

East Bay Waltz

Teachers and DJs – What You Need to Know

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Thank you for sharing your talent with us at East Bay Waltz. Below you'll find some guidelines we've developed that will help you understand how to best share your skills with our fantastic community.

The East Bay Waltz Board is Robert G., Alan K., Jay C., and Caroline V. If you have questions or concerns (or just want somebody to talk to) email us at production@eastbaywaltz.com. You can find us online at <http://eastbaywaltz.com/> or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EastBayWaltz/>

Teachers

The first class is either an all-levels or intermediate class, from 4:00 - 5:30 p.m. The second class is always a class aimed at beginners in rotary or cross-step waltz, from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Arrive early - 3:45 p.m. or 5:15 p.m. – for setup, sound check, and prep. We provide a sound system and can hook up your phone or laptop, or any other equipment that sends sound out a standard 1/8" stereo audio jack. If your equipment is more complicated than that, contact us to make arrangements. We have two wireless headset microphones for teachers; you're also welcome to bring your own. Just contact us to make arrangements.

The beginning class should have no prerequisites. The whole point is to include people who show up at 5:30 with no experience, and leave them feeling confident enough to enjoy a night of partner dancing by 7:00. We ask students joining an intermediate class to have taken a beginning class at least once and feel somewhat comfortable with waltz. If you would like students to meet other prerequisites, please email us what those are.

Use the terms "lead" and "follow" to designate dance roles. Please avoid using gendered pronouns to talk about either role ("they" is fine as a generic pronoun) and ask people what roles they want to dance rather than making any assumptions. (If you're referring to a specific person, of course, use that person's pronouns.) If dance-role balance is way off feel free to suggest (but not require!) that people switch roles, but do not suggest that only people of a certain gender should switch. Rotate partners often during class. If a couple will not rotate, don't force it, but feel free to explain they will learn more if they do.

We try to get everyone to come to classes on time, but people may come into your class late. Please allow them to join when they can, but do not stop the class to teach them what they missed. If there are things they need help with, one of the teachers can pull them aside to catch them up. This is one of the reasons we usually recommend two teachers are present for each lesson. Please let the people at the door know how late you can accommodate latecomers, so we can tell those that are too late not to enter.

Give your students a short break 45 minutes to an hour in and let them know where the restrooms and water are. Playing music during the break is a great way to fill the time with informal practice, one-on-one help, etc, while waiting for folks to come back.

Please end your class on time. If you want to continue one-on-one, please find a space outside, in the lobby or in a corner of the dance hall. Generally though, it's best when students join in the

dance, especially as the DJ should be playing easy songs for beginners in the first set.

If you're teaching beginning cross-step waltz, please teach the Cross-Step Waltz Mixer. (It's great practice, without feeling like a chore!) It's also a good idea to teach the Veleta Waltz Mixer in beginning rotary classes that seem ready for it. You can alternatively teach the Congress of Vienna in rotary classes as we will be doing that as well. The Bohemian National Polka is more difficult, and should be taught in an intermediate class focused on it.

Beginning class teachers, please go over basic rules of dance etiquette during the course of your lesson, especially if you have a high proportion of students who have never danced before. You don't need to have a big lecture about it – just mention as much of it as you can, in passing, as it comes up:

- anyone can ask anyone to dance, and anyone can say no
- polite ways of saying no to a dance
- dance with many people; don't repeatedly ask the same person for dances unless *they let you know* they want to keep dancing with you
- It's rude to give advice without being asked, but beginners should feel free to ask for help/advice/feedback
- floorcraft! leads are steering, follows are still active and watching
- how to dance in the fast lane vs. slow lane vs. center
- don't be sketchy:
 - don't be stinky (and bring a spare shirt or two next time!)
 - don't be bossy or give unsolicited criticism
 - don't force your partner to "follow" a lead
 - don't hurt your partner (!)
 - don't hit on people (or at least be damn sure they welcome the attention)
 - don't crash into people (and apologize if there is a crash, even if it isn't your fault)
- speak up if somebody's being sketchy – feel free to stop dancing with them mid-dance if necessary – talk to the friendly EBW board or the person at the front door if they won't back off.

DJs

There are classes from 4-7 pm so please arrive by 6:45 p.m. – to prep and set up quietly while the class finishes.

You'll be programming a three-hour dance, in four 40ish-minute sets. **A 3-hour dance usually requires about 2.5 hours of music, perhaps less.** Try to keep your songs somewhere between 2:30 and 4 minutes, with 3-3:30 being ideal. **That means approximately 40 songs, total** – 10 per set. It's better to list fewer songs on the set list, and add more if you're short, than to list more songs and have to cut them.

