

LESSON BOOK



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"There are shortcuts to happiness and dancing is one of them."

- Vicki Baum (1888-1960) Austrian writer and musician



Music CDs

There are six CDs included with the course, offering a wide variety of music styles and tempos to help you practice. The first three CDs have music broken up into individual styles starting with slower, easier songs and gradually increasing in speed. The last three CDs are compilations of several styles together.

MUSIC CD 1

Waltz and Tango

Track #	Tempo	Style
1. Stress Free Waltz	88bpm	Waltz
2. Home on the Range	78bpm	Waltz
3. Amazing Grace	80bpm	Waltz
4. Gymnopedie	86bpm	Waltz
5. Home Ĝrown Waltz	88bpm	Waltz
6. Grazin	92bpm	Waltz
7. El Rosa Negra	112ĥpm	Tango
8. Lost in a Trance	108bpm	Tango
9. Sometimes	112bpm	Tango
10. Tango Azul	112bpm	Tango
11. Gitano En Mi Corazon	120bpm [Γ ango
12. Durango	130bpm	Tango

MUSIC CD 2

Foxtrot and Rumba

1. Tuxedo Malfunction	130bpm	Foxtrot
2. Slow Walk	98bpm	Foxtrot
3. Cool Jazz Spot	108ĥpm	Foxtrot
4. Tall n' Blond	110bpm	Foxtrot
5. Walking	120bpm	Foxtrot
6. Pleasant Things	128bpm F	oxtrot
7. Latin Lover	110bpm	Rumba
8. Monday	104bpm	Rumba
9. This is Real	112bpm	Rumba
10. It Was Not To Be	118bpm	Rumba
11. You Were Meant to Be With Me	124bpm	Rumba
12. Shade Tree	128bpm R	. umba

MUSIC CD 3

Cha Cha and Swing

1. Mystic Fire	116bpm	Cha Cha
2. All or Nothing	112bpm	Cha Cha
3. Miami Satin Nights	120bpm	Cha Cha
4. Red Bandana	120bpm	Cha Cha
5. Smooth as Silk	116bpm	Cha Cha
6. Back From Tijuana	120bpm	Cha Cha
7. Undertow	120bpm	Swing
8. Motown	114bpm 8	Swing
9. Filet of Soul	116bpm	Swing
10. Jerry in the House	120bpm	Swing
11. Ladies and Gentlemen	130bpm	Swing
12. Don't Be Bad	140bpm	Swing

MUSIC CD 4

Smooth Dance Compilation

Track #	Tempo	Style
1. Stress Free Waltz	88bpm	Waltz
2. After Innocence	92bpm	Waltz
3. Autumn Waltz	90bpm	Waltz
4. Keep Your Chin Up	108bpm	Waltz
5. I'm On Your Side	116bpm	Tango
6. Tangled Tango	116bpm	Tango
7. Tango De La Corazon	110bpm	Tango
8. Fiery Heart of Love	132bpm	Tango
9. Getting Sediment All Over You	112bpm	Foxtrot
10. Newton's Apple	112bpm	Foxtrot
11. Speak Easy	112bpm	Foxtrot
12. Éasy Jazz Fun	124bpm	Foxtrot

MUSIC CD 5

Rhythm Dance Compilation

124bpm	Rumba
102bpm R	t umba
122bpm	Rumba
120bpm	Rumba
116bpm	Cha Cha
112bpm	Cha Cha
120bpm	Cha Cha
120bpm	Cha Cha
116bpm	Swing
124bpm	Swing
126bpm S	wing
140bpm S	wing
	112bpm 120bpm

MUSIC CD 6

Smooth and Rhythm Compilation

1. The Dream	118bpm	Rumba
2. Pleasant Things	128bpm	Foxtrot
3. Heirloom	84bpm	Waltz
4. Tango Romantico	108bpm	Tango
5. Not a Care	120bpm S	wing
6. All or Nothing	112bpm	Cha Cha
7. Fly Away With Me	122bpm	Rumba
8. Pinstripes	136bpm	Foxtrot
9. After Innocence	92bpm	Waltz
10. Tango Valentino	100ĥpm	Tango
11. Homemade Pie	122bpm	Swing
12. Mystic Fire	116bpm	Cha Čha
13. You Were Meant to Be With Me	124bpm	Rumba
14. Swing My Baby	144bpm F	oxtrot
15. Lover's Waltz	100bpm	Waltz
16. Piano Tango	112bpm	Tango
17. Get Up and Go	132bpm	Swing
18. Miami Satin Nights	120bpm	Cha Čha

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The Basics of Partner Dancing



"There is a bit of insanity in dancing that does ever ybody a great deal of good."

> - Edwin Denby (1903–1983) American dance critic and poet



The Basics of Partner Dancing



Welcome to Learn & Master Ballroom Dance! Ballroom dancing can be lots of fun and great exercise as well. To get started, let's learn some very basic concepts about how ballroom dancing works. There are a variety of styles or dances inside the larger category of ballroom dance. We'll cover six of the most popular dances in this course—**Waltz, Tango, Foxtrot, Rumba, Cha Cha, and Swing** to start. Within each of these specific dances is a set of figures. For example, in Rumba you will learn nine different figures. Each figure is made up of a series of steps or footwork.

Think of it like this, the individual steps are the letters. Combine these steps to form an entire figure—or a word. And on the dance floor, connect these words or figures to say what you want to say with that dance.

It's also important to know that Ballroom dancing is split into two divisions: **AMERICAN STYLE** and **INTERNATIONAL STYLE**. We are going to focus on the American style, and within it are two different categories—**SMOOTH DANCES** and **RHYTHM DANCES**. Waltz, Tango, and F oxtrot are American Smooth dances; and R umba, Cha Cha, and Swing ar e American Rhythm dances.

DANCE TERMS

In each dance is a fundamental figure called a Basic. A **BASIC** is a standardized group of steps, which together with other patterns, constitute the foundation of a dance. Think of it as the default figure in every style of dance.

FRAME refers to the position of the arms and torso while in dance position. (**Figure 1.1**)

FINDING YOUR CENTER

To find the center or the cor e of your body, imagine a straight line running fr om front to back and another line from side to side through your body. Where the two lines intersect is your center or core. It's not on the exterior of your body; rather,



FIGURE 1.1 Dance Frame

Introduction

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The Basics of Partner Dancing



it's found in the interior of the body. The objective when dancing is to keep your center or core aligned in the center of your body.

BODY ALIGNMENT

Body alignment refers to four blocks of weight: the head, the tor so, the hips, and the legs. Your head should be sitting dir ectly over your shoulders and ribs, which are situated directly over your hips and legs. Use your partner or a mirror to check your alignment and make adjustments accordingly.

THE FIVE FOOT POSITIONS

Mark demonstrates the Smooth f oot positions while Jaimee demonstrates the Rhythm positions. The difference is that in Rhythm dances the toes are turned out with heels together and in Smooth dances the feet ar e parallel.

DANCE TIP

It's a person's center that carries her from foot to foot when walking, not the feet.

KEY IDEAS

One of the most important elements of ballroom dancing is the awareness between you and your partner.

If your center is not aligned in the mid dle of your body, you will distort all of your blocks of weight.



FIGURE 1.2 First Position (Feet Together)







FIGURE 1.5 Fourth Position (Walking Step)



FIGURE 1.6 Fifth Position (Heel to Toe)

Introduction



POINTS OF CONTACT

The Five Points of Contact:

- 1) Leader's left hand to follower's right hand
- 2) Leader's right hand on follower's shoulder blade
- 3) Follower's arm on top of leader's arm
- 4) Follower's hand on leader's shoulder or arm
- 5) Body contact

DANCE TIPS

Ladies, be careful to support the weight of your left arm on your own. You don't want to rest it on his arm.

Ladies, you can rest your hand slightly to the back or front of your partner's shoulder or directly on it.

KEY IDEA

As you're learning, you may choose to dance in four points of contact. When you feel comfortable, try dancing in five points of contact.



FIGURE 1.9 Third Point of Contact



First Point of Contact



FIGURE 1.10 Fourth Point of Contact



Second Point of Contact

FIGURE 1.11 Fifth Point of Contact



FIGURE 1.12 Closed Dance Position



FIGURE 1.13 Promenade Dance Position

DANCE POSITIONS

POSITION refers to the placement of the two dancers to each other. The most fundamental dance position is the closed position. **CLOSED POSITION** is the normal hold w here man and lad y stand facing eac h other with their arms lifted together in frames. (**Figure 1.12**)

PROMENADE POSITION is a V-shaped dance position where both the man and lad y move forward in the same direction. (Figure 1.13)





OPEN POSITION refers to any dance position where the man and lad y stand apart or slightly apart, with one or two hands in contact. (**Figures 1.14–1.15**)

APART POSITION is when the man and lad y have no body contact. (Figure 1.16)

RIGHT and LEFT SIDE POSITION is an open position where the lady is to the right or the left of the gentleman. (Figures 1.17–1.18)



FIGURE 1.14–1.15 Open Dance Position



FIGURE 1.15



FIGURE 1.16 Apart Dance Position



Right Side Dance Position



FIGURE 1.18 Left Side Dance Position

LEADING AND FOLLOWING PRACTICE

Here is a simple exercise to help you and your partner learn to respond to each other as you dance. Stand facing each other and touch palm to palm. *Gentlemen,* slowly walk forward toward the lady and then walk backward, using the center of your body to move. *Ladies,* you will wait a fraction of a second until you feel your partner move to take the step.

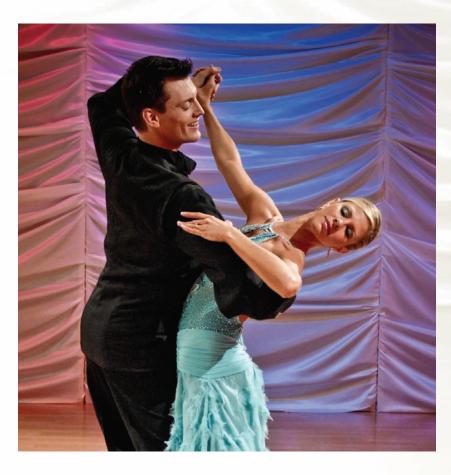
DANCE TIP

Spend some time practicing this exercise so that you become comfortable dancing with a partner.

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American Smooth Dances



"Dance is the only art in which we ourselves are the stuff of which it is made."

> - Ted Shawn (1891–1972) Pioneer of modern dance



Fundamentals of Smooth Dancing

There are many dances in the American Smooth category of ballroom dancing, but this is your opportunity to learn the three most popular—the Waltz, the Tango, and the Foxtrot. **AMERICAN SMOOTH** is a division of ballroom dancing consisting of dances that travel progressively around the dance f loor, alter nating between open and closed dance positions. All Smooth dances share several important characteristics.

Your POSTURE should incorporate the following components:

- Your core is pulled in
- Your rib cage is lifted and slightly forward
- Your shoulders are relaxed
- Your neck is stretched nice and tall

Your POSITION to each other in Smooth dances will be slightly of fset—the woman standing slightly to the right of the man. (Figure 2.1) Smooth dances can be danced in four or five points of contact.



FIGURE 2.1 Offset Dance Position

DANCE TIPS

Your posture in Smooth dances should be positioned directly over your feet. The weight should be equally distributed between the balls and heels of your feet.

Practice holding your frame without connecting to your partner to properly develop it.

Gentlemen, place your hand directly on top of the woman's shoulder blade. You don't want your hand on her back or at her waist. (Figure 2.2)

Ladies, if you make a V with the thumb and forefinger of your left hand and place it right on top of the gentleman's shoulder, you will have the correct fourth point of contact. (Figure 2.3)



FIGURE 2.2 Second Point of Contact



FIGURE 2.3 Fourth Point of Contact

Smooth Dances

Fundamentals of Smooth Dancing



In all of our Smooth dances you will hear the terms heel leads and toe leads. **HEEL LEADS** and **TOE LEADS** refer to which part of my foot touches the floor first—either the heel or the toe.

In Smooth dances you move forward on the heel first, and you will use a toe lead when moving backward. *Ladies*, when you take a toe lead and place your right heel on the floor, the toe of the left foot should be simultaneously releasing. This is called a toe r elease. Always release the toe when you are moving backward. (Figure 2.4)

In Smooth dances , the feet, knees , and ankles should brush under the body with eac h ste p. T his brushing action is also called **FOLLOW THROUGH**. It should feel like your feet are gliding on the floor.



FIGURE 2.4 Toe Release

LINE OF DANCE, or **LOD**, is the counter clockwise f low of traffic around the dance floor.

SWAY is the inclination of the body to the left or right, usually against the direction of movement. Sway helps you to:

- Change your weight
- · Control your rise
- Change your direction

RISE AND FALL is the continuous changing of body elevation through the use of the feet, ankles and legs. Rise and fall is accomplished through the bending and straightening of the legs and through the lifting and dropping of the heels.

A great way to practice rise and fall is to stand facing eac h other and step into a deep knee lunge. This lowering action is considered the fall. From that position you will rise all the way to your toes, alternating moving backward and forward. That upward movement is considered the rise.





