

# Medieval / Early Renaissance Dance Basics

## Types of Dances

Line (Longways)

Sometimes for a specific number of couples

Sometimes for "as many as will"

Circle – for any number of couples (or sometimes individuals)

Square – for two couples

## Steps

Single – A step and close, resulting in the weight on both feet. Done forward, backward, and sideways.

Double – Three steps and a close. In a triple meter, this is two steps and a close. Done forward, backward, and sideways.

Set – A light hop sideways onto the left foot, with the right foot closing, taking the weight briefly, with the weight then shifting back to the left foot. Usually repeated to the right side as well. Can be done forward (at an angle) as well as sideways.

Turn Single – A clockwise turn done individually. Takes four walking steps, tracing a small circle on the floor as if walking around a pole.

Siding – Facing your partner, both do a Double forward and slightly to the Left, so that right shoulders line up, then a Double back to position. Repeat on the other side. "Side Right" = right shoulders

Arming – Partners reach out and gently grasp each other's forearms (or put palms together or link elbows), then circle around each other in eight steps back to position. Usually done with right arms then left arms.

Cast Up/Down – Done in line dances, where a couple turns away from each other outside the lines and moves either up or down (usually) one position in the line.

Hey – A weaving pattern where the dancers are in a line and move around each other, alternating left and right as they go. When the end of the line is reached, the dancer turns and, starting with the same shoulder, moves back up the line, everyone ending in their original positions. Heys can be done with or without hands; with hands is like a linear version of a grand-right-and-left.

Meet – Dancers move toward each other, nod (not a full Reverence), and move back to original position.

Put Back – Partners take both hands and one goes forward a Double, "putting the other back." Often in both directions and used for changing places with another couple.

Turn Two-Hands – Partners take both hands and dance around other, turning in a circle, either halfway around or all the way around, as directed.

Circle – All dancers take hands and move to the right or left as directed.

Slip – Steps where dancers take sideways steps without turning their hips, the second foot generally sliding across the floor to meet the first (leading) foot.

Go the Figure (of 8) – Couple cross through another couple and goes around both of them in a figure eight. Can be done halfway or the whole way around.

Clap right and left – Clap your hands together, then your partner's right, then yours, then your partner's left.