



*How To Be
A Successful
Teacher
By Jeff Priest*

Presented by Jeff Priest from Canadian Callers College

➤ **The dictionary says to teach is:**

- *To impart knowledge or skill*
- *To provide knowledge*
- *To condition to a certain action or frame of mind*
- *To cause to learn by example or experience*
- *To advocate or preach*

➤ **Effective teaching techniques include;**

- *Know “who” your students are*
- *Use CALLERLAB definitions*
- *Styling*
- *Timing*
- *LOTS of Patience*
- *Don’t Over-teach*
- *Add Some Humour*

➤ **There are four main methods of learning:**

- *Visual*
- *Auditory*
- *Reading*
- *Kinesthetic or Tactile (Doing The Action)*

Know “Who” your students are

- *It is important that you gear your teaching to your students*
- *30 something’s learn much faster than retirees. Teens learn much faster than 30 something’s.*
- *What type of terminology will you use? Do your students speak English fluently? If not, how will you minimize the confusion? Remember to be concise in your definitions. Don’t ramble or add unnecessary words or phrases.*
- *Do you have women dancing as men? Will you use the term boys and girls, men and ladies or beaux and belles?*
- *Remember Square Dancing is a language all of its own.*
- *You are teaching more than just calls. You are teaching a new language that contains many words that each have their own action. Your dancers have to hear a new word, decipher what it means and get the message to their feet to perform the action that goes with it. Not easy for all people.*
- *Also remember that you may have some folks in your group who don’t want to be there. They have been “forced” into it by a partner, friend or other individual who had some control.*

What learning method do your dancers fit into?

- *Visual (Show and Tell)*
 - *These dancers must see the action completed to understand it.*
- *Auditory (Your words must be correct)*
 - *These dancers will pay very close attention to you when you are speaking. They will remember what you say. Words said over the microphone are very hard to take back from auditory learners.*
- *Reading (Offer the written definition)*
 - *These learners require a written definition to really learn what you are telling them. They don’t fully understand until they can read it for themselves.*
- *Kinesthetic or Tactile (Doing The Action)*
 - *These dancers must do the action for themselves. They don’t get it until they do it!*

Use True CALLERLAB definitions

*Always use the true written definition when teaching a call. Develop a **CALL ANALYSIS SHEET** for each call that you use.(samples are below) This will give you all the required information to teach it properly and effectively. If you have shortcuts or hints you want to give the dancers, that is fine but use the definition first. Your “reading” dancers may well look it up and will challenge you if you stray from the written word. Better to offer your personal hints after they have heard what the real definition is. AND be sure they know these are YOUR personal hints. The dancers will create their own definitions but best you tell them the correct way right from the beginning.*

Styling

Styling seems to have been placed on the back burner in recent years. I realize that class times are shorter, however our dancers will enjoy the dance much more if they are doing the calls properly with style and finesse. Styling is part of every definition that CALLERLAB provides. You should be teaching it as you work with your dancers. Maybe not on the initial teach but once they have learned the fundamentals, then teach them the style and flow of the call.

Timing

Give your dancers the name of the call before they learn it. Always be sure to tell your dancers where the call starts and where it ends AND how many beats it took to get there. This is critical to them understanding how the timing works. You also need to use music that has a very clear beat so the dancers can identify when to step. There is lots of good music available for workshopping. Some of the more modern music available today is not the best for workshopping as there is too much “stuff” to get in your way. Pick a solid piece of hoedown music that doesn’t fight with your voice and doesn’t offer too much distraction to the dancer. You also need to use a singing call in each tip and the figure should include your new teach.

Many callers say I can’t get my dancers to dance the calls in the correct time. Their solution is to give them more time. The better option, in my opinion, is to slow your tempo down, and count out the beats so your dancers know what the timing is. Once they are dancing the new call in time then gradually put your tempo back to normal.

Often times new sight callers forfeit timing for choreography. In my opinion, you should always use modules when teaching, so you can flow the call and the dancers can achieve the correct timing and a result that works.