Waltz

WALTZ DANCE FIGURES

- Basic Box
- Box with Underarm Turn
- Basic Progressive
- Balance Steps
- Fifth Position Balance Steps
- Open Break with Underarm Turn
- Left Turning Box
- Right Turning Box
- Simple Twinkle



We are beginning with a category of ballroom dance called American Smooth. **AMERICAN SMOOTH** is a division of ballroom dancing consisting of dances that travel progressively around the dance floor, alternating between open and closed dance positions.

We will focus on three dances in this category: the Waltz, the Tango, and the Foxtrot. These three dances are considered Smooth dances as opposed to Spot dances. **SPOT DANCES** remain on one part of the dance floor, while **SMOOTH DANCES** travel progressively around the entire dance floor. We will talk about Spot dances in the second part of the course.

Our first dance in American Smooth is the Waltz. The **WALTZ** is an elegant and graceful dance in 3/4 time characterized by the rising and lowering action you see in the feet and body. The Waltz was first developed in Vienna and soon dominated the European and American dance scene until World War I. At that point a whole new generation became enraptured by the contemporary Tango and Foxtrot. The original Waltz was fast-paced, but it evolved into the slower version we know today.



Waltz Timing

Waltz is danced in 3/4 time—which means the beat is 1-2-3-1-2-3. It is usually very slow with the downbeat on the 1.

The ability to hear and count the beat is very important in dancing. For some people, hearing the beat comes naturally, but for others it takes a bit of practice. For practice in hearing the beat, listen to the Waltz tracks on the CDs and count the beats while snapping your fingers or clapping your hands. You can also sway back and forth, keeping the 3/4 time.







FIGURE 3.1 Gentleman's and Lady's Starting Foot

BASIC BOX

In every dance there is a fundamental figur e called a basic. A **BASIC** is a standar dized group of steps, which together with other patterns, constitute the foundation of a dance. Think of it as the default figure in every style of dance.

The **BASIC BOX** in Waltz is a sixstep figure that forms a box on the floor as you dance.

You lear ned about closed position in the basics of partner dancing , b ut remember, **CLOSED POSITION** refers to the normal hold where a man and a lad y stand facing eac h other . (**Figure 3.2**) In Smooth dances , the lady will stand slightly to the right of her partner. His right f oot will be

aligned between the lady's feet. You can dance the Waltz in four or five points of contact. (Figures 3.3–3.4)

Notice when you step to the side and y our feet come together that they actually touch each other or "close" to eac h other. *Gentlemen*, it is important to always close your feet at the appropriate time so that your partner can also close her feet. The rule is to always close your feet on beat 3. (Figure 3.5)

DANCE TIPS

Gentlemen, you will always start with your left foot. *Ladies*, you will always start with your right foot. (Figure 3.1)

Another option in learning the Basic Box is to stand in front of each other and just hold hands. That way you can focus on learning the steps.

Keep your frame still. Don't move your arms or use each other for balance. Keep your head up. *Ladies,* don't rest your left arm on your partner's arm.

KEY IDEA

Never step twice in a row with the same foot. Always dance with alternating feet.



FIGURE 3.2 Closed Position



FIGURE 3.3 Four Points of Contact



FIGURE 3.4 Five Points of Contact



FIGURE 3.5 Close Your Feet on Beat Three



The Gentlemen's Responsibility in Leading

The key to successful leading , *gentlemen*, is to move your entire body forward, taking a straight step directly into the lady. She will then feel the need to move backward. If she does not feel your body moving toward her, she will most likely not move back either. The same is true in moving backward. Your frame must stay with your body so that she knows to move forward as you step back. Just using your arms to push or pull will cause her to lose her bal ance.

The way to properly lead is to use y our supporting leg to move. By bending your knees like you're sitting in a chair, you will feel your weight start to move forward. Using this technique will eliminate the need to push the lady backward. (Figure 3.6)

When stepping, a common mistake is to leave your arms with or push the lady while moving your feet. (Figures 3.7–3.8) Instead, keep your frame strong and bend your knees and use your body weight to propel you by keeping your back straight and using the supporting leg to push into the floor. That way the lady knows exactly where to go.

Ladies, you will dance a fraction of a second behind the man. You won't shift your weight until you feel him do the same.

If you are moving together in time to the music, stepping with the correct foot, and not stepping on your partner's feet, then you're ready to learn the next figure.

BOX WITH UNDERARM TURN

The Box with Underarm Turn is the Basic Box, the figure you just learned, with an added underarm turn for the lady.

Gentlemen, your footwork is essentially the same as in the Basic Box. The only difference is as you take your backward step on beat 4, you will open your right arm out to the side and slightly raise your left hand to indicate an underarm turn. (Figure 3.9)



One other slight difference is that you may have to rotate slightly as the lad y is finishing her tur n to get back into closed position. Pay attention when finishing the turn not to pull the lad y back into y ou when placing y our hand back on her shoulder. You will cause her to lose her bal ance. Let her dance back into the partnership and all you will do is bend your elbow.

FIGURE 3.9 Indication of Underarm Turn



FIGURE 3.6 Use Your Supporting Leg to Move

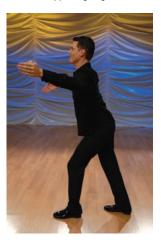


FIGURE 3.7 Incorrect Way to Lead



FIGURE 3.8 Incorrect Way to Lead



Ladies, the underarm turn involves walking under your own arm in a circle for six beats. You will start with your right foot. (Figures 3.10–3.14)

KEY IDEA

Ladies, walk in a fairly large circle during the underarm turn. This figure will take a large amount of space on the dance floor.

Arm Styling

ARM STYLING is the positioning and movement of the arms, reflecting the character of a dance or style of dancing. Arm styling finishes the line of the body or movement and it brings a more polished and finished look to the figur e.

When the gentleman r eleases the lady's arm, both of your arms should be relaxed. They should be vertical but not too stiff.

Ladies, you will feed your arm through the partnership in front of your bod y by bending a t the elbo w. (Figure 3.15) Also after the turn, *ladies*, you will wait for your partner to place his hand on your back. Then gently lay your hand on his shoulder.





FIGURE 3.10–3.14 Lady's Underarm Turn

FIGURE 3.11







FIGURE 3.13



FIGURE 3.14



FIGURE 3.15 Bend Arm at the Elbow to Begin Underarm Turn

BASIC PROGRESSIVE

The Basic Progressive is just like the Basic Bo x figure but it is designed to help y ou move around the dance floor in the line of dance. **LINE OF DANCE**, or **LOD**, is the counterclockwise flow of traffic around the dance floor. This is standard for every ballroom dance floor anywhere in the world.

When you take your side step in this figure it's more of a progressive side step, meaning your step is on a diagonal not directly to the side. This diagonal motion will help you to progress along the line of dance.

Changing Your Weight and Sway

One of the most common mistakes w e can make w hen dancing the progressive figure is to not completely transfer all of our body weight to the opposite foot with each step and beat. Changing your weight is just like walking—you will alter nate your feet. What will help y ou change your weight is what we call adding sway.

SWAY is the inclination of the body to the left or right, usually against the direction of movement. (Figures 3.16–3.17)

Sway helps you to:

- · Change your weight
- Control your rise
- Change your direction

Assignment

Your first assignment after mastering these basic figures is to incor porate sway to assist with changing your weight. Also practice your arm styling to make the figures look great.

Sway

Rise and Fall

When dancing Waltz, the raising and lowering action is simply called rise and fall. **RISE AND FALL** is the continuous changing of body elevation through the use of the feet, ankles, and legs. Rise and fall is accomplished through the bending and straightening of the legs and through the lifting and dropping of the heels.

So, you will be lowered or have bended knees on beat 1, push up with your legs through beats 2 and 3, and finally bend your knees again at the end of beat 3.



Ladies, it's important to wait until you feel your partner move before moving yourself. If you move first, you will pull him off balance.

Completely change your weight with each step.



FIGURE 3.17

Waltz





Heel Leads and Toe Leads

HEEL LEADS and **TOE LEADS** refer to which part of the foot touches the floor first—either the heel or the toe. (**Figures 3.18–3.19**)

Gentlemen, your forward steps will always be a heel lead, and y our backward steps will be a toe lead. *Ladies*, all of your steps will be the natural opposite of the gentleman's steps.



FIGURE 3.18–3.19 Heel Leads and Toe Leads



FIGURE 3.19

BALANCE STEPS

BALANCE STEPS are a way to keep dancing when you have nowhere to move. This figure is divided into tw o segments—forward and backward balance steps and side to side balance steps.

DANCE TIP

Dragging the foot on the floor during each step of the balance steps will help with your balance and will help to slow down the timing of the figure.

FIFTH POSITION BALANCE STEPS

These balance steps will be a little dif ferent from the previous balance steps because you will be changing your weight on beats 2 and 3 and balancing on your toes. In the **FIFTH FOOT POSITION** the toe of one foot points to the heel of the other foot. (**Figures 3.20–3.21**) For a full description of the fifth foot position, see the Basics of Partner Dancing.



FIGURE 3.20 Fifth Foot Position (Heel to Toe)



FIGURE 3.21 Fifth Position Balance Step



FIGURE 3.22 Open Break

OPEN BREAK WITH Underarm Turn

An **OPEN BREAK** is a break or rock step taken in open position while facing each other, often with partners moving apart from each other. (Figure 3.22)

The sequence of this figure is:

- Half of a box
- · An open break
- An underarm turn
- A fifth position balance step
- Finish with a box

Assignment

After mastering these figures incor porate rise and fall into your dancing. Also pay attention to use the heel and toe leads cor rectly.

DANCE TIP

Ladies, when dancing in the five points of contact you will stretch your neck into his right arm through your sternum. You don't want to tilt your head. (Figure 3.23)

LEFT TURNING BOX

The Left Turning Box is different from the Basic Box because it adds a quarter turn of rotation with every three beat measure.

FIGURE 3.23 Lady's Waltz Dance Posture

Inside and Outside of a Turn

An important idea about turning is to know the inside and outside of a turn. In the Left Turning Box you will make a 1/4 of a turn to face a new wall with each three beat measure. That means with each turn you make, one of you is on the inside of the turn and one of you is on the outside of the turn. The partner moving backward is on the inside of the turn and the partner moving forward is on the outside of the turn.



FIGURE 3.24 Dancing on the Track



FIGURE 3.25 Dancing off the Track

Dancing On and Off the Track

Another way to look a trotation is thr ough a conce pt called dancing on and off the track. Think of your steps as if you're dancing on a railroad track. With each measure, one person is dancing directly on the track and the other person is dancing off of the track. You will alter nate this role. When you dance forward you stay on the track, and w hen moving backward you move off the track. (Figures 3.24-3.25)

DANCE TIP

When following through in each step, be careful not to turn your foot out or brush your foot wide. It should track directly under your body.

Brushing Your Feet and Following Through

Brushing your feet is important in most Waltz figures, especially turning figures. What it means is that with each step you take, you will track or brush your knees, ankles, and feet right under your body. This motion is also called FOLLOW THROUGH.







RIGHT TURNING BOX

The obvious difference in the Left and Right T urning Boxes is that one turns to the left and the other to the right. Ho wever, in order to turn the figure to the right, the leader must begin with his right foot. So, this figure begins with one half of a Basic Progressive step, also called a **CHANGE STEP**. The figure finishes with the second half of the progressive.

Make sure to apply the same tec hnique when executing the Right Turning Box that you used in the Left Turning Box. That means dancing on the track w hen moving forward and of f the track w hen moving backward. Also it's very important to remember to track your legs and feet directly under your body and brush your feet past each other with each step.

SIMPLE TWINKLE

This next figure is called the Simple Twinkle. This figure is the first time you will dance in a position other than closed position, and it is called pr omenade position. **PROMENADE POSITION** is a V-shaped dance position where both the man and lady move forward in the same direction. (Figure 3.26)

To find the promenade position, stand in closed position w hile holding each other's elbows and walk your feet to the right all the while staying connected. When you feel comfortable in the promenade position, practice swiveling your feet out by applying pressure to the balls of your feet.



FIGURE 3.26 Promenade Dance Position

KEY IDEA

The position of your head during the promenade will greatly affect your balance. Do not tilt your head forward or backward in the promenade; rather, turn it from left to right directly over your spine.



FIGURE 3.27 Incorrect Promenade Position



FIGURE 3.28 Incorrect Promenade Position

DANCE TIPS

Because you are dancing in the closed promenade position, the lady's hip is positioned slightly behind the man.

Keep your torsos connected when in promenade position.

If you run out of room on your dance floor, simply dance a couple boxes to turn yourself around and dance in the other direction.

Assignment

After mastering these figures incorporate the tracking of your legs or follow through into your dancing. Also practice dancing to the inside and outside of the turn.



TURNING A CORNER

One question you might have is, "How do we get around a corner?" There are several ways to do this:

- 1. The easiest solution is to dance one measure of a Left Turning Box for 1/4 turn, and then do not turn on the second half of the box.
- 2. Gentlemen, turn the ladies underarm turn 1/4 to the left to face a new line of dance.
- 3. Dance a Simple Twinkle.

DANCE FLOOR ETIQUETTE

Keeping these simple rules of etiquette in mind will ensure you have a great time and are viewed as courteous when you are in social dancing situations:

- Gentlemen, ask your partner to dance and offer your hand. Then guide her out to the dance floor.
- It is appropriate and acceptable for the lady to ask the man to dance, especially in a ballroom dance club situation.
- Thank each other after the dance, and the gentleman escorts the lady to her seat.
- Never correct or instruct your partner on the dance floor.