Genres & styles: We dance to a wide range of musical styles, from Strauss to Scissor Sisters. A good set will have that kind of variety: some old songs, some new, some mellow James

Taylor-sounding stuff, some metal – mix it up. Similarly, dancers like recognizing songs and dancing to them and hearing great new-to-them tracks. Be sure to play plenty of social dance classics and some less familiar ones. We encourage all DJs to make a point of including songs by groups historically excluded in music such as women, trans people and people of color. Three caveats, though:

- **Value danceability over novelty.** If you can dance to it, everything else is extra; if you can't dance to it, nothing else will save it.
- We're an all-ages event. Keep most, if not all, of your songs to a PG-13 rating or cleaner. If you're going to play something edgy, save it for the end of the night.
- Don't play music that some attendees might find offensive or abusive at any point. This includes both the artists and the lyrics of songs you play.

Editing songs: Some DJs love to edit tracks, others hate the practice. EBW has no official position on this topic. The more popular the song, the more people are going to be surprised (and possibly annoyed) by your changes. On the other hand, editing tracks can make them more danceable, beginner-friendly, and brief. Use your discretion. If you do decide to edit and are looking for a free program to use, we recommend [Audacity](#). It makes simple changes like fade outs or small changes to BPM easy. Note, some edited tracks are so commonly played that they have become the *de facto* standard version, like the Cross-Step Mixer, or Richard Powers' edit of "Erin Shore" by the Corrs, so keep that in mind when you're playing something well-known. Even if you've heard another DJ play a song, check your version is danceable before playing it.

Required dances: At some point in the evening, there must be a Cross-Step Waltz Mixer, a Veleta Waltz Mixer, a Congress of Vienna Waltz, a Midnight Waltz, and a Bohemian National Polka. There also must be two waltzes of the waltz type taught in the beginning lesson titled "Waltz with a Stranger" and announced as such. Dancers prefer Waltzes with a Strangers to be shorter than other waltzes (2:30 - 3:00 minutes). Play no more than three of the prescribed dances per set - a good mix is maybe Waltz with a Stranger & Xtep in 1st set; Veleta, CoV & Waltz with a Stranger in 2nd; Midnight & BNP in 3rd. The waltz mixer corresponding to the beginning lesson should happen in the first set.

- The music for the [Cross-Step Waltz Mixer](#) is usually a *heavily edited* version of "The Clock Stopped" by KGB. Dancers are used to this track, but you may substitute another as long as it:
 - is ~4-5 minutes long
 - is a slow (~105-110 bpm) cross-step waltz
 - and has regular 4- or 8-bar phrasing.
- The Veleta Waltz Mixer (choreography here: http://socialdance.stanford.edu/syllabi/Veleta_Mixer.pdf) is a simple mixer that can be done to any song meeting these criteria:
 - ~4-5 minutes long
 - 135-155 BPM
 - even 16-bar phrasing (ideally in 4- or 8-bar sections)
- The [choreography for the Bohemian National Polka](#) explicitly specifies the proper music to use: the Feuerfest Polka by Strauss, at 104 BPM. We typically play a version recorded by the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, conducted by Erich Kunzel.

- There are several versions of the Congress of Vienna. The three most commonly played are the [original edited track](#), and the recorded versions by the Brassworks Band and Bangers & Mash. Play a version that contains only three choruses and two windows (and please don't play the original 8+ minute track).
- [The Midnight Waltz](#) is a simple 4 wall line dance that solo dancers do at East Bay Waltz while couples waltz around the outside of the room. It was written to "Children" by The Mavericks, but we almost never dance it to that song. Any waltz can be used if it is 130-150 BPM, and there's no need to worry about phrasing as the original track wasn't even.

Music for these dances will be provided if you don't already have them (email production@eastbaywaltz.com to ask for them). At each dance we briefly review the steps for the mixers before doing them. If you would like to do this, feel free. Otherwise please ask one of the board members and we will gladly do it.

