

MY FIRST CONVENTION HANDBOOK

**A Guide to Your First
Florida State Square and Round Dance Convention**

Live Lively -



Square Dance!

Compliments of
The Florida Federation of Square Dancers

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FIRST CONVENTION HANDBOOK

Much of the information contained in this Handbook was extracted from the IAGSDC Handbook entitled “*The Guide to IAGSDC Convention*” found at the IAGSDC History Project with the permission of Allan Hurst.

https://iagsdchistory.mywikis.wiki/wiki/Guide_To_IAGSDC_Convention

This Handbook is provided by the Florida Federation of Square Dancers. Going to your first convention can be scary. We hope this information will alleviate those fears. It can be found at https://www.dancergram.com/aa-floridasquaredance.com/documents/First_Convention.pdf

Another booklet provided by the Federation that is a companion to this Handbook is the ***New Dancer Handbook***. In this booklet, you will find information about the various Square and Round Dance organizations in the United States, how Florida is split into regional associations, tips, history, conventions, acronyms, etc. This Handbook can be found at www.floridasquaredance.com and scroll down the list in the upper left hand of the screen; click on the link for My First Convention and it will take you right to it.

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Introduction

Each year, a state square dance convention is held in Florida the third weekend in January. It is simply referred to as the state convention, but the official title is Florida State Square and Round Dance Convention (hereinafter referred to as FSSRDC).

The Convention is sponsored by three state organizations – Florida Federation of Square Dancers (Federation), Florida Callers Association (FCA), and the Round Dance Council of Florida (RDCF) and the three organizations share in the profits/loss. There is an approved set of convention procedures that are followed by the convention committee each year. If there are any major changes, i.e. changing the date of the convention, all three of the state organizations must vote on it.

Going to conventions can seem like a pretty complicated process to first-timers - but it's not that bad; really.

Most first-timers report that the only thing they didn't like about their first convention was not knowing what to expect.

If you're a new dancer, take heart – this booklet is written by experienced dancers, with the goal of making conventions as fun as possible for you! We'll take you through the entire convention experience from start to finish.

Remember, every experienced square dancer – and caller and cuer! – started off as a new dancer.

The information in this guide mostly applies to the annual FSSRDC. There are some things that are the same for the National Square Dance Convention®.

“Hey, there’s a lot of information stuffed into this Guide!”

Well, there’s a lot happening in and around each convention!

- Take your time and read through this Guide at your leisure.
- A Guide was created by Allan Hurst for the IAGSDC^{®1}. We obtained permission from him to use some of his information in our Guide.
- Some people have reported it’s easier for them to print off a copy of the Guide (www.floridasquaredance.com). The printed version can also be highlighted with a marker.

So read on, and join us in the fun of the dance ... and the annual convention!

“Me? Go to convention?”

Most clubs go into a frenzy as convention time nears each year. It’s common for new dancers to have concerns such as: “What if I mess up in a square?”; “If I break down my square, will I bring shame down upon the heads of my club?”

You’ll soon discover such fears are groundless. You stand a far better chance of bringing ridicule upon yourself for wearing white shoes after Labor Day, than of embarrassing your club by making a few dance mistakes at Convention.

Often, new dancers who are approaching graduation are reluctant to make plans for Convention. Our advice: if you’re planning on graduating, make plans to attend Convention to “lock in” your newly developed dance skills.

Contrary to what many students believe, newly-graduated dancers attending Conventions become stronger dancers than those who stay home.

What really happens at Convention?

The idea of spending two days square dancing doesn’t sound terribly exciting at first. However, the same thing could be said for other types of conventions, choral conferences, or leather conventions all of which are similarly popular and entertaining.

¹ International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs

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Like those events, there are many different types of activities at any given convention. Some examples:

- Hexagon squares (six couples dancing per square)
- Dance workshops
- Vendor booths
- Separate halls for the type of dancing and the level
- Dangle dances
- Awards
- Kick-off for the next convention
- After party
- Dance & Dinner Show
- Meetings
- Entertainment
- Tours²

Mostly, Convention is about meeting old and new friends, and dancing with them, and realizing that you're part of a global community of Square and Round dancers.

When to start planning your trip

Some dancers plan to attend Convention many months in advance, while others go at the last minute. As you'll see shortly, planning ahead can save you quite a bit of money.

