

Fezziwig Safety and Courtesy Tips

1. Fezziwig's isn't "Dancing with the Stars." We don't have judges and we don't do competitive ballroom dancing there. Please dance for your partner's pleasure and safety and for her skill level and not to impress the "judges." Fancy variations that stop traffic or take up too much space (multiple underarm twirls, spinouts, reverse twirls in place, etc.) are inappropriate at Fezziwig's and are likely to get you or someone else injured, especially in the afternoon when the dance floor gets crowded.
2. For both historical reasons and safety reasons, we also do not dance the relatively modern left-turning waltz at Fezziwig's. The left-turning waltz (or "Boston") was invented, not in Vienna but in America in the late 19th century, and did not become popular in Europe until the early 20th century!
3. The outside lane of the dance floor is the fast lane and is intended for couples dancing up to tempo. If you are dancing slowly or teaching an inexperienced dancer or a child to dance, the safest place for you is in the center of the floor. Please note that this is also the place for our special children's dances so the faster dancers should take care not to tear through the center like bats out of hell. Finally, the fast lane is NOT an appropriate place for fancy competitive ballroom variations, especially during our crowded afternoon sets. That could be either suicidal or homicidal!
4. No lifts, even in the waltz, and no dips, PLEASE, at Fezziwig's. On a crowded social dance floor, both are very dangerous. Lifts and aerial steps are only appropriate on the stage, and dips did not become fashionable until the second decade of the 20th century, when the tango became the new ballroom craze.
5. Everyone is welcome at Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig's dance party and it's perfectly OK to dance a couple of dances with your sweetheart or friends; however, please also devote some dances to the customers (our "patrons"). They're the reason we're here.
6. If you are introduced to a customer at Fezziwig's, it is a strong hint to ask her to dance. If you are unable to ask her to dance because of an injury or because you have to rush off to a show, then politely excuse yourself and, if possible, ask her for a future dance.
7. If you join in any of our set dances or country dances – and we certainly hope you will – please remember to join at the bottom of the set, not at the top, and please don't take the First Couple position in the set. That is for the callers and, ordinarily, only Fezziwiggers lead and call the set or country dances.
8. Please remember to be silent during announcements and during dance instruction. Not everyone knows the dances as well as you do and the customers absolutely need to hear the caller.
9. If you are involved – even innocently – in a collision on the dance floor, please apologize immediately. The rule of etiquette is for both leads (usually both gentlemen) to apologize, regardless of who is actually at fault.