LOTS Of Patience

Patience is very important. Yes, they are all adults and yes they should be able to learn this but YOU need to understand – this is their recreation not their job. You also need to understand that your dancers are learning not just new calls but a new language and new actions to go with the words. This is all foreign to them. To learn they need to be relaxed not frustrated. Be very complimentary to your dancers even if they are not as successful as you had hoped. There are times when you will have problems with a new call. Drop it for the night. Many callers experience difficulties when there is a full moon. Also, party nights are not good for teaching either. The mindset is different. Be prepared to change your program!!

Don't Over-teach

Watch your time with a teach tip. 10 minutes is the most it should be. The human brain will get to a point where it can only hear the same thing so many times before it tunes out. Also remember to be concise and don't offer too much information about any one call. Keep to the definition! Re-teach as required. Also, always remember those sitting out. They need the teach as well, be sure to reteach/review in the next tip for those who missed it. This also gives those who were having problems a second chance at a first teach.

Add Some Humour

Your humor needs to be light hearted fun, stay away from religion and politics and definitely do not use sarcasm. Sarcasm can be offensive. Be sure not to pick on anyone for any reason. You will find after a while someone who you can kibitz back and forth with - that will be okay but don't go too far. During a teach put in a few simple routines just to give their minds a break. Have lines of four pass thru and say forward and back. No one says you have to be facing in to do that call. They will all smile! You will find humor that suits in your group – be sure to employ it. Allow your dancers to have fun.

Summary:

So what are the key Elements:

- **Use all methods of teaching:**
 - **Visual**
 - **Auditory**
 - **Written**
 - **Action**
- **Give the name of the call:**
 - **Identify the starting position**
 - **Give the definition**
 - **Give the timing**
 - **Give the ending position**
 - **Give the name of the call**
- **Ensure the sit-outs get a full teach:**
 - **Tip # 2 should emulate Tip # 1**
- **Ensure good dance music:**
 - **They can't dance if there is no solid beat**
 - **Know your music well**
- **Ensure you know the true definition:**
 - **You can teach "how the call is danced" but you must give the true definition**
- **Be clear and concise:**
 - **Don't ramble or mumble**
 - **Don't be confusing or ambiguous**
- **Be Patient and Complimentary:**
- **Have FUN!!!**

Read on to see Week 1 of our Full Teaching System!

BASIC
FULL Teaching System
Created By Jeff Priest

This Is A Building Block System

It Is Based On Modules

The Benefits Are Many

The System Is Very Flexible...

Once the Core 20 is taught

20 Core Calls!

1. Circle left / Right
2. Forward and Back
3. DoSaDo
4. Swing – Partner / Corner
5. Promenade – Couples / Singles
6. Allemande Left
7. Weave The Ring/Right & Left Grand
8. Stars – Right / Left
9. Pass Thru
10. U-Turn Back
11. Separate @ 2 – (Lines)
12. Courtesy Turn
13. Ladies Chain – 2 & 4
14. Lead Right
15. Veer Left
16. Bend The Line
17. Right and Left Thru

Now have the ladies turn around again and all **Single File Promenade** again – just like before. Give them a minute to do this and then have everyone **FACE THE CENTRE** and join hands

1 - CIRCLE LEFT. Now using your music for timing allow approximately 12-16 beats for each of the following:

2 - NOW CIRCLE RIGHT

3 - DROP HANDS SINGLE FILE PROM

4 - LADIES TURN AROUND (U-Turn Back)

5 - DOSADO

6 - LADIES TURN AROUND

7 - SINGLE FILE PROMENADE

8 - MEN SLIDE INTO THE MIDDLE AND UP BESIDE YOUR PARTNER TO

PROMENADE IN TWOS. PROMENADE

9 - MEN KEEP HER ON YOUR RIGHT

10 - ALL FACE THE CENTER AND CIRCLE LEFT.

