

Virginia Reel

Longways dance in sets of 4 or 5 couples.	
1-8	Join hands in long lines, Go forward and back 8 beats of music
9-16	Right hand turn your partner 8 beats
17-24	Left Hand turn your partner 8 beats
25-32	Do-si-do (back to back) with partner 8 beats
33-48	Top couple take two hands, Sashay 16 beats down the center of the set and back
49-96	Top couple "reel the set" (top couple only)-- hook right elbows with partner, turn 1-1/2 times. Top gent then goes to the first lady in the ladies line, top lady goes to the first man in the man's line and they turn left elbows once around. Top man and woman then meet again in the middle, turn right elbow once around with each other, then left elbow with the next person in line, etc. Continue "right to your partner, left to the next" until the top couple has "reeled" all the way down the line.
	Top couple then sashays back up the middle to the top, and separate from each other.
	They "peel off" (cast) down the respective outside of the lines, (men down the men's side, lady down the ladies side) go to the bottom and make a two-handed arch.
	All the other couples follow them down to the bottom and up through the arch, leaving the top couple at the bottom, and the second couple at the top ready to start the dance over.

The Virginia reel is a folk dance that dates from the 17th century. Though the reel may have its origins in Scottish country dance and the Highland reel, and perhaps have an even earlier influence from an Irish dance called the [Rinnce Fada](#), it is generally considered to be an English country dance. The dance was first published in England in 1685 by Sir Roger De Coverly. The dance was most popular in America from 1830–1890.