

STEP-ETIQUETTE 101

Cape Breton / Nova Scotia Ceilidh Tips for Aspiring Dancers!

Hey Dancers! Have you ever wondered what is the Step-Etiquette when you go to a ceilidh or a square dance in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia? Well, here are some friendly “guidelines”. Enjoy!

1 **Wait for the nudge!** It's always nice if someone gives you the little nod or nudge of encouragement to get up to dance. But what do you do if you're dying to get up to dance, but no one knows you? Just go for it ... do a few steps. Ease into it. People will gradually get to know you. Eventually you will get the nudge!

2 **No sneakers, no flip-flops and no bare feet!** No need to be too formal but it's ok to dance in the shoes you came in. A nice, solid, dance-appropriate shoe will go a long way.

3 **Musicians and dancers should complement each other!** One is not meant to out-shine the other. There is a mutual respect between the two, and it's a beautiful thing when the musicians and the dancers really connect.

4 **Step Dancers are artists too!** We get to see a dancer's personality through their choice of steps. Dancers should be given solo time, watched and appreciated.

5 **Don't overdo it!** Whether you are a seasoned dancer, or a newbie, the audience loves getting a taste of your steps, but not a full performance. So its best to limit your time. And even though you may not be able to keep those feet still, it is not the norm to get up twice for a solo. If you're at a square dance, you can dance as many sets as you can handle!

6 **Learn from those who have been doing it for years!** They often give directions in a square set if they see others need help.

Keep in mind, these Step-Etiquette “guidelines” are going to change depending on the nature of the venue, ceilidh, dance, or party. But at the end of the day (or night), dancers are always welcome!

