



TAKE YOUR SQUARE DANCE CLUB TO THE PEOPLE!

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GET SEEN. GET THEM CURIOUS. GET THEM DANCING!

If we want new people to discover square and round dancing, we can't always expect them to find us. Go where people already are.

Farmers markets. College campuses. Art walks. Street festivals. Shopping centers. Parks. Community fairs. Outdoor concerts. Neighborhood events.

The goal isn't simply to "put on a demonstration."

Instead, make people stop, smile, get curious and think: "That looks like fun. I want to try it."

START BY FINDING YOUR PEOPLE

Before deciding what kind of event to hold, spend some time thinking about where the people you want to reach already gather.

Don't start with: "Where can we demonstrate square dancing?"

Start with: "Where do people in our community go to have fun?"

Make a list. Think about places where people naturally:

- Socialize
- Listen to music
- Shop
- Exercise
- Explore
- Attend community events
- Meet friends
- Bring their families
- Try new experiences

LOOK AROUND YOUR COMMUNITY

- Farmers markets
- College campuses
- Art walks
- Street fairs
- Food festivals
- Outdoor concerts
- Shopping centers
- Parks
- Community festivals
- Downtown events
- Libraries
- Neighborhood celebrations
- Recreation centers
- Local businesses

Also look for events involving music, dancing, fitness, families or social activities.

These audiences may already be interested in the kinds of experiences square and round dancing offer.



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BRAINSTORM WITH YOUR CLUB

Don't leave this to one person. At a club meeting, ask:

“Where could we introduce square dancing to people who have never tried it?”

Give everyone five minutes to write down as many ideas as possible.

Don't evaluate the ideas yet.

Then ask:

- Where do younger adults gather?
- Where do families gather?
- Where do people already listen to music?
- Where do people go for entertainment?
- Where do people go on weekends?
- Where are there community events?
- Where could we reach people who might enjoy social activity or exercise?
- Where would people have enough space to try a few simple dance moves?

You may be surprised by what your members come up with.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT LOCATION

Once you have a list, look for places that offer three things:

- 1. THE RIGHT PEOPLE:** Are potential new dancers likely to be there?
- 2. THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT:** Will people be relaxed, social and open to trying something new?
- 3. THE RIGHT OPPORTUNITY:** Can you realistically create a short, visible, engaging activity there?

You don't need the biggest event in town.

You need an event where your target audience is already paying attention.

THEN DECIDE WHAT TO DO

Once you've identified a promising location, decide what kind of activity fits. You don't have to do the same thing everywhere.

IDEA #1: A FLASH MOB

A flash mob can create attention because people don't expect to encounter a group of dancers in an ordinary public place. Arrange for dancers to gather casually around the designated area. At a predetermined time, the music begins, and the group suddenly comes together. Keep it short.

3–5 minutes of energetic dancing → invitation → hand out a business card with a QR code.

Afterward, invite spectators to try a very simple movement.

The objective is to have fun and create curiosity.



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IDEA #2: A “TRY IT” DANCE

Instead of demonstrating for 20 minutes, create a five-minute experience.

Put up a sign:

**NEVER SQUARE DANCED?
TRY IT FOR FIVE MINUTES.**

Have a caller or experienced dancer teach one or two very simple movements.

Then everyone does them together. The experience should be:

Easy → social → successful → fun.

People don't need to learn square dancing right now.

They need to experience what it feels like to participate.

IDEA #3: FARMERS MARKET POP-UP

Farmers markets are excellent because people are already walking around, browsing, talking and socializing.

A small dance area can become an unexpected attraction.

Start with a short demonstration, then announce:

“Want to try it?”

Invite shoppers to participate.

Keep the movements simple enough that a complete beginner can join without feeling embarrassed.

Have someone nearby who can answer questions and provide information afterward.

IDEA #4: COLLEGE CAMPUS POP-UP

Contact:

- Student activities
- Recreation programs
- Residence life
- Student clubs
- Campus event planners

Instead of: “Would you like to learn square dancing?”

Try: “Want to try something completely different?”

Consider partnering with fitness, recreation, social or music-oriented student organizations.

The objective is to introduce square dancing as a fun social experience,
not something students are expected to already know about.



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IDEA #5: ART WALKS & DOWNTOWN EVENTS

Art walks, First Friday events and downtown festivals are ideal because people are already looking for something interesting to experience.

A small group dancing energetically can attract more attention than a large group standing around waiting for people to watch.

A sign might say:

THIS IS SQUARE DANCING.
NOT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?
COME TRY IT.

