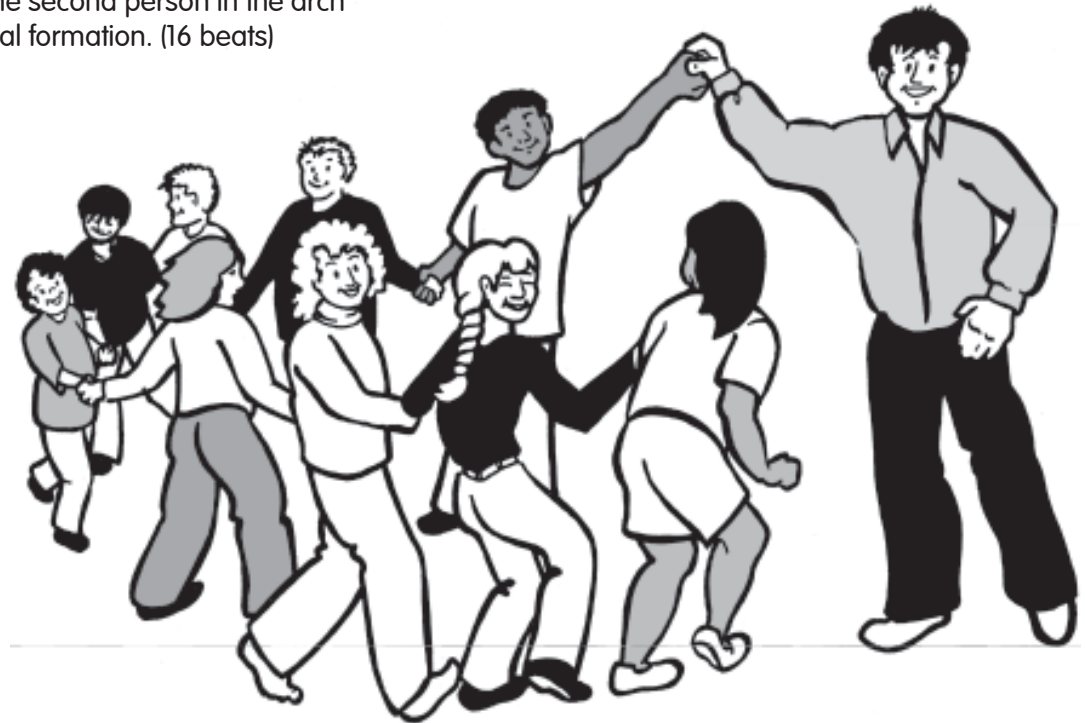


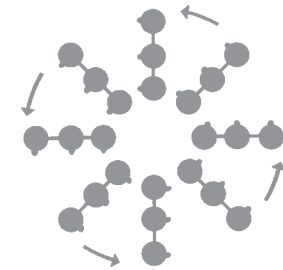
Figure 16: Thread the needle

The Butterfly

Of all the dances in this collection, this is the one I would vote for as the Canadian National Dance. Every time I present it at a community event, people's eyes light up and they tell me nostalgic stories about doing it back in Prince Albert or Dauphin or Sudbury. At my sister's wedding I did the "extreme" version with two of my big strapping brothers who made a game of trying to keep my feet off the floor for the entire dance. It was tons of fun, but I nursed bruises on my arms for a week afterwards!

Depending on your sources, the Butterfly could be Czech, German, Swiss or French, and is related to dances named: The Wheat, Studentenpolka, Der Gemischte, Le Papillon, Promenade, and Garden Walk. It is also common at old-time dances in the central US, and there are those who call it the Minnesota State Dance.

As the music begins, we hear an old Czech waltz, played on the piano just the way my grandma did. A fiddler joins in, then takes over and changes the scene to a prairie dance hall with a wedding party in full swing.



Suitable for: Grade one to adult

Formation: Trio of dancers, arms linked

Music: The Butterfly (CD #3)

- A Walk leisurely in time with the music, using either Step-Swing or Step-Hop-Hop. This is probably as good a time as any to get some gossiping in.
- B Centre dancer turns to one of the outside two and does a right elbow swing, then the other by the left elbow and back and forth until the music changes (or your arms fall off).

Variation for Teeny Tinies

Kindergarteners and preschoolers who might have trouble with the elbow swings could jump up and down, or skip, or join hands in a circle and skip around. Or you could dispense with the trios altogether, and use it as a fast/slow exercise.

Variation for Hot-Shots

The slow part remains the same. For the fast part: Keeping all hands joined, the centre and left hand dancers make an arch, the third dancer ducks through that arch, around the centre dancer and back to original place. Repeat with left hand dancer ducking through a right-hand arch. And back and forth and so on.



Figure 2: Step-swing