For most conventions, you'll need to make three sets of arrangements:

1. Convention Registration
2. Travel Arrangements
3. Hotel/Housing Arrangements

Convention Registration: The early bird gets the discount

It's a simple equation: the earlier you register for Convention, the less you pay. Since planning a convention is a long project, each future Convention Committee needs "seed money" to place deposits on a convention facility and the special flooring, and purchasing the fundraising items. Those funds are raised through advance convention registrations at discounted prices and selling fundraising items.

² There aren't any tours at the Florida Convention, but they have them at the National Convention.

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Convention registration starts on Saturday night after the kick-off for the next convention. At the kick-off, you will hear the date, location, and theme of the convention. You can register online or in person. After the kick-off is finished, there will be a “blue light special” where you can purchase your ribbons at a reduced price. Over the next year, the ribbon prices will increase at certain designated times, which you can find on the registration form. Early bird registrations are only sold at the current convention.

There will also be fundraising items for sale during this time. Items include, but are not limited to, shirts, convention buttons, and raffle tickets.

Your first year as a dancer, you won't have known about any of the advance registrations. However, once you attend your first Convention, you can start purchasing discounted advance registrations. Over time, the savings really add up!

Travel Arrangements: Getting there is half the fun

Our convention starts on Thursday night with a Trail-End Dance, which is separate from the cost of the actual convention. The convention starts Friday morning and goes through the end of the evening on Saturday night.

If you want to take in all of the convention, plan to arrive Thursday during the day and leave on Sunday. If you plan to attend the Florida Federation meeting or the Florida Callers meeting on Sunday, you will need to plan to depart early Sunday afternoon.

Examine the convention's schedule to get an idea of when things start and stop on the first and last day. The schedule will be printed in the *Bow & Swing* magazine and will be posted on the convention website (<https://www.dancergram.com/aa-FWS/convention/index.html>) approximately one month before the convention.

You may want to arrive early or depart late to take advantage of some of the activities...or just plan for a few days of sightseeing in the area. Many dancers find convention is a wonderful excuse to explore a new city!

Since our convention will always be in Florida, you probably won't have to deal with airline reservations!

Hotel/Housing Arrangements

There is always a host hotel which is where most of the Federation members stay and the Sunday morning Federation meeting is held. A block of rooms is set aside at a discounted rate. There will be a deadline to make your

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reservation at the discounted rate. At that time, if they have any rooms available, they might add more rooms to our block. If they don't have additional rooms available, you will have to pay a higher rate. Many dancers make their reservations for the next convention as they check out from the previous convention.

If the host hotel is part of a hotel chain, consider enrolling in their "frequent guest" club, before making your hotel reservation. You will then qualify for discounted rates and earn points towards free nights. When making your reservation, be sure to include your frequent guest program account number and request the special square dance rate.

Why stay at the host hotel? For our convention, at this time the host hotel is the only hotel in the area that will give us a special square dance rate. If you are registered at the host hotel, you will be able to participate in small casual gatherings in the hotel lobby. There's no dancing; just a time to unwind and have some refreshments. Since it's in the hotel where you are staying, you can rush up to your room beforehand and change into casual clothes. Since the majority of the hotel guests are square dancers, you can line up meal partners.

Some dancers may not have stayed in large hotels recently, and may be unfamiliar with some of the resources offered in such an establishment. Some things to think about when making your hotel reservation:

- What kind of bed do you want? King size? Queen? A pair of double beds?
- Do you want a nonsmoking room?
- Do you want a room that's located especially high or low? Some people are nervous about elevators or high places.
- Is there a "club floor"? For an extra charge, these floors usually offer some form of free breakfast and/or evening hors d'oeuvres and soft drinks.
- If you just can't leave work behind while traveling...do any of the rooms have high-speed internet access?
- Do you need a handicap accessible room?
- If you are planning to bring an animal with you, be sure to ask about the regulations for that. All hotels are required to let service animals stay with you; however, the animal must be trained to be a service animal and has a certificate stating the training has been completed. A therapy animal is not the same thing as a service animal. Some hotels will allow therapy dogs and others don't. Some hotels also charge a deposit for the animal.

For the Florida convention, the host hotel is a Marriott brand but it doesn't have as many amenities as a full-service Marriott Hotel i.e. a "club floor". At the

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Courtyard by Marriott there is a restaurant in the hotel as well as a convenience store, and a gift shop.

If you're a camper, you need to make a reservation for that. There is free dry camping at the location of the convention. If you would prefer full hook-ups, check the convention website for a list of the campgrounds in the area.

