

Rules of Etiquette for Cajun Dancing

The traditional Cajun dances: the Cajun Waltz, One-Step, and Two-Step are all traveling “Carousel” dances. The dancers create the “Carousel” by all the couples working together traveling around the floor in a counter clockwise direction. Turning is mostly, but not always, done at the corners of the floor, especially those corners of the floor on either side of the band.

In order to get maximum enjoyment from these dances, we need a “Carousel” that turns smoothly without traffic jams or disruptive traffic patterns. The better the “Carousel,” the better the dancing! To accomplish this, there are a few rules of etiquette that dancers need to observe:

- 1) Always dance forward around the floor, **don’t stop, or go backward** against the flow of the dance. If you need to stop, dance off the floor, or you could move to the center, but **never block the travel lane**.
- 2) **Slower dancers** should move toward the inside edge of the travel lane, faster dancers on the outside edge.
- 3) Stationary dances: Swing, Zydeco, etc. should never be danced in the travel lane. You will shut the carousel down and make it difficult and/or dangerous for the other dancers if you do. **These dances can and should always be danced in the center of floor**, which the carousel dances don’t use.
- 4) Clear the floor when the music ends! The next dance will have a tedious start if people are milling around the floor. Only dancers partnered and ready to dance should be on the floor!
- 5) When joining a dance already in progress, wait for a gap and merge onto the floor gracefully without interfering with other dancers.
- 6) **Avoid disruptive traffic patterns**. Cutting people off, violating other dancers’ personal space, being a nuisance is just bad manners.

As you can see, these rules of etiquette are about maintaining the integrity of the Carousel, and when adhered to the Carousel itself becomes a magical part of these dances. *Allons Danser!*