

CODE OF CONDUCT



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|---|----------|
| 1. Introduction..... | 0 |
| 2. Code of conduct..... | 1 |
| a. <i>Applicable rules.....</i> | <i>1</i> |
| b. <i>Dance Etiquette.....</i> | <i>2</i> |
| c. <i>Reminder of the french law.....</i> | <i>3</i> |
| 3. Resources..... | 5 |
| a. <i>Contacts.....</i> | <i>5</i> |
| b. <i>Other useful contacts.....</i> | <i>5</i> |
| 4. Conclusion..... | 5 |

1. Introduction

SwitchXperience is an event that celebrates West Coast Swing, centered around exploring both leader's and follower's role, switching and stealing. The event is open to dancers of all ages and promotes West Coast Swing music and dance education, as well as respect and consensual practice of switching roles and stealing partners, fun, and creativity.

SwitchXperience is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all. To achieve this, we rely above all on the education, common sense and responsibility of each individual. This code of conduct is a moral contract between all event stakeholders. Everyone is asked to read it, accept it and respect it.

This code of conduct suggests the means to be implemented individually and collectively to ensure that everyone can enjoy the event to the full, calmly and safely. It is not intended to replace existing laws or regulations.

Let's all help make this event a success, and continue to promote a safe, respectful and inclusive practice of West Coast Swing.

Who is this code of conduct addressed to?

This code of conduct is intended for all event stakeholders, without exception. This includes in particular:

- The organizing team
- Teachers
- Judges
- Partners (DJs, photographers and videographers, technicians, security guards, venue employees, etc.)
- Volunteers
- Event participants (dancers and non-dancers)

When is the code of conduct applicable?

The code of conduct is intended to be applied:

- Before the event: during any interaction with a purpose of organizing or participating in the event.
- Throughout the event: during classes, competitions, shows, parties and any other event-related social activity.
- After the event: in particular during the return journey or during post-event communications, such as the distribution of photos and videos, the completion of satisfaction questionnaires, etc.

Where does the code of conduct apply?

In all places connected with the event (dance halls, premises made available by the event, partner hotels or accommodation, etc.), but also on the Internet and in particular on social networks.

What happens in case of a non-compliance with the event's rules ?

In case of non-compliance with the event's rules and expectations, the staff reserves the right to take disciplinary actions ranging from a simple warning to permanent exclusion from the event or referring it to the authorities - without reimbursement of any incurred costs (event pass, accommodation, transport, etc.)

2. Code of conduct

a. Applicable rules

Be respectful and courteous. Politeness and respect reflect concern for others, consideration and benevolence. All participants are asked to show politeness and respect throughout the event.

Dance with care. Use all your senses and perceptive abilities on the dance floor to avoid collisions or injuries (especially during 'The Madness'). It's everyone's responsibility to be aware of their own movement and position, as well as those of their partner and the dancers around them, in order to avoid any form of dangerous contact.

Respect the consent and limits of others.

- Be aware that asking a person for a dance does not mean that they will agree to it. Everybody has their own reasons to decline a dance. There's nothing wrong with saying "no" - everyone has the right to refuse an invitation. Do not take it personally!
- **Lead, Follow, Switch, Steal**. Switching and Stealing are based on consent, but also on specific techniques. Check for assent before joining a steal circle. Don't "switch" without asking. If you're not sure about the role of the person you want to dance with, don't hesitate to ask.
***Exception : the Madness** → During the “Switch & Steal Madness”, by stepping on the dancefloor, you agree to be switched or stolen at any time and by anyone (of course with respect and awareness). If you do not feel comfortable participating in the Madness, just join us a bit later (you can enjoy this part of the social from the bar ;)).*
- If, at any time during the dance, you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, you can tell your partner, ask for the adjustments you need, or stop the dance before the song ends. Requests for your own safety and comfort are not disrespectful to your partner. They do not fall into the category of unsolicited "feedback" on dance skills (generally considered impolite). If you are often uncomfortable at dances, or if you often receive these kinds of requests for adjustments, you might consider asking a teacher or someone you trust for help.
- Just because you see someone behaving in a certain way or performing a particular move with someone else, doesn't mean they will want to reproduce it with you. This applies to everything from close positions to movements such as falling, but also to the simple act of accepting a dance or being photographed or filmed. If you're not sure what someone's limits are, or if you can't tell from their non-verbal cues, then ask.
With regard to image rights in particular, remember that if you are filming or taking a photo of someone, you must have their consent before using the images (see chapter "Reminder of the french law").