What to pack? (Aka, "Dancers' Daily Wear")

Packing for convention isn't quite as simple as many first-timers think. Dressing up for a day of dancing is different than attending a regular club or class night.

- Pack more socks and shirts than you think you need. It's not uncommon at convention to change socks and/or shirts several times daily. Ditto underwear.
- Don't forget your swim suit! Even if you don't plan on swimming, you may want that swimsuit for taking a dip in the hotel's hot tub after dancing all day.
- Your club outfit is needed for the Grand March, if there is one, and you might want to get a club picture in your club outfit or colors. Some clubs have very formal uniforms, while others are informal. Ask one of your club officers if you're not sure. Some dancers don't bother wearing a uniform at all.
- Bring comfortable shoes, boots, and clothing for dancing. Tight jeans may look great, but if they chafe in the wrong places, you'll be truly sorry later.
- Bring your checkbook and/or credit card! You will need them for registrations, vendor merchandise, and the like.
- Two pairs of shoes are not excessive. Many people are shocked to find that their shoes are soaked after a couple hours of dancing. Also, wet shoes promote chafing. (Ouch!)
- Another reason for two pairs of shoes for dancing: the type of flooring you dance on will dictate which type of shoe is best. Dancing on carpet in sneakers can lead to a turned ankle. Leather shoes are best for carpeting ... or plastic flooring.
- If you only brought "grippy" shoes but wish you had slipperier shoes, try picking up a roll of clear plastic packing tape. It is reported that the tape even seems to work with waffle-soled sneakers.
- Insoles are "in". Consider wearing gel-filled insoles for dancing for better foot comfort.
- "Style Over Comfort," Traditional square dance attire isn't as popular as it was many years ago. You will find many people in shorts or slacks and whatever style shoe is comfortable for the dancer. Keep in mind that

when you dance in a hall with a lot of other dancers, it can get very warm!

- A dance towel. “A towel, a towel, my kingdom for a towell” If you are a “schvitzer,” (sweaty person) bring one or two absorbent sorts of towels you can carry around with you to dry off between (or during) tips. Many square dance clothing or accessory vendors often sell belt clips for dance towels.
- Don’t try to break in new shoes or boots at convention. Instead, break in new dancing footwear for several weeks before convention, during class nights or club nights.
- Bring and always wear your club badge (or some kind of name badge) when dancing. People like to know with whom they’re dancing! Rather than remembering to bring a badge, some people wear club shirts or personal shirts embroidered with their name. Badges are also good for hanging your ribbon³. In Florida, we use two-sided tape on the ribbons so you can stick them on the back of your badge. If you don’t have a badge, there is usually a badge vendor at the convention where you can have one made on the spot. You can also purchase magnetic badge holders that prevent your badge from making holes in your clothing.
- Don’t stuff your magnetic badge into the same pocket as your hotel room key or credit cards. No, we’re not putting you on. Many hotels now use magnetic cardkeys, which can easily be erased by the strong magnets used on the back of dance badges. Keep your room key, ATM card, and credit cards somewhere completely separate from your badge.
- An insulated sports bottle or covered mug you can carry with you is an excellent investment.

Taking care of yourself

Dancing at conventions usually runs all day, and it is easy to forget to take care of yourself.

If you are not used to dancing for several hours at a time ... be aware that square dancing is a low-impact, highly aerobic activity, and burns 400 calories per hour of constant motion. That means you need to treat yourself a little more carefully than usual, unless you’re already accustomed to extended periods of (vertical) aerobic activity.

- Consider carrying along a bottle of “sport drink” (e.g. Gatorade, PowerAde, etc.) Even if you don’t feel thirsty between tips, it’s important to keep yourself hydrated! At the very least, keep a refillable bottle of water handy.

³ Ribbons are your ticket into the convention. When you register and pay, you will receive a ribbon that contains the name of the event, the dates, the theme, and the city and state where it will be held.

