

Iowa City Swing Dance Code of Conduct

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Updated: March, 2026

Iowa City Swing Dance welcomes everyone regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body type, race, ethnicity, or religion. That means we celebrate the Black heritage and creators of swing dance, respect everyone's boundaries, allow anyone to dance in either role, and celebrate diversity including: BIPOC and LGBTQ+ folks.

By participating in Iowa City Swing Dance lessons, events, and gatherings, you agree to respect our dance etiquette recommendations and abide by the following code of conduct. This ensures that we continue being a place where you and other dancers feel safe, comfortable, and welcome.

Dance etiquette

Below are best practices that we strongly recommend. You'll find our club values throughout!

Asking someone to dance

Dancing with someone is a privilege and not something you are entitled to.

- Anyone can dance either role; this is not based on gender or gender identity. Anyone, regardless of role, can ask anyone else for a dance.
- Ask for verbal or ASL confirmation when asking someone for a dance. We recommend asking, "Hi! Would you like to dance? ... Would you prefer to lead, follow, or switch?"
- We encourage you to dance with everyone, but it's also okay to say "no" to a dance. You don't need to offer a reason why and you don't owe that person a dance later.
- If you are turned down for a dance, respect that decision and find someone else to dance with instead.

Giving dance feedback

Social dance is about feeling safe to express and co-create, not to be perfect.

- Don't give people dance advice or criticism unless they EXPLICITLY ask for it.
- The only appropriate time for unsolicited dance advice is if your partner is causing you physical or emotional discomfort. Requests for your own safety and comfort are respectful of your partner, as your ally. You can tell your partner that you are uncomfortable, ask for adjustments, or stop the dance at any time without explanation.
- If you are often uncomfortable in dances or often the recipient of these kinds of requests for adjustments, you should consider reaching out to a teacher or trusted ally for help.

Obtaining consent

Respect the physical and personal boundaries of everyone on and off the dance floor.

- Realize that it is possible to make others uncomfortable—even without intending to.
- Make sure you have consent from your partner before trying something like a physically challenging or intimate move.
- Immediately respect any request to stop a specific movement or intimate behavior. If you are unable to accommodate this request during your dance, you should end the dance rather than continue to violate your partner's boundaries.
- Help your partners understand your boundaries by making them clear. While many people will successfully be able to read your body language, words are the most effective communication. If you are not comfortable verbally expressing yourself, we can assist you in making your boundaries known to the individual.
- If you experience a partner who will not take "no" for an answer or who otherwise continues to violate a crossed boundary, this qualifies as harassing behavior and should be reported to Iowa City Swing Dance.

Maintaining personal hygiene

We are all pretty comfortable with sweat and close physical proximity, and we can all work to make it a pleasant experience for everyone.

- We strongly suggest wearing deodorant, bathing regularly, brushing your teeth, and securing long hair. You can bring breath mints, a small sweat towel, and possibly an extra shirt (or two) to change into.
- If you use perfume or cologne, consider wearing it sparingly because some people have sensitivities to certain scents.

Dating in the dance scene

Do not interpret dance connection as attraction. You're bound to meet some wonderful people in the dance scene, but our community isn't a market for hooking up or dating.

- If you ask someone out, be prepared for rejection and to take it graciously.
- If you've asked someone out once and they've said "no", continuing to do so is harassing behavior and should be reported to Iowa City Swing Dance.

Respecting the history of the dance

As you learn lindy hop and other Black and African American jazz dances, honor the creators of the dance and learn about the culture.

- Center Black American social dance values such as creative self-expression, call-and-response, rhythm, and improvisation.
- Learn stories about how and when the dance was created and evolved, from the Savoy Ballroom in the late 1920s to today. Need help to start? Ask us for book, video, blog, and social media account recommendations!

Code of conduct expectations

If the following expectations are violated, it is grounds to be asked to leave an event or potentially be banned from the Iowa City Swing Dance club (especially if there are repeat offenses).

- Other than in a jam circle (with a trusted partner) or in performances, aerials are not allowed on the social dance floor.
- No weapons or firearms of any kind will be allowed at any events or gatherings.
- People who are found to be overly intoxicated or under the influence of something that is causing them to be a danger on the dance floor will be asked to leave.
- Homophobic, misogynist, transphobic, ableist, and racist language and slurs are not tolerated.
- Verbal, physical, and sexual assault is not tolerated.
- Discrimination based on gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body type, race, ethnicity, or religion (or lack thereof) is not tolerated.

A note for visitors:

If you are not in good standing with your local dance scene (or any scene) for harassment, safety concerns, or discrimination, you are also banned from our events. To regain access to our events, work with your local scene to make amends and be in good standing. Additionally, violating our code of conduct at any dance event in any scene is grounds for a ban from our events.

Contact us or report an issue

If you feel unsafe, notice that someone else feels unsafe, or have any other concerns, please notify Iowa City Swing Dance. We all need to be active participants in keeping our classes, dance, and team environments safe. It's up to all of us to create a space where everyone feels comfortable and free to express themselves through this wonderful language of partner dance.

If you are able to report the issue immediately and directly to an event coordinator, one of the coordinators will monitor the situation and/or address the issue with the individual, which may lead to a warning or the individual being escorted out. Any behavior violating the letter or the spirit of Iowa City Swing Dance's Code of Conduct will not be tolerated and may lead to temporary or permanent expulsion.

Ways to report an issue or concern:

- Talk to Iowa City Swing Dance staff, event coordinators, or teachers at the event
- Email us at danceiowacity@gmail.com
- Complete an anonymous form at: <https://forms.gle/YN9B19N12H6cf3yY9>

Abridged

Iowa City Swing Dance Club

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To see our full code of conduct or to report an issue, visit [www.\(link to code of conduct\)](#).

Together, through respect and honest conversation, we can create a friendly, supportive, and safe environment for everyone.