

This paper was originally written for Advanced and Challenge callers, and contains some references to calls on these programs.

## Intro

Asymmetric choreography occurs when one half of the square is different than the other half.

- **Symmetric Choreography:** Most Modern Western Square Dance choreography is symmetric. That is, when one half of the square does something, the other half does the same thing on the other side. Each dancer and their diagonal opposite (e.g., the #1 Boy and #3 Boy are diagonal opposites) are always opposite each other, on the other side of the square, facing opposite directions. If an imaginary line is drawn from any dancer through the center of the set, their diagonal opposite can be found at the same distance from the center, facing the opposite direction.
- **Asymmetric Choreography** occurs when one or more dancers does not match their diagonal opposite.

## Types of Asymmetry

An asymmetric setup can have any combination of these 3 attributes:

1. **Sex Asymmetry:**
  - 3 Boys on 1 side
  - Parallel Waves with all 4 Girls facing the same wall
2. **Formation Asymmetry:**
  - A Diamond on one side, a Line on the other
  - a 2x4 in which one side is T-Boned differently than the other
3. **Sequence Asymmetry:**
  - Boys or Girls are in a sequence other than 1-2-3-4 or 1-4-3-2

## Get-Ins

There are many ways to get into asymmetry. For example,

1. **Goal Posting:**
  - Couple #1 Split Couple #3 Around 1 to a Line
  - Couple #2 Split Couple #4 Around 2 to Lines of 3
  - Couple #3 Separate Around 3 to a Line
2. **Sex or Position Swap:**
  - Couple #1 and #2 Half Sashay
  - Couple #3 and #4 Right & Left Thru (then square your sets)
  - Couple #2 and #3 Flutter Wheel (then square your sets)
3. **Traveling Couples:**
  - Couple #4 only Promenade 1/2 way
  - Couple #1 and #2 Promenade 1/2 way
  - Couple #1 Lead Right and Circle To A Line
4. **Near | Far:**
  - Heads Star Thru; Near Column Double Pass Thru
  - Heads Star Thru & Spread; Far 6 Pass Thru

## 5. Facing designations:

- Those Facing The Caller Tag The Line
- Those Facing The Window U-Turn Back
- Those Facing The Back of the Hall Partner Trade
- Tag The Line, Face The Music

## 6. Other ways:

- Heads Lead Right; Square Thru your Couple Number
- Heads Lead Left; Eight Chain your Couple Number
- From a Circle: Couple #1 drop hands with your partner, all straighten out to a Line of 8
- Heads Circle 1/2 way, #1 Man Break to a Line
- If You Want To: Half Sashay
- The call **Who's on First | Second | Third | Fourth**

## Useful Calls

These calls are useful to move people around and resolve asymmetry:

1. Near | Far CONCEPT
2. Those who Can, Those Facing
3. Slide Thru (also Ramble, Cross Ramble)
4. Tag The Line (also Tag Back, Tag Your Neighbor, etc.)
5. Explode, Explode The Wave, Explode The Line
6. Roll (also Single Wheel)
7. 1/4 In, 1/4 Out
8. Any Hand (especially Any Hand Remake - can be cued at lower programs)
9. Partner Tag
10. Half Breed Thru
11. Out Roll Circulate
12. Zig-Zag, Zag-Zig
13. Vertical Tag/*anything*
14. Zing
15. Rotates, Single Rotates
16. Ripple *n*
17. Single Cross Trade & Wheel (from asymmetric Mini-Waves)
18. Couple Up (also Split Trade Couple Up)

## Resolving Asymmetry

Just as there are several ways to get into asymmetry, there are several ways to resolve.

This section describes a method of resolving asymmetry that can be used both when writing sequences and when sight calling.

1. Maneuver all girls, boys, heads, or sides to one half of the set.
  - Parallel Waves is the easiest formation to modify.
  - **Acey Deucey** and **In Roll Circulate** are useful since they move one dancer from each side to the other side.
  - If you do not yet have the desired setup, use a call such as Near Wave Swing Thru, or Far Wave Out Roll Circulate to maneuver the un-desired dancer in each wave to become an In-Facing End. Then call Acey Deucey or In Roll Circulate to move them to the other wave.

