

# Bon Odori Song

2019, updated 2020

This is an American folk song about Obon and bon odori. Lyrics and music were written and will be performed by Cecilia Eng who has danced bon odori since she was a child with the last twenty years or so at the Oregon Buddhist Temple. Cecilia's hobby is writing folk songs. Chris Dart and Elaine Werner created the choreography.

(chris) One of my favorite phrases in this song is "nobody cares if you dance right or wrong" which is an important concept in bon odori. This is not performance dance, but dancing for joy with our community. The fourth stanza will be a little "interesting" to the dancers. In it Cecilia refers to several of the dances we have done at Oregon Buddhist Temple so we will do a sample step from each. There is a lot of laughter expected for this stanza :-). There is a list below of the stanza 4 dances/motions we will do. It can blow up to fit an 8.5 x 11 piece of paper.

## Teaching Video:

<https://youtu.be/TIhtp2dIIRU>

## Dancing Video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHvv28EBAV4&list=PLkeYL6A2MrBSVoMr2SShTA4C\\_sbfqvs\\_G&index=22](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHvv28EBAV4&list=PLkeYL6A2MrBSVoMr2SShTA4C_sbfqvs_G&index=22)

## Lyrics:

### **Bon Odori**

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Our ancestors knew all about the pain of strife.  
We thank them for teaching us to live a better life,  
So we welcome and cherish their memories this night  
Before they return into the light.

### **CHORUS:**

All life is a circle of darkness and light  
So join us in our circle on this joyous night.  
The lanterns are our memories of joy and love,  
So dance in our circle while they shine above!

We celebrate our happiness in peace without war.  
We dance with joy in life before death's dark door.  
The memory of hatred gives way to love of friends  
And we will dance together 'til the end!

### **CHORUS:**

Yes, we join in the circle for the obon dance  
With the grandmothers we follow as we dare to take a chance  
And nobody cares if you dance right or wrong -  
Just dance to the rhythm of the song

**CHORUS:**

So we'll dance, playing baseball as we hit home runs!  
We will dance to recycle and to pound mochi buns!  
There's a samba and fandango – and too soon we hear the call  
For the Coal Miner's dance - the last of all.

**CHORUS:**

----- Dance notes:

for the 4th stanza of Bon Odori Song -- Cecilia Eng

**Catch Hit**

Yakyu Ken Ondo (baseball dance)

**Scoop Pound**

Mottainai

Portland Mochitsuki Ondo

**Samba Bird**

Shiawase Samba

Bambutsu No Tsunagari

**Dig Dig**

Tanko Bushi