

# Sasha!

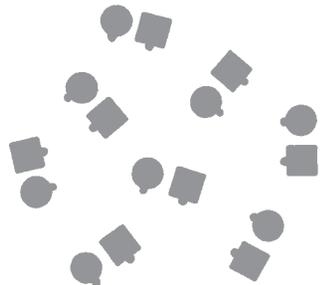
I've had an immense amount of fun with this wonderful dance over the years. Steve Hickman taught it to us one year at Lady of the Lake family camp and he says that the Dalsemers learned it from some Ukrainian dancers they met in Denmark. I usually introduce the dance by asking if anyone can count to three in a language other than English ("ras dva tre" means "1-2-3" in Russian, Ukrainian, and Polish), with fascinating results. Occasionally we dispense with the Eastern European theme and use another language, just for fun.

Suitable for: Grade Three and up, or mixed groups of any age

Formation: Partners scattered around the room, facing each other

Music: Sasha (Step Lively #8)

- A Point your finger at your partner, saying  
*Sasha! Sasha! Ras Dva Tre!* (pronounced *rahss, dvah, tree*)
- B Clap hands with your partner thus:  
RRR, LLL, Both Both Both, Knees Knees Knees  
RRR, LLL, Both Both Both, Knees Knees Knees
- C Right elbow **swing** with partner, then shout *Hey!*  
Left elbow swing with partner, *Hey!*
- D Promenade solo anywhere in the room with arms in the air,  
looking for a new partner  
Point your finger at them and start over again from A.  
The dance ends with *Hey!* at the end of the C part.



All of the following were collected at dances over the years, and represent the best approximation I could find of the pronunciations.

Amheric	and hoolet sost
Arabic	wahid itsnayn tsalatsa
Basque	bat biga hiru
Bengali	ek dui tin
Cantonese	yat ee sam
Carrier	'ilho nanki ta
Cree	peyak niso nisto
Czech	jeden dva tri
Danish	ên to tre
Dutch	een twee drie
Esperanto	unu du tri



Figure 8: Hey!

# 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.

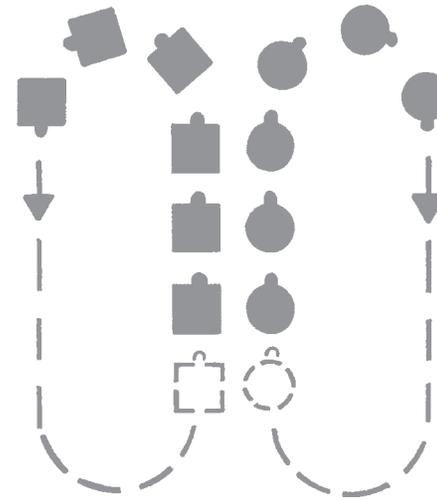
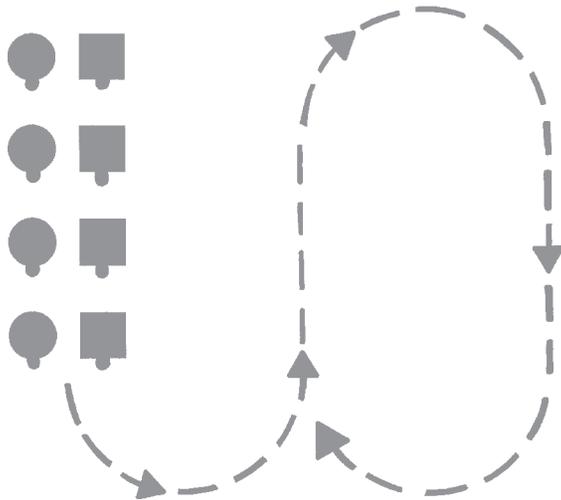
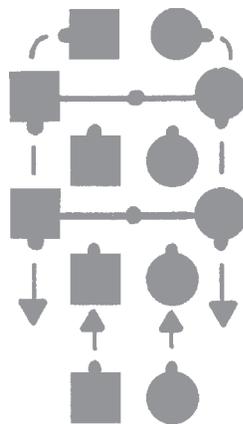


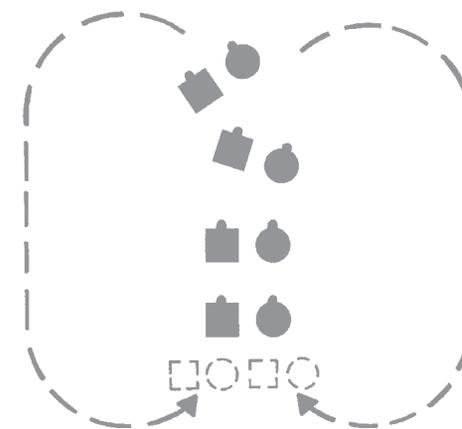


Figure 11: Promenade position



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.*

## Ruth in the Willow Tree

The evolution of this dance is a story of folk process. For years I have been calling a modified version of the English Country Dance "The Willow Tree" and another that I call New Fangles. Smithers caller Ruth Lloyd put the two together, added some touches of her own and created a new dance. This I then took home and remodified (can't I leave anything alone?), resulting in a dance that retains the spirit of the original, but is easier to teach.

