

1937

On Your Own Toes

Jane Helser
Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker>



Part of the [Home Economics Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Helser, Jane (1937) "On Your Own Toes," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 17 : No. 6 , Article 8.
Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol17/iss6/8>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.



On Your Own Toes

by Jane Helser

THE tantalizing strains of "Hot Lips" came pouring out of the red-faced man's trumpet and the dancing couples whipped up their pace to keep time with the music. It was then that they first came to our attention—racing by at a perilous pace, the boy with his eyes closed. A moment later both he and his partner were sprawled out on the floor looking dazedly at the spectators dancing by.

Here is example A, one of the worst members of the dancing species—the race horse who ploughs along with a devil-may-care attitude, using his partner for a bumper, and usually dancing backwards or with his eyes closed. He is a real menace to the success of any party. He tears along at a pace too swift to allow perfect balance—and a catastrophe usually results. Unfortunately, it isn't always the guilty couple who gets the worst of the spill.

Exhibit B of the dancing pests is the fair lady who droops herself heavily on her partner's shoulder, nestles down and closes her eyes. Her protruding posterior takes twice the space it deserves. In addition to wearing out the partner who holds her up, exhibit B affords nothing but humor to on-lookers



who wistfully wish for "a board with a nail in it."

This peculiar position seems to be characteristic of many of today's dancers, but why or how it got its start no one knows. Perhaps the originators of the extended derriere bent over to watch their partners' feet. But they must learn that their wilted way of waltzing is not the least bit becoming,

and that a partner's arm does become cramped.

"I saw the cutest little dog today, do you like dogs? I can't hear you . . . Oh! (giggle giggle)" Haven't you heard specimen C buzzing around the dance floor? The steady stream of uninteresting conversation must make it difficult for her partner to listen to the music, keep in time with it, and still follow the trend of her chatter.

Dancing is an art that must be practiced to arrive at skill in it. It requires the whole attention of the dancer to execute his feet properly and in most instances, chatterboxes are taboo.

Listed under D is that "six-inch-law" girl who puts her left hand on the inside of the man's right shoulder and pushes back lest her escort stand too close. She doesn't glide around; she has to be towed whenever moved. Men hate to dance with her because, to be very truthful about it, they can't.

About this time, we hear a howl coming from the feminine side of the dancers who protest heartily against the "tummy-leaders" who bend them over in an unbalanced and perilous position and still expect them to keep their knees out of the way. They stagger home a trifle dizzy and aching in every shoulder muscle from being bent forward every minute of the evening.

Please, kind sirs, they plead, let us stand up straight and hold us in a relaxed and easy position. We'll follow ever so much better if we're comfortable while dancing and don't have to worry about sticking out at the wrong places.

Here is Example F which the girls dislike with gusto—the exhibitionist and show-off, the conspicuous of the conspicuous. Up and down the floor he bounces, holding his partner's arm at a wild angle and doing impossible things with his feet—steps he made up himself.

At the opposite extreme is Example G, the plodder, that no-fun dancer who knows how to walk in time to music and never bothers to learn anything else. Dancing is enjoyable only when the dancers know how to dance and walking in time to music is certainly not the way. In these days of

trucking and the big apple, there is no excuse for not knowing simple one and two-steps, a few slides and open ups that came into being when most of us were learning to read.

But surpassing all others for the ultimate of the party why-did-he-comes is Exhibit H who arrives at the affair with wandering feet and an apparently uncontrollable desire to dance across and against, up and into the traffic. Joyfully he tramples along using his outwardly pleasant, inwardly seething partner as a bumper.

If he is a good dancer, and he often is, he uses every one within his area to annoy and jolt. If he is a bad dancer, he'll soon wear himself out and mercifully become a wall-flower. But be he good or bad, or just one of those accidents, the man who jolts and bumps receives the biggest leather medal of them all. He is without a doubt the most annoying and most hated of the dancing pests.

Real enjoyment of dancing is only possible as a reflection of pleasure received by the partner. Cooperation and team work is not only essential in dancing but it is the whole thing.

Therefore, stand up on your feet, and



be positive they are **your** feet. Keep them where they belong, under you. Be smart and learn at least some of the latest dance steps. Educate your toes and keep them that way. Regard your partner with an eye, ear and hand to please him or her. See that the tummy stays at home. Don't protrude behind. Carry your own self around. Careful now, keep easy and relaxed. Grand fun, isn't it?