

Guidelines

Updated June 2024

Fusion Dance
Community Brussels

Welcome to our fusion dance community! We hope to create a growing and learning community based on a set of shared values. These values include respect, inclusivity, consent, good communication, safety, tolerance and generosity. We also highly value healthy self-care practices. These guidelines apply to everyone present at our events, including participants, teachers, musicians, DJs and organisers. They provide a list of recommendations to ensure everyone's safety and well-being, as well as advice on aligning one's behaviour with the values listed above.

Inclusivity, respect and safety

- We welcome everyone and treat them with respect, regardless of gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, lifestyle, disability, appearance, religion, age, dance ability and personal boundaries.
- We identify attendees with the names and pronouns that they provide.
- Dance roles are diverse and not tied to gender or appearance. We discuss them openly with our dance partners without making assumptions.
- We are generous and tolerant in our approach to dancing. We celebrate the richness of skills and styles. We are open to dancing with newcomers and experienced dancers alike.

Consent matters

- Declining an invitation to dance is always ok. A dance is always better when it starts with the enthusiastic consent of everyone involved.
- We practise verbal and/or non-verbal consent for the invitation to dance, the choice of roles, dancing in close embrace, and sharing weight (dips or aials). It is highly recommended to seek verbal consent with a new dance partner and new practices between partners.
- We respect personal boundaries (physical and emotional) and establish our own. By discussing what works for us and for our partner, everyone has a better time.
- We never force an interaction.
 - If they seem to refuse an invitation for a movement, we assume they understand our intentions but aren't comfortable with it.
 - When in doubt, we verbalise: "Are you comfortable with close embrace/dips/lifts/etc.?"
- We escalate progressively in any matter that could be uncomfortable (embrace, dips, lifts, etc.).
 - Not advancing progressively means taking more risks to make our partners uncomfortable. We only skip steps after asking our partner verbally to make sure they are on board: E.g. "Are you happy with advanced lifts?"
- We always ask verbally before attempting moves that could be dangerous if not done properly (high, upside down or difficult lifts, abrupt dips, etc.). We assume your partner may have an injury you do not know about.
- We do not assume someone is comfortable to dance in a specific way with us based on how we see them dance with others.

Navigating mistakes

- Social dancing is based on improvisation and non-verbal communication. Mistakes occur all the time. We remember that almost everyone has good intentions, and most discomfort is caused unknowingly.
- Most issues can be resolved with good communication. If we are made uncomfortable, we may:
 - address the person that behaved inappropriately if we feel safe doing so;
 - inform the safer space team or the organising team.
- We have the right to end a dance at any time.
- If we realise that we made someone uncomfortable, we listen respectfully, apologise, and learn, so that the situation is not repeated.
- Let us look out for each other. If we see a situation that concerns us, we ask if everything is ok if we feel safe doing so. Otherwise, we report to the safer space team or to the organisers.
- Harassment, including offensive verbal comments, intimidation, stalking, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention, is not tolerated.
- If your behaviour is reported, the organising team may discuss the issue with you, give you a warning, or ask you to leave.

Self-care and consideration for others

- We celebrate people taking care of themselves.
- We take care of our body: we stretch, stay hydrated and nourished, get enough rest, and are conscious of our alcohol levels.
- We are gentle with the body of those we dance with.
- We are mindful of those around us. We are reasonable with our moves to avoid collisions, especially when leading fast moves, dips or lifts.
- We maintain good hygiene, for example by changing clothes and taking breaks to freshen up when needed.
- We are cautious of the amount of perfume and fragrances that we wear, as some members of our community have allergies or hypersensitivities.
- We refrain from giving unsolicited feedback on the dance floor. It is always ok to give feedback on something that makes you feel uncomfortable.

Sound Policy

Ensuring the well-being of everyone's hearing is a priority. We ask DJs and musicians to maintain sound levels at about 85 dB, and to never exceed 90 dB (measured one metre away from the speakers).

These guidelines are inspired from the safe space policies and codes of conduct of Mix your Moves Fusion Weekend, Blues Muse, Black Forest Fusion, the Brussels blues dance community, Steel City Blues, Boulevard Blues, and Blues Fuse. We are always open for suggestions to improve the safety of our community.