Suitable for: Grade four to adult

Formation: Longways set for an even number of couples (not more than 12)

Music: Reels (CD #13) or Partie de Lancier (CD #9)

- A Torpedo: Top and bottom couples take torpedo position (ballroom position with an attitude, as in *Sashay for Your Life*) and **sashay** towards each other. Just before they crash in the middle, the couple coming toward the band separates, allowing the other couple to pass through and both continue to their opposite end.

Turn around and repeat the figure back to place, again the two approaching the band (different people this time) are the ones to separate.

- B All **dosido** partner.

- C All face the nearer end of the set. Let me explain this: if you numbered the couples 1 to 10, starting with those closest to the band, then couples 1 to 5 face toward the band and couples 6-10 face away, resulting in four single-file lines of 5 dancers each. (See figure 28)

**Cast off** from both ends: Couples 1 and 10 turn away from their partner and, followed by the other couples, walk behind the line towards the centre of the set. When they meet, couples 1 and 10 form a circle and raise their joined hands to form arches. The other dancers enter the side arch, meet their partner in the middle, join hands and exit by the arch closest to their original position. Couples 2 and 9 will now be on the ends of the lines, and 1 and 10 are in the middle.

Reform the lines, and new end couples prepare for the torpedo.

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- Note that you will always dance in your own half of the set, except briefly when it's your turn to torpedo.
  - I take no responsibility for crashes in the middle!
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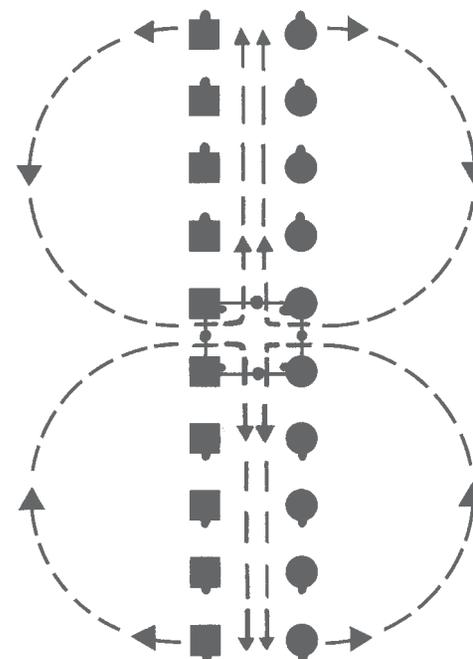
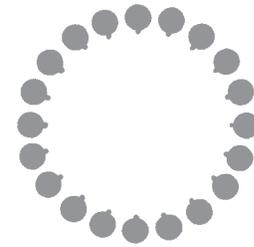


Figure 28: Cast off from both ends

# Tunnelmania

*This little bit of mania sits in the grey area between game and dance, but I include it here because it is a great icebreaker and requires the dancers to listen and react to the music. It's usually so popular that I have to put a ban on requesting it, in order to get anything else done!*



Formation: Circle, no partners

Music: Any tune with a recognizable melody (see below)

Two dancers form an arch by joining both hands at eye level. All the other dancers march counterclockwise around the circle and under the arch. When the music stops, the arches come down and a dancer is caught. This person waits in the centre while the whole process is repeated, and when another dancer has been caught, these two form another arch on the other side of the circle. Each time the music stops, more dancers are caught and make more arches, eventually creating a circular tunnel. When all are caught, one final piece of music is played, and the original archers get to make a tour under the arches all by themselves.

CAUTION: Of all the dances I've ever done with kids, this is the one most likely to result in a bloody nose or broken eyeglasses. Hence, a few guidelines are in order:

1. March, don't run.
2. Arches must stay up until the music stops. No bonking or catching early.
3. If there is no one to catch when the music stops, the very next person is the one caught. Your dancers will figure out pretty quickly that they can avoid being caught by listening for the end of the phrase and then stopping just before they get to an arch. This can result in a game that never ends.
4. If you push or cut corners, or dive through and touch the ground, you're automatically caught.