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- Remember to take a drink after each tip; it's very easy to get dehydrated on a dance floor.
- Some people find that taking an over-the-counter anti-inflammatory or pain medication helps prevent soreness later. For example: aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil), or naproxen sodium (Aleve). Take such medication before starting to dance or before finishing up a long dance session. Some dancers have taken Advil before dancing to avoid swollen feet at the end of a long session. If you have problems with painful or swollen feet or legs after dancing, and over-the-counter meds don't work for you, it is recommended that you consult with your physician.
- It is recommended that gently stretching between tips can help prevent soreness and stiffness.
- Take a long, hot soak in the hotel hot tub or in your room after you've finished dancing for the day...it's a great way to prevent muscle soreness at night or in the morning.
- If you have any physical conditions that preclude actions such as twirling or swinging, consider investing in a "Please don't twirl me" or "Please don't swing me" badge. You can purchase these badges ready- or custom-made from the badge vendor. Even with the badge, make sure you inform the other dancers in your square of any requests before dancing starts.
- Some dancers wear a red kerchief on a sore wrist or arm, or use a faux sling to indicate a weak arm.

If your feet tend to blister during long/intense periods of activity ... go to an outdoor clothing store and try a pair of "sock liners". These are thin white socks worn under regular socks. Sock liners whisk perspiration away from the skin, and substantially reduce friction to prevent blisters or chafing. Try these before going to convention – perhaps at a local club night or class night.

Personal grooming is extra-important when you're dancing eight to ten hours a day. You may need to shower more than once a day. Breath mints are handy on the dance floor. A good antiperspirant or deodorant is essential and polite.

If you sweat a lot, bring a towel. Yes, we know we said this earlier. Many dancers don't like hugging other dancers who are soaking wet. If you know you get sweaty ... sweatbands for your head or wrists wouldn't hurt, either. There is an old tradition of men wearing long sleeved shirts to dance so the sleeves can absorb the sweat. Women don't like touching a sweaty hairy arm!

What should you carry around with you? Some people prefer to "travel light" when running around dance halls. Some dancers only carry the dance schedule and some sort of small fan. Others like bringing a bag or backpack containing items such as: spare badges or badge magnets; breath mints; sports bars or energy snacks; adhesive bandages; spare shirt; a towel.

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Just like at summer camp when you were a kid ... put your name on your stuff.

Women, remember that if you bring a purse you won't be able to take it out on the dance floor with you so it will be sitting on the sidelines unattended. It is suggested you buy a small bag that wraps around your waist. It's not very large so you won't be able to carry much in it. Therefore, consider only carrying your car key (not the whole key ring) or hotel key card, a small amount of cash, a credit card, and ID. This will fit in the bag and won't be too much weight on your waist. If you don't have one of these bags, consider having your partner carry these items in his pocket. The square dance vendors usually sell these small bags. DO NOT leave money or valuables lying around anywhere! We all like to think square dancers are honest but you never know. Besides, we don't know anything about the spectators that can access every hall.

It is suggested if you're going to be one of over a thousand dancers; make sure that your backpack, gym bag, fanny pack, or camera case has your name in it, or a luggage tag attached somewhere.

This especially applies if you're carrying around one of a thousand identical backpacks, fanny packs, or tote bags from a current or previous convention.

Extra things going on during the convention

What's a "Grand March"?⁴

One of the Florida Convention traditions is a presentation of all the member clubs. This takes the form of a march, club-by-club, into a ballroom or similar large dance space. Florida clubs and chapters are introduced as they approach the stage. Dancers generally wear their club outfits for the Grand March, although it's not a requirement.

The format of the march is the same each year with the Federation officers first, then the Florida Callers Association officers, Round Dance Council of Florida officers, the convention committee chairpersons, and then each of the clubs line up.

At the conclusion of the Grand March, introductions are made and sometimes a few announcements are made. At the completion of the March, each line will have eight people so they then break into squares and do the first tip which is called by the Florida Callers Association president.

⁴ Florida currently does not have a Grand March at their convention, but most of the other conventions do.

It's been said that some people refer to the Grand March as a bit corny, but ... when you're marching with your club, and there are a thousand other dancers on the floor, all marching with their clubs, and people are cheering each other's clubs as they make entrances ... the Grand March feels pretty darn wonderful. It can be a real thrill to realize that you're part of a much larger group, all of whom share a common interest.

What's "Last Square Dancing"?

Many dancers call this competition, but there is no competition in square dancing.

Anyone can participate in this event and you can form your square in advance. Many squares choose to dress in the same color, or wear a special hat, etc. There are usually two or three callers calling Mainstream only. You will find the rules in the program booklet.

Basically, it's called like any dance. You can break down but you have a certain time frame to re-form. You can only do this twice and then you have to leave the floor. Tips continue to be called until there is only one square left. There are judges with each square that will be holding colored flags.

