



Introducing Callarama by Reinhold Roedig

Mel Wilkerson's Newbie Caller Meeting
February 13/14 2021

Participants and friends are welcome to a
3-month try-out at
[callarama.com/friends of mel.html](http://callarama.com/friends%20of%20mel.html)

1 Checker Software Con & Pro

- I already have everything in my head
- I don't have time to bother with it
- It can lead beginning callers astray

Jim Mayo says:*

... I learned to call back in the dark ages... We had to learn what each call did to the arrangement of the dancers. Jay King devised a method of drawing diagrams to help us understand... Today's callers have a much easier way to practice... The program that I have used for this is Callarama... Any of these programs can be an extremely valuable learning tool if you use them properly... To get the most benefit from these computer programs ... A caller must resist the temptation to push the "Enter" key before he or she has tried to visualize what the ending formation/arrangement will be... With the computer and self control you don't have to draw diagrams... You can select the call and then visualize the ending position of the square you see on the screen. Then - and only then - push "Enter" to see whether you were correct... If you use this tool correctly it is a wonderful way to learn one of calling's most essential skills without the need to have real dancers to practice with.

* excerpted from "Computers for Caller Training" callarama.com/resources.html

2 Why Callarama?

No other software offers **all of this**:

- + It includes a manual checker mover
- + It is animated -observe timing and flow
- + Displays dancers as checkers or in 3D
- + Speech Recognition that can be adapted to your calling style
- + Unlimited sequencing of calls
- + Modify routines by inserting modules or calling in reverse
- + Includes 2-Couple, 6-Couple (Rectangle) and Asymmetric modes
- + Get over missing calls with Manual Mode and build your own, animated calls with an editor
- + Save, organize and print your material
- + As a coach, use it for presentation
- + Remotely connect with other callers to exchange ideas or to teach

3 What is the downside?

- Calling repertoire is limited to MS, PLUS, A1 and A2
- Runs only on a Windows system or emulator
- Installation is easy, without system files, but Windows Firewall and Antivirus software may require special permissions

If that's OK:

- callarama.com/download.html will install the software or update it if you already have Callarama.
- As downloaded, Callarama is **free** and fully functional, except you cannot save material and will see only the last 8 calls in the sequence
- For full activation go to callarama.com/purchase.html
Pay only once and have it for life*
- caller Coaches, accredited or recognized as such, get it free

*Activation covers multiple devices. After 3 years, a fee of \$10 for new devices applies.

4 Get started: Choose a layout that suits your preferences

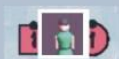
LAYOUT **INTRO**, with reduced features, for starters, showing available calls in a scroll-list

LIST, with advanced features

LIST Scroll-list can show call names and/or shortcuts or the voice commands how they should be phrased by default

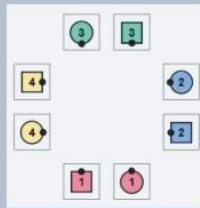
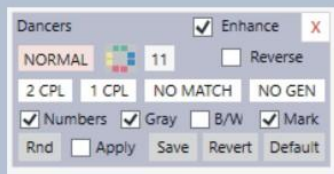
LABEL is the recommended layout for efficiency. Calls are graphically arranged per program and in teaching order, represented by their shortcuts. Color shading indicates availability

MINI is a display for small spaces with voice calling only



Show Dancers as checkers or in 3D - or both, with an additional window

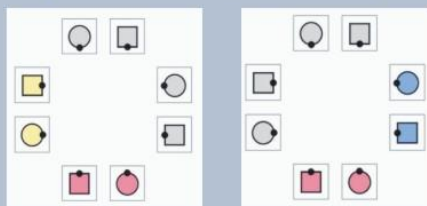
5 Preferences -continued



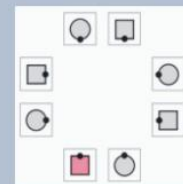
Set your preferred color scheme and adapt the appearance to your method of sight calling

For learning experience, depict the dancers how you would memorize and watch them during a tip. As the most basic approach, identify 2 adjacent couples and their corner relation:

Couples 1 & 4 or, as a Lady Caller, Couples 1 & 2



Or, if you are Don Beck*, like this:



* Don Beck, *Out of Sight*, 1983

6 Preferences -continued

CALLS Choose the call repertoire:

SELECT MS, PLUS or A programs. Include a selection of EXTRA calls and/or your own CUSTOM calls

VOICE Use Speech Recognition with **Callarama Voice**

Depending on your computers audio hardware and settings, you will likely be ready to call by voice.

To be successful, however, you need to understand how it works. Callarama has a vocabulary of its own. The call list can show how commands should be spoken by default. If you prefer different expressions, you can include them in the vocabulary.

Open **Voice Editor**, select a command and enter up to 6 alternative expressions ("alias"). There is a special phonetic set for users of German speech recognition.

HELP

Please read the introduction to Callarama Voice in HELP

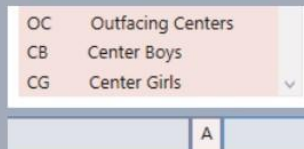
7 Ready to call?

