

Two Couple calling and the Sicilian Circle

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First a quick lesson in history Lesson in calling

Look at the photo in this slide. It is of a square dance (Barn dance) circa 1900. They have the caller, they have the music and they have the dancers.

But what do you actually see in the photo.

- **Question.** Where is everyone looking.
- **Question:** what is everyone doing
- **Question** – who is looking at the prompter (caller)
- **Question** – Are those that are not dancing engaged in the event.

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This has been said many times by many callers and the axiom from before 1900s remains as true today as it did back then.

To be a prompter (square dance caller) you must have the following qualities

- **Presence** – when you are prompting, you have to be able to be the show even when they aren't looking at you,
- **Personality** – Once you become a square dance prompter, you are always a prompter whether you work in a store, at the mill, or you are a cowboy or the Sheriff – You will always be you
- **Sociability** – You have to make people want to feel like it is a party when you are there, even when they are learning. They are there for the social, you are there to keep it going and give them something to talk about
- **Making things fun** – Let them whoop it up. Teach them to have fun and have fun when you teach them. That way you control it and it doesn't control you. Short figures that end with Lots of swings and dosidos and promenades works well. The dancers need to know they are doing great. Don't just tell them, let them tell themselves.
- **Dancing** – you have to be able to dance it to teach it. Show it, teach it and prompt it. Get out and dance when you are not prompting.

- **Performance** – Like presence, it is a show an you are the entertainer. They won't look at you but they know you are there. It is not like the opera or theatre, and it is not the saloon girls. It is all of them together and they are you.

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- **Timing** – get them on the beat. If they move to it they can do anything you throw at them and come back for more. If they don't they go home early or it is more booze than barn dance. Your music has to draw them in. Even the Fiddle can be the rhythm.
- **Prompting and teaching** – teach them to listen, and and then to do. Most things you can prompt them through. Make sure your prompts and patter are different. Set your square with number ones and teach them beforehand. That way at the dance you can prompt and teach while they learn. You can use the patter to tell them how.
- **Timing** – good music sets the toes tapping. When you prompt, let them know ahead of time what's coming so they can dance to the music or tap their toes when they aren't dancing. Prompting has 10 beats dancing has 8 – you have to learn that. (**today that is called lead time**)
- **Giving something new.** Always try to bring in something a little new or different each dance you prompt. Use what they know and change it up a little with a surprise.
 - Take couple number 1 left instead of right to start – but don't change the order
 - Have the girls star inside and pick up the boy for a change
 - Work two couples at the same time
 - Change partners to take a new girl home – make sure you get them back to originals when you are done by the end of each sequence

I might add again that these were 10 things that were true prior to 1900, prior to callerlab, prior to regional standardisation, during the creation of callerlab, during the creation of standard lists and right up to the last 20 or so years. They were True prior to the turn of the last century and remains true today but are not always remembered.

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One of the key successes of Square dancing, and the evolution of those 10 principles of being a square dance caller, is that it was always

focused on making sure that the dancers had fun, succeeded and wanted to do it again. **IT WAS ABOUT THEM.**

- It was **them** that made the caller famous.
- It was **them** that made the caller popular.
- It was **them** that invited the caller back for all the family socials and gatherings,
- It was **them** that recommended you for the shearing festival, for the cattle drive, and for the big town holidays.
- It was **THEM** because they believed in you.

The thing to note is historically, the actual choreography associated to being a good caller did not even enter the priorities until number 5 on the list. Everything before that is about them having a good time.

Everything after that is using the tools to make sure that good time is shared with a single activity – the square dance, reel, contra or directed polka – whatever was the prompter’s mood or show for the day.

A lot has changed over the years, and although the idea is to ensure that there is something fun for all ages and that everyone can join in, there are a few principles which are foundation principles that have been part of the activity then, and remain a part of it now.

It is one of those principles I would like to focus on specifically.

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The art of the two-couple dance.

In the days gone by, the hootenanny, or barn dance was a big couples circle in which one couple paired and worked with their partner and another couple. Sometimes they were facing each other, and sometimes they were partnered, but that relationship very rarely changed.

Great prompters of the day worked with even couples in the ring and worked their two couple mixers generally before the square dance would begin. Around the turn of the century things got really wild where they would actually separate partners and even have them going different directions and then bring them back together on the other side of the circle for the “everybody promenade”. What magic.

Today we do things like Right And Left Grand, and Thars and Rollaways, and Weave The Rings etc that achieve much the same, but now they are as much about the caller doing the “showmanship aspects of calling” as they are about the wonder and delight of the dancers.

In the big circle they would introduce mix and matches of couples with things like 8 couples on the inside facing 8 couples on the outside and every now and then they would change outsides and inside couples and work the other way around the circle meeting new people to do their routines like star 4 or linking stars where the girls or boys would move down the centre of the two circles and outsides would stay with their partners by walking left or right around the outside or inside

- In today's square dance parlance with 4 dancers that would be a spin chain thru and ends circulate twice...but in a big circle of facing couples, where every thing is 8 beats of 8 it was really fancy magic.

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Things were simple then and they would use outside couples as leads to show new movements in the big circle with two facing couples, a bit of mix and match and get you doing it with other couples as you shuffled along to different couples each time.

- Fancy movements were things like Insides make an arch and Dive Thru, everyone California Twirl – repeat for the outsides
- Outsides Split The Inside Two, Separate, Go Around One And Come Back To Face Her, Star Thru, California Twirl (or arch and Substitute) – repeat for the insides
- Outsides Split The Inside Couple, Go Around One To Make A Line, Bend The Line, Star Thru, California Twirl – repeat for the insides
- Right And Left Thru, Ladies Chain, Flutterwheel
- Right Hand Stars And Left Hand Stars and so on.
- Pass Thru, California Twirl
- Circle left $\frac{3}{4}$, Star Thru, Dosado, Ladies Chain

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You could then take all of the simple easy two couple stuff that everyone was doing, and by circling left or right, or circling a fraction and passing thru to a new couple. You would add a lot of forward and backs, and yells and Hee-Haws and swings because this was the chance to liven up the group. It was easy for the band because it was all just a rhythm and beat .