DANCE NOTES: WALTZ

To fully master Waltz, you should be able to accomplish the following standards:

- Know your timing and be able to identify a Waltz song.
- Know the names of the figures and the direction they move.
- Know your own steps for each figure—the leader's role or the follower's role.
- Make sure your posture is correct. Your head and chin are always lifted. Your hips should stay underneath you.

SAMPLE WALTZ ROUTINE

This routine uses all of the figures you've learned. Turn on some Waltz music and practice dancing these figures:

- Balance Steps
- Open Break with Underarm Turn
- Left Turning Box
- Basic Progressive
- · Right Turning Box
- Simple Twinkle
- Basic Progressive
- Box with Underarm Turn
- (repeat entire routine)

LEGÃCY LEARNING SYSTEMS

Lango TANGO FIGURES

Tango Basic

- Tango Rocks
- Single Corté
- Curving Basic
- Promenade
- Rock and Corté
- Running Steps
- Promenade to Underarm Turn
- Advanced Rock and Corté

TANGO is a dance with a quick stacca to feel, striking foot action, and dramatic snapping turns of the head. Tango was born in the slums of Buenos Aires in the late nineteenth century. It became a popular dance before World War I but was later banned in the United States due to its scandalous reputation. As the dance has evolved over the decades and become less scandalous, it's now danced in ballrooms.

Tango is danced in a 2/4 time signa ture. There are several ways to count Tango. We can count the beats one through eight, count the slows and quicks, or spell the word T-A-N-G-O. If you count using slows and quicks, remember, a slow is equal to two beats and a quick is equal to one beat.

ANDER

Posture, Position, and Frame

Tango utilizes a modified dance hold where you will be slightly more offset from each other than in Waltz and Foxtrot. (Figure 4.1) That means the man's arm will be positioned farther and lower down on the lady's back. *Ladies*, instead of placing your arm on top of his arm, you will hook your forearm and hand underneath his elbow and upper arm. Your palm should face downward and your thumb will pull upward. (Figures 4.2–4.3)

Your posture and frame are the same as in Waltz.



FIGURE 4.1 Modified Tango Position

Smooth Dances

Tango







FIGURE 4.3

DANCE TIP

Gentlemen, be careful not to pull your shoulder up and forward when the lady connects her left hand under your arm. Rather, keep your shoulder blades pulled back and down.



FIGURE 4.5 Maintain Bent Knees with Every Step

DANCE TIPS

When dancing the sidetogether step you will drag your foot to the closed position without changing your weight.



Your legs should move directly under your body, only slightly lifting your foot off the floor as you step.

If you feel uncomfortable using the five points of contact, dance instead in four points of contact.

TANGO BASIC

Lady's Hand and Arm Position

When dancing the basic y ou will make an upside-down L on the floor. The last three steps of the figur e—forward-side-close—will end most T ango pa tterns and is called **TANGO CLOSE.** When you move to the T ango close, you will be in third foot position. (Figure 4.4)

Contrary to Waltz, in this dance there is no rise and fall, so your knees will stay slightly bent a t all times. This concept is important to maintain quick and grounded footwork. (Figure 4.5)

Another distinguishing element of dancing T ango is that y ou do not change your weight on the last beat. So men will al ways begin the figure with their left foot and the women will start with their right foot. A simple way to remember this concept is the phrase, "Women are always right."

KEY IDEAS

The knees stay slightly bent at all times.

Do not change your weight on the last beat.





FIGURE 4.4

Third Foot Position of Tango Close







FIGURE 4.6 Step on Flat Feet



FIGURE 4.7 Gentleman's Dance Position

TANGO ROCKS

The **TANGO ROCKS** adds a series of rock ste ps to the T ango Basic. T o **ROCK** means to transfer y our weight from one foot to the other f oot using a

DANCE TIP

Gentlemen, when you step during a rock step, step with flat feet. (Figure 4.6)

slight backward and forward motion. When rocking in Tango, your head should not tilt back and forth but should stay still and r emain directly over your spine. You should have flexed knees and transfer your weight completely from foot to foot as you rock.

SINGLE CORTÉ

Gentlemen, this figur e will seem a bit un usual at first because it's the first time you step backward. As you step backward, your hips will be in a seated position so that the lady will feel you move backward without being pulled off balance. (Figure 4.7)

Also, *gentlemen*, to give the lady her shape flatten your back, pull your body in, and look dir ectly over the lady's head. And as y ou finish the Corté and mo ve into the Tango close, you want to move laterally into your partner, as if you keep your head a t the same height with eac h step.

A **CORTÉ** is a type of lunge where the woman steps forward creating the traditional Tango picture. (**Figure 4.8**)



FIGURE 4.8 Tango Corté

Ladies, to position yourselves in a Corté you will feel like you're lifting yourself into your partner without moving backward or dropping the left side of your body. Even though it appears that the lady is moving backward, she's merely lifting into her partner and extending her chest. You also want to turn your head slightly to the left but stay directly over your spine.

Assignment

Your first assignment after mastering these basic figures is to incorporate bending your knees with each step and to apply quick staccato movements to each step.

DANCE TIPS

Ladies, when you feel your partner drop his weight and bend his knees, that's how you know to move forward in this figure.

Gentlemen, as you move the lady toward you, be sure not to pull her to ward you.





CURVING BASIC

You have already learned the Tango Basic in a linear fashion, mo ving straight do wn the line of dance. However, Tango is commonly danced in a circular direction to the left, and dancer suse a Curving Basic to f ollow the line of dance. A CURVING B ASIC is a T ango Basic w hich curves to the gentleman's left.

The way to achieve this circular motion is with the amount of rotation you have in your upper bod ies. By rotating your upper body to the left, gentlemen, you will add contact with the lady's body, making it easier for her to follow through. (Figures 4.9-4.10)

You have the option of curving this basic in a tight circle in one spot on the dance f loor or gradually curving it as you follow the line of dance.

Gentlemen, you will lead with your right side and take a wider second step so that it feels like you're dancing a little bit to the side. (Figure 4.11)

Ladies, your first step backward will feel like you're taking your leg back and acr oss your body. Your thighs will be v ery close together. Your second step, however, will feel like a side step as you move back and to the side.



FIGURE 4.9-4.10



Leading with the Right Side of the Body

FIGURE 4.10



FIGURE 4.11 Side Step of the Curving Basic



PROMENADE

You should be familiar with the term Promenade from Waltz. Remember, **PROMENADE** is a V-shaped dance position where both the man and lady move forward in the same direction. To get into promenade position, you will swivel your feet out, which places the lady slightly behind the man. (Figure 4.12)



FIGURE 4.12 Promenade Position

Ladies, when you turn from a promenade position to a closed position, be sur e to keep your weight over your left leg. There is no weight change when going from promenade position to closed position, and y ou will change positions on the "and." When turning your head, you will keep it directly over your spine without tilting it forward or backward.

DANCE TIPS

Gentlemen, between your second and third steps, you will pause as you follow through to allow the lady to get all the way around to your right side.

Ladies, you always want to look in the direction you're traveling rather than at your partner.

There is no weight change when going from promenade position to closed position.

ROCK AND CORTÉ

Gentlemen, it's important to not pull your arms and tilt your head back when you take the Corté step. Instead, shift y our weight all the way over your left hip and leg to giv e your partner room to make the Corté line. (Figure 4.13)

The character of Tango gives it its unique look and f lavor and brings the dance to life. When dancing, correctly maneuvering the steps and figures is important, b ut how you approach them is equally as important. T ango is shar p and ag gressive. It's passionate, sultry, and even playful at times. Add the Tango character as you practice these figures.

The attitude of Tango dancers is fierce, aggressive, and dramatic. Practice dancing these



FIGURE 4.13 Gentleman's Corté Position

Assignment

DANCE TIP

figures with this attitude in mind.

Your assignment after mastering these figures is to lead with the right side of your body, to keep your knees flexed, and to use the third foot position in the tango close.

LEGACY LEARNING SYSTEMS

RUNNING STEPS

This figure incorporates a sequence of Tango Basic quick and slow steps. It appears that you are running across the dance floor. When dancing the Running Steps, you won't close your feet together in the middle of the figure. Instead, you will only slightly pause.

Gentlemen, it's fairly easy to track your legs and feet in your first three forward steps but after you take the first side step your legs are separated. So, you must bring your thighs together and brush your feet past each other to continue.

Throughout every figure in Tango, your knees should be flexed and bent, which keeps your head at the same height at all times. This technique will take some practice because you don't naturally move and step with bent knees. The bent knees ar e important because it kee ps your center of gravity closer to the f loor, allowing for quick and controlled footwork. The action of the feet is highly articulated, with forward steps heel first. Think of it like a magnet attracts the ball of the foot to the floor after the heel is placed.

PROMENADE TO Underarm Turn

In this figure you will dance in promenade position, move to a throw out, and finally complete an underar m turn. To get into the promenade position, you will dance from a basic to promenade with a quick f lick of the head. To complete the advanced head snap, *gentlemen*, you will take the lady and slightly squeeze her toward you. Then you will release the pressure and the lady will respond by going to promenade position. Both dancers are not tilting their heads but turning them directly over their spines.

DANCE TIP

It's not necessary to close your feet during the side steps, but it is necessary to close your thighs.

KEY IDEAS

Track your legs directly under your body so that your thighs, knees, and feet touch with each passing step.

Keep your knees bent with your body weight sitting toward the back of your feet.

Pick up and place your feet on the floor, rather than gliding them in constant contact with the floor as in Waltz.

DANCE TIPS

In the throw out position, extend your arm out from the elbow to help keep your balance and to create a pretty dance line.



Ladies, you are going to be walking forward when you dance the underarm turn. If you don't make it back to your partner just wait for him to dance back to you. (Figures 4.14–4.17)



FIGURE 4.14–4.17 Underarm Turn



FIGURE 4.15

FIGURE 4.16



FIGURE 4.17

Smooth Dances



There are a few options for your legs during the throw out. You can hold your foot out and point it in the middle of the partnership, you can flick your legs from the knees to ward the middle of the partnership, you can bring your feet together and tap them, or you can tap your feet together and point them toward the middle.

DANCE TIP

Gentlemen, apart from dancing the footwork, it's important to lead the correct timing. You can count the timing aloud each time you practice the figures. This way, if your partner has trouble feeling your lead, she will be a ble to hear your timing and follow more easily.

Assignment

Your assignment after mastering these figures is to add character to y our dance using your own unique personality. Have fun with it!

Tango Styling Tips

In the Tango frame you will feel like you're wrapped around each other. To maintain a correct frame, the gentleman will rotate his ribcage and spine to the left and bring his right ar m to the middle of the ladies back, angling down from the elbow. (Figure 4.18)



FIGURE 4.18 Tango Frame

DANCE TIP

Gentlemen, remember to keep your shoulder muscles pulled down and tight so that the lady can't pull your shoulder toward her as she wraps her hand around your arm.

Ladies, this allows you to reach over the man's arm and attach your thumb to the back of his arm so that you feel locked to him.

When dancing Tango, use sharp, deliberate steps. Positioning your foot with a slight striking action will help y ou ac hieve the c haracteristic T ango style. *Gentlemen*, your first three steps are led with your heel, and your side step is slightly forward and placed on the inside edge of your foot.

Also, keep your knees bent. With flexed knees and weight on the balls of your feet, your mo vements will be quick and balanced. Finally , y our head should be stretched tall and stay directly over your spine.



ADVANCED ROCK AND CORTÉ

This figure is very similar to the R ock and Corté. T he advanced variation adds rotation. *Gentlemen*, you are going to use your right leg and the right side of your torso to lead and rotate to the left. You will dance a sharp turn to the right by swiveling on your left foot. *Ladies*, stay on your left leg as long as y ou can while you feel the gentleman beginning to rotate. The important conce pt is to kee p your body in position—his right side to your right side.

DANCE TIP

Gentlemen, do not follow through with your legs on the first step, but step out to the side with your right leg and hold that position as you swivel on the left foot.

Ladies, you will feel like you're dancing backward and then forward before going into the Corté position.

TANGO PRACTICE ROUTINE

This practice r outine uses all of the figures you've lear ned and is demonstrated in the workshop. The Tango Basic and the Curving Basic are used interchangeably.

- Curving Basic
- Tango Rocks
- Single Corté
- Curving Basic
- Promenade
- Curving Basic
- · Rock and Corté or Advanced Rock and Corté
- Running Steps
- Curving Basic
- Promenade to Underarm Turn

LEGACY LEARNING SYSTEMS

Learn & Master Ballroom Dance

Foxtrot

FOXTROT DANCE FIGURES

- Foxtrot Basic
- Left Rock Turn
- Promenade Basic
- Left Turning Box
- Turning Basic to Promenade
- Swing Step
- Promenade with Underarm Turn
- Quarter Turns
- Foxtrot Twinkle
- Promenade Turn Variation



In the American Smooth style there is the graceful Waltz and the fierce Tango. Now we will dance the Foxtrot, which has an easy-going, fluid, comfortable style. You'll also notice a jazzy characteristic to Foxtrot, like what you might envision when you hear the names Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers or when you hear a classic Frank Sinatra song.

