

BANJO CONTRA
(American)

Contra dances have their roots in the country dances of the British Isles, where they reached a peak of popularity in the late 1600s and early 1700s. When the English, Scot and Irish immigrants settled in the New World they brought these dances with them. Every one of the thirteen colonies knew and danced contras, including many of the Puritans. Not all were pickle-faced joy killers, and most were not about to give up their love of country dancing. Contra dancing has never ceased to be a part of the New England dance culture, and from there it has spread to all parts of the United States.

Banjo Contra is called by the well-known contra and square dance caller, Mr. Jerry Helt.

Record: Contra Dances With Calls and Instrumentals, Jerry Helt
Caller and Prompter. Blue Star LP 1029, side 1, band 5 (LP).

Formation: Longways set or contra line, M with L shldr to music. Cpls numbered 1, 2, 3, 4 etc. All odd numbered cpls cross over and become active cpls.

Meter: 4/4

MeasPattern

- 1-2 Banjo With The One Below, Men Go Forward
Facing the one below join both hands, assume butterfly banjo pos (R hips adjacent), M go fwd, W back up, pivot in place (backtrack) to assume sidecar pos (L hips adjacent). (cts 1-8)
- 3-4 Sidecar Back To Place You Know, Face The Girl
In butterfly sidecar pos (L hips adjacent) M go fwd, W back up, return to place and face each other (butterfly pos facing). (cts 9-16)
- 5-6 Heel And Toe Here We Go, Heel And Toe Back You Go
Starting with M L ft, W R ft move twd M L, W R with a "heel and toe, and step, close step"; then with the other ft move twd M R, W L. Repeat the same action. (cts 17-24)
- 7-8 Heel And Toe Here We Go, Heel And Toe Back You Go
Repeat the above action of cts 17-24. (cts 25-32)
- 9-10 Do-Sa-Do Same Girl You Know
Do-sa-do the same W. (cts 33-40)
- 11-12 Same Girl Swing
Swing the same W and finish with the W on that M R, facing the ctr of the set. Progression has been made, actives have moved down one place in line, inactives up

Continued..

one place, all dancers in original lines. (cts 41-48)

13-14

With The Couple Across Circle Four To The Left

With the facing cpl in the opp line join hands and circle four to the L. (cts 49-56)

15-16

Left Hand Star With The Same Four

The same four dancers L hand star exactly once around to end in their orig long lines but facing a new person below. (cts 57-64)

Note: Caller indicates ends cross over every second and alternate sequence through the dance.