2. Deliver 4-dancer calls to make each wave *symmetric*.
  - A *symmetric* wave has the Ends as original diagonal opposites, and the Centers as original diagonal opposites.
  - Use calls such as **Out Roll Circulate**, or **End Boys Ripple  $n$**  to fix non-symmetric waves.
  - If one wave is symmetric, and the other is not, deliver calls such as Swing Thru or Trade The Wave to the symmetric wave to keep the symmetric dancers moving while you maneuver the other dancers (e.g., Near Wave Swing Thru while the Far Wave Out Roll Circulate).
3. Convert one side to a right-hand wave, and the other to a left-hand wave.
  - E.g., Near Wave Trade The Wave.
4. From here, there are many calls or short sequences that convert the formation into a symmetric one. For example (from Waves),
  - Those Facing Pass Thru
  - Any Hand Remake (or Swing The Fractions)
  - Any Hand 1/4 Thru + Leaders Trade
  - Single Hinge, Centers Trade, Ends Fold (Single Cross Trade & Wheel)
  - Ah So + Those Who Can Double Pass Thru
  - Split Trade Couple Up

I personally have a list of over 40 symmetric conversions from this position. I leave it as an exercise to you to discover some more.

This resolution method also works if the formation is Parallel Two-Faced Lines, or Columns consisting of one R-H Box and one L-H Box.

When writing a sequence, you may find that in order to resolve, two dancers need to be switched, say the #1 Boy and #2 Boy. You can examine the sequence and switch them when convenient (eg., Center Boys Trade). Failing that you might be able to instead switch the #3 and #4 Boys to resolve asymmetry. Failing that, at the beginning of the sequence, you can call Couples #1 and #2 Flutter Wheel to switch those Boys.

## Surprise Getouts

For some dancers, part of the fun is trying to notice when the square returns to normal. Hence, an unexpected getout adds to the excitement.

1. An asymmetric resolve (calling LA, RLG, or Promenade Home from an asymmetric formation)
2. An un-noticed symmetric resolution (dancers don't notice when the square becomes symmetric)

## Sight Calling Techniques

- **General method:**

In addition to the information normally needed for sight resolution (e.g., a primary and secondary couple), asymmetric sight calling requires that you also know who are the Heads or Sides.

To resolve with sight calling,

1. First resolve the asymmetric aspect (refer to above section on 'Resolving Asymmetry');

2. Then use your normal sight resolution technique.
- **Easy method:**
    1. Get into asymmetry by calling Near Box Pass Thru (from Facing Lines), or Near Column Double Pass Thru (from Starting Double Pass Thru);
    2. Do 4-dancer calls (to each side);
    3. Get the same formation on each side, but one side R-H, and the other side L-H;
    4. Get out of asymmetry by calling Those Facing Pass Thru (from Waves or Two-Faced Lines), or Those Who Can Double Pass Thru (from Columns).

Examples:

- Heads Star Thru; Near Column Double Pass Thru; Everybody Trade; Far Column Double Pass Thru (symmetric)
- Heads Star Thru; Near Column Double Pass Thru; Everybody Hinge; Fan The Top; Boys Swing Thru; Those Facing Pass Thru (symmetric)
- Heads Star Thru & Spread; Near Box Pass Thru; Boys 1/2 Tag; Girls Crossfire; Everybody Scoot Back; Boys Box Counter Rotate 1/4; Those Who Can Double Pass Thru (symmetric)

With this method you can easily set up a 'Battle of the Sexes', placing all 4 Boys on one side, and the Girls on the other. Then call separate calls to each side, and resolve by calling Those Facing Pass Thru.

## Resolving Hints

- **Sex Resolves**
  - Boys Run; Bend The Line.
  - Explode The Wave; Boys Fold; Star Thru.
  - Recycle; Slide Thru; Those Facing Pass Thru.
  - Explode The Wave; Girls Run; Boys Fold.

## Asymmetric Versions of Calls

Dancing calls from asymmetric positions feels different. For example,

- From Parallel Waves (one R-H, one L-H):
  - Relay The Deucey (lots of trades instead of arm turns)
  - Spin Chain Thru (finishes with a push cast)
  - Switch To An Interlocked Diamond
  - Scatter Circulate (ends in two-faced lines instead of waves)
- From Mini-Wave Columns (one R-H Box, one L-H Box):
  - Checkmate
  - Wind The Bobbin (ends with a push cast)
- From Parallel Two-Faced Lines (one R-H, one L-H):
  - Split Circulate (some trade, others pass thru)
  - Split Counter Rotate 1/4

## Asymmetric Calls

### Face The Music:

All dancers individually 1/4 turn in place to face the caller.

### Rip And Snort:

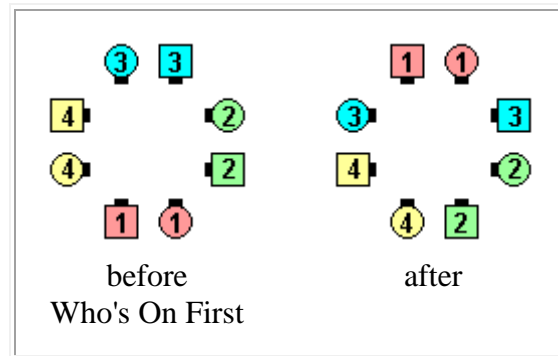
From a (moving) Circle. Retaining joined hands, designated Couple (#1, #2, shortest, sexiest, etc.) walk forward to split the opposite couple, then the designated couple drops hands with each other while everyone else retains hands, the designated couple separates and goes around the outside to meet each other to reform a circle. The couple originally opposite the designated couple does a 'dishrag' twirl to end back in a facing circle.

