



Helpful Tips for Square Dance Clothing Choices



There is a thing called “traditional square dance costume”. It’s fun to wear, twirls with lots of fun when you dance, and it’s surprisingly flattering when it fits well. You can pick up an outfit or two from a square dance club “rummage sale” usually for a very reasonable price (\$30 or less), including the petticoats, or you can find outfits on e-bay. The costume has a circle skirted dress or top and skirt, short sleeves, pettipants, and mary jane shoes. Long prairie skirt outfits are also traditional square dance outfits. Ruffles are typical, but are a matter of preference.

In fact though, any modest attire (not cut low or much above your knee) that is not form fitting is fine. Western attire keeps the mood festive, and is flattering on everyone. You don’t need all the bling, but that can be part of the fun. Lots of us come to square dance at our clubs straight from work and wear our work clothes or our knock around clothes to club meetings. So really, almost any outfit can be a square dance outfit.

A couple guidelines (beyond modesty) help though:

Gals usually wear short sleeved outfits, the guys wear long sleeves. You are going to sweat. Probably a lot. If you are wearing a dress and 40 yards of petticoat and pettipants, you are already carrying your fair share of the heat load. So guys get to wear long-sleeved shirts, and gals wear the other stuff. Remember though, if it’s 90 degrees out, adjust your clothes. No one wants you to drop over with heat exhaustion.

If you are wearing a swirly skirt, wear something to cover your underwear like jogging shorts or pettipants. We don’t want to see your undies when you twirl!

It helps to have a fan. You can get them at the Asian grocery store for \$3

It helps to have a bottle of water.

It helps to NOT bring a purse or cell phone. If you must, figure out a pocket or a way to fasten it to your belt (or give it to your partner) You need both hands and arms to square dance!

SHOES ARE IMPORTANT – they need to stay on your feet. Sneakers are OK, but actually, street shoes with a little slip on them are much better since they won’t catch on the floor and wrench your knee or hip when you go to turn. Ballroom dance shoes are great, western boots with leather soles (not gripping rubber) are great. In fact, any comfortable, shorter heeled, closed toe shoes with leather soles are great. High heels, sandals, flip flops – not so much.