Approximate breakdown of 40 dances ... *(with recommended BPMs)*

- 5 required dances: Xstep mixer, Veleta, Midnight Waltz, CoV & BNP
- 19-20 Waltzes, including 2 Waltzes with a Stranger (rotary/xstep matching the lesson)
 - 10-11 rotary waltz ... *(130-190 bpm)* including 1-2 redowa *(145-175 bpm)*
 - 8-9 cross-step waltz ... *(104-128 bpm)*
- 4-5 east coast swing (and/or lindy hop) ... *(124-200 bpm)*
- 3-4 polka ... *(104-125 bpm)*
- 2-3 west coast swing ... *(90-120 bpm)*
- 1-2 schottische ... *(68-85 bpm)*
- 1-2 cha-cha ... *(110-125 bpm)*
- 1-2 fusion and/or blues ... *(100-200 bpm)*
- 0-1 hustle ... *(110-130 bpm)*
- 0-1 nightclub two-step ... *(70-85 bpm)*
- 0-1 country two-step ... *(95-115 bpm)*
- 0-1 one-step ... *(108-130 bpm)*
- 0-1 foxtrot ... *(60-75 bpm)*
- 0-1 tango ... *(120-160 bpm)*
- 0-1 salsa ... *(170-190 bpm)*
- 0-1 zwiefacher (and put it in the last set)
- 0-1 waltzes good for mazurka *(130-160 bpm)* or hambo *(115-145 bpm)*

Note: When beats are counted for BPM in 4/4 is sometimes subjective. Some would count a 120 bpm polka as 60 or 240 bpm. We highly encourage you to count your music's BPMs using a simple [online BPM counter](#). Don't worry if your counts are half or double ours. When in doubt, the best way to tell if a song is at a pace you can dance to is to try it out yourself.

The first set should be as beginner-friendly as you can make it. Slower, clearer tempos, shorter songs, and heavy on waltzes. In particular, use only easy versions of the beginner class' dance in the first set. We want our newcomers to feel accomplished, like they can dance with the experienced folks.

Put at least one East-Coast/Lindy in each set, and 3-4 of the other listed dances. The rest should

be Waltz/Xstep in near-equal proportions. It's a good idea to add 1 or 2 more of whatever types of dance are taught that night. The last dance of the night should be a Waltz.

Use fast dances carefully. While very fun, too many will wear dancers out and they'll leave earlier. We recommend no more than 2-3 fast waltzes (above 170 bpm).

Print and bring 4 copies of your set list (big font, 2 sets per page) for posting. This contains the type of dance (Waltz, Cross-Step Waltz, Cha-Cha, etc), but not necessarily the song title, BPM, etc. If the song is notably faster or slower than normal, go ahead and tack a "Fast" or "Slow" on that dance name. Please make use of legible fonts, avoiding anything too flowery or difficult to read at a distance. If you would like a template for your set list, please contact production@eastbaywaltz.com.

On the set list, list one type of dance, or in rare cases two ("Cha-Cha/West Coast Swing" or "Something/Blues" are the classic examples). In general, just list the easiest or most natural dance for the song; if folks want to dance something other than what you announce, they can figure that out on their own. List cross-step waltzes as "Slow Waltz/Cross-Step Waltz." We have a robust community of Irish dancers that will almost certainly form Irish Polka Sets in the middle of the room during your polkas, hustles and maybe even cha-chas or west-coasts. If you know your polka or hustle is even, feel free to mark it as a "Polka/Reel." If not, please don't mark it as a reel.

We provide a mic for our DJ. Please use it to announce the type of dance before each song is played. Announce loudly, clearly, and twice (i.e.: "The next dance is a Schottische. Please take partners for a Schottische.") Please avoid gendered language—in particular, calling "Ladies and Gentlemen!" excludes everybody who doesn't consider themselves a "lady" or a "gentleman." Also, while you can say a dance may be fun for those with certain preferences, do not imply that a dance is intended for a specific type of partner such as "favorite partners," couples, or age based designations. Have silent tracks or some other way to pause between songs and leave at least 10 seconds to let people thank their partners and find new ones. Depending on the mood of the room, you could wait up to 30 seconds. If there will be both traveling and stationary dancers, please remind people that the traveling dancers should go around the outside of the room and the stationary dances are done in the center.

Please be aware of the time remaining and keep an eye on the clock, especially towards the end of the night. We will want to take a break between your 2nd and 3rd sets for announcements.

Check your sound levels throughout the night. At the DJ station, a good volume to aim for is about **70-75 dB**. Music should be clearly audible throughout the room, but not so loud that people have to talk louder to converse. Due to the residential nature of the dance hall, we try to keep the volume from getting too loud and disturbing our neighbors. To ensure we can keep our space, if it gets loud the board may come and adjust your volume.

Feel free to dance yourself, but always be sure that your role as a DJ come first. That means if you take a dance partner, you have your next song lined up, you return to announce the next dance by the end of the song and if volume needs to be adjusted, you leave your partner for a moment to do so.

The most important advice we can give is to have fun. When our teachers and DJs are having a

good time we've always found everyone else has more fun too.

Thanks again!

The East Bay Waltz Board