

# RSCDS Ottawa – Dance Syllabus

## Introduction

<b>Introduction</b>	<p>This handbook gives details of what is taught and required at each of the three levels of dancing. These are the standards encouraged by the Society and generally apply across all Branches.</p> <p>Level 1 – Beginner and Improving dancers</p> <p>Level 2 – Intermediate dancers able to accomplish most steps and basic formations</p> <p>Level 3 – Advanced dancers able to dance many formations by recall and achieve success with new complicated dances</p>
<b>Movement between levels</b>	<p>Dancer movement from one level to another may take place under three different situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• advancement when a dancer is considered ready to meet the challenge of a more advanced teaching level</li><li>• movement to a lower level, or</li><li>• movement to an alternate level for various reasons</li></ul>
<b>Timing</b>	<p>Changes from one dancing level to another will usually take place as classes begin in the fall. In preparation for this, in the early spring instructors of teaching classes should assess those dancers registered in their classes for possible movement to the next level. The final decision requires agreement between the current instructor and the “receiving” instructor. Dancers are then informed at the end of the dancing year as to whether they should move to another level for the following year. The dancer must also agree to the move.</p> <p>This is the standard process but movement may occur during the year in special circumstances.</p>
<b>Movement to a lower level</b>	<p>Instructors have the responsibility to teach at the level described for their class in the syllabus. They should not lower the level of instruction to accommodate dancers who are not ready to progress at that level or who are no longer able to meet the dancing requirements of that level. While endeavouring to provide a positive dancing experience to the individual dancer, the instructor’s primary responsibility is to meet the needs of the majority in their class. As a result, there may be occasions when a dancer will be asked to move to a lower-level teaching class or to an alternate class.</p> <p>In the event of disagreement, the Chair of the Committee of Instructors and the Branch Chair should be informed of the situation and how it is being handled. They may become involved in the situation, if agreement cannot be reached.</p>

## Level 1

<b>Introduction</b>	This Level introduces new dancers to the elementary formations and the steps of Scottish Country Dancing. They will obtain a degree of sociability and feeling for the dance and learn dances incorporating these elements.
<b>Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Skip Change of Step</li><li>• Slip Step</li><li>• Pas de Basque with emphasis on rhythm</li><li>• Strathspey Traveling</li><li>• Common Schottische (Strathspey Setting)</li></ul>
<b>Formations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advance and Retire – 2, 4 bars</li><li>• Allemande<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ for 2 couples</li><li>◦ for 3 couples</li></ul></li><li>• Back to back</li><li>• Bow and Curtsey</li><li>• Casting<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ 1, 2 or 3 places, Off or Up</li><li>◦ Cast Off for 4 steps and up for 4 steps</li><li>◦ Cross Over and Cast Off</li><li>◦ Set and Cast Off/Up</li><li>◦ Turn and Cast Off</li></ul></li><li>• Corner Formations<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Identifying corner positions</li><li>◦ Turning corners</li></ul></li><li>• Cross Over – 2 bars</li><li>• Figure of 8<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ on the sideline</li><li>◦ across the dance</li><li>◦ Half figure of 8 across the dance</li></ul></li><li>• Grand Chain for 3 couples</li><li>• Hands Across<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Four hands across and back</li><li>◦ Four hands across half-way round</li><li>◦ Three hands across</li></ul></li><li>• Hands Round/ Hands Round and Back (circle in jig, reel and strathspey time)</li><li>• Ladies' Chain</li><li>• Lead<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Down the Middle and Up</li><li>◦ Down the Middle and Up followed by Cast Off</li></ul></li><li>• Dance, near hands joined</li><li>• Poussette for 2 couples in reel and jig time</li><li>• Promenade<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Down the Middle and Up</li><li>◦ Down the Middle and Up followed by Cast Off</li></ul></li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reels of 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ on the sidelines – Right Shoulder/Left Shoulder (6, 8 bars)</li> <li>◦ across the dance – Right Shoulder/Left Shoulder</li> <li>◦ mirror</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reels of 4 on the sidelines</li> <li>• Rights and Lefts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ for 2 couples (8 bars)</li> <li>◦ Half Rights and Lefts – 4 bars</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Stepping Up or Down</li> <li>• Turns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ 1 hand</li> <li>◦ 2 hands (strathspey only) – 2, 4 bars</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE: Not all of these formations may be taught in any one year</b></p>
<b>Music</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difference between a Reel and a Jig</li> <li>• Difference between a Strathspey and a Slow Air</li> </ul>
<b>Technique/Dancing skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covering – alignment with other dancers who are dancing the same pattern</li> <li>• Teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Dance with different partners</li> <li>◦ Supporting couples need to remain alert!</li> <li>◦ Proper firm but gentle use of hands and arms</li> <li>◦ Eye contact</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Able to do a simple dance from a walkthrough</li> <li>• Dance Etiquette <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Wait for the dance to be called</li> <li>◦ Ask a partner to dance</li> <li>◦ Join at the bottom of sets as they form</li> <li>◦ Dance only dances within capabilities</li> <li>◦ Counting off</li> <li>◦ Listen to briefing/teacher</li> <li>◦ Thank partner and set members</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Posture – Upright carriage with good balance</li> <li>• Progression – in standard 2, 3, and 4 couple dances</li> <li>• Spirit of the Dance – Connecting to the music which encourages the enjoyable sociable movement of dance</li> </ul>
<b>Movement to next level</b>	<p>Before moving to Level 2, the dancer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• should expect to dance at Level 1 for more than one year</li> <li>• should be able to carry out the full Level 1 syllabus with confidence</li> <li>• should obtain the recommendation to move to the Level 2 class from their current teacher</li> </ul>

