



# Larrys Corner

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This is called Larrys Corner because when I teach I stand in the corner so I can see everyone.

If you want to read dance stories they are under Headlines or Larrys Corner.

[Http://www.comedancewithus.com](http://www.comedancewithus.com) Or  
<http://www.dancempls.com>

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Do you have any likes or dislikes, stories, or helpful hints for dancing? If so, write it down and give to Larry Ablin or Barb Johnson. We will add it to one of the future News letters.

If you would like to tell us how you became interested in dancing, write it down and give to Larry or Barb, we will add your picture with it and put it in one of the future Newsletters. If you have anything you would like to write about, just write it up and give to Barb or Larry. I enjoy writing something for you.

Come Dance With Us

*Inside this issue:*

**Salsa Etiquette**

## Salsa (Dance) Etiquette-Beginners

Practice makes perfect! Just make sure not to practice on the edges of the floor, taking huge steps, bumping into everyone around you, throwing your arms, elbows, knees, and heads into anything and everything that gets near you. That would be bad! ;)

The Six Golden Rules: (most of these apply to everyone, not just beginners).

1) Be aware of the people around you and actively avoid hitting them! Sounds simple right? Well, if this sounds simple to you then you haven't been dancing in some of the more crowded nightclubs. This can prove very difficult at times, and you have to keep your wits about you in order to "steer clear". Avoid throwing your partner into people as a means of clearing space for yourself. If you're dancing in a crowded place, don't take large steps, keep your steps smaller to help with the faster music.

2) If you knock into somebody, or step on somebody, acknowledge your mistake. Say you're sorry! You don't have to get on your hands and knees and beg for forgiveness, but you do have to actually look at the person and acknowledge the fact that you hit them, stepped on them, whatever. Even a friendly nod is better than nothing! If they are busy dancing, and they ignore you, it's ok to go up afterwards and just say you're sorry. Ladies with spiked heels that step on somebody DO have to get on hands and knees or stand and beg for forgiveness.

3) Let the show-off, show off! You can't stop them. Salsa is a beautiful dance, and it's gorgeous to watch two people really groove. As a beginner, it might be in your better interest to actually give these guys some room since some can be mighty forceful in taking it from you. Just move your partner to a safer place on the floor. Generally, salsa "shows" is held on the outside of the floor, the edges. If they're going to show off, they want people to see it, so there not going to go to the center of the floor right? Beginners may find more space, and easier dancing in the center, or even in front of the band.

4) Salsa is a showy dance! It's nice to have people admire your dance style and super fast, razor sharp moves. However, as an alternative view to that above, show off's had to pay special attention to rule number 1! Be aware of your surroundings! The worst part is, most show off's are good dancers, thus they already are aware of their surroundings. They just don't care. They are going to clear space for themselves to do their stuff, at whatever cost to those dancing around them! Well, that's just life. Some people are cool, show offs aren't! As a beginner, my advice is to avoid these people like the plague. Believe me; you won't be able to miss them out on the dance floor. When you're watching them, you'll be awed and entertained, when you're dancing next to them, you won't be!

5) Lay off the fancy dips! I know . . . believe me. There will be plenty of

time for that later. For example, let's say you just learned this great dip in class and you want to twirl the lady around five times, absurdly fast, catch her with one hand behind your back, and gracefully take her body to the floor, as the woman is astonished by your grace, and the crowd is awed by your speed. Unfortunately, this often turns out quite poorly when starting out! The five quick turns don't go as well as planned as the lady spins out of control crashing into the couple next to you. In a flailing attempt to grab her, you leap forward catching her and throwing her into a dip far too fast. As you are lowering her body, you notice the spiked heel of the lady dancing next to you flick up in the air towards your partner's head. As her head and the lady's heel nearly collide you attempt to jerk her out of the way, throwing her into someone's ass, and then throwing both of you off balance, as you land not so gracefully on the floor, on top of the woman who is never going to dance with you again nor will any of her beautiful friends. Not the most beautiful of pictures eh? Well, I see it all the time! It never ceases to amaze me.

6a) Leaders protecting your partner: Adding on to all of our previous tips, the underlying theme is, your partner is gold. Her safety is in your hands, and only your hands. Whether she is a rote beginner, or a truly advanced dancer, you are the leader at least in most cases. You've learned that through the use of well placed turns, and cross body leads, you can deftly navigate the most crowded of dance floors. Your partner is not a weapon, to be flung out like a dangerous projectile, in order to clear more space for yourself. Likewise, if she is swinging out of control, you might try to rein her in a bit. Remember the simple truth; followers are following your lead. If an accident happens it's ALWAYS the leader's fault whether it IS or not. Leader's need to be vigilant in preventing dance accidents before they happen! Stay sharp . . .

6b) Followers protecting your partner: Does that mean you can close your eyes, and go blithely wherever led? Well, yes and no. In many cases, you are at the leader's mercy, however, in some cases cross body leads for example, you have many choices. For example, let's take the biggest problem. Huge steps! Most of the time, unless you're in a ballroom, you're not going to get away with taking enormous leaps away from your partner! Keep it small, keep it tight. Watch some of those advanced female dancers we have in our midst. I hate naming names, because inevitably I'll leave out someone who will read this, but I can't think of a female teacher who takes big steps when not performing. One dancer in particular, you'll know her when you see her and if she's at the club, you WILL see her, is just lightning fast in the smallest space I've ever seen. In fact most of the really advanced dancers, dance incredibly tightly, and very controlled. Oh, and one more thing, if you see your leader about to crash into someone else behind him he can't see back there, trust me, it's polite to give him a little pat with either your left or right hand, alerting him to the impending crash.

Sub Rules of Dipping: Know which direction you are going to dip the lady, and make sure you're not dipping her into somebody!

### The two not-so-golden Rules

1) While it is ok to ask someone phenomenally better than yourself to dance, it's not ok to do it more than once or over and over throughout the night unless invited. Be respectful of their right to dance at their level. They're out to have a good time just like you. If you are going to ask someone phenomenally better than yourself to dance, be understanding of the fact that they may wish to wait for a song or two. If they say no, don't take it personally. You may just have asked at an inopportune time i.e. their favorite super fast dance tune just came on! It's ok to ask again, once, but usually not in the same night.

### The Opposite View

Advanced Dancers: Wow, a beginner just came up to you and asked you to dance during your favorite fast song, so you said "not right now, maybe later, thanks for asking", and went to dance with someone else. Be aware, and sensitive, to the fact that it is NOT easy to ask people to dance. He/She may have walked all the way across the floor, with her friends watching, to ask you that question that you so easily brushed aside. If you really just didn't want to dance with a beginner for that particular song, FIND him/her later and say something to the effect of "how about that dance". If you don't want to dance with a beginner, be POLITE about it, and go out of your way to be both charming and respectful.