Drink with moderation. Alcohol consumption is legal and widespread in France. Nevertheless, all participants in the event are asked to control their consumption so that it remains compatible with the safe and respectful practice of West Coast Swing, and so that all activities outside the dance floor can take place in a serene and pleasant manner. Everyone is asked to be aware of their own limits, to be attentive to those of others and to accept them: inciting another person to consume alcohol to excess is not tolerated behavior.

b. Dance Etiquette

The advice we give you below aims at providing the very best experience to everyone during the event. If you don't follow them to the letter, it doesn't mean disciplinary actions will be taken against you. However, we heartedly recommend you pay attention to it for everyone's well-being.

- **Dancing :**
 - **Invite and dance with everybody.** We all have our favorite dancers, or a special bond with some of our friends. However, we would prefer if you did not dance only with those people for the whole event. In order to be inclusive and friendly, we advise you to dance with as many people as possible, of different levels.
 - **Don't give unsolicited feedback to other dancers**
 - **Pay attention to your partner.** We all like to try new patterns and new dance moves, but beware of the inherent risk of injury. Any move which increases the risk of hurting

your partner (or other dancers) creates an environment where people are not safe anymore. Especially for a specific drop or a lift, we advise you not to try it with someone you haven't practiced it with beforehand.

- ***Be watchful and proactive.*** The security, well-being and comfort of each attendee is everyone's concern. We ask our attendees to be empathetic, to look after other dancers and to feel free to help when a difficulty arises. Minors can attend the event : please, be specifically mindful of their security, their well-being and their comfort.
- **Hygiene :** In any type of dancing, and specifically in partner dancing, hygiene is essential to respecting oneself and one's partner.
- **Health :** We are all passionate about dancing. However, no event and no dance will ever justify neglecting your health, nor sharing your germs and making others sick.

c. Reminder of the French law

The code of conduct is not intended to replace existing laws and regulations. This non-exhaustive chapter is designed to raise awareness about certain key concepts: *discrimination, insults and defamation, sexual violence, image rights, drunkenness and drug use*. The behaviors described below are prohibited and punishable by law.

Discrimination: In law, discrimination is an unfavorable treatment which generally meets two conditions: it must be based on a criterion defined by law, and it must relate to a situation covered by the law (such as access to private goods and services, or access to a place open to the public). The criteria defined by law prohibiting discrimination may be derived from the French legislation alone, or from international or European texts; here are a few examples (non-exhaustive list):

- Criteria governed solely by the French legislation: marital status, physical appearance, name, morals, place of residence, ability to express oneself in a language other than French.
- International or European criteria: age, sex, origin, membership or non-membership - real or assumed - to an ethnic group, nation or so-called race, pregnancy, state of health, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, political opinions, philosophical opinions, beliefs or membership or non-membership - real or assumed - to a particular religion.

Insult and defamation:

- An insult is a word, writing or expression of thought addressed to a person with the intention of hurting or offending them. Insults are punishable by law, whether expressed in public or in private. Penalties are heavier for public insults and discriminatory insults.
- Defamation consists in asserting a fact that is prejudicial to a person's honor or reputation.

Sexual violence or violence of sexual nature: Sexual violence refers to situations in which a person imposes on another person a behaviour or statements (oral or written) of sexual nature.