To show you how it worked then, and how it can work now, lets go back over a century to an old-fashioned barn dance.

The following was a circle mixer to liven the party before a square dance of groups of four couples. The caller would get the dancers into two circles of 8, or 16 couples. If there was room, he could put another circle of 4 in the middle. This was an early dance and the prompter was introducing the star features

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- *All the couples bow and swing 8 steps round and set your ring*
- *Circle left around that floor 8 steps first, then do 8 more*
- *Heads go up and back you go, with the new girl dosido*
- *Trade (chain) her over cross that track, turn her there and send her back*
- *Star it 6 steps, and then face in, pass those two with a silly old grin*
- *Star it left and make it 8, keep that girl your doing great.*
- *Girls right hand go one then two, dosado with someone new*
- *Gents go left and right you do, bow to mother next to you*
- *Dosado with the one in front, girls will squeal and the gents will grunt*
- *Turn around to a left allemande, then race your partner right and left grand*
- *Its neck and neck, and side by side four hands go and you are tied*
- *On number 5 its dosido – back to back on heel and toe*
- *All star left go 6 step round back right out and you are home.*

There are lots of whoop it ups, yelling, promenades, stars and such as per the normal mixers but the prompter(has introduced something new but still easy working with what the dancers know.

After this everybody “have fun circle dance”, the prompter would announce that the next dance would be a square dance. Everyone could then take a break get a drink, check their dance cards etc and in about 5 or so minutes get ready to square dance.

This would be followed by the introduction of “Star 6 steps” and then pass 2 steps” in the square dance but also of the partner changes with the stars to the allemande lefts.

The prompter would have practiced this with a number of dancers (his number 1 couples) and also the music with the band.

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Prompter notes:

SEQUENCE – first part, second part, second part, first part, second part
second part, first part.

Band - 16 beats open, no break, no close end without last 4 beats –
HEE HAW HO no promenade (surprise)

Note: Prompt the star only 6 steps to end facing partner -

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First part:

- *All 4 couples bow and swing (8), then circle left go round that ring (8)*
- *half round and when your right, the gents go in Men star right (8)*
- *One time round by – pass mothers' hand, find your corner allemande (8)*
- *Here comes mother don't touch a thing, right and left you weave the ring (8),*
- *Gents behave cause here comes mother swing her like there ain't no other, (8)*
- *Swing her high and swing her low, all go in with a "HEE – HAW – HO"*
- *Promenade - Music*

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Second part:

- *Heads dosado, and the sides will swing, one time round and home I sing (8)*
- *Head two ladies chain across and keep that girl but don't get lost (8)*
- *Side to ladies chain across, but chain her back and find her boss (16)*
- *Heads star right go 6 steps in, face to mother and pass again (8)*
- *Allemande left with your left hand, back to mother right and left grand --
Gents going right and the ladies left, all the way and she's well met (16)*
- *Meet with mother and dosado(8), she'll turn around and promenade home (8)*

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The question you may have at this point is, “Why am I bringing up an old time square dance?”. Well simply put it is the process used for a structured barn dance. But let’s look at what the prompter did with the big circle (the Sicilian circle)

The prompter introduced:

- the new variation movement on stars, 6 steps only to face a new direction
- then turning stars with different partners,
- Then passing thru the star to the outside couple
- Changing steps from 8 beat movements to 6 beat movements and 2 beat movements

It took little to no prompting to get the dancers to succeed with a brand new dance concept and accept change because he built on what the dancers knew but added a little variety to give THEM fun and success.

Each piece was always two couples working and it ensured that at least one of those couples knew what was going on.

Just as a note, the caller then had themes through the dance using stars. He later, in another concentric circles introduced things like turning stars and locking them with other stars such as the grand star circle (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0v2azfg8NHM>)

It was always based on taking what the dances knew, adding just a little bit of variety to keep it interesting but still “promptable” and danceable and giving them a fun time with success.

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So lets look at the changes from then and now:

this brought into flow variations such as,

- head ladies chain,
- lead to the left,
- left hand star,

- Head ladies lead in the centre - right hand star across,
- left hand star,
- head ladies lead right hand star across to the corner
- allemande left.

In the square the culmination of these circle mixers led to such complicated successes as

- Side two couples bow and swing
- Heads promenade go round the ring
- Halfway only and her you go
- Come down the middle for a dosido
- Pass thru and face but don't go far
- Pass thru again and make a star
- Head boy lead – star left across
- Right hand star and don't get lost
- Heads go Back to the partner for a dosado
- Its back to back around you go
- Pass thru to the corner for a left Allemande
- Partner right go right and left grand.

Many of you will recognise that sequence or variations of it that are still in use today

- Fun night: Heads promenade $\frac{1}{2}$ way, pass thru, face in, pass thru, right hand star, heads star left $\frac{1}{2}$ way, right hand star, heads star left across, swing your corner
- Basic singing call Heads square thru 4, make a right hand star, heads star left $\frac{1}{2}$ way, star right, heads star left halfway, swing your corner...

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The great callers of the day used the circle to introduce the movements they wanted in the circle, normally using two couples and prompts. They then then introduced the two couple stuff into the squares with minimal teaching and normally maximum success.

Many callers today still use the Sicilian Circle as a teaching platform. I do. I use it primarily as a review and welcome platform as it allows me to get everyone dancing on time, review what they have learned and move them around and mix and match to see who is doing what, and where any problems may lie.

So, Why have we fallen apart as callers? There are two reasons

First: Many callers today have lost focus in the THEM, and focus more on the techniques and technicalities of the choreography than the simple pleasure of building fun and success for THEM.