A **FOXTROT** is a smooth progressive dance characterized by fluid, walking-style movements combined with a lilting action. The Foxtrot began with a y oung dancer named Har ry Fox who started a new dance tr end in 1914 in r esponse to Ragtime music. Harry hit the dance floor with his jerky jumps and fast trots. Eventually the dance evolved into what remains today—a much smoother and elegant version of Harry's dance, more reminiscent of the Waltz.



FIGURE 5.1 Closed Dance Position

Foxtrot Timing, Posture, and Position

Foxtrot timing, like Tango, is comprised of quick and slow counts. A slow is equal to two beats, and a quick is equal to one beat. Foxtrot music is in a 4/4 time signa ture, although the basic step and most of the figures are six beats long.

Foxtrot closed dance position is identical to W altz. The gentleman's right hand is placed on the lady's shoulder blade, and the lady's left hand is placed on top of the gentleman's right shoulder. (Figure 5.1) *Ladies,* your elbow may extend past the gentleman's elbow if necessary. You should dance in four or five points of contact, whichever is more comfortable for you.

DANCE TIP



FIGURE 5.2 Offset Feet Position

The lady should be offset to the right of the gentleman so that

he doesn't step on her feet. (Figure 5.2)

FOXTROT BASIC

The Foxtrot Basic is counted slow-slow-quick-quick.

Gentlemen, your side-together step or the quick-quick step will be forward and slightly diagonal because your momentum will carry you in that direction. This side step is like stepping over a speed bump. You will step up and over, allowing your body weight to rest down on flexed knees on the last beat. Be sure to change weight on the last step so that you can lead with the left foot in the next figure.

LEFT ROCK TURN

The **LEFT ROCK TURN** is a gliding rock step that turns both partners to the left, commonly used in cor ners. This figure is very useful in maneuvering out of the corner.

Your feet will track directly under the body. *Gentlemen*, tracking your feet is very important so the lady feels your lead. (Figure 5.3)

Gentlemen, when dancing this figur e make sur e you don't leave your right foot behind you, or your momentum will propel you toward the lady. Between the second and thir d steps, you will tur n your frame slightly to the left and make a quarter turn. (Figure 5.4)

DANCE TIP

You can dance this figure a couple times in a row to maneuver out of a corner on the dance floor.

Ladies, between the first and second steps you won't change your weight. As you step backward, pick up y our toe fr om the f loor as if you are stepping. Otherwise, you won't be able to follow through with your feet. (**Figure 5.5**) The same is true for the gentlemen.





DANCE TIP

Keep your neck straight and positioned over your spine. Keep your shoulders relaxed and down and the center of your body pulled in. Your knees should be flexed.

LEGÃC



FIGURE 5.3 Tracking Your Feet or Follow Through



Gentleman's Frame in Left Rock Turn

Smooth Dances



PROMENADE BASIC

In **PROMENADE** the gentleman and lad y move forward in the same direction with their bodies facing each other and looking in the direction of intended movement. (Figures 5.6–5.7)

Gentlemen, you will turn your torso slightly to the left at the end of the promenade to bring the lady back into closed position. *Ladies*, you will feel like you're dancing slightly behind the gentleman, on his right hip.

DANCE TIP

Ladies, when taking the second step of the figure you will keep your thighs as close together as possible and point your foot straight ahead. (Figure 5.8)



FIGURE 5.6 Foxtrot Promenade Position



FIGURE 5.7 Step with Your Inside Foot



FIGURE 5.8 Toes Pointed Straight Ahead

Foxtrot Footwork

The footwork in Foxtrot is very similar to Waltz, except the gentlemen will no w take two heel lead steps at the beginning of each figure, rather than one. *Gentlemen*, your footwork is heel, heel, toe-toe-heel. *Ladies*, you will move backward most of the time, taking toe leads. Your footwork is toe, toe-toe-heel. Use this footwork to create the lilting action characteristic to the Foxtrot.

Also, you will accent beats 2 and 4. That means you will completely change your weight on beats 2 and 4, and use both beats of the slow to completely change your weight.

Assignment

Your first assignment after mastering these basic figures is to incor porate the proper timing with accents on beats 2 and 4. Also practice the Foxtrot footwork and using correct posture.





LEFT TURNING BOX

The **LEFT TURNING BOX** is a figure that changes the Foxtrot timing. The figure is similar to the Basic Box in Waltz, but the difference is the Foxtrot box is danced in 4/4 time, while the Waltz box is danced in 3/4 time.

It's helpful to know that anytime you dance slow-quick-quick as you do in this box, it's called box rhythm. In contrast, the slow-slow-quickquick timing is called basic rhythm. So, anytime you dance a box figure in Foxtrot your timing will change from basic rhythm to box rhythm.

This figure is very useful when you don't have much space to dance. You can stay in one spot and dance this simple ste p, and it can be danced with various amounts of rotation.

DANCE TIP

When dancing backward you are turning the figure, so you will dance off the track. The forward step will be on the track.

KEY IDEA

BOX RHYTHM is slow-quick-quick, and **BASIC RHYTHM** is slow-slow-quick-quick.

TURNING BASIC TO PROMENADE

This figure is a Basic that turns slightly to the right, allowing you to set up Promenade without being in a corner. *Gentlemen,* to set up to Promenade from the Basic, you will rotate your body to the right as if you were going to pass the lady by. Anytime your body turns, your legs and feet continue to move straight through and under your body as if you were on a track.



DANCE TIPS

Ladies, your head doesn't turn to promenade position until your feet close in promenade.

Gentlemen, in promenade you will turn your torso to face the lady but your hips will still be pointed outward in promenade position, not facing the lady in closed position. (Figure 5.9)

Ladies, keep your head over your left shoulder while dancing the entire figure.

FIGURE 5.9 Promenade Position



SWING STEP

Here is a simple figure that adds much character to your Foxtrot. With every side step, you will brush your feet under your body and only change your weight on the last side step.

DANCE TIP

To achieve the sway action, your bodies will move in the opposite direction of your movement. (Figures 5.10-5.11)

KEY IDEA

Keep your frame still. Your arms should not move around or bounce up and down.

Assignment

FIGURE 5.10–5.11 Foxtrot Sway



FIGURE 5.11

Your first assignment after mastering these figures is to k eep your frame still and firm and incorporate sway into your steps.

PROMENADE WITH UNDERARM TURN

This figure begins in promenade position and adds a lady's underarm turn as you dance forward. (Figures 5.13–5.15) *Gentlemen,* you have the easy part in this figure. Your footwork doesn't change from the Promenade footwork. What is different is that you will need to initiate the lead and the timing of the lady's turn. To indicate the turn in Promenade position, you will release your right hand from the lady's back. (Figure 5.12)



FIGURE 5.12 Promenade Underarm Turn Indication



FIGURE 5.13–5.15 Promenade with Underarm Turn



FIGURE 5.14



FIGURE 5.15

Smooth Dances





FIGURE 5.16 Keep Your Hand in Front of Your Head

QUARTER TURNS

The **QUARTER TURNS** is a forward Turning Basic and a backward d Turning Basic creating a zig-zag pattern on the floor. During the second part of the figure the rolls are reversed, with the gentleman moving backward while the lady is moving forward.

Remember the importance of:

- Tall, straight posture
- Good alignment of all major blocks of weight (head, shoulder s, hips, and legs)
- Tracking your legs and feet directly under your body

Foxtrot Rise and Fall

RISE AND F ALL is the contin uous c hanging of body ele vation through the use of the feet, ankles, and legs. In Foxtrot, timing your rise begins at the end of beat 4, continues through beat 5, and is lowered again on beat 6. Think of it as a slight bouncing action during the side-close or quick-quick ste ps in each figure. It will feel like y ou are pushing up from one leg and down to the other leg. (**Figures 5.17–5.18**)

Ladies, you're not actually spinning in the underar m tur n. Y ou're mer ely making tw o half turns, so piv ot on your right foot half a turn and then left foot for half a turn. Finish with y our feet coming together and face y our partner on the quick-quick.

DANCE TIP

Ladies, when you turn be sure to keep you hand in front of your head rather than behind it. (Figure 5.16)

Gentlemen, you don't want to look at the lady when leading her in an underarm turn. It will change your body position and thr ow the partner ship off balance. You also want to str etch your posture as tall as possible to give the lady room to make the turn.

KEY IDEAS

Always move with the flow of traffic or the line of dance.

Gentlemen, in Foxtrot, you must be in a Promenade figure to lead a Promenade with Underar m Turn for the lady.

DANCE TIP

You can adjust the amount of turn in the Quarter Turns depending on the amount of space on the dance floor.





FIGURE 5.17–5.18 Foxtrot Rise and Fall

FIGURE 5.18



FOXTROT TWINKLE

The Left Turning Box and the Foxtrot Twinkle are the only two Foxtrot figures you've danced that use box rhythm, or slow-quick-quick.

Assignment

Your first assignment after mastering these figures is to practice the rise and fall with e very step.

SWING STEP VARIATION

This figure is similar to the Swing Ste p you learned in lesson two but with a lad y's underarm turn added in the side ste p. *Gentlemen*, you have the same footwork. However, in the second side ste p you will open your arms to indicate a turn to the lady. Remember, this variation is an option for you once you feel ready for more of a challenge.

Using the Left Rock Turn

The Left Rock Turn is most effectively used in a corner, although you can use it anywhere you like. For example, if traffic is heavy and you need a moment to pause while someone dances by you, you may use it as a hesitation step.

FOXTROT PRACTICE ROUTINES

Here are two practice routines for Foxtrot. Foxtrot practice routine 1 is demonstrated in the workshop. These are just two ways that you could combine the figures.

Foxtrot Practice Routine 1

- Foxtrot Basic
- Promenade Basic
- Left Turning Box
- Turning Basic to Promenade
- Left Rock Turn
- Swing Step or Swing Step Variation
- Quarter Turns
- Foxtrot Twinkle
- Turning Basic to Promenade
- Promenade with Underarm Turn
- Left Rock Turn

Foxtrot Practice Routine 2

DANCE TIP

same position.

Gentlemen, when you swivel your feet to g et to

promenade position, mak e sur e y ou don 't mo ve

your torso with them. Your torso should stay in the

- Foxtrot Basic
- Swing Step or Swing Step Variation
- Left Rock Turn
- Foxtrot Twinkle
- Quarter Turn
- Left Turning Box
- Turning Basic to Promenade
- Promenade with Underarm Turn
- Left Rock Turn
- Foxtrot Twinkle

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American Rhythm Dances



"We're fools whether we dance or not, so we might as well dance."

- Japanese proverb



Fundamentals of Rhythm Dances

AMERICAN RHYTHM is a division of ballroom dancing consisting of a collection of Latin and Swing dances. There are many standard dances in American Rhythm, although in this course we will be learning the three most popular—Rumba, Cha Cha and Swing. These are considered Spot dances and generally remain on one part of the dance floor.

Your **POSTURE** will essentially feel the same as in your Smooth dances:

- Your center or core is pulled in
- · Your rib cage is lifted and slightly forward
- · Your shoulders are relaxed
- Your neck is stretched nice and tall

In the Smooth dances y ou are slightly of fset from each other—the woman stands slightly to the right of the man. But in Rh ythm dances we position our selves directly in front of one another. Rhythm dances are danced in four points of contact.

(Figure 6.1)

Posture Exercise

In Rhythm dances, the body posture is slightly forward over the balls of the feet. Stack your blocks of weight on top of each other. Then move your posture forward, transferring your weight to the balls of your feet.

Position Exercise

Position refers to how partners connect to each other. Stand facing each other and practice e xercise one b ut this time touc hing palm to palm. You should feel slight pr essure as y ou lean into eac h other. If you remove your palms, however, you should maintain your posture without falling forward.



FIGURE 6.1 Rhythm Dance Position

Frame Exercise

The purpose of this exercise is to find y our own position before connecting to your partner. Hold arms straight out until you see your hands in your peripheral vision. Then, ladies, bend your right elbow up, and gentlemen, bend your left elbow. Then, with your other arm, bend in at the elbow. No part of the shoulder should move forward.

The one exception with your Rhythm frame is in dancing Swing Both of you will drop your arms, and the lady will rest her right hand in the gentleman's left palm. (Figure 6.2)

Every step in Rh ythm dances is led with the ball of the foot or a **TOE LEAD**. (Figure 6.3) You will need to maintain contact with the floor with the ball or toes of your feet at all times. You can practice by placing a piece of paper under the balls of your feet while moving across the floor. The paper should stay under your feet.

Another very important idea in Rhythm dances is that you turn your feet out with heels together and toes apart. (Figure 6.4) This foot placement will help with your Cuban motion.

Also, you want to step to the inside edge of your foot when taking a step forward, backward, or to the side . Stepping to the inside edge will help with y our balance and prevent joint injury. (Figure 6.5)

FIGURE 6.4 Correct Rhythm Foot Position



FIGURE 6.3 Toe Lead











Transfer Your Weight Completely

A common mistake of beginners learning to La tin dance is to not complete a movement by fully changing their weight as the y step. Sometimes this is because the music feels too fast or sometimes just because you are busy thinking about the next step.