There is recognition for the top two squares.

Dangle Dances

Looking for a lot of laughing? This is like any of the other dancing at the convention except that for each tip a "theme" is announced. You might have to dance a funny routine, carry something, or pass something to another dancer in your square while you're dancing. After each tip you complete, you will be given a piece of paper to take to the badge vendor to get your free dangle. This event usually occurs on Saturday afternoon.

Oh no! Meetings?

Sorry, but yes there are some meetings during the weekend. You are not required to attend meetings, but if you want to learn more about some aspect of our activity, you are encouraged to attend. There are three major meetings ...

- Round Dance Council of Florida meets on Saturday at 12:00 noon in one of their dance halls.

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- Florida Federation meets on Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. at the convention host hotel.
- Florida Callers Association meets on Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. at the callers' host hotel.

Things to do when you arrive at the hotel

Check in and/or dump your bags first, and THEN find Convention Registration. If you haven't registered yet or haven't received your ribbons, you will need to take care of that first. While you're at Registration, be sure to pick up a program book. The entire dance schedule can be found in the program book as well as ads (and sometimes coupons) for various eateries.

Many dancers have suggested putting on your club badge before heading over to seek out registration. Doing so makes it easy for other dancers to identify you, and can substantially speed things up for everyone at Registration.

Before dancing starts, walk through the dance site, and familiarize yourself with the venue. Find out: Where are all of the rooms that you may want to dance in? Where's the information/registration/help desk? Where's the vendor room? If there will be a Grand March, where is the line-up site?

Use your dance schedule. The dance schedule is posted on the Convention website approximately a month before the convention. You can print it off or wait until you arrive at the convention and pick up a printed copy. You may want to bring a brightly colored pen or highlighter with you to mark off the dance sessions or events in which you want to participate each day. For example, some dancers like to stay in a single room and dance at a single level, while others enjoy following favorite callers or cuers from room to room.

Pace yourself on the first full day by NOT planning intense after-dance activities.

Trust us when we say ... after your first full day of dancing, you won't be in any condition to go out on the town in the evening. The only thing you're probably going to want to do at that point is to take a shower followed by a long soak in a hot tub. You may also find that you need more sleep than usual for the first couple of days at convention, plan accordingly.

If you changed your mind about attending the Dinner Show on Friday evening, go to the Registration Counter and purchase your tickets. The price of this dinner is separate from the Convention price.

Yeah, but when do we start dancing?

Our convention starts off with something called a “trails end” (sometimes called “trail-in”) dance on the evening prior to the first full day of the event. This is on Thursday night. The first dance marks “the end of the dusty trail” to Convention, and provides a chance for everyone to warm up before the main event starts the next day.

The “trails end” dance and/or the first few tips at a convention can be frustrating if you’re not prepared. Be aware that it’s quite common for squares at a trail-end dance to break down.

If your “trails end” square breaks down more than you’re used to, don’t panic. We promise that you haven’t suddenly forgotten how to dance, though it may feel like it for a while. No, we’re not laughing at you; really. This is something every new dancer goes through.

Be aware when dancing at a trails-end dance that:

- Many of the people attending conventions haven’t danced in a while, and are rusty;
- It’s a new hall and new sound system for everyone (including the callers and cuers!), with different acoustics than people are used to;
- No matter who’s calling, it’s probably going to be someone different than most people’s club caller.

These conditions create breakdowns for many people in many squares. Don’t get discouraged. The dancing will get better as the event proceeds. Honest. We promise.

Things to know about dancing at Convention...

Dancing at a convention can be an exhilarating experience.

Imagine meeting a group of seven other people for the very first time on a dance floor and feeling like you’ve instantly developed 8-way telepathy.

That’s what a great square can feel like!

To maximize your chances of dancing in great squares, here are some things to keep in mind.

