

SPEAKING OF DANCING...

How to Use the Internet to Support Your Dancing

by Gigi Jensen

I started researching this article with the idea of sharing some of the digital resources you can use to help you as a dancer.

Oh boy! This topic turned out to be a bigger one that I can succinctly explore here and now. I did, however, come up with some ideas that will help you find dance resources in more familiar locations.

Enjoy the familiar, your local library:

Use your local library system to your dance advantage. Look at their book, music, and DVD sections for sources about how to dance, dance history, health benefits of dancing, folk music, Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers dance movies, etc. I used to check out VHS tapes on how to dance hip hop and swing. Do they carry any of the national dance magazines? Checking my own public library system online, I found a generous smattering of interesting dance-related items. Most bigger library systems allow you to check out your books online and some may still offer curbside



service. Ours has a web portal to other catalogs of resources. They also give free tickets to local arts institutions who sometimes have dance-related exhibits and events.

Your fellow dancers:

I'll bet y'all have a few books, CDs, videos, DVDs, LPs, on your bookshelf. Have you thought about sharing those with each other? Does your folk dance club have a lending library? Pre-virus, you could host a dance movie viewing in your living room. Today's version is to watch dance movies together on YouTube over Zoom, which we recently did with our tango students. I know it's not the same when you can't pass the popcorn bowl, but since we now live in another state, it was nice to share dance together.

Websites:

Visit folk dance organizations' websites. I saw links to dance books, CDs, movies, articles, and to other organizations with their collections. I went first to *folkdance.com*, clicked the *Resources* tab, then *Dance-Related Links*. I ended up visiting folk dance organizations in Ontario, Canada, and Australia. They had resource sections, too, with links to even more folk dance organizations! I spent the afternoon virtually wandering around the world. Then I went to the National Folk Organization website and did the same, following up with Stockton Folk Dance Camp.

Social Media:

As for social media, like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Pinterest, and so on... that requires more thought. It's not as orderly as your local library. It's more like the Wild West. I'm not ready to buckle on my holster and spurs just yet.

