

# **Dancesport 101:**

## Competing with the UCSB Cotillion Dance Club

1. Dancing:
  - a. What happens at a competition? The collegiate competition schedules are generally structured as follows:
    - i. Syllabus: Must adhere to syllabus restrictions. Costumes prohibited or optional.
      1. Smooth: American ballroom, a couple dances inside and outside of ballroom frame. The dances: Waltz, Tango, Foxtrot, and Viennese Waltz.
      2. Standard: International ballroom, all the moves are in ballroom frame. The dances: Waltz, Tango, Viennese Waltz, Foxtrot, and Quickstep.
      3. Rhythm: American Latin, danced with Cuban hip motion. The dances: Cha-Cha, Rumba, Swing, Bolero, and Mambo.
      4. Latin: International Latin, danced with Latin hip action. The dances: Cha-Cha, Samba, Rumba, Paso Doble, and Jive.
    - ii. Open (Non-Syllabus): No syllabus restrictions. Costumes encouraged.
      1. Night Club: Social dances including (but not limited to) Argentine Tango, Hustle, Lindy Hop, West Coast Swing, Salsa, Nightclub Two-Step, and Merengue.
      2. Multi-Dance Events: Smooth, Standard, Rhythm, and Latin
      3. Team Match: Schools compete against each other in several events
  - b. Levels and What Steps are Allowed:
    - i. Newcomer: Restricted to bronze syllabus and competitors with less than 1 year experience. Dancers in this level may also dance bronze.
    - ii. Bronze: Restricted to bronze syllabus. Dancers in this level may also dance silver.
    - iii. Silver: Restricted to bronze and silver syllabi. Dancers in this level may also dance gold and pre-novice.
    - iv. Gold: Restricted to bronze through gold syllabi. Dancers in this level may also dance pre-novice and novice.
    - v. Pre-Novice: No syllabus restrictions. Dancers in this level may also dance novice.
    - vi. Novice: No syllabus restrictions. Dancers in this level may also dance Pre-Championship.
    - vii. Pre-Championship: No syllabus restrictions. Dancers in this level may also dance Championship.
    - viii. Championship: No syllabus restrictions. Highest level of amateur competition.
  - c. Heats or Rounds:
    - i. Couples dance against other couples of the same level in heats or rounds. Each heat is approximately 90 seconds in length. Judges will either re-call couples to the next round or rank couples 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> place. Ribbons are generally distributed to winners during the awards ceremony. Be aware of your couple number!
    - ii. Couples are encouraged to participate in as many events as possible.
2. Finding a Partner:
  - a. The first step is to find someone you are interested in competing with, and ask them if they are interested in competing with you. There are no formalities as to who asks who. Consider testing out one competition together, and see how it goes.
  - b. You can have more than one dance partner by dancing different events with different people. Check the competition's policy regarding same-sex couples.

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3. Buying Dance Shoes:
  - a. Dance shoes are encouraged in order to keep dancing safe and to protect the floor. Heel-covers are required on ladies' shoes at all competitions. Also, suede stars can be glued or wrapped with electrical tape around the heel tip.
  - b. Where do I buy shoes? Very Fine, World Tone, and other vendors
  - c. How much do shoes cost? Anywhere between \$40 and \$300. Less expensive shoes will do just fine – especially when you are first starting out. Be aware of the return policy.
4. Competition Dress Code: Keep in mind you must be able to dance comfortably in the outfit!
  - a. Ladies (Syllabus):
    - i. Smooth/Standard: Long skirt (length between the knee to ankle) with a nice blouse or semi-formal dress.
    - ii. Rhythm/Latin/Nightclub: Short skirt (knee length or shorter) with biker shorts or dance bloomers and a blouse or semi-formal dress.
  - b. Men (Syllabus):
    - i. Smooth/Standard: Black pants, a dress shirt, undershirt, black socks, tie
    - ii. Rhythm/Latin/Nightclub: Black pants and dress shirt
  - c. Ladies (Open/Non-Syllabus):
    - i. Smooth/Standard: Ball gown costume
    - ii. Rhythm/Latin/Nightclub: Costume
  - d. Men (Open/Non-Syllabus):
    - i. Smooth/Standard: Dance Tuxedo or Tail Suit
    - ii. Rhythm/Latin/Nightclub: Latin pants and shirt
5. Registration:
  - a. Forms: Some competitions have online registration while others have mail-in forms. Be aware of each competition deadline! Late registrations will incur penalties.
  - b. Fees: Competition fees vary in price from \$20 to \$40 and include ballroom admission and unlimited entries.
  - c. Changes: Changes can be made online (if available) or on the day of competition
6. The Weekend Trip:
  - a. Transportation: If you need a ride to a competition or have room in your car to take extra dancer, please sign up with the CDC officers. Be prepared to split the cost of gas.
  - b. Sleeping Arrangements: If you need a place to stay the nights before and after the competition, please sign up with the CDC officers. Hotel accommodations cost approximately \$40 per person for a two-night stay. Plan transportation accordingly.
  - c. Meals: Bring snacks and plenty of water. Competitions schedule a dinner break in the afternoon between the morning and evening sessions.