- Square up as close to the caller as possible. This is one of the most critical pieces of advice for newer dancers... *if you trust only one piece of advice in this booklet, please trust this one.* Uncertain dancers who

usually square up in the back of the hall rarely improve their skills over time

- Another reason to square up in front of the caller: If you have problems, the caller can more easily see you, and adjust the choreography speed or difficulty accordingly. *This goes double for callers you haven't ever heard before.*
- Don't be afraid of squaring up with strangers. That's half the fun attending conventions! If you usually dance at home with the same people, you'll improve your dance skills by dancing with strangers. After all, you can still dance with the people you know at home for 51 other weeks a year!
- If you're a newer dancer, and are shy about squaring up with more experienced dancers ... don't worry about it. Many people you'll meet at convention are also newer dancers. Dancing with more experienced dancers at conventions is one of the best ways to sharpen your dance skills. They'll be happy to help!
- If you have a problem with something (e.g., perhaps you don't like being twirled), tell the people in your square before the tip begins. They should be happy to accommodate you.
- It's OK to ask questions about calls, flourishes, or sound effects, that you don't know or didn't understand.
- If you can't hear the caller or cuer clearly from your square, don't be afraid to shout, "Louder, please!" or "More voice, please!" until you can hear them clearly. Don't suffer through half (or more!) of a tip before speaking up!
- Wear your club name badge at all times. People like to know who they're dancing with, and it's considered rude in many parts of the world to dance without a name badge.
- Always thank your square. It's considered rude to leave a square without thanking each dancer. Some people hug, some shake hands; it's a matter of personal taste. If you like hugging, consider asking each person you don't know "do you hug?" before having at it. Even if they don't hug, they'll be pleased that you asked first.
- Try new callers. If this is your first convention, we suggest dancing at least twice to each caller you don't know. This lets you pick out new favorites for future events. Even if you've been to convention before ... don't be afraid of dancing to callers you may not have heard previously. (This especially applies when the convention venue bounces between the East Coast, West Coast, and Midwest, each of which has regional favorite callers.)

If you graduate at one level, should you dance in the hall of your graduating level, or hang out in a lower-level hall? It has been observed that the level of dance difficulty at conventions often increases slowly over the course of a

weekend, as dancers and callers become more confident with each other and their surroundings.

This means it's to your advantage to start dancing at your highest level on the first day, when choreography will probably be easiest. On the second or third day, if you find yourself needing a break, you can always move down to a lower dance level for a session, then go back to your highest dance level when you've had a mental break.

“Oh my gosh, our square just broke down!”

If your square breaks down, you won't bring shame down upon your home club. Laugh about it now, but one of the most frequent confessions of newer dancers is being scared to death of making a mistake, because then “everyone will think that their club has bad dancers.”

Breaking down is a normal part of square dancing, even for experienced dancers and callers. If the square breaks down, don't make a big deal about it. Re-square-up, and see if you can figure out what happened AFTER the tip is over. (Ask your partner or corner if they know what may have happened.)

- If your square breaks down during a patter call, form normal (boy-girl-boy-girl) facing lines of four, and wait for the caller to pick up your square on his next sequence. The official CALLERLAB procedure is:
 - Return to home position as soon as possible.
 - Head ladies take their corner's hand and head couples back out to form lines at the sides of the square.
 - On the caller's command “EVERYBODY go forward and back”, enter into the dance pattern.
- If your square breaks down during a singing call, quickly re-square-up, and have the girls “rotate” to the next boy in sequence. (Most modern singing calls take each girl to “visit” with each boy in turn.)

Occasionally, there are injuries!

If anyone falls or is injured in any way, only the affected square should stop dancing while the other squares continue to dance. Let the downed person remain on the floor while the other dancers in the square join hands and make a circle around the injured party. Stay in this format until the person in charge has assessed the situation and determines if medical assistance is needed.

An Accident Report should always be completed at the time of the incident.

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For more detailed instructions, go to https://www.dancergram.com/aa-FWS/insurance-secure/2024-new-insurance-forms/Club_Accident_Procedures.pdf

Is it over already?

For the last hour of dancing on Friday and Saturday nights, there are musical highlights. There are several callers scheduled for this part and it's all Mainstream. This is a time to wind down after two days of dancing. At approximately 9:40 p.m. all of the raffle ticket drawings are completed.

The evening culminates with an After Party. Everyone is invited to enjoy light refreshments and say your goodbyes to your new and old friends.

All too soon, however, the last tip has been called, and it's time to pack up and go home.

During the convention, don't forget to register for next year's convention and dinner show or purchase the convention shirts and other fundraising items. The ribbons will be the cheapest they will ever be for the next convention. As soon as you leave the convention the prices go up and will continue to increase at different intervals.

When you check out of your hotel, make your reservations for next year.

What's the Florida website?

www.floridasquredance.com. You can find everything about the convention as well as register for the convention, make your hotel reservation, and purchase fundraising items at this site.