In Rhythm dances, our weight will be on one foot or the other but never on both a t the same time . So, the center of my spine is aligned over the **SUPPORTING LEG** or the leg car rying the weight of the body. (Figure 6.6)

When stepping, make sure you are 100 percent over your supporting leg so that t y our partner is balanced. When y ou move y ou should push from the supporting leg into the floor and not just step to a foot as if you were walking. A good test is to raise y our other foot off the floor for just a second. If you have completely changed your weight, you will keep your balance. Remember, this is just an exercise. When y ou are dancing, both feet will al ways be toned with pressure into the floor.

CUBAN MOTION is the rotation of the hips side to side and forward and backward common in Latin dancing.



FIGURE 6.6 Body Weight Over the Supporting Leg

DANCE TIPS

You want to keep the top of your body straight when dancing with Cuban motion. Because you are connected to your partner, you don't want to pull or push him or her.

When dancing with Cuban motion, make sure to point your knees forward toward your partner and not to the outside. That will almost force you to dance on the inside edg e of your foot.

LEGÃCY

Learn & Master Ballroom Dance

Rumba

RUMBA DANCE FIGURES

- Basic Box
- Box with Underarm Turn
- Fifth Position Breaks
- Rumba Walks
- Rumba Rocks
- Open Break with Underarm Turn
- Cross Body Lead
- Cross Body Lead to Offset Breaks
- Crossover Breaks to Underarm Turn



This is the beginning of a new category of ballroom dance, American Rhythm. **AMERICAN RHYTHM** is a division of ballroom dance consisting of a collection of Latin and Swing dances. There are eight standard dances in American Rh ythm, although we will only be lear ning the three most popular: the R umba, the Cha Cha, and the East Coast Swing. These three dances are considered Spot dances as opposed to Smooth dances. **SPOT DANCES** remain on one part of the dance floor, while **SMOOTH DANCES** travel progressively around the entire dance floor.

The first dance, **RUMBA**, is a dance of Cuban origin, combining complex footwork with pronounced hip movement. Rumba is characterized by its sensual and romantic feel and has been called the dance of love. You will see much use of the hips and a variety of quick and slow movements.

Posture, Position, and Frame

Your **POSTURE** will essentially feel the same as in the Smooth dances: (Figure 7.1)

- Your core is pulled in
- · Your chest is lifted and slightly forward
- Your shoulders are relaxed but your elbows are at shoulder level. Keep a tall line from your feet to the top of your head
- Your neck is stretched tall



FIGURE 7.1 Rumba Posture, Position, and Frame

LEGACY LEARNING SYSTEMS

Your **POSITION** to each other will feel slightly different. In the Smooth dances, you are slightly offset from each other—the woman standing a little to the right of the man. However, in Rhythm dances position yourselves directly in front of each other with your toes facing each other.

Your **FRAME** for Rumba will be rounder, so you may need to take a tin y step away from each other. There should be about twelve inches between you and your partner's feet. You want your frame to look a bit mor e round and feel as though you are holding a big barrel. The lady's right hand and the gentleman's left hand should be just above the lady's eye level.

RUMBA TIMING

Rumba music has a 4/4 time signa ture. That means a Rumba Basic is two measures or eight beats long. We would count it slow-quick-quick-slow-quick-quick. It equals eight beats of music because a "quick" is equal to one beat and a "slow" is equal to two beats.

BASIC BOX

The Rumba Basic Box is much like the Waltz Basic Box with slight variations in the timing and tec hnique. The **BASIC BOX** in Rumba is a six step figure forming a box on the floor and counted in a 4/4 time signa ture as slow-quick-quick.

Completing a Change of Weight

In the Rh ythm dances, y our weight will be on one f oot or the other but never on both at the same time. When your body weight is 100 percent over the supporting leg, your partner will feel bal anced. The center of your spine should be aligned o ver the supporting leg or the leg that carries the weight of the body. You can test your weight placement by lifting the opposite leg and remaining fully balanced.

KEY IDEAS

When you take a step forward, backward, or to the side, make sure to transfer all of your weight over that foot. In order to accomplish this action, push into the floor with your weighted foot. (Figure 7.3)

The weighted foot is the one your body weight is on.

When you take a step, it is an action of your entire body, not just moving your foot. DANCE TIPS

When stepping to the side and bringing your feet together, your heels should be closed or touching. (Figure 7.2)

With every step, change your weight from foot to foot.

Push from the supporting leg into the floor. Do not merely step to your foot as if you are walking.



FIGURE 7.2 Heels Closed or Touching



FIGURE 7.3 Weight Completely Over Supporting Leg

Rhythm Dances

Rumba

Cuban Motion

CUBAN MOTION is the rotation of the hips side to side and forward and backward characteristic in Latin dancing. Cuban motion is achieved by bending and straightening y our legs at the appropriate time rather than using y our hips. Transferring your weight correctly is a key component of developing good Cuban motion. The following exercises on transfer ring your weight correctly are demonstrated in the Rumba workshop, session 17.

Bending Leg Exercise

Stand with y our feet together, toes apart. Change your weight from one leg to the other by bending one knee at a time.

Side to Side Exercise

Take a ste p to the side , legs shoulder width apart, and change weight from side to side.

Back and Front Exercise

Take a ste p backward and shift w eight from front to back.

BOX WITH **UNDERARM TURN**

This figure is the Basic Box with an added lady's underarm turn. Gentlemen, you are not actually spinning the lad y during the underar m turn. She is just walking ar ound in a half circle direction, so follow her with your hand. Do not apply pr essure or pull or push her with y our hand-just stay connected.

To indicate a tur n you will r elease your right hand from her back and open your left hand to her. (Figure 7.4)



FIGURE 7.8 Palms in Open Position

Rhythm Dances

Gentlemen, because y ou ar e not spinning the lad y during the under arm tur n, pa y car eful a ttention to leave y our left ar m in place and steady so the lad y is not thr own of f balance. (Figures 7.5-7.7)

DANCE TIP

Be careful not to take wide steps when moving forward and backward. Instead, brush your legs closely together, going right under your body.

FIGURE 7.7

KEY IDEA

During the underarm turn, move your right hands from a closed position to a position where the palms are open and the fingers touch, like a plus sign. (Figure 7.8)





Lady's Underarm Turn



FIGURE 7.6

FIGURE 7.4





FIFTH POSITION BREAKS

The Fifth Position Breaks is a series of breaks and rock steps in fifth foot position. You are in fifth position when the toes of one foot point to the heel of the other foot. (Figure 7.9)

A break refers to any kind of rock step where you shift your weight from one foot to another. (Figure 7.10) When dancing a break, the lad y's left side will be open and the gentleman 's right side will be open. Y our bodies will be a t an ang le, not square or side by side. (Figures 7.11–7.12)

Gentlemen, when going into the fifth position br eak, be careful not to drop your right elbow. It will destroy the lady's frame and it will be difficult for her to feel where you want her to go.

During the second fifth position br eak, you will send y our arms right through the partnership. (Figure 7.13) To get to the through position during the second fifth position br eak, *gentlemen*, roll the finger s of your right hand under neath her hand. At the same time release your left arms from each other. (Figure 7.14)

During the last fifth position break, you will swivel back toward each other without pushing or pulling on one another . That way you will both keep your balance.



FIGURE 7.9 Fifth Foot Position



FIGURE 7.10 Fifth Foot Position Break



FIGURE 7.11 Correct Position: Bodies at an Angle



FIGURE 7.12 Incorrect position: Bodies Side by Side



FIGURE 7.13 Send Your Arms through the Partnership



FIGURE 7.14 Indication of Fifth Position Break

Rhythm Dances

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Ball Flat Footwork

Every step in R umba is led with the ball of the foot. T his action is referred to as a **TOE LEAD**. *Ladies*, because of your heel, you will be stepping more on the toe of your foot, while the gentlemen will step more on the ball of the foot. (Figure 7.15) This is one of the main differences between the Rh ythm and Smooth dances . The Smooth dances are led with the heel, while the Rhythm dances are led with the toe.

Keeping the balls of your feet connected to the f loor at all times will help both of you feel grounded and this is an important factor in all of our dances, especially our Rhythm dances because they can be very fast at times. By stepping with the toe or ball of the foot, you will be forced to use your knees and hips, giving your dancing a more slinky and Latin feel.



LEGÃCY

FIGURE 7.15 Toe Lead

DANCE TIPS

In Rhythm dances, your feet will stay in contact with the floor at all times.

Using the ball flat footwork and transferring your weight with every step will help create Cuban motion.



Your first assignment after mastering these basic figures is to work on your ball flat footwork, using toe leads. This applies to forward, backward, and side steps.



FIGURE 7.16 Placement of Lady's Hand on Gentleman's Shoulder

RUMBA WALKS

RUMBA WALKS refers to a series of steps forward and backward for the man and the woman. To add variation to the Rumba Walks, continue dancing backward for six steps after moving forward six steps.

DANCE TIPS

Ladies, place your hand on either the side or the front of his shoulder and keep a solid frame so you can feel when he moves. Otherwise, he may step on your foot. (Figure 7.16)

Gentlemen, if your core is lifted and tight your partner will feel your movements better.

RUMBA ROCKS

The Rumba Rocks adds a series of rock steps to the Rumba Basic. *Gentlemen*, it's important that you use the pressure of your feet on the floor to move from foot to foot so that the lady will feel you and do the same.

DANCE TIP

Before moving your weight or the core of your body backward, make sure your foot is behind you or you will feel like you're falling. (Figure 7.17)

OPEN BREAK WITH UNDERARM TURN

An **OPEN BREAK** is a break or rock step taken in open position while facing each other, often with partners moving apart from each other. (Figure 7.18) To prepare the lady for the open break, the gentleman will bring his left hand into the center of the partnership while opening his right hand. (Figure 7.19)

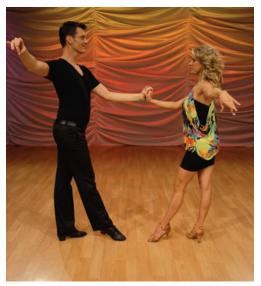




FIGURE 7.18 Open Break

Preparation for an Open Break

A PIVOT TURN is a rotational movement of the body around one's own vertical axis.





FIGURE 7.17 Place Foot Behind You Before Moving Backward



Ladies, to complete the pivot underarm turn, your weight is first on your right foot. Then, pick up your left foot and move it directly across your body. Next, transfer your weight to your left foot and swivel around on it. (Figures 7.19–7.21)



FIGURE 7.19–7.21 Pivot Underarm Turn

FIGURE 7.20

FIGURE 7.21

During the underar m turn, *ladies*, you will fold your arm in at the elbow so that you don't hit your partner with it. (Figure 7.22) Then, bring your arm through the middle of the partnership and extend it out nice and long when you complete your turn. (Figure 7.23)

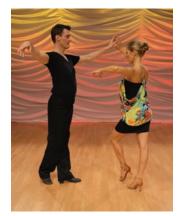


FIGURE 7.22 Bend Arm at the Elbow to Begin an Underarm Turn



FIGURE 7.23 Arm Position During an Underarm Turn

Assignment

Incorporate Cuban motion into these steps to spice up your Latin dancing.





CROSS BODY LEAD

This figure is called a **CROSS BODY LEAD** because the gentleman leads the lady across his body. *Gentlemen*, when you're leading the lady across your body, make sure to lead her in a straight line . (Figures 7.24–7.26)

FIGURE 7.24–7.26 Cross Body Lead



FIGURE 7.25



FIGURE 7.26

DANCE TIP

Gentlemen, during the cross body lead, turn only your upper body, not your feet.

CROSS BODY LEAD TO OFFSET BREAKS

OFFSET BREAKS are rock steps in an offset position rather than in normal alignment. (Figures 7.27–7.28)

KEY IDEA

Gentlemen, when you take a step to the outside of the lady's body, it is called OUTSIDE PARTNER. This is a common position in many of our dances.

Keep your frame lifted and solid.

Push into the floor when moving.



FIGURE 7.27–7.28 Offset Breaks



FIGURE 7.28

CROSSOVER BREAKS is a sequence of rotational actions and rock steps in open position. To dance this figure, you will do three crossover breaks, one underarm turn for the ladies, and one fifth position br eak. It's important to keep your legs tight and thighs close together w hen

Don't use your partner to help in the turn by pushing or pulling. Rather transfer your weight all the

dancing the crossover breaks for balance and for the appearance of this figure.

way over your foot and use the outside of the turn to propel the rotation.

CROSSOVER BREAKS TO UNDERARM TURN

DANCE TIP



FIGURE 7.29 Arm Styling

Arm Styling

ARM STYLING is the positioning and movement of the arms, reflecting the character of a dance or style of dancing. When dancing the crossover breaks, your palms should be facing up like you're serving a platter. (Figure 7.29)

As your hand swivels to the back at a 45-degree angle, flip your wrist to give the figure a little flare. Arm styling finishes the line of the body or movement and it brings a more polished and finished look to the figure. (Figure 7.30)



FIGURE 7.30 Finished Line with Arm Styling

Assignment

As you practice, incorporate the arm styling into the Rumba figures you've learned.

Dance Floor Etiquette

Keeping these simple things in mind will ensure that you have a great time and are viewed as courteous when you are out on the town in a social dancing situation.

- Gentlemen, ask your partner to dance and offer your hand. Then guide her out to the dance floor.
- It is appropriate and acceptable for the lady to ask the man to dance, especially in a ballroom dance club situation.
- Thank each other after the dance, and the gentleman escorts the lady to her seat.
- Never correct or instruct your partner on the dance floor.



