

Sight Calling – Commonly Asked Question

Question: Should I write down on a piece of paper who my primary and secondary couples are for each tip?

Answer: No, not unless absolutely necessary. Reasons

1. This is a crutch. If you depend on this, you will never train your mind to the degree of alertness necessary to be a truly confident sight caller.
2. When you are looking down to read from the paper who you have selected, you are not watching the floor. This can result in loss of correct timing.
3. It is important to be able to get to the corner quickly in order to reward dancer success as soon as it happens. But if you have to check your paper a couple of times--continuing to call all the while of course -- and then go for the corner, this takes a half-minute or longer. Thus, the psychological impact of a quick Left Allemande is lost.
4. Likewise, if the majority of the floor breaks down, you want to get to a quick Left Allemande, so you can get everyone dancing again. But if you have to check your paper ' the corner, you will be continuing to call while the rest of the floor is watching you --wondering when you will be getting them dancing again.
5. Some dancers will see you writing down who the couples are before the tip or checking your sheet during the tip. This does not look very professional. I-can just hear some dancers saying to themselves: "Gee, he has to write down the dancers in order to call."

If you are new to sight calling, go ahead and write down the couples, but plan to get away from this within '6 months. After 3 months or so, try one tip a night where you don't write down the couples, then 2 tips a night, etc. until you are completely free from writing down the couples.

Note: If you call for a singles club or any group where the dancers change partners every tip, you have a problem, go ahead and write down the couples in this situation.

Question: If I forget who is the primary and secondary couple, what to I do?

Answer: If you know all the dancers, i.e. who their original partner are:

1. **Pick a man and ask him who his corner is.** That man and his partner become your primary couple. Whoever he points to becomes the secondary girl and you know who her partner is.
2. **Get everyone with their original partner in a starting double pass thru position.** Then call Centers right-hand star, find corner – Allemande left.
3. **If couple shave their original partner and the other two do not:** get everyone in a starting double pas thru position with the “matched Couples (ones with their original partner) on the outside of the set. Now Half Sashay the center couple (such as box the Gnat, or Right and Left Thru & ½ sashay), then call: Centers right hand star, find the corner –Allemande Left

If you are a guest caller, and do not know anyone, you can:

- Get everyone in a circle, call "4 men star left, Pick up original partner with an arm around, all promenade

This gets everyone with the original partner but the sequence may be off. So use #2above. i.e: have the Heads Wheel Around, Pass Thru, Wheel And Deal, Centers Right Hand Star, Find The Corner, Allemande Left

Note: The idea of Men Star Left, and pick up original partner gets old fast. This should only be used once or twice a night at most.