Second: Many caller teachers and mentors have changed the focus of teaching new callers to get callers technically and choreographically perfect by feeding them with a firehose of information and techniques, such as understanding formations, resolving the squares, extemporaneous calling and sight resolution, calling methods, terms and vernacular that is unique to the profession. They are all important and will be learned in time, but the “time” factor seems to be replaced with the “technique now” factor. Callers and mentors get focused on too many technical foundations all at once.

Can you imagine trying to teach students 1+1 And ABC on the first day of school at the same time as you are teaching inversion calculus and quadratic algebra along with the evolution of linguistics. It won't happen. There may be that one odd gifted genius student that gets it, but most are there to meet, socialise, learn, have fun and pick a path for the future. Every profession works the same except one – Square dance calling today. – It didn't used to.

Unfortunately, we seem to have lost sight of the simplicity and fun of the dance, which is the caller's primary responsibility...THEM. Give them a good time. Give them Fun, Give Them Sociability. All that choreography is a means to an end but without starting small with building successes, you become a technical “short term goal and move on caller and so do your dancers”.

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Take a step back and remember the old ways for a little bit and see how you can incorporate them into your calling and teaching for a better experience for your dancers.

Try instead of “heel and toe mixers”, the “repeat line dance” or “Patty cake polka”, using something like a Sicilian Circle from the start and

make it part of your teaching repertoire. They have a place but not as an example of square dancing or teaching.

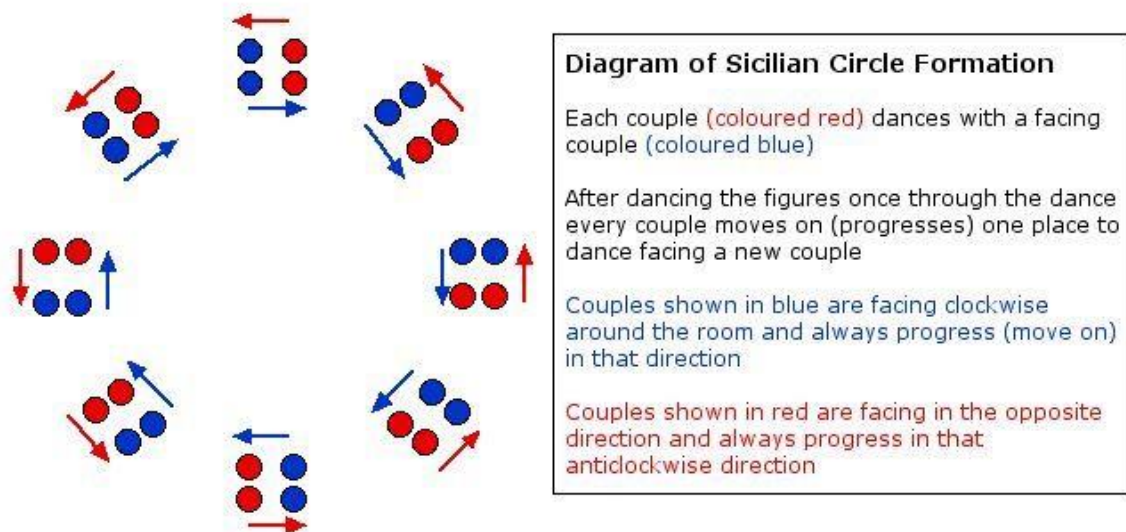
One of the biggest “**that was fun – once**” comments I have heard from non-dancers is “we did that in pre-school or kindergarten. – another is that is not square dancing. – They have their focus in the wrong place only because you put their focus in the wrong place.

I have never heard that with big circle dances and two couple circle dances. It is two couple dancing but as you can see from the past, just like today, it also has so much more untapped potential

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2 couple Dancing In Sicilian Circles

Dancing in formations other than the standard four couple square used to be common practice at square dances. The most frequently used formation was the Sicilian Circle. A Sicilian Circle Formation is a big circle composed to facing couples of four.



It is an ideal way of doing two couple dancing and interacting the floor. The big circle would include probably contain 3 or more sets of four.

However: If you don't have that many couples, just straighten out the curve and stack the mini sets in a long line stretching away from the caller just make sure you tell them that if they are on the very ends facing the wall to California twirl.

A third option is to scatter the mini sets randomly around the floor. And just work two couple dancing having them scatter periodically.

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There are several advantages to using Sicilian Circles.

1. Everyone dances all the time.
2. By Passing Thru facing couples and proceeding to the next couple to form other sets of four, the caller can mix and match dancers skills if needed. This is a great way to drill on timing.
3. Teaching any facing couple square dance "basic" in a Sicilian Circle Formation, isolates the action to just the four dancers. This takes away any distraction from other dancers such as seen in the square formation.
4. It allows the caller to easily see what is happening to the entire dance floor much easier than in multiple squares.
5. Sicilian Circles provide another form of variety in square dancing. They are fun to dance.

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I have attached a paper by Daryl Clendenin published last year in Behind the Mike, to the speaking notes that provides several more reasons to use Sicilian Circles for teaching.

I will discuss using Sicilian Circles at regular square dances. Any time you change a formation, the dancers perk up.

Presently, the standard practice is to move from the square formation to an Eight Chain Thru Formation and run dancers back and forth across a 2 by 4 grid. This is essentially two facing couples stacked.

- Moving to a Sicilian Circle Formation just includes more facing couple sets in the stack.

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The primary sequence for most callers today includes the following:

Get in

FCZ module or isolated sight (2 couple dancing)

A crossover

FCZ module or isolated sight (2 couple dancing)

A crossover

Get out module or isolated sight (two couple dancing.)

Nearly 88.34% of all our dancing through mainstream of our dancing today is two couple dancing. The rest is incorporation of crossover moves and only a few couple 4 couple movements. That makes 2 couple calling your most powerful tool, regardless of the formation.

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The primary dance routines used with facing couples are called a Facing Couple Zero.

- At the end of each FCZ modules, everyone is in the same geographical position where they started.

If the caller decides to not call a Facing Couple Zero, then the progression around the big circle mixes partners. This is the caller's choice. Keep everyone with their partner or mix and match.