Cha Cha

CHA CHA DANCE FIGURES

- Cha Cha Basic
- Lady's Underarm Turn
- Alternating Free Turns
- Progressive Basic
- Chase Turns
- Cross Body Lead
- Crossover Breaks
- Offset Breaks
- Shadow Position Breaks

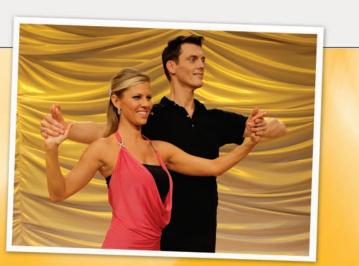




FIGURE 8.1–8.3 The Chasse

The CHA CHA is an exciting Latin dance best known for its lively and playfully cheeky character, syncopated footwork, and quick r otating Cuban motion. In Cuba in the la te 1940's, you'd find people dancing the Rumba and the Mambo in clubs and in the streets. One figure in the Mambo was called the T riple Mambo, and by 1954 this figur e had de veloped into a new dance, known as the Cha-Cha-Cha. The Cha Cha of today is a slightly modified version of this dance with three syncopated steps and a rock step.

Our frame and posture for Cha Cha is the same as it was f or Rumba. Your body position is aligned directly in front of each another. Your weight will be slightly forward on the balls of your feet, and your frame is round and solid. Cha Cha is in 4/4 time, so it's counted 1 through 4.



FIGURE 8.2

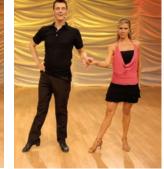


FIGURE 8.3

CHA CHA BASIC

Cha Cha is v ery smooth. Although it's fast with quick w eight changes, there is a gliding look to the movement. You'll see the combination of smooth b ut sudden movements in the sidetogether-side step called a chasse. A **CHASSE** is a French word meaning "to chase," and in dance it in volves a series of side steps typically in a triple rh ythm. (**Figures 8.1–8.3**) The key to dancing with gliding steps is to kee p your foot in contact with the floor at all times.







FIGURE 8.4 Keep Your Heel Lifted on the Middle Step of the Chasse



FIGURE 8.6 Skim the Inside of Your Toe as You Glide Your Feet



Aligned Feet with Thighs Brushing Together

KEY IDEAS

Don't drop your heel in the middle of a Chasse. (Figure 8.4)

During a rock step, align your feet right in front of the one another so that your thighs brush together. (Figure 8.5)

DANCE TIPS

Change your weight quickly but without any bounce or hop to your feet.

Glide your feet across the floor rather than picking them up. You should feel like you're skimming the inside of your toe across the floor. (Figure 8.6)

LADY'S UNDERARM TURN

For the Lady's Underarm Turn in Cha Cha, *ladies*, you will dance a pivot or spot turn. A **PIVOT TURN** or **SPOT TURN** is a rotational movement of the body around one's own vertical axis. (Figures 8.7–8.10)









FIGURE 8.7–8.10 A Pivot or Spot Turn

FIGURE 8.8

FIGURE 8.9

FIGURE 8.10

Rhythm Dances

Cha Cha









FIGURE 8.11 Hand Position During Underarm Turn

The steps of this figure are: • Lady does a turn

• Both turn at the same time

FIGURE 8.12

ALTERNATING FREE TURNS

• Man does a turn on opposite side of the Basic

A FREE TURN occurs when the gentleman and lady do not touch each

FIGURE 8.13

DANCE TIP

Gentlemen, don't hold the lady's hand too tightly as she dances an underarm turn. Your hands should be palm-to-palm. (Figures 8.11–8.13)

DANCE TIPS

Gentlemen, to indicate a free turn you will turn your elbow out to the side. (Figure 8.14)

When dancing a free turn, be careful not to push too hard on your partner's hand or you will knock him or her off balance. You want to maintain that invisible line right down the middle. (Figure 8.15)

Assignment

other as they turn.

Your first assignment after mastering these basic figures is to work on keeping your bodies aligned and your thighs together. Try not to drop your heel on the Chasse so that you can push off the middle step.



FIGURE 8.14 Free Turn Indication



FIGURE 8.15 Hand Position During Free Turn

Rhythm Dances





Adding Speed to Your Turns

Ladies, in the previous three figures you danced a pivot turn by incorporating three steps to your turn: a quarter turn, a half turn, and a final quarter tur n. Now practice making a three-quarter pivot turn by placing your left leg across your body and turning all the way around in one movement. (Figures 8.16–8.17) This will cr eate a m uch quicker looking turn.

DANCE TIP

The longer you face your partner even though your torso is turning, the faster your pivot turn will be.



FIGURE 8.16–8.17 Pivot Turn in One Rotation



FIGURE 8.17

PROGRESSIVE BASIC

The Progressive Basic is also known as the Forward and Backward Basic. *Gentlemen*, instead of taking the side cha-cha-cha steps to the left as in the Basic, you will move forward. (Figures 8.18–8.20)

DANCE TIPS

Remember to keep your frame firm and toned so that you don't dance into each other or push and pull each other off balance.

Even when dancing backward in the Progressive Basic, you will lean slightly forward so you don't pull your partner toward you.



FIGURE 8.18–8.20 The Progressive Basic



FIGURE 8.19



FIGURE 8.20

Rhythm Dances





CHASE TURNS

This figure is very similar to the Progressive Basic, but you will incorporate pivot turns. It is called Chase Turns because you will appear to be chasing each other. While turning, you will drop your connection and frame to be in an open position.





FIGURE 8.22

DANCE TIPS

The Cross Body Lead

Gentlemen, you will turn the bottom part of your body in the rock step while keeping your

Here is the Cha Cha version of the Cross Body Lead. It's very similar to the Rumba figure, but you

Gentlemen, you will slightly open your body from closed position to a perpendicular position before bringing the lady across. (Figure 8.25) Ladies, this means you will wait a split second to turn, and your partner will indicate when to pause with his frame and specifically his left hand. It should feel a bit

FIGURE 8.23



FIGURE 8.24

The Chase Turns incorporate a visual lead.

VISUAL LEAD means to be lead by what you see, rather than by body contact.

KEY IDEA

frame pointed to the right to indica te a Cross Body Lead. (Figures 8.21-8.24)

If you can't turn a complete 180 degrees in the Cross Body Lead, it's alright to turn a little bit less.

CROSS BODY LEAD

like he is stopping you from moving forward.

FIGURE 8.25 Gentleman's Position During Cross Body Lead

Assignment

Your assignment after mastering these figures is to incor porate the styling and speeding up of the turns.

will dance the lady across your body and make a 180-degree turn.



CROSSOVER BREAKS

The Crossover Breaks is the most complex figure so far, so transfer ring your weight completely with each step is vital to getting the speed y ou're going to need for this figure. The Crossover Breaks figure in Cha Cha combines three sets of crossovers followed by simultaneous pivot turns by both the gentleman and the lad y.

Crossover Technique and Arm Styling

During the Crossover Breaks, the gentleman will drop his hand and lead both of his partner's arms through the center by rotating his torso in the direction he wants the ar ms to go . (Figure 8.27) To complete the line of the Crossover Breaks, your arms will unfold out from the body while the upper body extends in an open position. (Figure 8.26)

A common error that occurs during the Crossover Breaks is not swiveling out the supporting leg when taking the crossover step. You also want to keep your body tall and straight over the supporting leg when you're swiveling so you don't fall forward.



FIGURE 8.26 Crossover Breaks with Finished Line

DANCE TIPS

In a crossover break, don't try to swivel out on a bent leg. You will lose your balance.

It's important to practice the figures individually so that you master your own steps. Don't rely too heavily on your partner for balance. You should be connected to your partner but not leaning, pushing, or pulling on him or her.



FIGURE 8.27 Leading the Crossover Breaks



OFFSET BREAKS

This figur e looks and feels a lot like the Cha Cha Basic but with a slight r otation before the rock ste ps to dance into of fset position. Y ou may also hear this figure called Outside Partner Breaks. **OFFSET** means that one partner is to the outside of the other, as opposed to being in line with him or her. (**Figure 8.28**)

A common mistake in offset position is to dance side by side. (Figure 8.29) This incorrect position will negatively affect your partner's balance, so it's important to maintain a r ound frame. Your frame keeps your partner in fr ont of you and not moving into and beside you. Only your feet will be dancing outside your partner.



sometimes called a cross handhold when dancing the open break.

FIGURE 8.30 Shadow Position Break



FIGURE 8.28 Offset Position



FIGURE 8.29 Incorrect Offset Position

DANCE TIPS

Gentlemen, when dancing an offset break, you will step directly under her shoulder while keeping your frame solid.

Ladies, you will feel your partner move forward in an offset break, indicating you should move backward. Don't let him dance into you or lean forward into him.

SHADOW POSITION BREAKS

In **SHADOW POSITION** you will stand facing the same direction in a parallel position. *Gentlemen*, you will maintain a solid frame and then move in a circular direction so the lady's rock step is on the opposite side of you. (Figure 8.30)

This is the first Cha Cha figur e where, *gentlemen*, you must fake your footwork so that you stay on the lady's footwork. That means instead of dancing a cha-cha, you will take only two steps when leading your partner into a shado w position break. To indicate a shadow position break, you will change to a handshake position or

Assignment

Your assignment after mastering these figures is to work on closing your feet and making small, quick movements when dancing each figure.

Rhythm Dances





Improving Your Turns

There ar e man y quick tur ning and rotating actions in Cha Cha, and it's easy to lose y our timing if your turns aren't as quick as they need to be.

So, to improve your turns:

- Stand on y our axis with y our weight completely o ver the piv oting foot before turning or rotating
- Keep your feet turned out
- Keep your head up and look in the direction you're moving



FIGURE 8.31 Shadow Position Break Hand Position

DANCE TIPS

DANCE TIPS

(Figure 8.33)

pointing out. (Figure 8.32)

Gentlemen, in the shadow position break, you are palm-to-palm with your partner, not holding her hand. *Ladies,* your palms are facing outward. (Figure 8.31)

Ladies, to get into the shadow position break, slightly turn your cha-cha-cha step sequence as the gentleman leads you into the parallel position.

Close your feet with every step, and keep your steps small and compact, especially with quick moving figures.

Just because the Cha Cha is fast, it doesn't need to be frantic—stay relaxed but poised.

When pushing into the floor with the supporting leg,

keep the top of that toe connected to the floor and

In Cuban motion bend your knee forward, not to the side. This will move the opposite hip backward.

Cha Cha Styling

Here are a few styling tips to make y our Cha Cha look g reat. Use clean and precise, grounded steps. Each step in Cha Cha is lead with the ball



FIGURE 8.32 Toe Connected to the Floor and Pointed Out

of the foot. T his means y ou will rar ely release the ball of your foot completely off of the floor, although y our heel is often released.

With Cuban motion, y ou will ne ver have both legs bent a t the same time, although there will be times w hen both legs ar e straight. And, arm styling is always a result of the movement of the back. Y our ar m's

movement is a continuation of the direction your body is heading.

CHA CHA PRACTICE ROUTINE

- Cha Cha Basic
- · Cross Body Lead
- Offset Breaks
- Crossover Breaks
- Progressive Basic
- Chase Turns
- · Shadow Position Breaks
- Lady's Underarm Turn
- Alternating Free Turns



FIGURE 8.33 Bending the Knee in Cuban Motion



SWING DANCE FIGURES

- Swing Basic
- Rotating Basic
- Lady's Underarm Turn
- Throw Out
- Gentleman's Waist Wrap
- The Cuddle
- Single Tuck In
- Double Tuck In
- Walk Back and Kick
- Peek-A-Boo

There are many styles of Swing-Lindy Hop, Jive, Shag, Charleston, and West Coast Swing, to name a few Each of these dances has its own unique footwork, timing, musical style, and interpretation. The Swing style you will learn in this course is one of the most popular and exciting-East Coast Swing.

East Coast Swing has alter nately been called Easter n Swing, Jitterbug, Triple-time Swing, and American Swing . EAST **COAST SWING** is a dance comprised of six count patterns with quick turns, rock steps, and an energetic bounce type of leg and hip action. East Coast Swing evolved from the Lindy Hop around the 1940s.

Swing Timing

East Coast Swing is in a 4/4 time signa ture, but it's comprised of six count patterns. So, the basic step is counted 1 & 2; 3 & 4; 5, 6. Or y ou could count it as triple step, triple step, rock step.

You can dance to a v ariety of different speeds of music, depending on how accomplished of a dancer you are. The faster the music, the smaller and quicker your footwork and connections will be.

SWING BASIC

You will start the Basic figur e in third foot position, and your bodies will be slightly ang led outward and in a forward direction. (Figure 9.1) You will feel like you are not only moving forward and backward but also a little to the side as you dance.



FIGURE 9.1 Swing Frame

Rhythm Dances

The Swing frame is very similar to the Rumba and Cha Cha frame; the only difference is that you will drop your right hand (*ladies*) and left hand (*gentlemen*) so they are resting on top of each other. (Figure 9.1) Your position will be similar to the Promenade V-position.

DANCE TIP

Ladies, don't hang on too tightly to the gentleman's shoulder or pull it out of position with your left hand.