Repeat **1 – 10** **ONCE**

Repeat **1 – 5** ... then teach **SWING**

Now call “boys put her on your right and Promenade in twos - boys to the middle ladies to the outside.”

Wording here is very important for success.

Repeat **1 – 5** with **Swing and Promenade**

Once you have everyone feeling comfortable with what you have taught in this first session, it is time to set them up in squares. At this point, depending on how long you have had them up, you can either give them a short break or have them stop in their promenade position and from the circle put them in groups of four couples and show them how to form a square.

Once in Squares you will need to tell them about Partner, Corner, Home and Couple Naming. ie: Heads, Sides, Couples 1, 2, 3 & 4. Once that is done, put on a hoedown and repeat 1 – 5 with the Swing & Prom. That will become the base for your Open, Middle and Closer for your singing call. Now to teach a figure that is easy. Teach Heads ONLY up to the middle and back. Now Sides ONLY up to the middle and back. Now teach Heads ONLY promenade by twos half way around. Now Sides ONLY promenade by twos half way around. Everyone join hands and CIRCLE LEFT till you get home. Face Corner *(or partner if you don't want to change partners on the singing call)*. Bow – give this lady a swing – promenade by twos till you're home. Tell them they have a new partner. *(If you did a partner change)*

Second Tip will almost be the same as the first tip without the big circle and with the only additions being:

4 MEN STAR BY THE LEFT – BACK HOME AND DOSADO – SAME LADY SWING AND PROMENADE HOME.

Third Tip will include everything you have taught as well as: **A COURTESY TURN AND TWO LADIES CHAIN.**

Fourth Tip will include everything you have taught with a full review if required.

Fifth Tip will include everything you have taught and if the dancers are ready, **4 LADIES CHAIN.**

Sixth Tip (usually the last) will be very Relaxed and will be a repeat of the second or third tip.

Week 1 – First Singing Call:

Open – Middle – Closer

(Note: singing call with Grand Square works well here)

CIRCLE LEFT: -----

CIRCLE RIGHT; -----

AT HOME FACE YOUR PARTNER

BOW..... DO SA DO

SWING & PROM

Figure - 4 Times Through

HEADS PROMENADE 1/2 WAY

SQUEEZE IN SIDES

SIDES PROMENADE 1/2 WAY

SQUEEZE IN HEADS

ALL JOIN HANDS AND CIRCLE LEFT

AT HOME FACE YOUR CORNER

BOW TO HER

SWING & PROM.. *(62 Beats – Full Prom)*

Week 1 - Second Singing Call:

Open – Middle – Closer

ALL JOIN HANDS AND CIRCLE LEFT
(8 BEATS)----
NOW CIRCLE RIGHT
(8 BEATS) -----
FOUR BOYS STAR LEFT
AT HOME DOSADO
SWING & PROM

Figure – 4 Times Through

HEADS (SIDES) PROMENADE 1/2 WAY
SQUEEZE IN SIDES (HEADS)
SIDES (HEADS) PROMENADE 1/2 WAY
SQUEEZE IN HEADS (SIDES)
ALL JOIN HANDS AND CIRCLE LEFT
AT HOME FACE YOUR CORNER
BOW TO HER
SWING & PROM .. (62 Beats – Full Prom)

Week 1 - Third Singing Call:

Open – Middle – Closer

ALL JOIN HANDS AND CIRCLE LEFT
(8 BEATS)-----
NOW CIRCLE RIGHT
(8 BEATS) -----
FOUR BOYS STAR LEFT
AT HOME DOSADO
SWING & PROM

Figure - 4 Times Through

HEAD (SIDE) LADIES CHAIN
HEAD (SIDE) LADIES CHAIN BACK
SIDE (HEAD) LADIES CHAIN
SIDE (HEAD) LADIES CHAIN BACK
FACE YOUR CORNER
BOW TO HER
SWING & PROM.. (64 Beats – Full Prom)

