



ETHNIC DANCE CHICAGO

Dancing As A Second Language

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)-1

What is Ethnic Dance Chicago (EDC)?

- Ethnic Dance Chicago (EDC) is a multi-ethnic group of folks of all ages, ethnicities and backgrounds who enjoy dance and music from all over the world – with our handle being: **"Dancing as a Second Language"**. Ethnic Folk Dancing is a great social mixer and a good workout of which a personal trainer would approve. Since 1987, EDC (not-for-profit) has promoted the preservation and enjoyment of the dance and music heritage of America's ethnic groups, traditional American contras and squares, contemporary line dances, social, popular and swing dances, and round dances and mixers. You don't need partners for most of the dances!
- Join us at our Friday dances where we offer dance lessons early in the evening, followed by an open dance party until midnight. Stick around for the party where you'll be exposed to many dances you can learn by doing. Just get in between experienced dancers and/or follow behind the line. Beware joining the end of a line as you may end up leading if the line changes direction.
- You'll encounter dances with strange sounding names (such as Kolo, Drmes, Csardas, Legenyas, Tsamikos, Syrto, Halay, Debki, Kujawiak, Krakowiak, Highlife, Oro, Paidoushko, Horo, Kopanitz, Rachentza, Briul, Sirba, Hambo, Polska, Ondo, and Bourree). You'll learn dances with unusual time signatures (such as 5/8, 7/8, 9/8, 11/16, 12/8). You'll also see more familiar dances such as Mazurka, Schottische, Polka, Reel, Jig and Waltz with more familiar time signatures such as 2/4, 3/4, 6/8 and 4/4.

Where is EDC Online?

- **Visit EDC's website:** www.ethnicdance.net –for ethnic dining suggestions, video gallery, photo gallery, music & rhythm galleries, regional calendar, current schedule and links to many other resources:
 - Meeting Schedule: www.ethnicdance.net/schedule/ – current listing of weekly meeting and other events
 - Regional Calendar: www.ethnicdance.net/calendar/ – listings of many dance/music events of that might be of interest
- **Join EDC's Discussion Group:** www.facebook.com/groups/ethnicdance/ – Post dance photos, videos, links, discussions, etc.
- **LIKE us on EDC's Fan Page:** www.facebook.com/ethnicdance/ – Post dance photos, videos, links, etc.
- **Join "Stuff Folk Dancers Say":** www.facebook.com/groups/stuff.folkdancers.say/ – a Global Community discussing dance/music issues.
- **Follow EDC on Twitter** – www.twitter.com/ethnicdanceguru/ – #ethnicdanceguru
- **Join EDC's Meetup Group:** www.meetup.com/ethnicdance/ – become a regular dance participant
- **Post on our Blog:** <https://ethnicdance.wordpress.com/> – post a story or ask a question

When and where does EDC meet?

- EDC meets most Fridays throughout the year:
 - **Most Fridays:** **Chicago Latvian Community Center, *First Floor Ballroom***, 4146 N Elston Ave in Chicago, NW Corner of Elston Ave (NW Diagonal) & Hamlin Ave (3800W) – enter on Hamlin – 8:00pm-12:00midnight.
 - **LAST FRIDAYS:** **Chicago Latvian Community Center, *Second Floor Ballroom***, 4146 N Elston Ave in Chicago, NW Corner of Elston Ave (NW Diagonal) & Hamlin Ave (3800W) – enter on Hamlin – **8:30pm**-12:00midnight.
- **Cancellations:** On Occasion, EDC will cancel the regular Friday dance for a group outing or for a special event.
- **Current schedule:** (www.ethnicdance.net/schedule/) – **Directions** (www.ethnicdance.net/directions/)
- **Suggested Donation** is \$6.00 per person. Discounts for full-time students and children under 12.

Why do people dance?

- Participating in dance and music celebrations is a strong unifying factor among many ethnic groups and also within the international folk dance (IFD) community. One of the world's best-kept secrets is that folks in the IFD community find their own unity in learning and enjoying dances and music of other cultures - cultures not necessarily part of their own heritage.
- Ethnic Dance Chicago is a safe haven where folks of all backgrounds and origins (and even some pets) are accepted. No one has to give up or change their own ethnicity to participate. Besides, as a participant you can:
 - Keep in touch with or re-establish contact with your own roots
 - Learn dances and songs from different traditions and enjoy cultural celebrations of others
 - Meet an interesting cross-section of people and make new friends
 - Challenge yourself to learn new and unusual music rhythms and dance forms
 - Introduce yourself and your friends to new challenges and new relationships
 - Indulge in healthy physical and mental exercise
 - Have fun

How do I get started?

- If you live in the Chicago area, or if you're just passing through Chicago, drop in, and **make dancing your second language!** If you've danced but haven't been active for a while, there's no better time than the present to start up again!
- The first night you attend, you'll probably feel overwhelmed by the variety of new music and dance steps, but you'll survive. You'll probably think that everybody there is an expert, but they aren't. Everyone started from scratch at one time. Give yourself time to learn the language of dance, and you'll become competent sooner than you can imagine.
- After dancing a while, you'll recognize common elements across cultures and unique elements of specific cultures. You'll also begin to recognize dance and music styles and forms, dance names, tunes and countries and ethnicities of origin. Moreover, you'll notice that many people you once considered to be "dance experts" are just plain folks – like yourself.