- IN a Sicilian circle as a teaching tool mixing partners and separating pairings is often a great way of interacting the dancers with one another and breaking down the “segregation cliques”
- As couples progress on to dance with other couples they get to dance with many more other dancers than can be done in the square formation.
- It's up to the caller to decide whether to return everyone back to the original set of four or end the dance with everyone mixed. I sometimes leave the couples mixed and move to squares for a singing call.

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As with most of what I done with the presentations on modules, on isolated sight, and focus tips, I keep the modules short (less than 12 movements maximum). The same applies to Facing Couple Zeros.

IN a Sicilian Circle especially, keep them short and progress the couples to new couples frequently. This stops the “helper discussions” and lets the caller maintain control.

There are several ways to "progress". The most obvious is to Pass Thru the facing couple and move on around the set to a new couple. A nice way to vary the feel of this progression is to use a Pass Thru Equivalent. One of my favourites is Right and Left Thru with a full turn and move on. Dancers like that action.

Square Thru 3/4 and move on can be used to move couples to reverse the progression from CCW to CW.

Once your dancers have the idea of how "progression" in Sicilian Circles work, there are several other options for "progressing".

- **Veer Left/Right ... Veer Right/Left ...** and move on If you are willing to teach a little bit.
- **Veer Left ... Veer Left ... Veer Right ... Veer Right ...** produces a weaving action that the dancers will enjoy. It progresses the dancers two positions in the big circle.
- **Swing thru, Men run all do centers part of ferris wheel, square thru 3...** progresses you two couples.
- **Swing Thru ... Men Run ... Couple Circulate** will move each couple to a new pair. Then Bend the Line ... Circle Left 3/4 will finish the module.
- **Reverse flutterwheel, sweep 1/4, 1/2 sashay, star thru – move to the next**
- **Slide Thru ... Two Ladies Chain ... Roll Away ... Touch 1/4 ...** This sets up two single file columns. Each man is leading their partner. Single File Circulate two places ... Face the one beside you ... Circle Four Left 3/4 will finish the progression.
- **Using Stars.** Finally, if you are willing to teach something that the dancers may find is hard to do at first, Star 4 Right 1/2 ... Go onto the next couple and Star Left 1/2 ... Go onto the next and Star Left 1/2 ... Go onto the next and face them. Once the dancers learn to do this one, they really like dancing it. It's called a "Grand Star Circle". A prompted dance of the same name can be found at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0v2azfg8NHM>

One of the unfortunate things that happens however is that we get so lost in the technical "square dance" and we record so much, we do not record the use of this great tool often. If you google Sicilian Circle you get a few traditional versions of squares, easy old-time rut routines that will essentially "turn off" most callers and dancers today. Unfortunately,

these films do not give any indication of the versatility of the Sicilian circle.

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On a more positive note: let's give a little bit of indication to what we can actually do with this tool.

Take a look at this choreographic sequence below.

It is a full routine square dance copied from a festival dance in the mainstream hall. – It was a “hot hash” and not particularly difficult but it was a longer sequence.

- HEADS SQUARE THRU 4, EVERYBODY SQUARE THRU 4, BOY RUN RIGHT, SCOOT BACK, HINGE, LADIES TRADE, RECYCLE, SQUARE THRU 3, **TRADE BY**, PASS THE OCEAN, LADIES TRADE, BOX THE GNAT, PASS THRU, PARTNER TRADE, GIRLS LEAD REVERSE FLUTTERWHEEL, SLIDE THRU, **TRADE BY**, LEFT SQUARE THRU 4, PARTNER TRADE, LADIES LEAD DIXIE STYLE TO A WAVE, BOYS TRADE, RECYCLE, BOY WALK -- GIRL DODGE, HINGE, LADIES TRADE, HINGE, IN YOUR BOX – CIRCULATE, BOYS RUN, SPIN THE TOP, BOYS TO THE LEFT -- CROSS RUN, LADIES TRADE, (*LEFT*) SPIN THE TOP, GIRLS CROSS RUN, RECYCLE, PASS THRU, **TRADE BY**, RIGHT AND LEFT THRU, VEER LEFT, COUPLES CIRCULATE, TAG THE LINE, FACE RIGHT, BOYS TRADE, BOYS RUN (*LEFT*), CHAIN DOWN THE LINE, SEND HER BACK FLUTTERWHEEL, SLIDE THRU, ALLEMANDE LEFT, RIGHT AND LEFT GRAND, AND YOU ARE HOME

It got me to thinking and I re-read what Cal Campbell and Daryl Clendenin had written about Sicilian circles and the thing that grabbed me was they both espoused keeping the partner and using a pass thru (or equivalent to move to the next couple and do the next little facing couple zero.

If I looked at that sequence and as noted earlier, that if you make a long line and if you get to the end of the line just do a California twirl for the Sicilian circle type dance in a line, then trade by is exactly that

That exact same sequence can be danced in a sicilian circle by changing the one movement, trade by and replacing it with the words “move to the next”

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Heads Lead left, square thru4, BOY RUN RIGHT, SCOOT BACK, HINGE, LADIES TRADE, RECYCLE, SQUARE THRU 3 TRADE BY, PASS THE OCEAN, LADIES TRADE, BOX THE GNAT, PASS THRU, PARTNER TRADE, REVERSE FLUTTERWHEEL), SLIDE THRU, TRADE BY, LEFT SQUARE THRU 4, PARTNER TRADE, DIXIE STYLE TO A WAVE, BOYS TRADE, RECYCLE, BOY WALK GIRL DODGE, HINGE, LADIES TRADE, HINGE, SPLIT** CIRCULATE, BOYS RUN, SPIN THE TOP, BOYS CROSS RUN, LADIES TRADE, SPIN THE TOP, GIRLS CROSS RUN, RECYCLE, PASS THRU, TRADE BY, RIGHT AND LEFT THRU, VEER LEFT, COUPLES CIRCULATE, TAG THE LINE, FACE RIGHT, BOYS TRADE, BOYS RUN, CHAIN DOWN THE LINE, FLUTTERWHEEL, SLIDE THRU,

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MOVES THAT CAN BE TAUGHT and danced IN THE SICILIAN CIRCLE (not in any particular order)

Any move that only requires two couples to perform can be taught in the Sicilian Circle.