Sexual violence refers to all sexual acts committed with violence, coercion, threats and/or surprise. Surprise refers to the fact that an aggressor surprises the victim's consent if they are not in a state to consent (for example, when they are asleep or unconscious), or because the aggressor has used stratagems to deceive the victim's consent. Coercion can refer to the notion of manipulation or influence, implicit or explicit, for example due to a difference in status between the two individuals or a particular sensitivity or weakness on the part of the victim.

Notably, the following cases are considered as sexual violence:

- Sexist or sexual contempt is the imposition of sexist or sexual comments or behavior on a person that violates their dignity or exposes them to an intimidating, hostile or offensive situation.
- Sexual harassment is the repeated imposition on a person of sexist or sexual comments or behavior that either violates their dignity because of its degrading or humiliating nature, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive situation. Regarded as sexual harassment is also the use, even if not repeated, of any form of serious pressure with the real or apparent aim of obtaining an act of a sexual nature. (Art. 222-33 of the French Penal Code)
- Sexual exhibition is the act of exposing one's nudity or sexual attributes "to the view of others in a place accessible to public view". (Art. 222-32 of the French Penal Code)
- Sexual assault is defined as "any sexual violation committed with violence, constraint, threat or surprise". (Art. 222-22 of the French Penal Code). Case law defines sexual assault as "touching" of the victim's chest, buttocks, thighs, sex, mouth (forced kissing) or contact with the attacker's sex on any part of the victim's body.
- Rape is defined as "any act of sexual penetration of any kind whatsoever, or any oral-genital act committed on the person of another or on the person of the perpetrator by violence, constraint, threat or surprise". (Art. 222-23 of the French Penal Code)

The notion of *consent* is essential, because in all forms of sexual violence, the victim has neither consented to nor desired the sexual behavior and/or comments and/or images. Their refusal and non-consent can be expressed in words, silences, attitudes or writing. Consent must be reciprocal and mutual. Silence does not mean acceptance. If a person is not in a position to give consent, this means that they are refusing. Consent is temporary. It can be given and then withdrawn.

Image rights: Image rights allow you to authorize or refuse the reproduction and public dissemination of your image. The image may be a photo or a video. In the case of an image taken in a private place, it is necessary to have the written agreement of any person to use an image where they are recognizable (distribution, publication, reproduction or commercialization). In the case of an image taken in a public place, authorization is required if the person is isolated and recognizable. The image may be distributed via the press, television, a website or a social network. In practice, the photographer/videographer (event official or any other person who has recorded an image of another person) must obtain written consent before distributing the image: they cannot simply consent to be photographed or filmed.

Drunkenness in public places: Manifest drunkenness in a public place is prohibited. There is no defined blood-alcohol level to characterize such intoxication: the state of intoxication is assessed by the police according to the situation. As a reminder, in France it is forbidden to drive with a blood alcohol level equal to or greater than 0.5 grams per liter of blood.

Drug use: Some 200 psychoactive substances are banned in France. A substance is prohibited if it has been classified by the Agence nationale de sécurité des médicaments et des produits de santé (ANSM) as a narcotic. The term "narcotic" thus refers to all substances whose consumption is prohibited.

3. Resources

a. Contacts

A breach of the code of conduct may be reported to any member of the staff (Event organizer, volunteer, teacher, DJ etc.). You may also ask for help from the staff of the venue (for example: a security agent) or anyone you trust.

b. Other useful contacts

- To call the police: 17
- To call the firefighters: 18
- For a medical emergency (SAMU): 15

4. Conclusion

This code of conduct is a moral contract between the different actors of the event. Even though we first rely on people's education, common sense and responsibility, this code of conduct promotes the values we defend, which are benevolence, dignity, integrity, respect and tolerance.

All together, we can promote a safe, respectful and inclusive practice of West Coast Swing.



Thank you to Westies' Safety for offering a Base for the Code of Conduct.