IDEA #6: SHOPPING CENTERS & COMMUNITY SPACES

Consider a short dance in a common area. Rather than one long demonstration, try several short appearances:

12:00 — 5-minute dance

1:00 — 5-minute dance

2:00 — 5-minute dance

Each appearance reaches a different group of people.

IDEA #7: PARTNER WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES

Consider businesses whose customers might enjoy an active social experience:

- Coffee shops
- Restaurants
- Breweries
- Bookstores
- Fitness businesses
- Recreation centers
- Community centers
- Outdoor businesses
- Local markets

Ask: "Would you be interested in hosting a short community dance activity for your customers?"

The business gets something entertaining for its customers.

Your club gets exposure to people who may never have encountered square dancing otherwise.

IDEA #8: COMMUNITY FESTIVALS & STREET FAIRS

Find community events and approach the organizers. Offer something specific:

"We'd love to provide a short, interactive square-dance experience for your attendees. We can bring the dancers and caller and keep the activity to 10–15 minutes."

An organizer is much more likely to respond to a specific, easy-to-understand proposal than a vague request for a booth.



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NOW GET PERMISSION

Once you've identified the event and decided what you want to do, contact the person responsible for the location or event.

Don't simply show up and start dancing.

Contact:

- The event organizer
- Farmers market manager
- Mall or shopping center management
- College student activities office
- Parks and recreation department
- Festival coordinator
- Downtown association
- Business or property owner
- Community organization sponsoring the event

Explain:

- What you want to do
- How many dancers will participate
- How long it will take
- What space you need
- Whether you need music or electricity
- Whether you plan to distribute flyers or QR codes

Ask about:

- Available space
- Sound requirements
- Noise restrictions
- Insurance requirements
- Permits
- Event rules
- Participant limits

GET PERMISSION IN WRITING. Even if the organizer agrees verbally, follow up with an email confirming the details. Permission first. Dancing second.

DON'T JUST DEMONSTRATE—INVITE

One of the biggest mistakes clubs make is creating a spectator event.

People watch experienced dancers doing something they don't know how to do and think: "That's nice, but I couldn't do that."

Instead, find a way to bring people into the experience.

Think: WATCH IT.

Then: TRY IT.

Then: FIND OUT MORE.

That creates a much stronger pathway from curiosity to participation.



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MAKE THE FIRST EXPERIENCE EASY

Your first interaction shouldn't require:

- A partner
- Special clothing
- Prior knowledge
- Memorizing terminology
- Knowing how to square up
- Understanding dance levels

Instead (with warmth and a smile):

"Come stand here."
"I'll show you what to do."
"Just follow along."
"You're doing great."

The objective is to give someone a successful first experience.

HAVE THE NEXT STEP READY

Someone may love the experience and ask: "Where can I do this again?"

Your club needs to be ready with an answer.

HAVE BUSINESS CARDS WITH A QR CODE linking directly to beginner information. (see Square Dance Revival's resources: How to Create a Marketing Business Card, How to Create a QR Code)



A FRIENDLY PERSON: Someone who can answer: "I've never done this before. What happens if I come?" That conversation may be more valuable than the demonstration itself.

DON'T TURN IT INTO A SALES PITCH

People didn't come to the farmers market, art walk or college event to hear a lecture about square dancing.

They came to enjoy themselves. Let the dancing create the interest.

Then provide a simple invitation:

LIKE THAT?
COME TRY IT.

That's enough.



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CREATE A COMMUNITY OUTREACH TEAM

Consider creating a small group of club members who enjoy introducing square dancing to the public.

Your team might include:

- 1 caller or cuer
- 6–12 energetic dancers
- 1–2 people who talk with spectators
- 1 person handling photos/video
- 1 person responsible for information and handing out business cards

Not everyone has to dance.

Some people are naturally good at welcoming and talking with strangers.

TAKE PHOTOS AND VIDEO

With appropriate permission, capture short videos of the event. (Square Dance Revival has a simple permission form you can use on its resource page)

Look for:

- People laughing
- Movement
- Interaction
- Spectators joining
- People trying the dance

These images can become marketing material for your next event.

One community event can create social media content for weeks.

FOLLOW UP

Don't let the event end when everyone goes home.

Ask:

- How many people participated?
- How many asked questions?
- How many took a business card?
- Did anyone come to an introduction/community dance or beginner class afterward?
- What attracted attention?
- What didn't work?
- What should we change next time?

Then do it again. One event is an experiment. Repeated outreach creates awareness.

Find them. Go to them. Give them a reason to stop. Let them try it.

Then make the next step easy.

Don't wait for potential dancers to find you. Take the dancing to them.