

Cha Cha & Rumba

- Leading & FOLLOWING -

- LATIN TECHNIQUE -

LEADING & FOLLOWING FUNDAMENTALS

BUTTERFLY POSITION

- Both arms up at shoulder height & out to the sides with palms together & elbows bent.
- Shoulders are parallel to partner's shoulders.

FIRM TOPLINE FOR MEN

- 'TOPLINE' refers to the position of the body above the waist.
- The man's topline should turn as a unit.

FIRM RESISTANCE FOR WOMEN

- By maintaining a constant resistance (or firmness or tension) in her body, the woman is immediately able to detect the man's movements and respond.

'SEAMLESS' BLENDING

- By anticipating the next figure, the man can initiate a lead for that figure on the last beat of the previous figure.
- This type of smooth blending helps make the dancing follow continuously from one figure to the next.

LEADING

The principal used is for the man to shape the body and/or arms so as to make the movement required obvious to the lady.

PHYSICAL LEADS

The man uses the joined arm(s) to lead the woman to the required position. Tension is required in both the man's and woman's arms.

SHAPING LEADS

These are created by the man through ARM POSITIONS, HAND HOLDS and BODY POSITIONS.

[On page 2 typical Physical and Shaping Leads are given for a number of basic figures.]

LATIN TECHNIQUE

FIRST PRINCIPLES

QUIET TOPLINE

In Latin dances, motion should be minimized above the waist. Most of the action is in the legs and feet. Try to keep your shoulders parallel to your partner's shoulders in figures where you are facing your partner. Examples: Basic, Cucaracha, Fwd & Back Basics, Fence Line, Time Step, Crab Walks.

BALL-FLAT Walking Action

When walking forward or backward, place the ball of the foot down first and then the heel.

This requires a slight 'forward poise', i.e. forward lean.

In placing the ball of the foot down, place the inside of the foot down first, then the ball. This produces a slight 'knee-in' action.

FOOT PLACEMENT ('Foot-Turn')

In Latin dances the feet are never parallel except when they are closed. This 'Foot-Turn' is always outward. The amount of turn varies but is typically about 1/16th (22.5 degrees.)

The LATIN CROSS on Rock Steps

When you rock forward or back, place your foot with the toe pointed 'OUT', i.e. away from the center of your body by about 1/16th (as shown in the diagram.)

Examples: Basic, Forward Basic, Back Basic, New Yorker, Fence Line, Hand-to-Hand, Time Step, Shoulder-to-Shoulder.

ARM POSITIONS

The position of arm of the contact hand will be dictated by the lead of the figure being danced.

The free arm(s) becomes an extension of the body and therefore the arm action is completed after the associated body action. Typical free arm positions are:

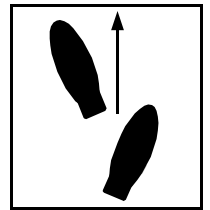
- To the side, extended
- To the side, retracted
- Forward, retracted
- Across body, retracted.

The free arm movement should be a supple action which is continued through to the wrist and fingers to arrive in the correct position on the appropriate beat of music. This arm action reflects individual tastes and therefore will vary with each individual. It should be natural and comfortable.

LATIN MOVEMENT EXERCISE

[Do this a few minutes every day to develop a natural Latin movement and hip action.]

1. Stand with feet together in a normal relaxed manner with a slight forward poise.
2. Lift rib-cage, straighten spine but do not raise shoulders.
3. Take a step to the left placing first the inside of the ball of the foot. Transfer full weight to the left foot allowing the pelvis to move sideways and back so that the weight is felt to be near the heel of the left foot. The knee of the left leg is locked back. The right leg relaxes and the knee bends in slightly.
4. Repeat step 3 to the right, then left and continue.



