

Five Dances Like Clockwork

32-bar strathspey for two couples in a four-couple longwise set

- 1-8 1st couple set, dance down for two bars, giving both hands, turn in two bars, then dance up back to original places, finishing with 1st man facing out.
- 9-16 All dance a right-hand chain in the diagonal of the 1st woman. (This is similar to a ladies chain, with 1st woman and 2nd man in the roles of the ladies.)
 - 9-10 Giving right hand, 1st woman and 2nd man change places, curving slightly round each other. At the same time, curving out to their right, 1st man and 2nd woman dance towards the others' places.
 - 11-12 Giving left hands, 1st woman and 2nd man turn their partners, finishing diagonally opposite their starting place, their partners finishing where they started, facing out.
- 13-14 Repeat bars 9 and 10.
- 15-16 Giving left hands, 1st woman turns 2nd woman and 1st man turns 2nd man for three quarters, finishing in a line across the dance between first and second places, 1st couple facing down and 2nd couple facing up.
- 17-24 All dance the targe, starting with 1st woman turning 2nd man by the right in the middle. On bars 23-24, men together and women together turn all round, finishing in a line across the dance between first and second places, 1st woman and 2nd man back to back in the middle, facing 2nd woman and 1st man respectively.
- 25-32 Men together and women together dance a Highland Schottische pousette across the dance. On bars 31-32, they turn for three-quarters to finish back on own lines, in order 2, 1.

Repeat from new positions.

Devised by Nicolas “Niols” Jeannerod in December 2025.

I was one of Mervyn Short’s musicians during Summer School 2025. As a trainee teacher, I was very impressed by the precision of his teaching: he invariably took the class through five dances each morning, finishing perfectly on time. I wrote the tune “Five Dances Like Clockwork” during one of these classes, and the dance followed naturally. Both are dedicated to Mervyn, whose example I hope to learn from.

Recommended music: *Five Dances Like Clockwork* , by the deviser.