## Level 2

<b>Introduction</b>	This level encourages dancers who have completed the Level 1 syllabus to acquire knowledge of more complex formations and steps and to develop and demonstrate a higher level of dancing skill.
<b>Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steps included in the Level 1 syllabus will be reviewed and polished</li> <li>• Highland Schottische Setting Step</li> </ul>
<b>Formations</b>	<p>Formations included in the Level 1 syllabus will be reviewed and polished. New formations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Cumulative Grand Chain</li> <li>◦ Men's chain</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Corner Formations in reel, jig and strathspey time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Set to and Turn Corners</li> <li>◦ Set to Corners and Partner</li> <li>◦ Corner Chain</li> <li>◦ Corners Pass and Turn</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Double Triangles</li> <li>• Allemande for 4 couples</li> <li>• Figure of 8 for 2 couple <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> couple</li> <li>◦ 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> couple around standing 2<sup>nd</sup> couple</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Balance in Line</li> <li>• The Knot <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ 2 couples</li> <li>◦ 3 couples</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Petronella turns and the Petronella</li> <li>• Rights and Lefts – Diagonal</li> <li>• Reels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Tandem (full or half)</li> <li>◦ Reels of 4 (full and half) - and across the dance on the diagonal</li> <li>◦ Reels of 3 – on opposite sides and then on own sides</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Rondel</li> <li>• Set and Link for 2 couples</li> <li>• Strathspey Poussette <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Right Round</li> <li>◦ Half Poussette</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Turns – all types, including both hands with pas de basque step</li> </ul>
<b>Music</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further development of music appreciation</li> <li>• Use of varied piano, piano and fiddle, full accordion band recordings</li> <li>• Growing recognition of lead tunes for dances</li> </ul>
<b>Technique/Dancing skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At Level 2, dancers will be encouraged to develop and to demonstrate improvement of dancing skills. The dancer will be given instruction and practice to</li> </ul>