LEADING EXAMPLES

FIGURE

PHYSICAL LEADS

SHAPING LEADS

BACK BASIC	Maintain Butterfly (BFLY) or CLOSED Pos.	Rock Back R (Toeing Out) & Recover. Move body forward.
BACK CUBAN	Maintain BFLY position.	Step behind with Free Foot (Toeing Out) Recover to face partner for side step(s).
BASIC	Maintain BFLY or CLOSED position.	Meas.1: Rock Fwd L (Toeing Out) & Rec. Meas.2: Rock Back R (Toeing Out) & Rec.
BREAK BACK to OPEN	Bring joined hands through causing Woman to step behind to OPEN position. (Hands flat.)	Step behind with free foot (turning 1/4 & toeing out) to OPEN pos. Recover without turn to OPEN Pos.
CHASE	Release Hands as Man turns. Rejoin hands on last measure.	Step Fwd L (turning 1/4 RF) Rec. R (turning 1/4 RF).
CIRCLE	Bring joined hands forward turning Woman away to slightly back-to-back position.	Turn away on Free Foot to slightly back-to-back position.
CRAB WALKS	Maintain BFLY position.	Step through with Free Foot, step side and continue. Look in direction of motion
CUCARACHA	Maintain BFLY or CLOSED position.	Press to the side & recover, step in-place
FENCE LINE	Maintain BFLY position.	Lunge through with Free Foot (toeing out & lowering), look in direction of motion, recover turning to face partner.
FRONT CUBAN	Maintain BFLY position.	Step in front with Free Foot (Toeing Out) Recover to face partner for side step(s).
FORWARD BASIC	Maintain BFLY or CLOSED position.	Rock Forward L (Toeing Out) & Recover.
HAND TO HAND	Bring joined hands through causing Woman to step behind to OPEN position. (Hands flat.) Bring same joined hands back through and recover to BFLY.	Step behind with free foot (turning 1/4 & toeing out) to OPEN pos. & recover forward turning to face partner in BFLY.
LARIAT	Bring M's L & W's R hand across in front of M's R shoulder (about head high), back of M's R hand is placed on W's waist, M leads W fwd around him by moving his L hands around his head.	M maintains facing direction throughout, M does L & R Cucaracha as W circles.
NEW YORKER	Bring joined hands through causing Woman to step in front to Open position. Bring same joined hands back through and recover to BFLY.	Step in front with free foot to Open Pos. (turning 1/4 & toeing out), recover turning 1/4 to face partner in BFLY.
OPEN BREAK	M releases his R (W's L) hand and leads W to rock apart with his L hand.	Rock apart L (M's R & W's L arm up) and recover to BFLY.
PEEK-A-BOO	No physical contact.	A Chase can be interrupted for 2 measures by the front person (M or W) who initiates 2 Cucarachas while looking back at partner.
REV UNDERARM TURN	M raises his L hand through and CCW over W head leading her to do a L-face Spot Turn.	M does the 1st meas. of a Basic while leading the W to turn L face under his L arm.
SHOULDER TO SHOULDER	Maintain BFLY position. As M rocks fwd go to BFLY/SIDECAR or BFLY/BANJO position.	M does a Front Cuban starting with the free foot, while leading to W to do a Back Cuban.
SIDE WALKS	Maintain BFLY or CLOSED position.	Step Side with Free Foot.
SPOT TURN	Indicate Spot Turn with a small inward semi-circular motion with the joined hands in the motion direction.	Step through with the free foot & turn 1/2, Recover (turning 1/2) to face in BFLY pos.
TIME STEP	Release both hands, stay in Open-Facing pos.	Both do a Back Cuban with the free foot.
UNDERARM TURN	M raises his L hand CW over W's head leading her to do a R-face Spot Turn.	M does the 2nd meas. of a Basic while leading the W to turn R face under his L arm.
WALK	Maintain same position throughout.	Move fwd or back using Ball-Flat action.
WHIP	Bring both hands together at waist with M's R hand on top (leading W forward.)	M step back on R turning 1/4 LF leading W across, M step fwd turning 1/4 LF to BFLY.