

## Some Basic Ballroom Dance Information

1. **A List of the Main Dances:** There are two families of ballroom dances:

- (a) smooth (standard), which is “elegant”, danced in the ballroom (e.g., waltz) dance position, and in which couples dance around the floor in a counter-clockwise direction [called “the line of dance”]: Waltz (slow 3/4, danced 1,2,3), Viennese Waltz (fast 3/4,), Foxtrot (slow 4/4), Quickstep (fast 4/4), Tango (slow 4/4)
- (b) rhythm (latin), which is “sexy”, danced in a more open position, and which has no line of dance: Rumba (slow 4/4), Bolero (slow 4/4), Mambo/Salsa (fast 4/4), Cha-Cha (medium 4/4), East Coast Swing/Jive (medium 4/4,), West Coast Swing (slow, 4/4), Samba (medium 4/4), Meringue (medium 4/4), Hustle (medium 4/4)

For more information on these dances, see, for example, [www.ballroomdancers.com](http://www.ballroomdancers.com), [www.thedancestoreonline.com](http://www.thedancestoreonline.com), or [www.dancevision.com](http://www.dancevision.com).

### 2. Getting Started:

The box step is a very basic step that can be used for several different dances: Forward on L (left foot), to Side on R (right foot), Close L (to right foot). Back on R, Side on L, Close R. The most common dances are: Waltz (1,2,3), Fox-Trot (1-2,3,4), Rumba (1-2,3,4), Cha-Cha (1,2,3,4,&), and Swing/Jive (1,&2;3,&4;5,6). You can use the box step for the first three. You will need to learn the basic steps for the other two.

Explanation: The numbers refer to beats of music on which you step (changing weight and alternating feet with each step). 1-2,3,4 means, for example, step on the first beat and hold for two beats, step with other foot on 3, step with other foot on 4. & is a half beat.

3. **Advanced Dancing:** To learn to dance well, you will need to take some lessons. The cheapest way is to take group lessons (about \$10 per lesson). To progress further, many people take private lessons (which are considerably more expensive). Several studios also have regular dance parties at which you can dance. For more information, contact: Ballroom Dance Studio of Columbia (256-4569), Capitol Ritz Dance Studio (Jefferson City, 893-7787, [www.capitalritz.com/](http://www.capitalritz.com/)), Twilight Dance Studio and Boutique (Columbia, 441-2220, [www.twilightdancestudio.com/](http://www.twilightdancestudio.com/)), or Columbia Adult Career Center (adult programs, 214-3803, [www.career-center.org/adult/personal.htm](http://www.career-center.org/adult/personal.htm) [look under dance]).

### 4. Dance Etiquette:

- Feel free to ask anyone for help with basic steps.
- Dancers are encouraged to dance with different people. So don't be shy about asking someone to dance.
- Don't stand on the dance floor if not dancing.
- For smooth (standard) dances, dance in the middle of the floor, if you are not progressing around the dance floor (so that you don't block movement).

5. **Our Dance Organization:** Ballroom Dancers of Mid-Missouri, evenings at 441-8888 or 268-7888, [midmodancers@hotmail.com](mailto:midmodancers@hotmail.com), <http://ballroomdancers.missouri.org>. We have dances at Tiger Columns on the first and third Sundays (except on holidays), normally 7-10 (pay the bartender). To become a member, please see our website or ask for a form at the dance.