

## **Shag Etiquette**

1. Asking a partner: It is equally permissible for a woman to ask a man as it is for a man to ask a woman. If either is accompanied by another partner, you should ask the partner if it is okay to dance with that person. Take your partner by the hand onto the dance floor and at the end of the dance, thank him or her and walk them off the dance floor.
2. If you don't want to dance, say: "No thank you." If you are tired or don't like the song, tell them so and indicate that you will be glad to dance with them the next song or at another time. Do NOT dance with another person if you just turned down a request. Please, if someone says "no thank you," do not be persistent, take them at their word.
3. It is not polite to correct someone on the dance floor! Remember this is a social setting and people are there to have fun.
4. It is not polite to offer instruction to someone in a social setting (or in a dance class if you are not the instructor). Let's face it, you may be the one doing it wrong. Unless they ask for help or are hurting you, DON'T TEACH! If your partner requests help, kindly take them off the dance floor or to the side away from the other dancers.
5. DANCERS BUMP INTO THE NICEST PEOPLE and it isn't even a contact sport. Be aware of the other dancers around you and if you bump into someone, kick someone, or step on someone's foot...or if they bump into you, apologize whether it was your fault or theirs. Show concern that no serious injury has occurred. It is fairly accepted practice that when a collision occurs, apologize...even if it is not your fault.
6. DANCERS, USE SELECTIVE FLOOR PLACEMENT – Find your spot and keep your slot! The first person on the floor usually sets the slot of the dance (either parallel or perpendicular to the floor sides). Dance small, nobody likes to be pushed around on the dance floor!
7. Please step off the dance floor if you are not dancing. If you are drinking (or in some cases smoking), keep off the dance floor because of possible damage to the floor.
8. Leaders: If dancing with a less experienced partner, keep the steps simple at first and build to the level that your partner can handle. Leading should be defined as "the art of making your partner comfortable." Work as a team, don't showboat!
9. Leaders, protect your partner. Since you are directing her movement, you need to be sure to protect her safety.
10. Leaders, if you must count and give verbal leads, keep it low enough that just you and your partner can hear. It can confuse those around you and besides, just because you can count doesn't mean you are on beat.

Special thanks to Judy Dayner and the Beaufort Shag Club for these timely tips.