Swing Footwork



FIGURE 9.2 Swing Footwork

Every step is led by placing the ball of the foot on the floor first. Your heels may touch the floor but only for a split second. Y ou don't want to place all of your body weight on the heels , or y ou will drastically r educe the speed of your footwork. (Figure 9.2)

Ladies, because y ou are in a heel, y our footwork will be toe-ball-f lat. Both partner s should not drop your feet flat onto the floor, which not only looks bad, b ut is hard on your joints.

KEY IDEA

The triple steps and rock step should be small steps and stay under neath your body.

FIGURE 9.1

Swing Frame

ROTATING BASIC

On the first triple step the man initiates rotation, and on the second triple

step the lady initiates the rotation. Complete the Rotating Basic with a rock step. To achieve the rotation, *gentlemen*, you will gradually rotate to the right. The entire figure looks like two half circles or the number three on the dance floor.

Ladies, be v ery a ware of staying connected to y our partner thr ough your left arm and back muscle so you will feel the gentleman's rotation.

Lilting Action

LILT is the up and do wn action ac hieved through the bending and straightening of the legs. Lilt is to East Coast Swing what Cuban Motion is to Rumba and Cha Cha. It gives Swing its character.

DANCE TIPS

Gentlemen, don't step around your partner to create the rotation. Instead, it should feel like you're stepping in front of the lady to cut off her direction.

The key to this figure is keeping a toned and connected frame. You don't want to move within the frame.

To achieve the lilting action, you will take a step and straighten the leg. Then you will drag the back leg into the center as if you have a limp, not picking it up and placing it ther e. Then release the front leg again, bending and straightening it. A simple way to remember the lilting action is with the phrase, "bend-limp-bend."





The rock step in Swing is a similar action to Cuban motion in R umba and Cha Cha. However, you won't accentuate your hips as much. You will feel like you're swinging your hip open a little b ut not taking your whole body away from your partner or the frame. (Figure 9.3)

LADY'S UNDERARM TURN

Gentlemen, after the first triple step, you will raise your left hand to a palmto-palm position with y our partner. T his indica tes an underar m tur n. *Ladies,* make sure your body is dir ectly aligned o ver your supporting leg when you turn so you don't lose your balance. The turn occurs between your triple steps, so you will count the tur n with an "and" f or triple-step, AND, triple-step, rock step.

DANCE TIPS

Gentlemen, don't push the lady around on her underar m turn, but give her a little space by lifting up your arm and side of your body as well as placing slight pressure on the lady's hand.

To keep your figures and dance frame compact, don't fully extend the elbow during the rock step. That way you never get too far away from your partner. (Figure 9.4)

Assignment

Your first assignment after mastering these basic figures is to work on leading each step with the ball of your foot and incorporating the lilting action into your figures.



FIGURE 9.4 Bended Elbows During Open Rock Step

FIGURE 9.3

Swing Rock Step





THROW OUT

The **THROW OUT** is a transition turning toward the left where the gentleman r eleases the lady from a closed position to an open position. T he gentleman will shape his body while rotating to the left to throw the lady out. (Figure 9.5) The purpose of a throw out is to fr ee yourself to turn or lead a tur n, so y ou wouldn't want to immedia tely go back to a closed position. You will effectively dance a throw out through shape. **SHAPE** is the inclination of the body to the right or to the left tha t initia tes r otation. (Figures 9.5–9.6)

Ladies, during the thr ow out y ou don't want to feel like he's pulling you across him. Instead, you will lift the left side of your body as he lifts his right side and f ollow his lead.

The key to dancing this figure is gaining momentum when throwing the lady out. The momentum can make you lose your balance, though, so you will need to change the shape of your body after the throw out to counterbalance it.



FIGURE 9.5–9.6 Swing Shape During Throw Out

FIGURE 9.6

DANCE TIP



Gentlemen, it's important to let go of the lady's back during the Throw Out.

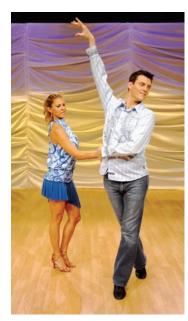


FIGURE 9.7 Gentleman's Waist Wrap

Rhythm Dances

GENTLEMAN'S WAIST WRAP

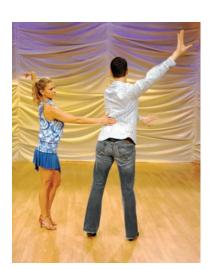


FIGURE 9.8 Lady's Hand Position During Gentleman's Waist Wrap

63

This figur e is somew hat similar to the Lad y's Underarm Turn you learned in session two, but this time the gentlemen ar e tur ning. *Gentlemen*, y ou will be tur ning to the left, wrapping y our bod y into y our o wn ar m and moving past the lad y's right side. (Figure 9.7) To finish this figur e y ou will lead the lad y in a reverse underarm turn (a turn to her left).

Ladies, you will contin ue to dance the Basic step on the spot and let him pass your right side. You will keep your hand connected to his back as he does his turn so he knows exactly where it is after the turn. (Figure 9.8)



Swing Styling Tips

Any time you are in an open position, you will leave your free arm extended out to the side. When turning or doing a rock step, your arm will always follow the rotation of your body. (Figure 9.9) There are so man y variations in how to dance Swing—y ou can c hoose how you ultimately want to style your arms.

KEY IDEAS

The body always leads the action of the arm.

Make sure to elongate your torso to create shape in Swing.

FIGURE 9.9 Swing Arm Styling

To create shape, you won't crunch down one side of your body but you will lift up the opposite side of your body. It's not a bending at the waist but a lifting of a side of the body. *Ladies*, you will follow the shape of your partner's body—that is how he will lead.

THE CUDDLE

A **CUDDLE** is a lady's reverse turn that wraps her into her own arms beside the gentleman. (Figure 9.10) *Gentlemen*, your footwork will be in a compact space when leading this figure to give the lady space to move.

DANCE TIP

When dancing this figur e you don't want too muc h shape because y ou will use a doub le handhold.

Assignment

Your assignment after mastering these figures is to incor porate the arm styling and shaping when dancing the figures.



FIGURE 9.10 The Cuddle



SINGLE TUCK IN

A **SINGLE TUCK IN** or a **TUCK TURN** is a turn led by prepping or winding up the lady in one direction to spin her in the opposite direction.

Gentlemen, your footwork is very basic but the lead is not as simple . You will lead the right side of the lady forward and into you. When the lady spins, your role isn't to spin her yourself but to turn your torso as if you are going to tuck her in and release her. (Figure 9.11)

Ladies, this figure is not as difficult as it looks if you practice bringing your weight over your right foot and allowing your shoulders and torso to unwind your body for the turn. As long as you keep your weight over your right foot and your body very straight, you'll have no trouble with the turn.

DANCE TIPS

Ladies, as you learn the Single Tuck In, take a few steps to make your way around the turn until you feel comfortable turning in one motion. This is called a **PADDLE TURN**.

Ladies, you will start your turn on a bent leg. It helps to straighten that leg as you turn to give yourself momentum.

Gentlemen, be careful not to push the lady around her tur n with either of your hands. You are only leading her with the rotation of your torso.

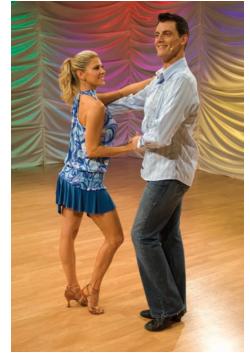


FIGURE 9.11 Winding Up for the Single Tuck In



FIGURE 9.12 Arm Position During Double Tuck In

DOUBLE TUCK IN

A Double Tuck In is the same as a Sing le Tuck In, but the lady will turn twice rather than once. *Gentlemen*, you will have a hand change after the lady's first turn and lead the second turn with your right hand.

Ladies, a key ingredient is that you keep your arms relaxed. This means you don't connect to your partner through stiff, tense ar ms. Rather, connect through your back and shoulder muscles.

DANCE TIP

Ladies, during the second tum you will open your arm and close it into your body as you rotate. This action will help propel your body around the turn. (Figure 9.12)



WALK BACK AND KICK

In this figure, you will take four steps backward, dance a series of four kicks together, and finish with a rock step. You will have two forward kicks, one kick with the gentleman 's foot between the lady's legs, and one kick with the lad y's foot between the gentleman's legs. (**Figures 9.13–9.14**)

Gentlemen, maintaining an unyielding frame in this figure is v ery important. To bring the lad y with you in the backward steps, you have to keep your ar ms in a solid position, especially y our right arm.



FIGURE 9.13–9.14 Walk Back and Kick



FIGURE 9.14

Assignment

Your assignment after mastering these figures is to incor porate turning techniques into these figures.

PEEK-A-BOO

This figur e is a fun v ariation of the Lady's Underar m Turn. Typically you will end the Lad y's Underar m Turn with a reverse ending, but now the timing will slightly c hange and y ou will dance a Peek-a-Boo. A **PEEK-A-BOO** involves a series of lady's underar m turns and rock steps and finishes with a reverse underarm turn.

Ladies, you will dance a P eek-A-Boo when you feel the man 's hand on y our shoulder b lade during an underar m turn. You will kee p your hand dir ectly in front of your body and bring it o ver the top of your head. (Figures 9.15–9.16)



FIGURE 9.15–9.16 Ladies Peek-A-Boo Positions



I



SWING: DANCE NOTES

East Coast Swing can be danced to a v ariety of styles of music such as Blues, Jazz, Bop, Rock and Roll, contemporary Pop, really anything that feels appr opriate to y ou. You can also dance Swing to a v ariety of speeds. It's always best when you are beginning to pick a slo wer, more comfortable tempo . Start with the tracks on the *Learn & Master Ballroom Dance* Music CDs. We've put together a variety of songs in various tempos. They are there to help you practice.

DANCE TIPS

Ladies, know how to follow even when you don't know what might be coming next.

Gentlemen, know how to lead a figure when your partner doesn't know what you are about to lead.

Closing Thoughts

Congratulations! You finished Learn & Master Ballroom Dance.

We know the effort and time you've invested in this course will reap benefits back to you for many years to come.

You've demonstrated your determination to stick with it all the way to the end. And if you were able to do that, then taking your dancing to the next level will be a pure joy.

You now have a solid foundation to dance well. But if you want to lear n more, consider working with a qualified teac her. To find a qualified dance instructor in your area, check with the National Dance Council of America. There is a link to their website and other great resources at our website www.LearnAndMasterBallroomDance.com/resources.

If you're ever in the Nashville, Tennessee, area, both Mark and Jaimee teach at Dance World—one of the nation's top dance studios. They are available for private or group lessons and would love to meet you.

Just a reminder, learning is a life-long process, and learning how to dance is a life-enriching endeavor.

Our hope is that you've had a g reat time; that you're becoming the dancer y ou've always wanted to be; that you've become more confident; and that you and your partner have grown closer.

We hope you have a great sense of achievement, and that through dancing you've made new relationships, have increased your physical fitness, or have even lost some of those unwanted pounds along the way.

Keep in touch from time to time on the Learn & Master Ballroom Dance discussion board and let us know how you're doing.

Thanks for letting Learn & Master Ballroom Dance be a part of your learning process!



Glossary

A

Alternating Free Turns (Cha Cha) - The lady does a turn; the gentleman does a turn on the opposite side of the Cha Cha basic; the gentleman and lady both turn at the same time to finish the figure.

American Rhythm - A division of ballroom dancing consisting of a collection of Latin and Swing dances.

American Smooth - A division of ballroom dancing consisting of dances that travel progressively around the dance floor, alternating between open and closed dance positions.

Apart Position - The gentleman and lady have no body contact.

Arm Styling - The positioning and movement of the arms, reflecting the character of a dance or style of dancing.

Axis - An imaginary vertical line running through the center of the body around which the body turns.

B

Balance Step - A figure to keep dancing when there is nowhere to move.

Ball Flat Footwork - The dancer rarely releases the ball of the foot completely off the floor, although the heel is often released.

Basic - A standardized group of steps, which together with other patterns, constitutes the foundation of a dance.

Basic Box (Rumba) - A six-step figure forming a box on the floor and counted in a 4/4 time signa ture as slow-quick-quick.

Basic Box (Waltz) - A six-step figure forming a box on the floor.

Basic Progressive (Waltz) - The Basic Box figure that moves forward with the right foot on the second measure as opposed to backward; this helps with movement across the dance floor.

Basic Rhythm (Foxtrot) - The basic timing of slow-slow-quick-quick; the foundational rhythm of Foxtrot figures.

Beat - The pulse of the music.

Blocks of Weight - The primary sections of the body arranged vertically from top down: head, shoulders/chest, abdomen, hips/legs.

Box Rhythm (Foxtrot) - The timing of the Foxtrot Basic Box counted slow-quick-quick.

Break - Any type of rock step where the dancer shifts his weight from one foot to the other.

Brushing the Feet - (See "Follow Through")

C

Cha Cha - A Latin dance originating from Mambo, best known for its lively and playfully cheeky character, syncopated footwork, and quick rotating Cuban motion.



Cha Cha Basic - The foundational steps, consisting of a Chasse and quick weight changes.

Change of Weight - The transfer of body weight from one foot to the other.

Change Step - Half of a progressive, starting with either foot.

Chase Turn (Cha Cha) - A Progressive Basic incor porating simultaneous pivot turns for the gentleman and lad y during counts 2-3, creating the feeling of partners chasing each other.

