

How to Read a Line Dance Step Sheet

◆ 1. Dance Header (Top Info)

This section gives you the basic details:

- Dance Title
- Choreographer
- Music Title & Artist
- Counts: (e.g., 32-count, 48-count)
- Walls: How many walls you face during the dance (usually 1, 2, or 4)
- Level: Beginner, Improver, Intermediate, etc.
- Tags/Restarts: If any extra steps or partial restarts occur in the dance 

◆ 2. Structure of the Sheet

Step sheets are usually divided into sections of 8 counts (called an “8-count phrase”). Each line often contains 1–2 counts per step.

Example (basic 4-wall dance):

[1-8] Walk Right, Walk Left, Shuffle Forward, Rock Forward, Recover, Shuffle Back

1-2 Walk forward right, walk forward left

3&4 Step right forward, step left next to right, step right forward (shuffle)

5-6 Rock forward on left, recover onto right

7&8 Step left back, step right next to left, step left back (shuffle)

◆ 3. Step Terminology

Here are a few common terms and what they mean:

Term - Meaning

Step - Put weight on the foot

Touch - Touch foot to floor, no weight

Kick - Small flick forward or to the side

Shuffle - A quick 3-step move (step together step)

Rock/Recover - Shift weight forward/back, then return

Coaster Step - Step back, step together, step forward

Pivot Turn - Step forward, then rotate over pivot foot

Jazz Box - Cross, back, side, forward (in a box pattern)

Grapevine - Side-behind-side steps, sometimes ending in a touch or cross

◆ 4. Directional Terms

These help you know which way to face or step:

- R / L = Right / Left
- Fwd / Back = Forward / Backward
- Side / Cross = Step to side / cross over
- Quarter / Half / Full Turn = Degree of turn, usually to the left or right

◆ 5. Tags and Restarts

• Tag = A small section added at a specific point in the music (e.g., after wall 2)

• Restart = You stop

mid-dance and begin again from the top, usually due to a music change or phrasing shift.

These are always noted clearly at the top or bottom of the sheet, with specific instructions like:

Restart after 16 counts on Wall 3.

Tips for Beginners

- Listen to the music while reading the sheet to get the rhythm.
- Practice 8 counts at a time, slowly, then build up.
- Use demo videos along with the sheet for visual guidance.
- Don't be afraid to write notes or underline tricky steps.