The movements you'll find that are missing are those very few that require four couples to execute. Such as: Grand Square, Four Ladies Chain, Double Pass (although that can be done on a single track), Eight Chain Thru,.. Those will naturally be taught in the Squares.

By using this method, I have found the time I need to teach a full set of lessons is cut by about a third. Teaching most of the moves can be done in the Sicilian Circle (SC) while actual dancing will be done in Squares.

Calls that can be done Done is a sicilian circle or with two couples

1. Circle Left / Circle Right
2. Forward and Back
3. Dosado / Dosado to a Wave
4. Swing
5. Promenade Family
 - A. Couples (Full, 1/2, 3/4)
 - B. Single File Promenade
 - C. Wrong Way Promenade
- D. Star Promenade
6. Allemande Left
7. Arm Turns
8. Right and Left Grand Family
 - A. Right and Left Grand
 - B. Weave the Ring
 - C. Wrong Way Grand

9. Left-Hand Star / RightHand Star
10. Pass Thru
11. Half Sashay Family
 - A. Half Sashay
 - B. Rollaway
 - C. Ladies In, Men Sashay
12. Turn Back Family
 - A. U-Turn Back
 - B. Backtrack 1
13. Separate Around 1 or 2
 - A. to a Line
 - B. and Come Into the Middle
44. Split Two
15. Courtesy Turn
16. Ladies Chain Family
 - A. Two Ladies Chain (Reg. & 3/4)
 - B. Four Ladies Chain(Reg. & 3/4)
 - C. Chain Down the Line
17. Do Paso
18. Lead Right
19. Veer Left / Veer Right
20. Bend the Line
21. Circulate Family
 - A.(Named Dancers) Circulate
 - B.Couples Circulate
 - C.All Eight Circulate
 - D.Single File Circulate
 - E.Split/Box Circulate
22. Right and Left Thru
23. Grand Square
24. Star Thru
25. California Twirl
26. Walk Around the Corner
27. See Saw
28. Square Thru (1, 2, 3, 4) / Left Square Thru (1, 2, 3, 4)
29. Circle to a Line (requires direction on who will break)
30. Dive Thru (insides and outsides)
31. Wheel Around
32. Thar Family
 - A. Allemande Thar
 - B. Allemande Left to an Allemande Thar
 - C. Wrong Way Thar
33. Slip the Clutch
34. Shoot the Star / Shoot the Star Full Around
35. Box the Gnat
36. Trade Family
 - A. (Named Dancers) Trade
 - B. Couples Trade
 - C. Partner Trade
37. Ocean Wave Family
 - A. Step to a Wave
 - B. Balance
38. Alamo Style (too tight)
39. Swing Thru / Left Swing Thru
40. Run / Cross Run
41. Pass the Ocean

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| 42. Extend | 54. Eight Chain Thru / Eight Chain 1, 2, 3, Etc. |
| 43. Wheel and Deal | 55. Pass to the Center (insides and outsides) |
| 44. Double Pass Thru (varied to single track) | 56. Single Hinge / Couples Hinge |
| 45. First Couple Go Left/Right, Next Couple Go Left/Right Varied first dancer left next dancer right | 57. Centers In |
| 46. Zoom | 58. Cast Off 3/4 |
| 47. Flutterwheel / Reverse Flutterwheel | 59. Spin the Top |
| 48. Sweep a Quarter | 60. Walk and Dodge |
| 49. Trade By (concept) | 61. Slide Thru |
| 50. Touch 1/4 * | 62. Fold / Cross Fold |
| 51. Ferris Wheel – Varied to work with oncoming couples the same as couples circulate. | 63. Dixie Style to an Ocean Wave |
| 52. Cloverleaf | 64. Spin Chain Thru (can be varied) |
| 53. Turn Thru | 65. Tag the Line (face direction) |
| | 66. Half Tag |
| | 67. Scoot Back |
| | 68. Recycle (From a Wave Only) |

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The following are some simple FCZ (facing couple Zeroes – Two couple zeroes) that you can use with the sicilian circle. They keep the partner relationship, but remember, the versatility of the circle as a teaching tool and review or warm up tool is that you do not have to keep the pairings if you do not want to.

Facing Couple Zeroes

- Square Thru 3, Boys Run, Girls Run, Square Thru 3, Boys Run, Girls Run, You're Home
- Touch 1/4, Box Circulate, Boys Run, Left Touch 1/4, Box Circulate, Girls Run, You're Home

- Right & Left Thru, Flutter Wheel, Veer Left, Chain Down The Line, Flutter Wheel, Veer Left, Chain Down The Line, You're Home
- Right & Left Thru, Ladies Chain, Square Thru 3, L.A., Promenade Home
- Couple #1 Half Sashay, Swing Thru, Girls Trade, Wheel & Deal, Zoom, Leaders Trade, Square Thru 3, Allemande Left, Promenade Home
- Box The Gnat, Square Thru 4, Partner Trade, Box The Gnat, Square Thru 4, Partner Trade, You're Home
- Right & Left Thru, Veer Left, Girls Cross Run, Bend The Line, Square Thru 3, Partner Trade, Star Thru, California Twirl, Flutter Wheel, Reverse Flutter Wheel, You're Home
- Swing Thru, Spin The Top, Nearest Boy Run Around 3, Nearest Girl Run Around 1, Wheel & Deal, Star Thru, Leaders Trade, You're Home!
- Touch 1/4, Scoot Back, Girls Stand Pat, Boys Run Right, Ferris Wheel, Star Thru, You're Home
- Half Sashay 1 & 1/2, (Boys lead) Dixie Style To A Wave, (Right) Swing Thru, Boys Cross Run, Swing Thru, Boys Run, Wheel & Deal, Sweep 1/4, You're Home
- Ladies Chain, Dosado, Swing Thru, Spin The Top, Swing Thru, Spin The Top, Recycle, You're Home
- Pass Thru, Girls Run, Single Hinge, Chain Down The Line, Flutter Wheel, You're Home
- Swing Thru, Girls Run, Couples Hinge, Girls Cross Run, Bend The Line, Flutter Wheel, You're Home
- Touch 1/4, Scoot Back, Scoot Back (again), Girls Run, Reverse Flutter Wheel, Veer Right, Boys Run, Boys Trade, Single Hinge, Walk & Dodge, Partner Trade
- Circle 3/4, Boy Walk, Girl Dodge, Single Hinge, Girls Trade, Spin The Top, Spin The Top (again), Recycle, You're Home
- Couple #1 Promenade 1/2, Boys Only Cloverleaf, Girls Face In, Boys Split The Girls, First Left, Next Right Around 1 To A Line, Tag The Line, Girls U-Turn Back, Dosado, Step To A (Mini) Wave, Boys Run, You're Home
- Couple #1 Promenade 1/2, Girls Only Zoom, Everybody Cloverleaf, Double Pass Thru, Leaders U-Turn Back, Dosado,