	<p style="text-align: center;">promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ recognition of opportunities for covering</li> <li>◦ covering as a natural part of dancing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Dance Etiquette <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Wait for the dance to be called</li> <li>◦ Join at the bottom of sets as they form</li> <li>◦ Dance only dances within capabilities</li> <li>◦ Counting Off</li> <li>◦ Listen to briefing/ teacher</li> <li>◦ Thank partner and set</li> <li>◦ Willingness to dance with all other levels of dancers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Footwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Accurate, rhythmic footwork, within each dancer's capabilities</li> <li>◦ Smoother transitions between steps</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Phrasing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Smooth transitions between formations</li> <li>◦ Growing recognition of where careful phrasing is needed in some dances including non-standard progressions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Spirit of the Dance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Growing enjoyment of the music, the dancing and the sociability with other dancers as confidence is gained</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ ongoing set management</li> <li>◦ readiness for the next part of the dance</li> <li>◦ frequent, easy eye contact</li> <li>◦ awareness of helpful use of hands and firm arms</li> <li>◦ a sense of dancing with others at all times</li> <li>◦ able to do some dances from a briefing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Movement to next level</b></p>	<p>Before moving to the Level 3, the dancer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• should be able to carry out the full Level 2 syllabus with confidence</li> <li>• should be able to dance an uncomplicated Level 2 dance from only a briefing</li> <li>• should obtain the recommendation to move to the Level 3 class from their current teacher</li> </ul> <p>NOTE: Some dancers may have achieved their dancing aims as Level 2 dancers and are welcome to remain and enjoy dancing at this level.</p>

## Level 3

<b>Introduction</b>	<p>This level encourages dancers who have completed the Level 2 syllabus to acquire knowledge of more complex formations and steps and to develop and demonstrate a high level of dancing skill.</p> <p>Dancers can expect to receive personal attention at this level.</p>
<b>Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steps included in the Level 1 &amp; 2 syllabus will be reviewed and polished</li> <li>• Glasgow Highlanders Setting Step</li> <li>• At this level, dancers may be introduced to Pas de Basque Coupé, Coupé Pas de Basque and some Highland steps.</li> </ul>
<b>Formations</b>	<p>All formations and new variations of those previously taught may be reviewed and polished. Not all these formations will be taught in any one year. New RSCDS and non-RSCDS formations may be taught. New formations taught may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bourrel for 2, 3, or 4 couples</li> <li>• Chain Progression</li> <li>• Circulating Allemande</li> <li>• Crown Triangles</li> <li>• Espagnole</li> <li>• Highland Schottische Pousette</li> <li>• La baratte</li> <li>• Petronella in Tandem</li> <li>• Rights and Lefts in 4 bars</li> <li>• Rights and Lefts for 3 couples</li> <li>• Set and Link for 3 couples</li> <li>• Set and Rotate</li> <li>• The Spoke – clockwise/counter clockwise</li> <li>• The Targe</li> <li>• The Tourbillon</li> <li>• Tournée</li> </ul>
<b>Music</b>	<p>This level encourages further development of music appreciation.</p> <p>Dancers may compare various recordings of music for a dance, based on suitability to the dance, arrangement of alternate tunes, clarity, ‘excitement’ and so forth.</p>
<b>Technique/Dancing skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covering – good covering wherever possible</li> <li>• Footwork             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ accurate footwork</li> <li>◦ smooth transitions between different steps</li> <li>◦ observing and carrying out foot changes</li> <li>◦ smooth transitions between formations</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Phrasing – adjustment of length of steps, easily and evenly</li> </ul>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spirit of the Dance – obvious enjoyment of the music and dance</li><li>• Teamwork – as at Level 2 but with greater ease and naturalness<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ ongoing set management</li><li>◦ readiness for the next part of the dance</li><li>◦ frequent easy eye contact</li><li>◦ awareness of helpful use of hands and firm arms</li><li>◦ a sense of dancing with others at all times</li><li>◦ able to do more dances from a briefing</li></ul></li></ul> |
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