



Tips for the Perfect ‘Dirty Dancing’ Lift



Lake Lift Competition participants, 2018. Photo by Buddy Morrison Photography

Do you have what it takes to perfect the infamous “Dirty Dancing” lift? Join other fans and re-live all the romance and memorable moments this year at the 2019 Dirty Dancing Festival in Lake Lure, NC!

During the weekend of September 13-14, celebrate the beloved 80s cult classic with various competitions in remembrance of the film. With watermelon carrying contests, talent shows, and shag competitions, the highlight activity of the movie and festival is the lake lift competition! The lake lift competition gives movie fans the opportunity to test their skills every year from across the country.

In the 1987 romantic film, the entire plot of the movie led up to this one scene. It is the triumphant ending and even "People Magazine" declared it "one of the most iconic dance moves in history!"

In the film, Jennifer Grey (Baby) and Patrick Swayze (Johnny) practice the iconic lift for days. They practiced on land, in the lake and, showcased the iconic lift in the finale on the main stage at Kellerman's Resort.

While the Lake Lift Competition is often a comedy of errors, here are tips for the ultimate lift from Ann Dunn of the Asheville Ballet & Dance Company to be sure you don't become another blooper:

Tip 1:

Practice with the guy lying flat on the floor to "feel" the center of balance for both of you (each person has their own center of balance, but in a lift you must share a mutual center of balance and it can be hard to feel). Do this before practicing in a vertical position - you need to know what balance feels like. Men, spread your fingers out wide and get the heel of your hand on her pelvis, without digging fingers into her lower abdomen. Both of you coordinate the deep knee bend before the jump and lift.

Tip 2:

The lifter's arms must get straight, right beside his ears. Ladies, jump up hard and then aim over his head. Hold onto his wrists on the way up before opening the arms into the wing position. Remember, it takes both of you! Breathe together...go low together...find that moment when the balance is just right to begin the lifting motion. Trust your partner's muscles.

Tip 3:

When you do eventually get to the water, the lifter should be SURE his feet are on firm, even ground. Take a deep breath, bend the knees, and bounce upwards as the base partner lifts at the waist and hips. In sync, count to three...lifting on count three.

Tip 4:

The base partner holds (hold it, hold it, hold it!) position of the person in the air as long as possible. The person in the air holds their arms up and

out to the side reaching for the beautiful blue Lake Lure sky. Keep those legs up, held tightly together and point your toes.



And THAT'S how it's done folks! Photo credit: Chris Wolfe.

Come test your skills and celebrate one of the greatest love stories of all time right here in Lake Lure, NC! Sign up onsite during the festival on Saturday, at the watermelon races tent, from 10AM – 3PM.