The real purpose of Tunnelmania in a dance program is to train the dancers to listen for the end of the phrase. For this reason, I don't recommend that you stop the music randomly, which would make it closer to a game of tag or musical chairs. Live music works best—have the teacher or one of the students play a lively bit of music and stop at the end of a recognizable phrase.

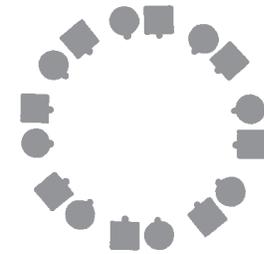
If you don't have the luxury of live music, then use a familiar tune with regular phrases (Pop Goes the Weasel, Star Dance, or one of the jigs, reels, polkas or marches from Step Lively 1 or 2).

# Shoo Fly

This classic play-party game contains a figure that square-dancers call "rip 'n' snort".  
Where DO they get these terms?

Formation: Circle with an even number of couples (6 or 8 works well), partners facing centre.

Music: Singing, CD #17



All join hands and go **forward and back**. (8 beats)

*Shoo fly! Don't bother me! Shoo fly! Don't bother me!*

Go **forward and back** again. (8 beats)

*Shoo fly! Don't bother me! For I belong to somebody.*

One couple raises their joined hands to make an arch. The couple directly opposite them in the circle walks toward the arch, pulling the rest of the circle with them, and dives through the arch. The leaders then drop each other's hand (everyone else continues to hold hands) and separate, walking around the outside of the circle back to place, pulling the whole circle with them. The two who made the arch continue holding hands and turn under their own arms to reform the original circle.

*I feel, I feel, I feel like a morning star,*

*I feel, I feel, I feel like a morning star.*

Repeat the forward and back move.

*Shoo fly! Don't bother me! Shoo fly! Don't bother me!*

*Shoo fly! Don't bother me! For I belong to somebody.*

Now the next couple to the right performs the rip 'n' snort with the couple across from them. Then work your way round the circle until all have had a turn. If you have more than six couples, you may need to sing the chorus twice to have enough time for everyone to get through.



Figure 14: Rip 'n' Snort

# Shoo Fly

## Advanced Rip 'n' Snort

The whole move can be done without anyone (even the lead couple) letting go hands. As soon as the lead couple goes through the arch—let's call it arch A—they raise their joined hands and back under the arch made by these hands—arch B. This feels like you are rolling across your partner's back. They then pull the rest of the dancers through both arches. The couple forming arch A should turn under their own arms before backing through arch B.

It's helpful if the opposite couple—the ones who make arch A—meet the diving couple in the middle of the circle.

The musical score for "Shoo Fly" is written in 4/4 time and consists of four staves of music. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are as follows:

Staff 1: Shoo fly! Don't bo - ther me! Shoo fly! Don't bo - ther me!

Staff 2: Shoo fly! Don't bo - ther me For I be - long to some - bo - dy. I

Staff 3: feel, I feel, I feel like a morn - ing star, I feel, I

Staff 4: feel, I feel like a morn - ing star. Oh! star.

Chord markings (F and C7) are placed above the notes. A bracket labeled "Last time" spans the final two notes of the fourth staff.

# Feder Mikkel

Although this dance is commonly thought of as Danish, the tune comes from a German song entitled 'Vetter Michel', meaning 'Cousin Michael'. It must have been well-known because both Beethoven and Frederich Schwindl created variations on the melody. While most dances in this formation progress so that a different couple is active each time through, this one is unusual in that the couple at the bottom of the set leads the figures.

Formation: Longways set of 5 or 6 couples

Music: CD #21

- A Both lines join hands, and all go **forward and back** twice.
- B1 'Peel off' figure:  
The leaders in this figure are the couple at the **bottom** of the set.  
Dancers continue to hold hands in two lines while the leaders cast away from each other, to the **top** of the set and back down to their original positions.
- B2 The lead couple (again at the bottom of the set) join both hands in a crossed position, and swing round and round up the middle of the set and remain in the top position.



**Feder Mikkel**  
*(translated from the Danish)*

Cousin Mikkel was here last night, last night he was here.  
He jumps up on the girls' knees and kisses them so heartily.  
Now listen Cousin Mikkel! I think you are strange;  
Do you think the girls like what you are doing?