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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)-2

What dance experience do I need?

- None – You don't need any dance background or experience – Just a willingness to try something different!
- Come to the dance lessons early to learn more. Generally, easier dances are taught earlier and more challenging dances are taught later. During the open dancing, we do dances recently taught, dances requested by participants, and occasional "old chestnuts" until about midnight.
- We **accept** donations in Cash, Checks and Credit Cards, but we **don't accept** statements like, "I don't know how to dance"!

What other activities does EDC offer?

- **Ethnic Dance Parties** – www.ethnicdance.net/newyears/ – www.ethnicdance.net/superbowl/
Every Friday after 10:00pm is a dance party, so bring food, snacks and beverages to share! We also throw pot luck dinners and dance parties for events such as New Year's Eve, the Super Bowl with the Latvians, etc. So be prepared to participate!
- **Group Dinners**
On occasion, EDC organizes group dinners at local ethnic restaurants and clubs, where there is great ethnic food, and often music and entertainment and sometimes even ethnic dancing. Many ethnic people are surprised to find that folks outside of their group know something about their culture. Excursions have included dinners at Turkish, Serbian, Uzbek, Greek, Japanese, Romanian, Bulgarian and Ecuadorian restaurants. On occasion when the Latvian Center is unavailable we may do a group excursion to another Friday folk dance group such as Argonne IFD in Downers Grove, IL or Racine IFD in Racine, WI. Check the calendar and schedule for such changes.
- **Weekend Festivals & Workshops**
EDC sponsors and supports (indirectly) local and regional dance workshops, parties and concerts. Occasionally, EDC cancels a Friday dance in support of other events. Check online for schedule changes. **Current EDC Schedule:** (www.ethnicdance.net/schedule/) – **Regional Event Calendar:** (www.ethnicdance.net/calendar/).
- **Save the 2018 Dates: Door County Folk Festival (July 11-15) – www.dcff.net**
EDC sponsors the Door County Folk Festival (DCFF), one of the most fun-filled extended weekends of dance and music in the Midwest, attracting hundreds of participants from all around the U.S., Canada and other countries. DCFF offers workshops in ethnic dance, contra and square dance, and ethnic singing; late night dance parties with live and recorded music; mini-concerts; youth activities; a traditional Door County Fish Boil; a pot luck picnic dinner; and a great time in a great location – the Northern Door Peninsula towns of Baileys Harbor, Ephraim and Sister Bay, Wisconsin.
- **Dance Performances / Demonstrations**
Need a dance performance for your event? EDC dancers can perform dances from many countries and ethnicities for schools, community organizations, corporate events, seminars, conventions, ethnic festivals, weddings, etc. Performances may include the option of audience participation in easy and fun dances. Examples:
 - Vereia Bulgarian Festival: www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBngwfBPSEM/
 - IAF North America Conference (Orlando, FL): www.youtube.com/watch?v=p60YQDpcUcs/
- **Dance Instruction for Special Events**
Looking for a dance instructor or contra/square dance caller for your school, church, community, social or corporate event? EDC instructors excel in making dancing fun and accessible to new or inexperienced dancers. Venues have included: community organizations, primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, churches and religious organizations, foundations, fundraising events, fraternal organizations, associations, social clubs, weddings, birthday parties, special events, government agencies and corporate training events. EDC instructors teach many styles of ethnic dance to live or recorded music and call traditional American square and contra dances to live or recorded music. Examples:
 - Old Town School of Folk Music Global Dance Party: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Buox-nL6Oo/
 - Square Dance for Valparaiso Old Time Dance Society: www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxYCOfmEup0/
- **Dance Instruction for School Programs – www.ethnicdance.org**
Are you looking for a program to enhance your school's Multi-Cultural Program, Diversity Day or International Festival? EDC instructors have many years of experience in designing and delivering multi-cultural, multi-disciplinary dance programs to primary and secondary schools (public, private, parochial) and colleges and universities. EDC offers various types of residency programs as well as in-school and after school programs. Examples:
 - Multi-Cultural Fair @ Chaney Monge School: www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNc5Vuo2fZs/
 - International Festival @ Spring Hill Middle School: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nrt_4_Um-JA/
- **Teacher In-Service Workshops – Teacher Continuing Education**
EDC offers programs that provide development & enhancement of teaching skills through the medium of world dance & music; including: (1) developing best practices for the delivery of effective instruction, (2) adapting to various populations of diverse learners, (3) creating effective & collaborative learning environments, and (4) increasing multicultural awareness in local and world perspectives. EDC is authorized to offer CPDUs and CEUs by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).
- **City-Wide Cultural Events**
EDC has taught Ethnic and American dancing to large public audiences at city-wide festivals at Navy Pier, Daley Plaza, Millennium Park, Grant Park, the Chicago Cultural Center and at neighborhood community centers. EDC instructors have taught regularly for Chicago SummerDance, the Chicago World Music Festival and Chicago WinterDance. Examples:
 - Balkan Folk Dancing @ Chicago SummerDance (EDC & Balkan Cabaret): www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqdA-fc708/
 - 50's & 60's Rock 'N Roll Dancing @ Chicago SummerDance (EDC): www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xca7NS5EkNk/
 - South Slavic Folk Dancing @ Chicago SummerDance (EDC & T-Roma): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NP9VSVigq2Q/>