Pass Thru, Centers Star Thru, Others Face The Music & Fold,
All Square Thru 3, Allemande Left, Promenade Home

- Couple #3 U-Turn Back, Trailers In, Cast Off 3/4, Near 2 Pass Thru, Cast Off 3/4, Centers Trade, Ends Fold, You're Home
- Couple #3 Split Couple #1, Around 1 To A Line, Tag The Line, Face The Music, Ends Trade, Boys Trade, Girls Trade, Centers Trade, Bend The Line, Star Thru, You're Home
- Lead Right, Boys Run, Scoot Back, Single Hinge, Girls Trade, Swing Thru, Girls Run, Girls Trade, Girls Cross Run, Wheel & Deal, You're Home
- Pass The Ocean, Girls Trade, Swing Thru, Boys Run, Tag The Line, Face Right, Girls Run, Left Swing Thru, Boys Trade, Boys Run, Bend The Line, You're Home
- Right & Left Thru, Veer Left, Wheel Around, Girls Run, Swing Thru, Boys Cross Run, Recycle, Boy Walk, Girl Dodge, Girl Walk, Boy Dodge, U-Turn Back, You're Home
- Swing Thru, Hinge, Scoot Back, Scoot Back, U Turn Back, Scoot Back, Scoot Back, Hinge & Face that person, Star Thru, Partner Trade & face that person, Slide Thru, Wheel And Deal, Step To A Wave, Cast Off 3/4, Hinge, Recycle, Flutter Wheel You're Home

Slide

Questions and discussion

Attachment:

THE SICILIAN CIRCLE

by Daryl Clendenin

One of the most important things we do as callers is teach new dancers. Through my years of calling and more importantly teaching, the fastest, easiest teaching method I have found makes use of the "Sicilian Circle."

The "Sicilian Circle" is a circle of facing couples half facing clock-wise and the other half facing counter clock-wise. This is a great way to teach any of the moves that require only two couples.

For groups of six couples or more the Sicilian circle is a wonderful way to introduce and demonstrate most of the movements. And, in a pinch, you can still teach most of the moves with as few as two couples. If you have an odd number of couples, one couple will be idle till the Command, "Move On to The Next." At which point, a new couple will have a short wait.

The Sicilian Circle (SC) Works Best Because:

1. The majority of movements are done by only two couples (list to follow).
2. No one sits out. All couples are on the floor during the teaching. Three couples no longer have to wait for a fourth in order to join the dance.
3. The couples are continually mixing which eliminates the possibility of weaker couples being together throughout a whole tip. You can also use it as a "real" mixer by changing partners throughout.
4. Two couples working together is less confusing than four couples.
5. About 80% of the moves involve two couples and can be drilled more effectively in the SC.
6. By doing demonstrations in the center of the circle, everyone can have a better view of the demonstration.
7. It's not a matter of Sides (or Heads) watching while the others are dancing. The two-couple dancing has everyone moving at the same time.
8. It's also a great way for a newer caller to learn to control the movement of the dancers and resolve with two couples.

I like to begin every class in the Sicilian Circle. You can start with 2 couples or more and have each couple join the circle as they enter the hall. There is no need to wait for enough to form another square.

CALLS THAT I TYPICALLY TEACH IN A LARGE CIRCLE

1. Circle Left & Right.
2. Allemande Left.
3. Right & Left Grand. Weave The Ring.
4. Half Sashay.
5. Promenade. Couples & Single File
6. Walk Around & See Saw.
7. Ladies Centre Men Sashay.
8. Swing
9. Dosado
10. U Turn Back

The Odd Couple – 7 couples – No Problem

by Mel Wilkerson

This is a situation that happens regularly, has happened or will happen to each and every caller I know. The caller is teaching a class but there are an odd number of couples. What do you do?

- Six couples not 8...Do I have two sit or do I confuse them and myself trying to call a rectangle or a hexagon.
- Those are usually left until the dancers know what they are doing and are more gimmicks than real dancing aren't they?
- What can I do with only 6 couples that doesn't leave two sitting out all the time? I want to teach a movement but then I have to re-teach it again and the odd ones or late ones feel picked on.

These are common questions many callers, and especially many newer callers face more-so today than in the past. This is particularly a poignant question with the changes in lists and the mad rush to get dancers dancing more movements quickly and calling it a new level than actually learning and having fun with the movements they know.

The question of odd numbers of couples applies particularly well to when dancers are first learning their movements. Hexagons and rectangles get confusing to both callers, and dancers especially new callers and dancers, and dancing as "tandem paired" dancers may be fun at first but very tiring and tiresome; especially when it has the effect on timing and time.