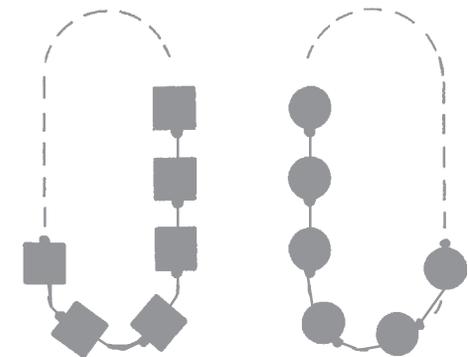


Figure 18: Peel off

# Feder Mikkel

A

B

1. D

2. D

D Last time

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for 'Feder Mikkel' in D major and 4/4 time. Section A consists of two staves of music. The first staff has four measures with chords D, G, D, and A7. The second staff has five measures with chords D, G, D, A7, and D. Section B consists of two staves. The first staff has four measures with chords D, G, E, and A7. The second staff has four measures with chords D, G, D, and A7. The final staff contains a first ending (1. D) and a second ending (2. D) that leads to a final measure with a D chord and the instruction 'Last time'.

# 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

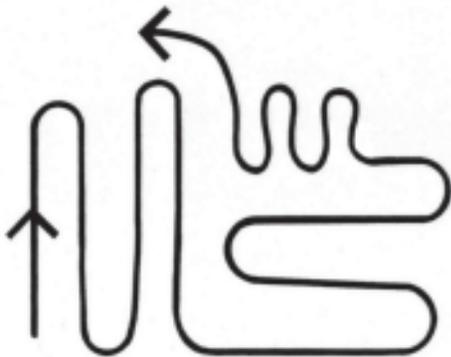
Steps: Skipping, or walking

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

Here are some common patterns:

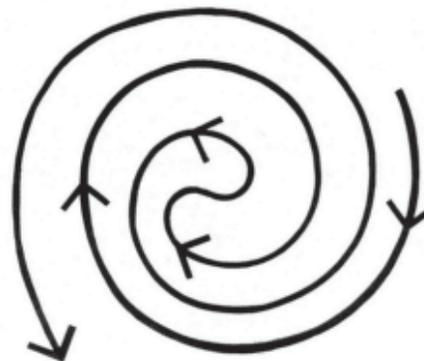
## **Snake:**

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.

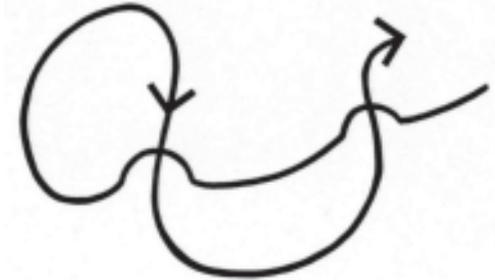
One can learn many things while dancing the farandole: how to invent patterns to creatively use the space, how to adjust your grip when going under arches, the ratio of circumference to diameter, awareness of all the other dancers, how to return to a simple circle shape. I use it frequently as a warm-up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

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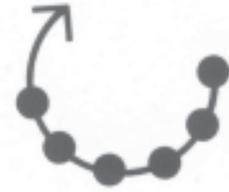
Once you have led several of these variations, it is time to transfer leadership to someone else in your group.

# Branle de la Montarde

The fact that this dance was included in Arbeau's Orchesography suggests that it had probably been danced for many years before that. It gives me great pleasure to watch today's children have so much fun with such a classic dance.

Formation: Open line of six dancers, hands joined.  
Leader on the left end of the line.

Music: CD #5 'Branle de la Montarde'  
from *Pour Savoir Sur Quel Pied Danser*, by Marie and Michelle Blaise



## **A** *Travelling steps (16 beats)*

Step sideways *Left, Right, Left*, then jump, landing with both feet together.  
(Note that each series of steps begins with the left foot).

Repeat three more times, for a total of four times.

Stop and wait for your turn in the next part.

## **B** *Individual turns (6 times 4 beats)*

The leader takes four beats to make a complete turn to the left, stopping a few feet away from the others. Then each of the other five dancers follows suit, leaving a bit of space between dancers so that there is room for the next move.

## **C** *The Hey – same music as Figure 1.*

Again using the '*LRL jump*' pattern, the leader moves to the end of the line by weaving in and out between the other dancers. Each dancer that he passes then joins hands and the line starts travelling to the left with a new leader.

The music in the B part allows for six dancers to execute their individual turns. Likewise, the music goes through six times, so that six people will have a turn as leader. However, it is not essential that you have exactly six dancers in each line. With just a bit of creative adjustment, you could accommodate more or fewer dancers in each line.

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Did you ever wonder why French dances always travel to the left?

