

Philadelphia Freedom Fly-in: Spin the Windmill at the Moulin Rouge



A Guide
for New
Attendees

What is the Fly-In?

A Fly-In is a weekend-long square dance event. Come to dance all day and connect with dancers from other clubs across the United States, Canada, and beyond. The Philadelphia Freedom Fly-In is hosted annually by Independence Squares, a member club of the International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs (IAGSDC).



Dancing at the 2023 Philadelphia Freedom Fly-In

All dancers are welcome in our inclusive square dance community. You don't need to bring a partner, have danced with Independence Squares before, or be a square dancing expert in order to attend. As long as you can dance at least the SSD or Mainstream program, you'll be sure to have a good time.

The registration rate for first-time attendees is \$90, regardless of when you register. If you can only attend part of the event, day rates are available.

You can register for the event online or by mail. To register online, make a free account on the [IAGSDC website](#) then visit the events page to complete your registration. To register by mail, send a registration form and check made out to Independence Squares to 65 Manchester Rd, Sewell, NJ 08080. Registration forms can be picked up at any Independence Squares event or found on our [website](#).

Contact the registrar, Ron Rumble, at ronrubble@gmail.com with any questions or concerns. We would love to hear from you!

Before the Fly-In

More information about the event can be found in the [Fly-In FAQ](#) on the [Independence Squares website](#). Once you're registered, you'll also get occasional emails from the registrar with important information and reminders.

Consider booking a hotel room for the duration of the event. The Fly-In is hosted at the Sheraton Bucks County Langhorne, so that is the most convenient place to stay. A limited number of hotel rooms are available at a discounted rate of \$135 a night, so reserve a room early. You can reserve through this [link](#). Contact the registrar with any concerns or if you want to try to arrange for a roommate.

There will be a themed dance and an optional costume contest on Saturday evening. The theme for this year's event is Moulin Rouge. Costumes for this theme can include all things Parisian, cabaret, turn of the century, or anything else fabulous!



Disco Costumes at the 2023 Philadelphia
Freedom Fly-In

Water will be available outside of the dance halls and free coffee and tea are made available by the hotel each morning. Meals are not included in your Fly-In registration. Independence Squares has compiled a [list of local restaurants](#). Printed copies of the list will be available at the registration table during the event. There is also a [hotel restaurant](#) that serves breakfast and dinner.

During the Fly-In

You should be aware that all of the dance halls at the Fly-In are carpeted. Some dancers, especially those wearing sneakers or other shoes with similar soles, find it difficult to slide on carpeting. One solution is to wear dance socks over sneakers to make it easier to turn on carpeted floors. If desired, you can purchase dance socks ahead of the Fly-In from [The Happy Dancing Company](#) or other retailers.

There will be multiple dance halls with different programs in each hall. Check the event schedule to see when you can dance. If you've graduated from a Mainstream or a Social Square Dancing (SSD) program, you can dance during any session labeled SSD. SSD is a shorter entry program made up of selected calls from the Mainstream call list. If you can dance Mainstream, you can dance SSD.

Once you're in a dance hall for your program, just hop into an empty spot in a square when dancers are squaring up. You don't need a partner to join a square. If you dance the "man's position," raise your right hand to find a partner. If you dance the "lady's position," raise your left hand. You can also partner with someone who has their hand up. If they have both hands raised, that means they dance both positions.

If you haven't attended a gay square dance event before, some things may feel a little different. Gay square dancers love flourishes, alternate movements or extra movements added on to calls for fun. Feel free to ask your fellow dancers about the flourishes they use between tips. At the Fly-in, people of all genders will be dancing all positions. It's common in gay square dancing to announce which position you are dancing when doing gendered calls. For example, if the caller says, "men run," dancers in the "man's position" might announce, "man."

If you make a mistake, don't worry about it. We all mess up sometimes. Just do your best to recover and keep moving. If the square completely falls apart, dancers will likely return to home positions or make lines of four facing in. Follow the lead of your square.

During the Fly-In

When not dancing, check out the basket raffle, participate in the fifty-fifty, and socialize with your fellow dancers. Bring cash if you want to participate in the fifty-fifty or basket raffle.

The basket raffle is a fundraiser for the club. Themed baskets full of goodies are donated and raffled off. You can view baskets and buy raffle tickets starting Friday evening. Drop a raffle ticket in the bag for any basket you hope to win. Winning tickets will be drawn on Saturday evening. Baskets can be collected and taken home on Saturday evening or Sunday morning. You do not need to be present at the drawing to win, but you must pick up any baskets you win by noon on Sunday.



Baskets at the 2023 Philadelphia Freedom Fly-In

Fifty-fifty drawings are a popular way for square dancers to test their luck and support square dance clubs. During dancing, fifty-fifty tickets will be sold. At a scheduled time, a winning ticket will be drawn. The winner will receive half of the money collected during the fifty-fifty. The other half will go to support Independence Squares. Fifty-fifty participants do need to be present at the drawing to win. The ticket drawing time will be announced on the day of the fifty-fifty.

During the Fly-In, you'll also have the opportunity to register for the 2025 Fly-In at a discounted, early bird rate. Plan to bring a checkbook or use PayPal if you want to register for next year's Fly-In! The discounted rate is \$95 and will only be available for a limited time.