

Blues Levels

What are the different Blues levels at Lindy Jazz?

There are currently 2 levels of classes available at Lindy Jazz:

1. Beginner
2. Intermediate

When do we move to the intermediate Blues course?

Once you are able to carry out the above basic techniques in the checklist below, ask your teachers if you can start attending the intermediate course. Your teachers may also be invited to join the intermediate course when they feel that you are ready. If you are new to Lindy Hop, we also recommend that you attend 2 beginner courses before asking to join the intermediate course.

Ask yourself these questions & see how many 'yes' answers you get:

- ☐ Can I 'weight shift' from one foot to the other
- ☐ Can I pulse to music
- ☐ Can I do both the 'up' and 'down' pulse
- ☐ Can I relax my arms, legs, hips, hands & shoulders
- ☐ Can I take small steps
- ☐ Can I walk to the beat of the music
- ☐ Can I do the basic slow drag
- ☐ Do I have an idea of the different holds eg open hold, close embrace
- ☐ Have I attended at least one Blues weekend workshop

Getting Feedback

Being aware of your own dancing is very important. You may watch hundreds of video clips & attend many weekend events but find that your dancing may not have improved as much as you'd like. If you're keen to improve quickly, we advise that you consider feedback as a very useful way to improve. Here are the different ways of getting feedback:

1. Ask your teachers
2. Ask someone to take a video of your footwork or any social dancing
3. Look at your posture or check your solo dancing in the mirror

Trust your Teachers

Your teachers have your best interests at heart and want you to be in the right level to develop your dancing. They may recommend a change for you to achieve this, please respect their advice.



Dance Courses & Dance Levels at Lindy Jazz

Dance Courses at Lindy Jazz

The swing dance courses are made up of 6-week block of classes. They are designed to give you the best possible way to learn; with lessons that are clear & easy to follow and explained in a fun & friendly way.

When we say, 'swing dance' we are referring to social dances of the 1920s-40s such as Lindy Hop, Charleston, Blues & Balboa. When we say 'Lindy Hop', we also include 'Charleston' as part of the syllabus.

When is the best time to join a course?

Ideally, join at the start of a course but you can also join at any point. The courses that are currently available are:

1. Lindy Hop & Charleston in Gosforth
2. Blues in Durham

When do we move from beginner to the intermediate course?

Our level of dancing is not measured according to the length of time that has passed since we began our first lesson. Our level of skill will depend on a number of factors. Some of us will be able to attend classes more often and some of us can only drop in occasionally. Some of us may over-estimate our skill level, yet some of us will under-estimate our skills. Everyone is different and learns at a different pace. Once you are able to carry out the above basic techniques listed in this guide, ask your teachers if you can start attending the intermediate course. Your teachers will also be invite you to join the intermediate course when they feel that you are ready.

What will we learn from coming to the courses?

These are the sorts of skills you will learn:

1. Movement skills - how to move your body
2. Connection skills - how to dance with other people
3. Musicality - how to feel & dance to the music
4. Social dancing - how to dance with different people to different styles & tempo of music
5. Vocabulary - how to create different moves

Why are different styles being offered?

All the swing dance styles we offer are related to each other. They come from the same era and are historically linked. In addition, you will find that most swing dancers are able to dance in more than one style and you will find these styles at many international swing events such as DJam. By learning all these styles at Lindy Jazz, you will grasp the all-important basics of how to move your body, how to dance with

other people & how to feel the music. Coming to as many classes as possible will give you the tools to social dance with confidence.

Lindy Hop Levels

What are the different levels at Lindy Jazz?

You may come across these levels in Lindy Hop:

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|------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Beginner | 5. Intermediate |
| 2. Beginner Plus | 6. Intermediate-Advance |
| 3. Improver | 7. Advance |
| 4. Improver Plus | 8. Advance Plus |

There are currently 2 levels of classes available at Lindy Jazz:

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 1. Beginner | 2. Intermediate |
|-------------|-----------------|

Beginners Classes are for everyone

To join the beginners' courses, you do not need any previous dance experience. We will share some fun moves to help you build up a great vocabulary of techniques so you'll be able to dance to different types of music and be able to dance through a whole song.

Regardless of whether you consider yourself to be an intermediate or advance dancer, we recommend that you continue to attend the beginners' classes regularly to refine your basics, to check for habits that may prevent you from progressing and to ensure that you still have the fundamental skills to enable you to lead or follow clearly.

Making Progress

There are no exams for Lindy Hop & there are no auditions for Lindy Jazz classes. So how do we know that we have progressed from 'Beginner' to 'Beginner Plus'? Ask yourself these questions:

- ☐ Can I 'weight shift' from one foot to the other
- ☐ Can I bounce or pulse whilst moving
- ☐ Can I relax my arms, legs, hips, hands & shoulders
- ☐ Can I take small steps
- ☐ Can I walk to the beat of the music
- ☐ Can I rock step
- ☐ Can I triple step (Lindy Hop)
- ☐ Do I know the difference between tapping & stepping (Charleston)

How about 'Beginner Plus' to 'Improver'? How many 'yes' answers do you get:

- ☐ Can I commit my weight on one foot or the other

- ☐ Can I match my bounce or pulse to my partner's
- ☐ Can I move my body before my I move my feet
- ☐ Can I step evenly
- ☐ Can I groove walk to music
- ☐ Can I rock step in any direction
- ☐ I can triple step in any direction (Lindy Hop)
- ☐ Can I do single & double kicks (Charleston)

How do we make faster progress?

Attend weekly classes, attend weekend workshops & social dance as often as you can. This will help you to improve quickly. At the end of class, do some footwork practice on your own or social dance with a dancer of a higher level as dancing with them will help you to get a feel for the dance. Every few months, book a private lesson as this will help you to make a big difference to your dancing.

Within these 2 levels of classes we cater for dancers at these stages of their learning:

1. Beginner Classes

- a. Beginner
- b. Beginner Plus
- c. Improver

2. Intermediate

- a. Improver Plus
- b. Intermediate
- c. Intermediate-Advance

So how do we know that we have progressed from 'Improver' to 'Improver Plus'? Ask yourself these questions:

- ☐ Can I carry out everything listed in the 'Improver' checklist
- ☐ Can I carry out the 6 or 8 count triple steps with ease (Lindy Hop)
- ☐ Can I lead / follow the basic Passby (Lindy Hop)
- ☐ Can I lead / follow the basic Tuck Turn (Lindy Hop)
- ☐ Can I lead / follow the basic Sugar Push (Lindy Hop)
- ☐ Can I do single & double kicks in any direction (Charleston)
- ☐ Can I do 1920s & 1930s basic Charleston footwork

So what key techniques do we need to enable us to progress from 'Improver Plus' to 'Intermediate'? Ask yourself these questions:

- ☐ Can I lead my partners relaxing, stretching & releasing instead of pushing or pulling
 - ☐ Can I follow my partners without anticipating or hesitating
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