*Because most men are right-footed and the left foot is the weaker, so if it should come about that the left foot were to falter for any reason the right foot would immediately be ready to support it.*

—Thoinot Arbeau,  
*Orchesography*

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There are significant timing challenges in this dance. At the end of part A, the dancers all stop at the same time and the current leader must be on the ball to start right away with the first four-beat phrase. The others wait their turn for their very own four beats (there is a tendency to rush this). When they have mastered this timing, you may want to encourage your dancers to be creative with their four-beat solo.

Likewise, leaders are often tempted to start the hey too soon, before all the dancers have done turning. Encourage them to wait for the appropriate spot in the music and to continue with the LRL-jump pattern as they execute the hey.

### *Branle de la Montarde*

Left right left jump Left right left jump etc.

Six times

# Les Jumeaux

This is a hybrid dance—my take on the pan-European tradition of ‘mock fighting’ dances, such as Oxdansen (Swedish), Degn Dansen (Danish), Saint Ferréol (Catalogne), Kohanochka (Russia), and first cousin to others such as Capoeira (Brazil), and Morris Dancing (England). What remains constant is the sense of physical play that comes with strong, contrary movements requiring much cooperation and physical coordination between partners.

Formation: Longways set, partners facing each other.

Music: CD #12 ‘Les Jumeaux’

**A (Truce)** Moving first toward the music and stepping the same direction as your partner:

*Side-close-side-touch*, (now away from the music) *Side-close-side-touch*. Repeat.

Arms can be held on your hips during this part.

**B (Fight)** The dancers execute a series of opposing movements – two slow ones, and five quick.

See the stick men on the opposite page.



This dance lends itself to great creativity. There’s no reason why you have to do the moves that I’ve described. You could create a dance about any story that you can tell in eight moves:

Water cycle

Three Bears

A baseball game

The Odyssey

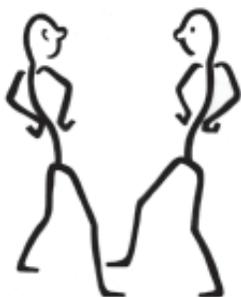
Or you could dispense with theme altogether, and simply create opposing, interlocking moves.

Have fun!

1. Clap alternately right and left.



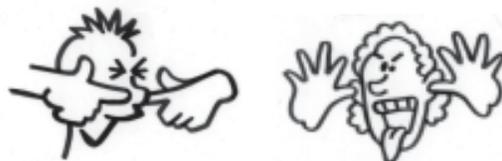
2. Scissor kicks - alternate left and right leg in front.



3. With hands on hips, one dancer leans forward threateningly, while the other leans back.



4. Take turns making ugly faces at each other.



5. Grizzly Bear: One dancer rises up like an irate bear, while the other cowers in fear.



6. Turning: One dancer turns his back on his partner, arms folded. Then they both jump to change direction. A grumpy expression really helps here.



7. Fake slapping: This one will require some practice. Once dancer pretends to slap her partner on the face. Her partner reacts by leaning sideways away from the slap and clapping her hands to give the impression that the slap actually took place.



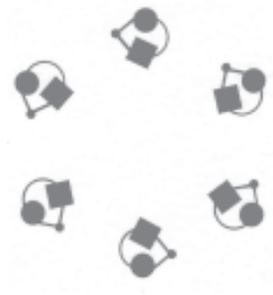
Note that the music slows a bit the 5th and 6th times through, to give you time to do more difficult moves.

8. Handshakes or Embracing: Depending on the comfort level of your group, dancers can make up by a series of handshakes or by fake kisses on each cheek.



# Cercle Québécois

*This stately mixer comes from a quadrille in the Portneuf region of Quebec.*



**Formation:** Circle of couples in ballroom position.  
Man has his back to the centre of the circle.  
The 'pointy' hands will thus be pointing counterclockwise around the circle.

**Music:** CD #16 'Un Air Trompeur'  
from *Danse Mon Coeur, Danse*, France Bourque-Moreau

## **Walking Step:**

In ballroom position, turn your hips to open up a bit, so that both dancers are facing more or less in the same direction.

Beginning on the outside foot (man's left, woman's right),  
*Walk two steps counterclockwise around the circle,*  
and on the third and fourth beat, *swivel your hips* to face each other.

Repeat two more times, or three times in total. (12 beats)

On the next four beats, the woman moves up to the next man in the following fashion:

The woman removes her left hand from her partner's shoulder, and as they raise the joined hands (man's left, woman's right) the woman walks under this arch, making a complete turn to her right as she moves up to the next man. (4 beats)

## **Swing:**

Swing with this new partner, either an elbow swing, or in ballroom position.  
(12 beats)

Get back into the original position to start again. (4 beats)



*Ballroom position*