

## So What do We Mean by Basic, Intermediate and Advanced?

From time to time we have special classes, workshops, and dances that we identify as either "basic," "intermediate," or "advanced." You might be wondering what we mean by those terms, and how to tell whether or not one of those events is right for you. While there are no official definitions of basic, intermediate and advanced dancers in the Scottish Country Dancing lexicon, what follows are some guidelines you may find useful.

A basic Scottish Country Dancer is still becoming comfortable with the five basic steps and the formations listed below for intermediate dancers. Basic dancers often need to walk a dance through at least once from more than one position to learn it and will likely need help to recover from a mistake. For the Flying Ghillies, basic dancers include those who have not yet completed at least one full term of our FUNDamentals class or do not have comparable experience attending a regular Scottish Country Dance class. Our Monday night downstairs class is at the basic level.

An intermediate Scottish Country Dancer is comfortable with the five basic steps and the formations listed below. By "comfortable," we mean that if asked to dance any of the below formations, intermediate dancers would be able to do so with only a brief reminder. Intermediate dancers can usually learn a dance of moderate complexity (ex: The Montgomeries Rant, Mrs Stewart's Jig, Monymusk and similar dances) by watching one couple walk it through. Intermediate dancers can usually recover from mistakes on their own. For the Flying Ghillies, an intermediate dancer has completed at least one full term of our FUNDamentals class or has comparable experience attending a regular Scottish Country Dance class. Our Monday night upstairs class is for the most part at the intermediate level. Formations intermediate dancers should know include:

Advance and retire	Figure of eight
Allemande	Hands across
Back to back	Hands round and back
Balance in line	Lead down the middle and up
Casting	Petronella turn
Chain formations: grand chain, grand chain for three couples, ladies' chain	Pousette (in reel and jig time)
Corner formations: turn corners and partner, set to and turn corners, set to corners	Promenade for three couples
Cross over	Reels of three
Double triangles	Rights and lefts
	Setting in line
	Stepping up and down

An advanced Scottish Country Dancers is proficient at the five basic steps and the intermediate formations, has learned additional steps like the Highland Schottische and Glasgow Highlanders setting steps and is comfortable with additional formations like the strathspey pousette, reels of four, the knot and others. By "proficient," we mean that if asked to dance any of the intermediate formations, advanced dancers would be able to do so without a reminder and with good footwork, handing, phrasing, covering and teamwork. Advanced dancers can usually learn a dance of moderate complexity from a talk through or by reading the text description and can not only recover quickly from their own mistakes but help less experienced dancers recover. The Flying Ghillies do not offer a regular advanced class, but we sometimes incorporate advanced steps and formations into the Monday night general class. The Cincinnati Branch (our parent organization) holds several advanced social

classes throughout the year.

We have one additional level of dancer: Teacher. Teachers meet the above guidelines for advanced dancers and have completed at least Part 1 of the two-part teacher certification process of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. In addition to dancing at an advanced level, teachers have been specifically trained to teach Scottish Country Dancing and to evaluate other dancers' level of ability and development needs. So if in doubt about what level class you should be in, ask one of your teachers!

Happy dancing!