

I Saw Three Ships

Traditional tune, with dance by Chris Kermiet

I wanted another English Country Dance for the Winter Solabration. Something Christmassy and easy – with a great tune. There's a great tune for "I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In" that's a lively jig, which I thought needed a dance. One that could be taught to new dancers with one walk-through, or two at the most. Here it is. The tune is wonderful, and would be a great addition to any Christmas program.

Here's the tune as well, as a midi file. (The quality of this will vary depending on the quality of your midi soundbank.)

If you want to, you can also [download the midi file](#) (you may need to alt-click or right-click on this link to start the download). The midi file plays the tune twice.

You may also [download the music](#) as a pdf.

Duple Proper

A1: First corners set, fall back, and two-hand turn once around (16 counts).

A2: Second corners set, fall back, and two-hand turn once around (16).

B1: Ones lead down, turn and skip back up (8); separate, go round the twos as the twos move up (8).

B2: Right hand star (8); left hand star (8).

I Saw Three Ships (AABB)

Corners should move forward towards one another during the setting.

I like this as right hands joined for the lead down, and both hands joined (promenade position) for the lead back up. But I'm usually not too fussy about this. When cueing this for contra dancers (at the Winter Solabration, for instance), I avoid the word "cast", since I don't want to get an assisted cast.

These should be crossed-hands stars. As you come out of the left hand star, the first man and the new second woman are headed straight for each other, which helps with the progression.