The movement of Rip And Snort is asymmetric, but the end result is symmetric.

### Who's On First | Second | Third | Fourth (Dan and Madeleine Allen 1955):

From a Static Set. Those at the given position (e.g., First means couple #1's original starting position; Second means couple #2's original starting position) walk forward to end between the opposite couple then U-Turn Back. The other 6 dancers move one position away from the destination of the designated couple, and adjust to end in a squared set.

For example, from a Squared Set, Who's on First has the #1 Man go to the #3 Lady's spot, who goes to the #4 Man's spot, who goes to the #4 Lady's spot, who goes to the #1 Man's spot. Similarly, on the other side, the #1 Lady goes to the #3 Man's spot, who goes to the #2 Lady's spot, who goes to the #2 Man's spot, who goes to the #1 Lady's spot.



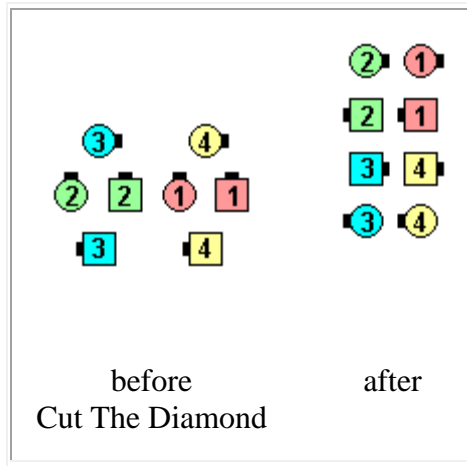
From a symmetric position, if this call is done 3 times in a row, alternating head positions and side positions, the result is another symmetric formation. That is, head-side-head or side-head-side will end symmetric. E.g., from a symmetric setup, Who's On First, then Who's On Second, then Who's On Third will end in a symmetric setup. Of course, from a symmetric setup, calling the call twice to either the heads or the sides also leaves you in a symmetric setup.

**Who's On First | Second | Third | Fourth** can be useful in a beginner's class to reinforce learning square positions.

### Shifting Center of Gravity

Sometimes, asymmetric sequences shift the center of gravity of the square. This often happens when dancers end on the same spot, taking right hands.

For example, from asymmetric Twin Diamonds, with the centers in a One-Faced Line, and the points with their right-hand inward: **Cut The Diamond** ends in Parallel R-H Waves, since original Centers all come to the same spot, to take right hands.



Such gravity shifts can be used to create unexpected resolves.

## Hints

- **Keep it easy**
  - Dancers may easily get disoriented, especially if they are not used to dancing by definition.
  - At lower levels, dancers often try to fix things by making normal couples or formations.
  - At upper levels, dancers may forget that they're asymmetric, and may try to match their opposites.
- **Keep it do-able**
  - Squares have a tendency to break down during asymmetrics. The formations are unfamiliar enough without adding complexity to your choreography.
  - Although **Relay The Deucey** is a Plus call, and can be done from asymmetric parallel waves (one R-H, one L-H), it should probably not be called at your Plus group. This call is challenging, even for experienced dancers.
- **Keep it short**
  - During asymmetric sequences, broken-down squares can not form lines and expect to continue.
  - Do not keep dancers in strange formations too long. No more than a couple of calls.
  - Broken-down squares don't have to wait long before resuming dancing.
- **The sequence must be worthwhile**
  - The sequence should contain something that can't be done from a symmetric formation. The following asymmetric sequence isn't of much interest as there's nothing in it that couldn't be done with a symmetric sequence:

Couple #1 And #2 Half Sashay,  
 Heads Square Thru 4,  
 Swing Thru,  
 Acey Deucey,  
 Split Circulate Twice,  
 Explode The Wave,  
 Boys Fold,  
 Star Thru,  
 Promenade Home

- **Help the dancers succeed**

- Before calling an asymmetric sequence, check to see if any squares are checker-boarding (dancing at 90° to other squares because of a crowded hall). If so, tell the checker-boarded squares to choose who is Couple #1. That is their "Near" wall.
- If you intend to explicitly identify a dancer during an asymmetric sequence (e.g., #2 Girl), have that dancer identify before starting the sequence or, better yet, before starting the sequence, tell the dancers to 'Remember your Couple #'.
- Give dancers plenty of positive feedback (e.g. say Boys are in one Wave, Girls in the other) as a reminder to not try to "fix" anything.