Week 1 - Fourth Singing Call:

Open – Middle – Closer

(Note: singing call with Grand Square works well here)

CIRCLE LEFT: -----

CIRCLE RIGHT; -----

AT HOME FACE YOUR PARTNER
BOW..... DO SA DO
SWING & PROM

Figure -

Second S/C Figure Twice

Third S/C Figure Twice

Week 1 - Fifth Singing Call:

Open – Middle – Closer

ALL JOIN HANDS AND CIRCLE LEFT
(8 BEATS)-----
NOW CIRCLE RIGHT
(8 BEATS) -----
FOUR BOYS STAR LEFT
AT HOME DOSADO
SWING & PROM

Figure - 4 Times Through

HEAD (SIDE) LADIES CHAIN
SIDE (HEAD) LADIES CHAIN
ALL FOUR LADIES CHAIN BACK
FACE YOUR CORNER
DOSADO ... NOW
SWING & PROM.. (64 Beats – Full Prom)

Remind your new dancers they are learning a new language and new actions.

It will take them time to learn how they all fit together.

Be very encouraging and extremely patient.

If you want them to come back, be sure to be positive in all your comments and use music that is both upbeat and suitable for your audience.

Remind your class that you WILL be back next week and look forward to seeing them all then.

Have fun with your last tip!!
Last figure on the next page

Week 1 - Sixth Singing Call:

Open – Middle – Closer

(Note: singing call with Grand Square works well here)

CIRCLE LEFT: -----

CIRCLE RIGHT; -----

AT HOME FACE YOUR PARTNER
BOW..... DO SA DO
SWING & PROM

Figure - 4 Times Through

HEADS (SIDES) PROMENADE 1/2 WAY
SQUEEZE IN SIDES (HEADS)
SIDES (HEADS) PROMENADE 1/2 WAY
SQUEEZE IN HEADS (SIDES)
ALL JOIN HANDS AND CIRCLE LEFT
AT HOME FACE YOUR CORNER
BOW TO HER
SWING & PROM.. (62 Beats – Full Prom)

Good Night All!

**See You
Next Week**

*Once you have finished the” Core 20”
This is what the rest of the pages look like!*

HEADS PROMENADE 1/2
SIDES RIGHT & LEFT THRU
SIDES PASS THRU
SEPARATE AROUND 1 TO A LINE
(BBGG) PASS THRU
BEND THE LINE (HANG ON SAME SEX)
STAR THRU
CENTRES RIGHT & LEFT THRU
CENTRES PASS THRU
SWING & PROM.. (64 Beats – Full Prom)

4 LADIES CHAIN
4 LADIES CHAIN
SIDES PASS THRU
SEPARATE AROUND 1 TO A LINE
STAR THRU
CENTRES PASS THRU
STAR THRU
FORWARD & BACK
STAR THRU
SWING & PROM.. (64 Beats – Full Prom)

*Once you have finished the” Core 20”
This is what the rest of the pages look like!*

HEADS PROMENADE 1/2 WAY
SIDES RIGHT & LEFT THRU
SIDES STAR THRU
CENTRES SQUARE THRU 3
STAR THRU
PASS THRU
BEND THE LINE
STAR THRU
SWING & PROM.. (64 Beats – Full Prom)

SIDES PROMENADE 1/2 WAY
WHILE HEADS RIGHT & LEFT THRU
HEADS SQUARE THRU 4
DO SA DO
STAR THRU
SQUARE THRU 3
SWING & PROM (64 Beats – Full Prom)

The Books!

There Are 4 Books In Total!

Basic Teaching System	\$45.00
Dancing The Basics	\$15.00
Mainstream Teaching System ...	\$15.00
Plus Teaching System ...	\$20.00

All 4 Books Purchased Together... \$85.00

Shipping Is Extra

Canada = \$20.00

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*If you have any questions at all about Calling, feel free to contact me!
I am always willing to share what knowledge I have about this activity!*