In Callarama, as in real calling, the instruction to dancers always has 2 separate components: The **who** (active dancers) and the **what** (the call). The list and labels represent only the call. “Who” is specified in the array of labels on top:

ALL	8	CP	TWC	ANY	ARKY
HD	CT	VCT	INF	BS	BX
SD	END	VEND	OUTF	GS	BL

The options depend on the current formation. Unavailable designations are grayed.

Click labels to select active dancers or (better) type the shortcuts or speak the commands. To see the list of shortcuts, click the “A” label:



The selection of calls will change accordingly. **White** labels are calls for selected actives. **Pink** labels are calls for an alternative that will be automatically set. These “**Smart Calls**” allow to call, for example: “Hds. Square Thru - Swing Thru - Boys Run - Ferris Wheel - Pass Thru” Without always specifying the new active dancers.

8 Ready to call!

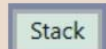
Set the slider at bottom to a suitable speed in BPM



There are 4 ways to prompt a call:

- 1 Select a call from the list. The list can be very long and tedious to scroll down, which is why the other methods are preferred
- 2 Click a label in the geographic display. You will soon be familiar with this method. You can see all available calls at a glance, and it helps learning the shortcuts
- 3 For best efficiency, type the **shortcuts**. When recognized, the command is indicated in the box under the dance floor. Press “Enter” or “Space” to trigger the call
- 4 Click “START VOICE” and speak the commands

You can prompt the next call while the dancers are still moving and you are observing the timing. Works best with shortcuts or voice




Read HELP 3.3 to understand the function of the **Stack**


9 Manage Routines

A “**Routine**” is a sequence of calls that will be recorded in the list on the left of the dance floor.

In contrast, a “**Module**” is a usually short sequence of calls with a certain choreographic purpose that is part of a Routine.

- 1 We start with a simple Singing Call, typing shortcuts:
H ST - PT - RHSTAR11 - LHSTAR11 - RLT - VL - CPLCIRC - CHLINEPR - PRH
(note that the shortcut is often recognized by just a portion of it)
- 2 The Routine is now listed with the full call names. Use the arrows at the bottom to manipulate it similar to an audio player. Move the slider to examine the flow of a call.
- 3 Click anywhere in the list to go to this place in the Routine. You can call from there and modify the Routine. For example, replace CHLINEPR ... with CHLINE - FLW - SWEEP - SWPR - PRH
(consult HELP 3.3 about use of PR, CIRC and SW commands)
- 4  the Routine and categorize/tag it if desired.

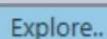
10 The FASR Monitor

Routines do not have to start from a Square. You can select any of the formations programmed in Callarama from the 2 drop-down lists above the dance floor. Click  there to set arrangement, sequence and relationship as well as the orientation on the floor (FLIP).

In the previous example, the target spot could have been set by selecting "RH PAR WAVE", flipped to 3 and with Boys and Girls in their #1 spots.

At any step in a Routine, this monitor will display the current FASR and the CRaMS number for Facing Lines of 4. With the "Mem" buttons, formation set-ups can be saved.


As a learning tool, you can select **random FASRs** with the 2 buttons on the left and then call or resolve from there---have fun!

 Explore..


gives an overview of all available calls and from where they can be done in Callarama.

11 Work with Modules


In the Singing Call Routine, we can replace **RLT** with an equivalent.

In Callarama, click on the line that has the RLT, then click  and confirm you want to remove this call. Because there is now a damaging gap in the choreography, you are prompted to fill it.

Call **ST - VL - WD**, and when you get the green light, click "Append".

You can use prerecorded Modules. Click on the line that has "Veer Left" and then click 




You see a list of sample modules that fit into the choreography. As an example, select "ZeroBoxSGLCL" and then click "INS". The sequence of calls is inserted into the Routine, and it continues as before.

If something goes wrong while modifying the Routine, click  once or more to restore the previous version.


12 Modules -continued

The Callarama collection of sample modules is largely thanks to Cal Campbell ("*All about Modules*"), with his kind permission.

Important: To improve your skills, you should develop your own repertoire of memorized modules, save and categorize them as such and set the module list to "Custom" where only your own material appears. Try this to make yourself envision the effect of a module:

From Zero Lines: Click  to pause it and click the "V" label next to the box below the dance floor to yellow  (calls not verified). Call **E LOAD - C TOP - PING - EXT - REC** (conversion to a Box with the same sequence). Envision the result, then click  to release the calls.

Cal has pointed out the concept of the "**revolving**" module:

From 2-faced Lines, click  . Callarama presents Zeros that go through this formation. Append the same "ZeroBoxSGLCL" as before. It now functions as a 2-faced Line Zero. This concept can augment your repertoire without additional memorizing.

13 Reverse engineer a Routine

In this example, imagine the task to develop a Singing Call for a tip where "Spin Chain the Gears" is the featured call. You want to have a get-out from this call at the correct spot to Swing the Corner.

In Callarama, call **H - LL - OW - G TRD** to get to the spot and call **SWPR - PR11 - HOME** to finish the Routine.

