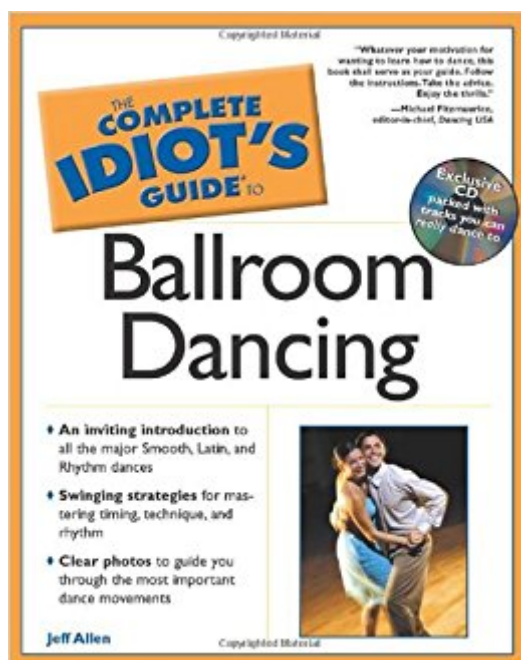


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# The Complete Idiot's Guide To Ballroom Dancing



## Synopsis

Ballroom dancing is back! And now anyone can move like a pro. DVD included! In addition to the step-by-step photos, footwork illustrations, and instruction covering all the common ballroom dances, this new edition of the bestselling Complete Idiot's Guide® to Ballroom Dancing includes a 90-minute instructional DVD featuring award-winning dancer and dance instructor Jeff Allen. It corresponds with the text seamlessly, giving readers the next best thing to one-on-one instruction, at a fraction of the cost. #149; The #1 selling ballroom dancing book #149; Includes a fantastic, new instructional DVD and hundreds of illustrations and instructions #149; Allen is a renowned, award-winning ballroom-dance teacher --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: Alpha; 1st edition (April 8, 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0028643453

ISBN-13: 978-0028643458

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.7 x 10.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.4 out of 5 stars 56 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,521,346 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #31 in Books > Arts & Photography > Performing Arts > Dance > Ballroom #84 in Books > Arts & Photography > Performing Arts > Dance > Popular #4231 in Books > Reference > Words, Language & Grammar > Communication

## Customer Reviews

JEFF ALLEN is a columnist for Dancing USA magazine and the author of four books on social and ballroom dancing. He holds Membership credentials with the North American Dance Teachers Association, Inc., and the Pan American Teachers Association. After competing in national and international competitions and winning the Gold closed level at the North American Championships, Jeff turned professional in 1984. However, he considers his greatest accomplishments to be the more than 30 Top Teacher awards he has won and being listed among the top teachers in America by DVIDA as a Regional examiner and teacher trainer. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I bought this book as a way to provide me and my wife with an intro to ballroom dancing before going on a cruise. The book is written like many of the "Complete Idiot" series books. After finally making it through the book, this is not a book I would recommend to others, unless you are a verbal (i.e. written form of verbal) learner. Here's why:- The book spends a great deal of time going through the history of ballroom dancing. While this is interesting to me, most people would simply not have the time or interest. I bought the book to learn to dance, not learn the history of dance.- The major dances are described in words, with little in the way of visual cues to guide you. Surprisingly absent are even the most basic footwork diagrams. I read the section on the fox trot several times and simply could not understand the basic steps. Yes, perhaps I am an idiot when it comes to understanding dancing, but I thought that was the point of buying a book such as this?- Beyond the basic dance steps, very little is described about the turns and sequences. In several instances where they are described, they are described with a numbering system that does NOT correspond with the beat of the music, making it even more difficult to work out the actual steps.- The accompanying DVD is of little additional help. The woman has a deer-in-the-headlights robotic look and the instruction is far too short to be of sufficient help. You simply cannot follow along with the DVD as a step-by-step instruction. In addition, there is a transition frame between sets that has little to do with ballroom dancing and simply ends up being a further distraction. The DVD is nowhere near as good as Dance Lessons 101 or Step-by-step Ballroom Dancing DVDs (also sold at ). So if you are a verbal learner (i.e. if someone can verbally describe dancing to you and that is enough), perhaps this book will work for you. However, most (myself included) are visual learners when it comes to learning to dance. You would be better off going with one of the aforementioned DVDs to get you started.

To be honest I have not read much of the book, I started dance classes (ballroom and latin) about 2 months ago and I am able to pick up the moves pretty fast cause I love it. So I focussed more on the CD here which I was very impressed with. It was more than I expected to find, covering a few basics two or three patterns per dance, having a little knowledge of dance already it was a nice review and practise. However to those of you that are interested in the book you will find explanations for both the man and woman's steps and also pictures as guidelines covering waltz, foxtrot, tango, viennese waltz, rumba, merengue, samba, cha-cha, mambo, east coast swing...that's a good spread for your money, of course the CD is necessary to also help explain.

I'm just starting lessons and thought this book, which I found in the library, would be a great reinforcement. I think I'm a bit premature, but that's not the book's fault. The problem is that there seem to be many variants of the "basic step" and the book does not always do what my instructor did. I expect that as I get more practice this will be a non-problem. The book is very wordy, but that's because the chapters are each very complete -- I think it's not too hard to skip forward and then go back for the finer details. However, the library copy came with a CD, with nice music. The edition sent has a DVD which seems pretty useless. Each topic seems to be about 6 seconds long and they slide into each other. It's not easy to watch two people dancing for six seconds and pick up the footwork -- especially when the segments are not labelled on the screen as they come up, and some of them are a bit blurry, which may be to indicate speed or to give the scene a dreamy look. A better DVD would have been helpful, but the book stands on its own.

Not only did the book come to me without the CD which was supposed to be included, but the information provided was in no way intended to be understood by the novice ballroom dance "idiot". I do not consider myself to be an "idiot" but did not find the information in this book helpful to me. And there was no promised CD included.

This book was different from what I was led to believe: it is a "detailed, sophisticated, and comprehensive" - not "idiot's" guide to ballroom dancing. I am enjoying the book, but the history and background, and then the technical foundation the book lays in finally getting to the actual dance steps, are more for the serious student who is NOT an idiot. This is clearly a serious book written by a serious dance teacher for serious students who are not idiots!

This guide does give one good background information on ballroom dancing, and has many illustrations. The accompanying music CD is good (not great, but good). My main complaint is that it can sometimes be a bit difficult to read, to follow. And there really should be a glossary of terms in the back, I had a difficult time finding what various acronyms meant. It's not really a book you can open up to, say, the section on the foxtrot and just learn how to do the foxtrot without first reading the rest of the book. It's meant to be read from start to finish before you begin learning any particular dance.

Good book. Lots of background information. Not good for High Society. Too structured and not forgiving. Should allow for creativity.

the explanation of steps is not very clear and the DVD leaves much to be desired as well

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