Ceilidh Guide

If you have never been to a ceilidh before, you’ve come to the right place for help! Here are some of the most common questions people ask, and our answers:

I don’t know how to dance. Can I still go?
Don’t panic, we know this is likely the first time you’ve attended a ceilidh, so we’ve structured the event specifically for beginners. Almost all ceilidhs have a professional ‘Caller’ in attendance, someone who demonstrates and guides you through each dance. Everyone learns together, which contributes to the fun and festivities! So, if you’re new to ceilidh dancing, you’ll fit right in.

What should I wear?
As you might imagine, when you are dancing and jumping around in a large group you’ll quickly heat up! To ensure you are comfortable throughout the event, wear breathable clothing (no thick / heavy jackets or jumpers), and flat lightweight shoes (no pointy high heels or heavy boots).

Who will be there?
At university ceilidhs, you’ll be dancing with other students from a mix of nationalities. It’s a great opportunity to meet other people in a fun and social setting.

Lads (boys) and lassies (girls) traditionally dance together, but if you prefer to dance with a partner of the same gender that is completely fine.

Can I bring a friend on the day?
Most ceilidhs are ticketed events, meaning you will be given a ticket, or will have to purchase one in advance of the event. Also, university ceilidhs are for students only. To avoid disappointment, make sure everyone who wants to attend has acquired a ticket prior to the event.

I heard there might be haggis to eat. What’s in it?
Haggis is the traditional national dish of Scotland. At our university ceilidhs we will serve two varieties, meat and vegetarian. Meat haggis contains sheep heart, liver and lungs, and is mixed with onions, oatmeal and spices before being baked. It is tastier than it sounds! The vegetarian option is the same, but with vegetable ingredients instead of meat. Both options are delicious and will give you an authentic taste of Scottish cuisine.

All haggis is served with a side of neeps (mashed turnip, which is a root vegetable) and tatties (mashed potato).

Is there a live band?
Almost all ceilidhs will feature a live band, usually an accordionist, who will perform traditional ceilidh music. This adds to the atmosphere of the event and brings a real sense of energy to the dances.

How long will the ceilidh last?
Some events last longer than others, but most of the university ceilidhs will last approximately 2 to 3 hours. Don’t worry, you’ll get breaks in between dancing to drink water and cool down!