We will now replace the set-up with calls that have the desired effect:

Click on the line that has "Swing to Promenade". On the bar above, click **R** for Reverse Calling. A list of applicable calls appears.

- under "SPIN CHAIN THE GEARS" dbl.click "All from RH PAR WAVE" - the dancers perform the call in reverse

- repeat clicking "R" and select **FLIP / DIA / C HGE / VL / H LR** in this order to create the Singing Call.

Unfortunately, we ended up swinging partners. To correct this, Click on the line that has "SPIN CHAIN THE GEARS", then click **+**

14 When the call is not there: Manual Mode

In **H PSOC - G ROLL - DIA - FLIP - EXT** (to OW), **Roll** does not work*.

You can create a Manual Call that is not animated, but can be saved for future use.

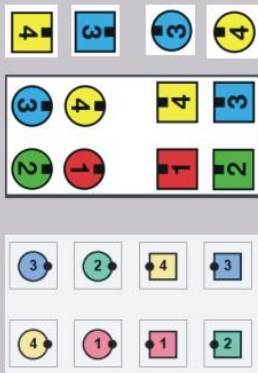
After **PSOC** select MODE/MAN from the top or press F5. In the Manual window select a target where the Centers are in the desired sub-formation (RH HOURGLASS). Name the call and specify 2 beats (optional). Drag the center dancers to the desired positions. To rotate a dancer, click or right-click on the icon.

Click "OK". When, as in this case, an existing end formation is identified, you can continue normally. Otherwise, more manual calls may be needed to return to normal.

***Roll** and similar "turn" calls such as **U-Turn** or **Face Right** can be combined with a huge number of calls. It is not feasible to program and present all of those combinations. Callarama tries to find the end formation for these "generic" calls in an algorithm, sometimes without success. Users are encouraged to report missing calls so that a fix can be considered.


15 Going Asymmetric

Asymmetric Mode has been developed with support from Hal Barnes*. Select "MODE/ASY" or press F8 to enter.



Looking at an "asymmetric FASR", presented by Cal Campbell, we want to analyze and use it in Callarama.

If dancers in the upper half would change places as shown, it would be symmetric. This makes it a "Region II", the easiest asymmetric set-up where 2 adjacent couples are half-sashayed.

In Callarama, **set matching dancer colors**, select a DPT BOX, go into ASYM mode and click  to open the Setup panel.


Select "Region II" and click the arrows below until you have the same arrangement (#15), the only difference being that the Side Ladies are half-sashayed (not an asymmetric issue).

*Hal Barnes, "Asymmetric Mechanics 2", www.halbarnes.com (caller corner)

16 Asymmetric -continued

We can go to Cal Campbells FASR from a Square in Callarama:

H SLT - RLT - [1B] DPT - [1B] U

The [1B] prefix means this: In ASYM mode, click 2 times (not double) on the #1 icon  to select the upper half of the BOX.

Then give the 2 normal calls (DPT - U). To real dancers you would say: "The Four in the Column away from me Double Pass Thru and U-Turn Back" (there are more elegant ways to achieve this).

Resolving this FASR is straight-forward:

(the # calls are clicked from the special asymmetric call list):

C PT - #ALL ST - #BEND - DIX - B CIRC - AL



The **magic call** is #BEND from the formation shown here: Because Cpls. 3 & 4 are in the upper half, the dancers will normalize the Square without an effort. The rest is a standard CRaMS #8a Get-out.

17 Asymmetric -conclusion

Hal Barnes has contributed 2 tutorials for asymmetric calling (see callarama.com/resources.html). All examples are working and can be modified in Callarama. Select **CHOREO** and find them the Choreo Collection.

If you are not the master, it is best to approach asymmetric calling in a strictly modular way. Here is an example:

From a Square or from any other formation where the original couples are paired, call "**Those who want to: Half Sashay**". Then, ignore what you see and guide them to a known Get-Out. Instead of "Allemande Left", call "**Left Turn Thru**", and all can resolve by swinging their partners.

Mind, **you must substitute gender-specific calls with gender-neutral calls during this** (e.g. Boys with Centers, Star Thru with Pass In or Out).

A somewhat funny or disrupting Singing Call figure can go like this:

LC34 - * 12SASH - H SQT - SWT - C RUN - FW - P - LTT - SWPR

** those who want, those who dare, the lucky ones etc.*

18 More



Call to **2 Couples** (MODE/2CP)



Call to **12 Dancers** (MODE/REC)



Allow **Random Calls** (includes a preview of the Robo Caller)



Use a **Combination Call**, e.g. from a Corner Line:

"All Load the Boat, but when you meet your partner.."

MOD/COM: **[END]LOAD ½ [CT]LOAD ½ - SLT - C PT - AL**

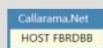


Create a Custom Call (CALLS/Open Call Editor)

Example: "Star and Wheel" (Burluson 1590)



Edit/Print Routines and Modules



Connect remotely with **Callarama.Net** (TOOLS/Connect...)

Thank you for your patience! Reinhold Roedig 02/04/2021