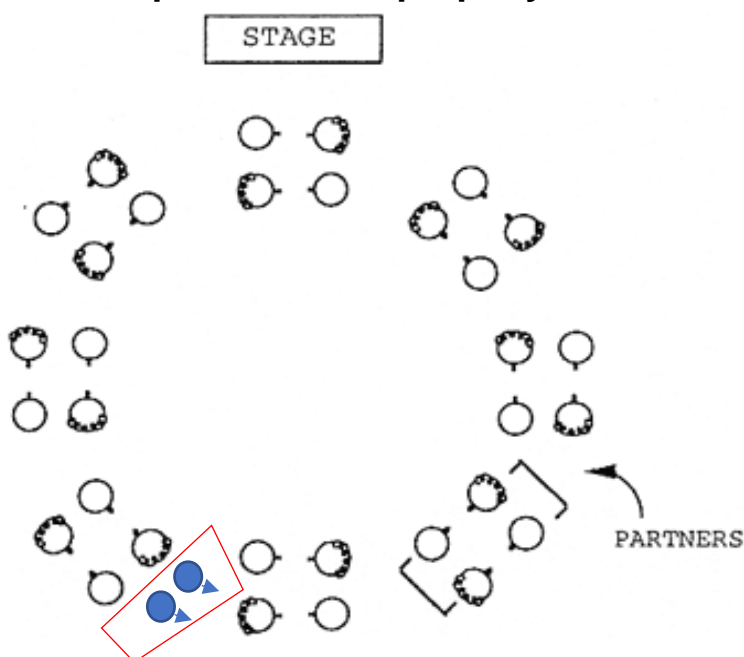
The simple answer on how to solve this problem is to properly identify the questions..

If you read it as:

How can I get all the couples dancing, to review, learn, and have fun when I do not have enough couples for another square?

The answer surprisingly enough is simply:

A Sicilian circle – modified for two couple calling.



HOW IT WORKS:

1. First accept that you cannot do all the movements – do not try because it will be too awkward unless you have a lot of dances with an odd one, two or three couples out.
2. Big movements like spin chain thru, etc. should be left until you have squares.
 - a. Ferris wheels, wheel and deals are fine but you may have to explain the Ferris Wheel a bit that they may have to interact with another set of couples
 - b. Lines of four movements require a variation and should be kept to a minimum (for example from facing couples veer left, couple on the outside only partner trade, line of four forward and back, bend the line etc...Your limitation is your imagination and creativity with the movements you know and they know.
3. Remember the prompt indication – “**move to the next**” (example, from facing couples: Square Thru 3, **Move To The Next**....) This tells the dancers they are moving to someone new. If you do not say it they may still be working with the same couples
4. Let them know early in the drill that if they are not facing another couple, just wait in the direction they are standing and another couple will be along shortly.
5. Make sure they do not close the circle up too small. Keep it big and spread out. It is easier for them and easier for you.

This is a great way as well to review most of your movements and keep everyone dancing. Most of your movements can be done in a Sicilian circle using two couple movements.

FIRST – THE FOUR BASIC RULES:

Rule number 1 – let the dancers have fun learning

Rule number 2 – do not worry about who is with who. The Sicilian circle is a mixer so let them mix

Rule number 3 – teach and dance and review – where there is a problem, use things like star thru, pass thru, move to the next and it will break up any of the dancers you have that like to dance their partner's dance rather than their own

Rule number 4 – Let the dancers have fun – if you play they will play too.

Here is an example of a potential series of movements in a Sicilian Circle. Let's just stick with the basic program for ease of explanation.

Situation – Dancers come to the hall and you have 7 couples – Oh no, three couples will have to sit out.... – **wrong attitude.**



“All right, let's get everybody up – grab a partner you don't want anyone else to dance with and all the couples make one big circle.”. – (Wait while they figure that out, chuckle and get on the floor)

Ok everyone what we are going to do is dance this square dance in a circle with 6 ½ sides and no corners....or something like that....(confused look) – “nahhh I am just kidding...we are going to review and dance some couples stuff because most of square dancing is done one couple looking at another..all you need to know is that if you are not facing another couple when I call something - just wait a moment and another couple will be coming toward you shortly.....I will show you as we go”

All right..Circle left...allemande left and everybody right and left grand...swing number 5, circle left

Allemande left, go allemande thar – forward two and the men back in make a great big star – push girls – remind them of your state and that pushing dope may be illegal so keep it quite that this is now mainstream - , shoot that star and promenade mother.....

Every second couple wheel around and face the couple behind you – **Important:** let them sort it out, they have fun with it and fix it very quickly. – here you stop and note that you have one couple left out (if you an odd number) – if you have 6 couples or an even number there is always the potential for fun in bringing someone across the square and saying shhhhhh nobody saw a thing.)

Explain: how this works is that you will dance as facing couples. That couple standing there not facing anyone, just wait facing the line and another couple will see you shortly....for example...couples right and left thru, pass thru, move to the next – Dosado.....now you see somebody is with the couple that was standing alone, and there is a new couple standing alone...now they will wait a little bit and somebody will be facing them.

OK HERE WE GO..: (MUSIC GOES BACK ON)

- DOSADO, MAKE A WAVE, SWING THRU, BOYS RUN, WHEEL AND DEAL, PASS THRU, MOVE TO THE NEXT
- RIGHT AND LEFT THRU, VEER LEFT, VEER RIGHT, MOVE TO THE NEXT, PASS THRU, MOVE TO THE NEXT, RIGHT AND LEFT THRU, WITH A FULL TURN, MOVE TO THE NEXT..
- STAR THRU, GO FORWARD AND BACK, DOSADO, MAKE A WAVE, CENTRES TRADE, GIRLS RUN, BEND THE LINE, STAR THRU, MOVE TO THE NEXT....

At this point another couple comes into the hall late. Just tell them to find the odd couple and stand back to back and get ready to start – it may take a second but dancers are forgiving. (the reason I say stand back to back is that after a while, if they come in late, they will automatically do it and you do not have to interrupt the flow on the floor.

