



BBC WORLD SERVICE LEARNING ENGLISH

Ballroom dancing



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Ballroom dancing

Celebrity dance show popular year after year

Read the text below and do the activity that follows.

Ballroom dancing in the UK used to be seen as something rather unfashionable that old people might do. For the past five years though, the popularity of ballroom dancing has soared thanks to a reality TV show. 'Strictly Come Dancing' is one of the BBC's big TV shows. Millions of people tune in every Saturday night to watch the show which airs from September right up to Christmas.

In the show a number of professional ballroom dancers each partner up with a celebrity. Every week they have to learn a different ballroom dance and perform it live on TV on the Saturday night. Four judges, all of whom have a background in professional dance, give the celebrities scores and comments about their dances. It's then up to the public to call in and vote for their favourite couple. The two least favourite then have to dance again and the judges decide who stays in the competition and who leaves.

The show demonstrates how glamorous ballroom dancing is. The celebrities get to wear colourful dresses and sequined suits to dance in, and it looks like a lot of fun. The TV programme also shows what good exercise it can be to ballroom dance and what hard work is involved in learning the dances and performing them properly.

Dance schools around the country have seen a boost in the numbers of people wanting to learn how to dance. And it's not only older people who're interested. Lots of children and young people in their 20s are keen to learn.

The format for the show has been copied in lots of countries around the world. In America, the show is called 'Dancing with the Stars'.

So you can forget your usual exercise – why not learn a foxtrot, a tango or a jive or for the less energetic, a waltz perhaps. It's the trendy thing to do!



Glossary

unfashionable – not modern or popular	soared – grown a lot
tune in – switch on their TV sets and select a particular channel	airs – is broadcast
partner up – dance together as a pair	live – as it happens, not recorded
judges – people who decide which person, or in this case pair, wins a competition	scores – the number of points someone gets in a game, test or competition
up to – if something is up to you, you have the right and power to do or decide it	glamorous – attractive in a special or exciting way
sequined – with a small shiny metal or plastic disc sewn onto them for decoration	a boost – a sharp and significant growth
keen – willing, wanting	the format – here, the way and style in which parts of a TV programme are put together
foxtrot – a type of formal ballroom dance that combines short quick steps with longer ones	tango – an energetic dance of South American origin for two people
jive – a fast dance which was very popular with young people in the 1940s and 1950s	waltz – a formal dance in which two people holding each other move around a large room, turning as they go and repeating a movement of three steps
trendy – modern, influenced by recent fashions	



1. Reading Quiz

Are these sentences true or false? Circle the correct answer.

1. Ballroom dancing has become more popular in the UK thanks to the 'Strictly Come Dancing' TV show. True / False
2. There are three judges on the show who comment on the dances.
True / False
3. It's only old people who are interested in ballroom dancing these days.
True / False
4. The American ballroom dancing TV show is called 'Dancing with Celebrities'.
True / False
5. A foxtrot is a kind of ballroom dance. True / False



2. Adjectives

Let's take another look at the adjectives we've used to describe ballroom dancing. Can you match up each adjective with the correct definition?

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 1. glamorous | a. not modern or popular |
| 2. energetic | b. having lots of different colours |
| 3. unfashionable | c. attractive in a special or exciting way |
| 4. trendy | d. having lots of energy |
| 5. colourful | e. modern, influenced by recent fashions |

Now complete the following sentences with one of the adjectives from above:

1. My sister is so fashionable. She has just bought a really _____ mobile phone.
2. The ballroom dancers were dressed in bright pink and green and yellow – they looked so _____ on the dancefloor.
3. It's so _____ being a ballroom dancer. You get to wear long expensive dresses with sequins on.
4. My father's clothes are so _____ - they are all from the 1970s.
5. You need to be fit to ballroom dance. You move around a lot and it's very _____.

3. Wordsearch



Try to find the words associated with ballroom dancing in the puzzle below.

There are ten words to find. Words can be written horizontally (g), vertically (i) or diagonally (m)

j	s	h	o	p	r	b	a	l	l	r	o
u	x	h	b	o	o	a	p	o	p	u	l
d	n	p	o	p	u	l	a	r	i	t	y
g	l	o	w	w	e	l	l	d	a	n	s
e	p	r	o	f	f	r	j	u	d	s	e
s	c	o	r	e	s	o	f	o	x	t	q
s	h	o	b	e	f	o	x	t	r	o	u
s	e	q	u	d	a	m	o	t	i	u	i
p	o	p	u	a	r	i	t	a	r	o	n
s	h	t	a	n	g	y	i	n	p	o	p
s	c	o	r	c	e	s	e	g	e	e	t
p	r	o	f	e	s	s	i	o	n	a	l

ballroom	dance	popularity	tango	sequin
professional	show	judges	foxtrot	scores



Answers

1. Reading Quiz

Are these sentences true or false? Circle the correct answer.

1. Ballroom dancing has become more popular in the UK thanks to the 'Strictly Come Dancing' TV show. **True**
2. There are three judges on the show who comment on the dances. **False**
3. It's only old people who are interested in ballroom dancing these days. **False**
4. The American ballroom dancing TV show is called 'Dancing with Celebrities'. **False**
5. A foxtrot is a kind of ballroom dance. **True**

2. Adjectives

Can you match up each adjective with the correct definition?

1. c 2. d 3. a 4. e 5. b

Now complete the following sentences with one of the adjectives from above:

1. My sister is so **fashionable**. She has just bought a really **trendy** mobile phone.
2. The ballroom dancers were dressed in bright pink and green and yellow – they looked so **colourful** on the dancefloor.
3. It's so **glamorous** being a ballroom dancer. You get to wear long expensive dresses with sequins on.
4. My father's clothes are so **unfashionable** - they are all from the 1970s.
5. You need to be fit to ballroom dance. You move around a lot and it's very **energetic**.

3. Wordsearch

j	s					b					
u		h				a					
d		p	o	p	u	l	a	r	i	t	y
g				w		l					s
e					f	r					e
s	c	o	r	e	s	o					q
						o	x				u
				d		m		t			i
				a				a	r		n
				n				n		o	
				c				g			t
p	r	o	f	e	s	s	i	o	n	a	l