Chasse - A French word meaning "to chase," involving a series of side steps typically in a triple rhythm.

Closed Position - The normal hold where partners stand facing each other with arms lifted together in frames.

Corté - A type of lunge where the woman steps forward creating the traditional Tango picture.

Cross Body Lead - The gentleman leads the lad y to walk across his body; the gentleman turns perpendicular to the lady, allowing her to dance forward on a path that crosses in front of the gentleman's body.

Cross Hand Hold - Partners join the same hands together, crossing the arms across the body.

Crossover Break - A sequence of rotational actions and rock steps in open position.

Cuban Motion - The rotation of the hips side to side and forward and backward common in Latin dancing.

Cuddle - A lady's reverse turn that wraps her into her own arms beside the gentleman.

Curving Basic (Tango) - A Tango Basic that curves to the gentleman's left.

D

Double Hand Hold - The follower and leader are in open position, holding each other's hands and not in four points of contact.

Double Tuck In - A single tuck in danced twice, where the second tuck in uses a cross hand hold.

E

East Coast Swing - A dance comprised of six count patterns, with quick turns, rock steps, and an energetic bounce action of the legs and hips.

F

Fifth Foot Position - The toe of one foot points to the heel of the other foot.

Fifth Position Balance Step (Waltz) - A balance step in fifth position; the weight changes on beats 2 and 3.

Fifth Position Breaks (Rumba) - A series of breaks and rock steps in fifth position.

Five Foot Positions - Used to determine the placement of the feet during a dance. They are:

1st Position - Feet Together 2nd Position - Feet Apart 3rd Position - Heel to In-Step 4th Position - Walking Step 5th Position - Heel to Toe



Five Points of Contact - The connection points between partners when in closed position. They are:

- 1. Leader's palm to follower's palm
- 2. Leader's right hand to follower's shoulder blade
- 3. Follower's arm on top of leader's elbow
- 4. Follower's hand on leader's shoulder or arm
- 5. Body contact

Flick - A staccato or sharp extension of the lower leg.

Following - Appropriately reacting to the leader's communication of body movements or connections (visual and/or physical).

Follow Through - The tracking or brushing of your knees, ankles, and feet directly under the body.

Forward and Backward Basic (Cha Cha) - (See "Progressive Basic (Cha Cha)")

Foxtrot - A smooth progressive dance characterized by fluid, walking-style movements combined with a lilting action.

Foxtrot Basic - The foundational steps in Foxtrot, a six beat step counted in a 4/4 time signa ture as slow-slow-quick-quick.

Foxtrot Twinkle - Utilizes a box rhythm with three steps involving a definitive rise and fall action.

Frame - The position of the arms and torso while in dance position.

Free Turn - The gentleman and lady do not touch each other as they turn.

G

Gentlemen's Waist Wrap - A figure in Swing where the gentleman will turn to the left and wrap his body into his own arm, followed by an underarm turn for the lady.

Η

Hand Shake Hold - (See "Cross Hand Hold")

Heel Lead - The heel of the foot touches the floor first.

Ι

Inside of a Turn - The position of the partner moving backward when dancing a turn.

J

Κ

L

Leading - Using body movements and connections (visual and/or physical) to communicate intended actions.

Left Rock Turn (Foxtrot) - A gliding rock step that turns both partners to the left, commonly used in corners.

Left Turning Box (Foxtrot) - Counted as slow-quick-quick as supposed to the typical Foxtrot count of slow-slow-quick-quick; a Turning Box step used in tight dancing situations.





Left Turning Box (Waltz) - The rotation of the Basic Box to the left.

Lilt - The rising and lowering action achieved through the bending and straightening of the legs.

Line of Dance (LOD) - The counterclockwise flow of traffic around the dance floor.

Μ

Ν

Ο

Offset Breaks - Rock steps in an offset position rather than in normal alignment.

Offset Position - The dance position used in smooth dances where the woman stands slightly to the right of the gentleman.

Open Break - A break or rock step taken in open position w hile facing each other, often with partner s moving apart from each other.

Open Position - Any dance position where the gentleman and lady are standing apart or slightly apart with one or two hands in contact.

Outside of a Turn - The position of the partner moving forward when dancing a turn.

Outside Partner Breaks - (See "Offset Breaks")

Outside Partner Position - The gentleman steps to the ouside of the lady's body.

Р

Palm Hand Position - The leader's hand is palm to palm with the follower's hand.

Peek-A-Boo (Swing) - A variation of the Lady's Underarm Turn involving a series of lady's underarm turns and rock steps.

Pivot Foot - The foot that turns on the axis of a pivot turn.

Pivot Turn - A rotational movement of the body around one's own vertical axis.

Point - A foot extension where the toe or ball of the foot is in contact with the floor while the heel is in the air.

Position - The relationship of two dancers to each other.

Posture - The positioning of the different body parts relative to one another, generally including:

- 1. The center or core is pulled up
- 2. The rib cage is lifted and slightly forward
- 3. The shoulders are relaxed
- 4. The neck is stretched nice and tall

Progressive - Movement that travels forward and backward giving dancers the ability to use the entire dance floor.

Progressive Basic (Cha Cha) - A Cha Cha basic with progressive movement, where the side Cha-Cha-Cha moves forward and backward instead.



Promenade Position - A V-shaped dance position where both the man and lady move forward in the same direction.

Q

Quarter Turn (Foxtrot) - A forward turning basic and a backward turning basic creating a zig-zag pattern on the floor. **Quick** - A way of counting dance steps, equaling one beat.

R

Reverse Underarm Turn - An underarm turn where the follower turns to the left as supposed to the right.

Right Turning Box (Waltz) - The rotation of the basic box to the right through the use of the change step.

Rise and Fall - The continuous changing of body elevation through the use of the feet, ankles, and legs.

Rise and Fall (Foxtrot) - A bounce or lilting action during the side-close or the quick-quick ste ps.

Rock Step - Transferring weight from one foot to the other foot using a slight backward and forward motion.

Rock and Corté (Tango) - Forward and backward rocking motion of a Tango rock that moves directly into a Corté.

Rotating Basic (Swing) - The Swing Basic with r otation; where the leader initiates the rotation on the first triple step and the follower initiates the rotation on the second triple step.

Rumba - A dance of Cuban origin combining complex footwork with pronounced hip movement.

Rumba Rocks - The addition of a series of rock steps to the Rumba Basic.

Rumba Walks - A series of steps forward and backward for the man and the woman.

Running Steps (Tango) - A type of progressive movement using slow and quick steps of the Tango Basic.

S

Shadow Position - Partners stand facing the same direction in a parallel position.

Shape (Swing) - The inclination of the body to the right or to the left that initiates rotation.

Single Tuck In - A turn led by the man through prepping or winding up the lady in one direction in order for her to spin in the opposite direction.

Simple Twinkle (Waltz) - A dance figure consisting of three steps involving a definitive rise and fall action.

Slow - A way of counting dance steps, equaling two beats.

Spot Dance - A dance that generally remains on one part of the dance floor.

Spot Turn - (See "Pivot Turn")

Supporting Leg - The leg that carries the weight of the body.

Sway - The inclination of the body to the left or right, usually against the direction of movement.

Sweetheart - (See "Cuddle")



Swing Basic - A six beat long step in 4/4 time signature; counted 1 & 2, 3 & 4, 5, 6 or T riple Step, Triple Step, Rock Step. **Swing Step (Foxtrot)** - A series of side-to-side steps with a constant change of weight.

Τ

Tango - A dance with a quick stacca to feel, striking foot action, and dramatic snapping turns of the head.

Tango Basic - An eight beat long step counted slow-slow-quick-quick-slow that creates an "L" shape on the dance floor.

Tango Close - The last three steps of the Tango Basic-forward-side-close.

Tango Rocks - The addition of a rock step to the Tango Basic.

Throw Out - A transition step turning toward the left where the gentleman releases the lady from a closed position to an open position.

Toe Lead - The toe of the foot touches the floor first.

Track/Tracking - (See "Follow Through")

Triple Step - A series of three consecutive, syncopated steps counted within two beats of music.

Tuck Turn - (See "Single Tuck In")

Turning Basic to Promenade (Foxtrot) - A Foxtrot Basic that turns slightly to the right allowing the dancers to set up into promenade position without requiring them to be in a cor ner.

U

Underarm Turn - The follower completes a turn while passing under joined hands.

V

Visual Lead - To be lead by what you see rather than by body contact.

W

Walk Back and Kick - A Swing figure achieved by taking four steps backward, kicking four times together, then finishing with a rock step.

Waltz - An elegant and graceful dance in 3/4 time, characterized by the rising and lowering action in the feet and body.

Weight Change - The shifting of body weight from one foot to the other.

Х

Y

Ζ

Glossary



Acknowledgments

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THANKS FROM JAIMEE

Billy, my amazing husband and best friend. Your love, faith, and support al ways awes me. I love you and my wonderful stepkids beyond words: Grace, Hailey, Rachel, Nick, and Cary. Mom, you and Dad have always been my biggest fans. Thanks for your never-ending belief in me—I know dad would be so proud. Erin and Rich, there is no better sister and brother-in-law in the world.

Thank you to all of my gracious students who were patient throughout this process. Thank you for your support and for letting me be a part of your lives in this way. I love my job! Mark, you always make me laugh (and sometimes snort)! I couldn 't have asked for a better partner and friend in this project. Your professionalism, knowledge, and wonderful ability brought such a deep level of excellence to this course. You have given me so much. Thank you doesn't seem like enough. You are the best, and I am honored to dance with you!

Jaimule dur

THANKS FROM MARK

First, I'd like to thank my partner, Christopher, for all his help during the project. My appreciation and admiration he will never fully know. All my love. To my dance partner, Jaimee, WOW! (ha, ha, ha) What more could I ask for: grace, humor, talent, and heart.

Finally, thank you to my students for your patience and understanding. I couldn't have done it without your support!

Mark D. Short



Instructors

JAIMEE SIMON

A love for dance and a passion for the Arts at a young age are what led Jaimee Gray Simon to a career in the Performing Arts with the non-profit organization Youth With A Mission in Tyler, TX. There she studied and taught the Arts, including ballet, jazz, hip-hop, mime, acting, and playwriting. She has traveled and taught all over the world in places such as Bulgaria, Israel, Azerbaijan, and Colombia, even studying in Russia under a former Bolshoi ballerina.

After returning home to her native Nashville in 2000, Jaimee discovered a passion for the art and sport of ballroom dancing. She has spent the last eight years training, teaching, competing, and choreographing in the areas of Latin, Swing, and Country under some of the nation's most esteemed ballroom dancers.

Jaimee also has an extensive background in acting and tele vision hosting. She has worked on feature films, music videos, and commercials. She has also appear ed on CMT's "T op Twenty Countdo wn" as a dance instructor/co-host, and on NBC's "Nashville Star" as a guest dance coach.

In 2008, J aimee and her partner w on a World Title in the Open 8 Dance division in the United Country y-Western Dance Council World Championships. She also holds several UCWDC Division One Champion titles, and she is also very proud of her award-winning competitive dance students. Jaimee's favorite dances and specialties include W est Coast Swing, Country-Western, and American Smooth.

MARK SHORT

Mark began dancing at the young age of 6 in his small hometown of Beebe, Arkansas. Through many years of piano lessons, dance lessons, school plays, and theater, Mark's love for the Arts guided him to the Univ ersity of Central Arkansas where he majored in music and theater. However, dancing was always in the stars for him.

He began his ballroom dance career in Little Rock, Arkansas, at the age of 18, working at the local ballroom dance studio for a number of years. At first, his main professional interest was the American Rh ythm style, in which he competed for about 6 years. Through travel around the world competing both professionally and with students and e ventually owning his own studio, he began to make a name for himself in the ballroom world. After much coaxing from his coaches, Mark was convinced to take a whirl at the American Smooth style, which resulted in attaining the honor of U.S. Rising Star Finalist.

At the request of the owner, Mark recently made the decision to move to Nashville, Tennessee, and work at one of the premier dance sport studios in the countr y. He is cur rently training with the U .S. and w orld's top coac hes to give the Pr ofessional American Smooth division one more try with Jaimee Simon, his new professional dance partner.



Credits

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

L. Gabriel Smith

INSTRUCTORS / AUTHORS

Jaimee Simon Mark Short

PROJECT COORDINATOR

Steve Krenz

DIRECTOR Paul Williams

raul williams

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Paul Williams John Huber

CAMERA OPERATORS

John Huber Bert Elliott Cameron Powell Adam Winfrey Jason Crossman Paul Cain Jeffrey Stanfill

PHOTOGRAPHER

Cameron Powell

MAKEUP/SCRIPT SUPERVISOR

Jes Mercer

VIDEO EDITORS

Paul Williams Bert Elliott John Huber Tim Moning Paul Cain Jes Mercer Josh Heath Jon Young Jason Crossman

AUDIO

Jon Young Darin Richardson Paul Williams Bert Elliott

SET DESIGN

Paul Williams Bert Elliott Micah Callaway

GRAPHICS

Paul Williams Bert Elliott

DVD DESIGN

Paul Williams Bert Elliott

BOOK AND COVER DESIGN

Jared McDaniel, Studio430.com

BOOK EDITOR Emily Garman

CONTENT SUPERVISOR

Steve Krenz

CONTENT ASSISTANT

Paulette Krenz

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