

What is modern square dancing?

Modern square dancing is a recreation enjoyed by thousands of people all around the world. It has its origins in the traditional dances brought to this continent from Europe by the early settlers, which combined to become an American folk dance, which in turn in the 20th Century became the basis for this modern variation that we dance right here in Silicon Valley today.

Modern square dancing is a unique mix of music with physical and mental exercise. It is a "non-competitive team sport", in which groups of eight people (a "square") cooperate to move according to the instructions ("calls") given by a caller. It's also very much a social activity, a way that people get together regularly with people they know but also meet new people who join the group or visit from other groups.

Although you may sometimes see local square dancers demonstrating square dancing at public events, they aren't "performers". These are just people showing you something they do regularly as a recreation, like a sport or game, for fun.

What sort of people are square dancers?

There are dozens of square dance clubs in the Bay Area, most of which meet on a weekly basis. Most of them welcome singles as well as couples, and many welcome families.

Unlike many other forms of dancing, square dancing is not an individual or couple activity. The unit in square dancing is eight people, so you will be interacting with seven other people at a time. And during an evening, you'll be dancing with different people as the squares re-assemble for each set of music.

In this area you will find square dancers from all walks of life, from almost every national background, as young as five and as old as 90.

And modern square dancing has been standardized worldwide (with the calls always given in English) -- so if you go to Australia or Germany or Japan you'll find a welcome from the square dancers there!

Who should attend an introduction to square dancing?

Anyone who would like to know more about square dancing!

- Singles, Couples, Families
- You don't need any prior dance experience of any kind.
- Come with family or friends or come by yourself -- you do not need to come with a partner.
- You don't need any special clothing, but wear comfortable shoes.

What can I expect from this kind of introduction?

- Sessions like these will give you a sample of what square dancing is about. You'll get to dance to a professional square dance caller, with other people who are trying square dancing along with some experienced square dancers who will be there to help.
- If you enjoy the intro session, you may want to join a club that is offering a beginner class. Clubs offer classes starting at various times of the year -- several are starting this fall!

[The above is an excerpt from <https://www.scvsda.org/intro.html>.]