

Sight Calling

by Tim Marriner

Sight calling is one of the most popular methods of choreographic management. It allows the caller the most flexibility and spontaneity while maneuvering the dancers through the calls. There are various forms of sight calling below are the most common.

Sight Calling Techniques

Burnt Image – This form of sight calling is also known as “One Couple” sight calling. The caller moves the dancers to a key starting point and remembers one couple's exact position. The caller then utilizes any two couple calls that keep all the dancers within the same box area. When the caller wants to resolve the sequence they maneuver the remembered couple to the original starting location and use a modular get out.

Isolated Sight – This form of sight calling is also known as “Two Couple” sight calling. The caller moves the dancers to a key starting point and remembers the formation and positioning of two couples. The caller then maneuvers the dancers utilizing calls that keep these four dancers connected in a group of four. They do not have to stay in the same quadrant of the square. When the caller wants to resolve the sequence they maneuver the two couples back to a similar position as started within any quadrant of the square and use a modular get out.

Full Sight – This form of sight calling is also known as “Extemporaneous” sight calling. The caller must be able to identify at least two key couples within a square. The caller utilizes any symmetrical choreography to maneuver the dancers. In order to resolve the sequence the caller then applies a memorized formula to maneuver the dancers to a position where a successful get out can be achieved.

Keys to Sight Calling

Develop an understanding of Formations, Arrangements, Sequence, and Relationships.

Start with the easiest methods of sight calling then learn one of the formulated methods.

Keep track of key dancers. Write them down if necessary.

If possible utilize the same key couples throughout the dance.

Use word associations to help remember key dancers.

Utilize more than one key square.

Watch the entire floor not just your key squares.

Watch the dancers in the middle of the room as their timing is usually best.

Don't bury yourself with the resolution process. If you are in a hole, don't keep digging.

If things don't work out take the blame, laugh it off, and start a new sequence.

Don't use this method until you are very comfortable maneuvering dancers.

Understand the limitations of Sight Calling and determine when it is best utilized.

Have a plan of action. Know which method to use before you start calling.

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