- **RIGHT AND LEFT THRU, SQUARE THRU 3, MOVE TO THE NEXT...**
- **TOUCH ¼, BOX CIRCULATE TWICE, BOY RUN AROUND A GIRL, REVERSE WHEEL AROUND, FORWARD AND BACK....SQUARE THRU 4, MOVE TO THE NEXT,**

Well that is a good warm up of what was known (so far). What should be next is the review of the last week's lessons. For sake of argument let's say we taught "Cross Run" last week. – We have them in a two-couple arrangement here so let's look at some refresher modules. This is essentially two couple routines with a focus on a movement. (Cross Run) It is exactly the same principle of isolated sight calling but without a "snapshot" picture to keep the dancers paired and with their partner.

Remember, the Sicilian Circle is a mixer so let them mix. You can periodically throw in some two-couple isolated sight keeping them partnered for your own exercise and mental strengthening but make sure you go back and read rule number 1 before you do it. It is about the dancers, and not you as the caller.

- PASS THRU, MOVE TO THE NEXT, EVERYONE VEER RIGHT, BOYS TO THE LEFT- CROSS RUN, LADIES TO THE LEFT – CROSS RUN, WHEEL AND DEAL, FACE THESE TWO, SAY THANK YOU AND PASS THRU, MOVE TO THE NEXT,
- VEER LEFT, GIRLS TO THE RIGHT - CROSS RUN, BOYS TO THE RIGHT -CROSS RUN, WHEEL AND DEAL,

RIGHT & LEFT THRU, SAY THANK YOU, AND PASS THRU,
MOVE TO THE NEXT,

- DOSADO, MAKE AN OCEAN WAVE, BOYS (GIRLS) CROSS RUN, GIRLS(BOYS) CROSS RUN, RIGHT & LEFT THRU, PASS THRU, MOVE TO THE NEXT..
- DOSADO TO A WAVE, BE CAREFUL...GIRLS RUN...BOYS CROSS RUN, WHEEL AND DEAL, SQUARE THRU 3 MOVE TO THE NEXT....
- DO A LEFT SHOULDER DOSADO AND STEP TO A LEFT HAND WAVE, LEFT SWING THRU, GIRLS CROSS RUN, BOX THE GNAT, RIGHT & LEFT THRU, PASS THRU, MOVE TO THE NEXT
- PASS THRU MOVE TO THE NEXT, PASS THRU MOVE TO THE NEXT, RIGHT & LEFT THRU, SQUARE THRU 3 MOVE TO THE NEXT...
- RIGHT & LEFT THRU, VEER LEFT, GIRLS CROSS RUN, BEND THE LINE, FORWARD AND BACK, SQUARE THRU 2, DO A U-TURN BACK, SQUARE THRU 3, MOVE TO THE NEXT
- DO A ½ SASHAY AND MAKE A LEFT HAND WAVE, LEFT SWING THRU, BOYS CROSS RUN, RIGHT & LEFT THRU, PASS THRU, MOVE TO THE NEXT
- STAR THRU, FORWARD AND BACK, RIGHT & LEFT THRU, VEER LEFT, GIRLS CROSS RUN, BEND THE LINE, SQUARE THRU 3, PARTNER TRADE, STAR THRU, CALIFORNIA TWIRL, FLUTTER WHEEL, REVERSE FLUTTER WHEEL, SWEEP ¼ MORE, PASS THRU MOVE TO THE NEXT
- TOUCH 1/4, BOX CIRCULATE, BOYS RUN, LEFT TOUCH 1/4, BOX CIRCULATE, GIRLS RUN, STAR THRU, DOSADO TO A WAVE, BE CAREFUL...GIRLS RUN...BOYS CROSS RUN, WHEEL AND DEAL, SQUARE THRU 3 MOVE TO THE NEXT....

As I said the list is only governed by your imagination in what you want to do. (and of course the movements the dancers know) I have not left the basic program here as I do not know where your dancers are but there is more than enough material to make it interesting, refreshing, challenging but most importantly successful and fun.....move to the next is a great way of letting them catch up if an error is made.

It is also much easier for the dancers to learn and the caller to call (**ISOLATED SIGHT** or Two Couple dance routines) and it will become

evident very early if there is a problem and where it is as they will be the one group that stands out

By repeating sequences and mixing and matching, such as in the last two, you can build and build. You will find it will also increase your calling repertoire when sight calling a full square you can also use movements that are not often called in a full square like a simple courtesy turn and incorporate into your routine

- MOVE TO THE NEXT, VEER RIGHT, COURTESY TURN, CHAIN DOWN THE LINE, TWO LADIES CHAIN, ALL 4 CIRCLE RIGHT $\frac{3}{4}$ **AND** PASS THRU, MOVE TO THE NEXT.....

There are lots of things you can do to build your own little two couple zeroes for example building on the theme above and using a flutter wheel to set up the chain down the line now we can go

- MOVE TO THE NEXT, RIGHT AND LEFT THRU, FLUTTERWHEEL, VEER LEFT, CHAIN DOWN THE LINE, FLUTTER WHEEL, VEER LEFT, CHAIN DOWN THE LINE, PASS THRU, MOVE TO THE NEXT

The beauty of this tool (the Sicilian Circle) is that it is a great mixer opener and refresher. It also allows you to start on time and if one couple comes in late, they can just join in without waiting for the next tip. It allows you to review the movements you have taught, identify any trouble areas and with whom very easily, and it ensures that no couples have to sit out on the floor.

You can also use it as a teaching tool to teach new movements as well. Then after using it and teaching what you wanted, the next time you can call a square up and use the movements in the square. By that time, the dancers will not mind sitting out a tip or an alternating tip. They have learned the movement, and, they can see it being used if they are not dancing this tip, but they also know they have learned the movement and everybody else has to stop and re-learn when they dance. It gets rid of that "everyone has to do it again because of me feeling".

These are just some ideas for your tool kit. I have found over the years that the circle is a great tool and a great opening mixer. I have found it especially useful for new dancer classes, even when I have full squares