## Stir The Bucket Routines

Vic-originals that I use regularly.

<p>Couple #1 and #2 Right &amp; Left Thru, New Couples #1 and #3 Right &amp; Left Thru, New Couples #1 and #4 Right &amp; Left Thru. (rotated)</p>	<p>Couple #1 Lead Right, make an arch, Couple #2 Dive Thru, Couple #2 Lead Right, make an arch, Couple #3 Dive Thru, Couple #3 Lead Right, make an arch, Couple #4 Dive Thru, Couple #4 Lead Right, look at the caller, Anybody facing out, California Twirl. (rotated)</p>
<p>Couples #1 And #2 Flutter Wheel, Couples #2 And #3 Reverse The Flutter, Couples #3 And #4 Flutter Wheel, Couples #4 And #1 Reverse The Flutter, Head Position Flutter Wheel, Side Position Reverse The Flutter. (rotated)</p>	<p>Couple #1 Lead Right, Circle To A Line, Original Couple #2 Lead Right, Circle To A Line, Original Couple #3 Lead Right, Circle To A Line, Original Couple #4 Lead Right, look at the caller, and California Twirl. (rotated)</p>

## A Few Short Sequences

Also Vic-originals.

<p>Couple #1 And #4 Half Sashay, Sides Square Thru 4, Dosado, Swing Thru, Acy Deucey, Boys Run, (all facing caller; say something intelligent), Near Line Step Forward, all the Ends Fold, R.L.G. (1/2 promenade home)</p>	<p>Everybody Half Sashay, Couple #1 Split Couple #3 Around 1 To A Line, Couple #2 Split Couple #4 Around 1 To A Line, As Couples Heads Lead Right, All Right &amp; Left Thru, Near Box Square Thru 3, Far Box Pass Thru (sym), All Wheel &amp; Deal, Centers Flutter Wheel, Dixie Grand, L.A. (1/2 promenade home)</p>
<p>Couples #1 And #2 Right &amp; Left Thru, (Same 4) Flutter Wheel, New Couples #2 And #3 Right &amp; Left Thru, (Same 4) Flutter Wheel,</p>	<p>Couple #1 (Walk Forward) Split Couple #3 Around 1 To A Line, Sides Right &amp; Left Thru &amp; Back away, Heads Move Into The Middle &amp; Bend The Line, Same 4 Swing Thru,</p>

New Couples #3 And #4 Right & Left Thru, (Same 4) Flutter Wheel, Four Ladies Chain 3/4, You're Home	Extend, Recycle, Right Pull By, L.A. (3/8 promenade home)
Heads Star Thru, Near Column Double Pass Thru, Everybody Trade, Far Column Double Pass Thru, Ends Trade, L.A. (ends at home)	Couple #1 Lead To The Right, Circle To A Line, Same Couple #1 Lead To The Right, Circle To A Line, Sides Forward & Back, (Same 4) Right & Left Thru & Back away, Heads Move Into The Middle & Bend The Line, (Same 4) Dosado, Swing Thru, Turn Thru, L.A. R.L.G. (ends at home)
Heads Flutter Wheel & Backaway, Sides Flutter Wheel & Backaway, Heads Lead Right, Circle To A Line, Near Box Pass Thru, Centers Trade, Far Box Pass Thru, Everybody Partner Trade & Roll, R.L.G. (ends at home)	Couple #1 And #2 Promenade 1/2 Way, Heads Do Your Part: Double Pass Thru (& step forward), Sides Do Your Part: Double Pass Thru (& step forward), Couple #3 And #4 Promenade 1/2 Way, Others California Twirl, You're Home

## Interesting Things I've Learned

From symmetric parallel waves: Near Wave Trade The Wave, then all Recycle ends symmetric!

Some calls that we think of as being 8-dancer calls are actually 6-dancer calls. E.g., Scoot Chain Thru; Grand Chain Eight.

## Vic and Asymmetrics

I've been calling asymmetrics almost since I first started calling. I have over 850 asymmetric sequences in my computer from Mainstream to C4.

I sight call asymmetrics at all levels, and enjoy resolving squares that accidentally become asymmetric.

When I first started writing asymmetrics, it might take 2 hours or more to write a good sequence. Today, I can write several per hour, depending upon my mood and mental state.

I once made a boast that I could resolve any asymmetric parallel lines within 3 calls (Challenge-program). A dancer said he'd buy me dinner if I could. He arranged my checkers into an asymmetric formation. Within 15 minutes, I was successful, with the third call being 'Any Hand Swing The Fractions & Roll' to a Right & Left Grand. It was a difficult task, so maybe I should change my boast to be within 4 calls. :-)