**CHRYSANTHEMUM**

**LEVEL:** 1  
**SUGGESTED TRACKS:** 2 or 6 (Polkas)

**SUMMARY:** A very simple dance with only 1/4 of the dancers moving at any one time. Works particularly well for a disparity of ages, uneven numbers, and differently abled dancers.

This is a very simple dance originally created by Chris Turner and described in *Dancing Round the Maypole*. We have adapted to make it even simpler to teach.

In this dance, one colour goes into the middle, turns to the left, and makes a single, clockwise circuit of the pole before returning home. This is repeated by each colour in turn. With a little imagination, the pattern resembles the long petals of a chrysanthemum...

**Dance at a Glance**

1. Blues* move in and circle the pole once, clockwise;
2. Repeat with Reds, Greens & Yellows;
3. Continue sequence as desired;
4. Yellows start the unwind.

*Colour sequence arbitrary

**Stepping**

This can be a walk, a skip or something more complicated suggested by whatever music you choose. However if you continue the dance for more than a few turns each, then stepping will become much harder. Much better to concentrate on the phrasing for this one.
DANCE INSTRUCTIONS

Before you Begin:

Make sure that:

- Everyone knows what colour ribbon they are holding!
- Your dancers know their position in the circle. Who is on either side of them?

Making the Pattern:

1. All face into the middle, holding the ribbon with the right hand raised;
2. All the Blues take 2 steps towards the pole and turn to the left. When everyone is ready, dance once around the pole and back to place;
3. Stand facing into the middle again with the right hand raised;
4. Repeat steps 1, 2 and 3 with the Reds, Greens and Yellows. This can be repeated as often as the enthusiasm and concentration of the dancers allows, usually two or three times. For really young dancers, once might be enough!

*The choice and sequence of colours is completely arbitrary, but be consistent once you have started.

The Unwind:

Starting with the last colour to have moved (in this case Yellow), reverse the sequence and direction of dance until the pattern is completely unwound.

Performance Tips:

- Each colour becomes a team, helping each other know when to start, and moving at the same speed - it’s not a race to the finish!
- Listen to phrasing so that this becomes more instinctive than counted (see p18).

Next Steps:

- Add an introduction or coda by getting the dancers to go in and out, either all together, or by colour group.
- Add extra flourishes by turning underneath your own ribbon, or parading around the pole.
- See Challenges (p51).

Extracted from The Maypole Manual by Mike Ruff and Jenny Read. This PDF can be used and shared free of charge, without alteration, for non-commercial educational use only. You can buy the full publication and accompanying CD from Mike Ruff or from the English Folk Dance and Song Society’s Folk Shop.