

**From the DJ Booth**  
by Tim 'DJ TJ' Johnson  
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# The Benefits of Rotation

An article on partner rotation in group lessons on couples dancing

## The Many Benefits of Rotation

There are numerous advantages in the rotation of partners during group dance lessons.

- Each follower gets to dance with the most skilled leaders.
- Each leader gets to dance with the best followers.
- Lessons featuring rotation welcome dancers without regular partners.
- Dancers without regular partners get the opportunity to practice what they learned via rotation.
- Rotation provides everyone in the class with numerous opportunities to practice as they learn, even if there is an imbalance of leaders and followers.
- Rotation breaks the ice for everyone in the class. It's a great way to meet other dancers in the class. In this way, rotation encourages social dancing.
- If one finds a move that doesn't work well with multiple partners, rotation helps identify areas for improvement and often leads to excellent questions for the instructor(s).
- The experience of dancing with multiple partners during lessons helps develop clearer leads and better following skills.
- In dance classes that feature rotation, students who rotate, learn more and dance better.



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## Side Effects of Avoiding Rotation

In some partnerships, one or both dancers may prefer not to rotate or social dance with others because they have difficulty dancing with anyone else.

By only dancing with a regular partner, dancers tend to reinforce each other's bad habits. True lead and follow dancing works with other dancers.

## A Good Reason to Skip Rotation?

If you are on a first date, or a date early in a relationship, it may be a good idea to stay with your date and direct others to rotate around you.

Any dancers who do not wish to rotate should position themselves at the end of the line and direct others to pass by.

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## Signs of a Progressive Teacher

In my travels throughout the United States, I've taken countless hours of group lessons from many of the nations most talented dance instructors.

One of the things that each of these great teachers have in common, is that they all encourage the rotation of partners during group lessons.

The method and direction of rotation is explained briefly and clearly.

Those who do not wish to rotate are directed to position themselves at the end of the line so that others may easily pass by during rotation.

Once partners are matched up, many instructors invite the students to introduce themselves to each other.

In cases where there is a mismatch in leaders and followers, extra dancers of either type are instructed to stagger themselves between couples. This way, no dancer has to sit out for more than

one rotation at a time. Instructors take extra care in these situations to rotate partners frequently so that each dancer gets plenty of opportunities to try newly learned moves with a partner.

Adept instructors encourage dancers without partners to practice their part until they are rotated to the next partner.

Depending on the circumstances at hand, instructors may choose to either rotate leaders, or rotate followers.

Skilled teachers know when and how often to rotate partners.

In general, after going through a new move a few times, the best teachers tend to suggest that the dancers thank their partners and rotate. Frequency of rotation is tweaked as needed to maximize it's benefits and to best fit the lesson being taught.

## Negative Reasons to Avoid Rotation

- Avoiding rotation because dancing is difficult with anyone other than a regular partner
- Avoiding rotation to appease a partner who becomes jealous easily

### About Me...

For over 9 years, I have worked to develop, nurture, and serve the Swing, Hustle, Ballroom, and Country dance communities in a fun and friendly way.

I enjoy the ongoing effort of promoting dance, hosting dances, teaching, DJ'ing, and social dancing with dancers of all levels.

On the national level, I enjoy providing the Dance Fanatics Pro Audio System and DJ Services at weekend events in such states as MI, OH, PA, WI, IN, & NY.

When I'm not working as a DJ or teaching, I enjoy social dancing and dancing in competitions.

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