

Spice Up Your Relationship with Ball Room Dancing

Ball room dancing is usually performed with twelve different types of dances. In this article we will restrict ourselves to first six dance types. These types are *Waltz*, *Swing*, *Foxtrot*, *ChaCha*, *Rumba*, and *Tango*. Out of these six types three dance types, *Waltz*, *Foxtrot*, and *Rumba* are for the slow music and the other three are for the fast music. We will cover these six types in three sessions, two per session. In each session we will learn one slow and one fast dance.

Before we start our first session lets take a look at some guidelines which are common to all ball room dancing types. First, male always starts a dance with his LEFT FOOT while female does so with her RIGHT FOOT. In most of the scenarios the male and female steps will be mirror of each other and that's how we get the symmetry in the ball room dancing. Second guideline, male always leads the dance (unlike other stuff in real-life) and female follow the footsteps. The best ball room dance occurs when male perfectly leads and female simply blends into it. Also note that in ball room dancing male has lot of work to do, he is the one who keeps the track of music bits, decides the actions, and guides the female. That is why it takes more time for males to learn the dance and female should support him in nice way. With these common guidelines let's start our first session with *Waltz* and *Swing*.

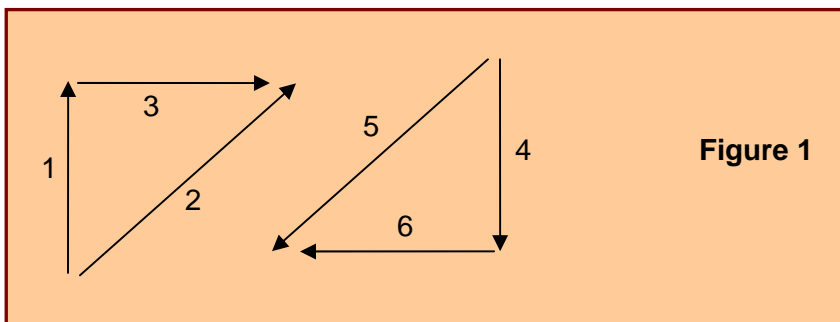
Waltz

Waltz is slow music dance. Waltz steps are divided into three actions: box, forward balancing, and side balancing. A Waltz dance then can be arbitrary mixture of these three actions. It is up to the male (his mood and music sense) to decide which action sequence to follow and how many times to do a particular action. For every action in all the six dance types I will first give instructions for individual practice and then guideline on how a couple should do it. Alright then, let us see how to do waltz's box action.

Box

As name suggests a box action completes a square or a box on 6 bits of music. The pre-dance position for both male and female is standing straight-up with legs close to each

other. For male the box action goes like this. On first bit put the left foot forward one step, on second bit put the right foot one step diagonally to the right side of left foot. On the third bit pull the left foot near the right foot. This is half box by now (See Figure 1). On the fourth bit bring the right foot one step backward and on fifth bit get the left foot diagonally backward to its original position. Finally, on the sixth bit drag the right foot near to the left foot to have it on its original position. This completes a box. The female action is exact mirror of this. What I mean by mirror is replace left foot with right and right with left foot. Replace forward action by backward and backward by forward action. See Figure 1 for Waltz box action. Try this as an individual.



Couple's Position

Now let's talk about how couple will do a Waltz's box action. First, standing position; obviously, male and female face each other with male holding her right hand with his left hand. This holding should be held at the nose level of the shortest person of two. The male's right arm goes behind her, resting on her back just below her shoulder. Her right arm goes on his right shoulder (not on his back). The men's right hand is at most important in the whole ball room dancing. It is the one (the arm on her back) that is going to tell her male's intentions, which action he wants to do next. The male's right arm GUIDES the dance! We will get to the details in a minute.

Finally, male and female shouldn't be facing each other exactly. The right foot of female should be in between two feet's of male (See Figure 2). In other words, the male should be able to see what is behind the female and so do the female. Now try this box action in couple.

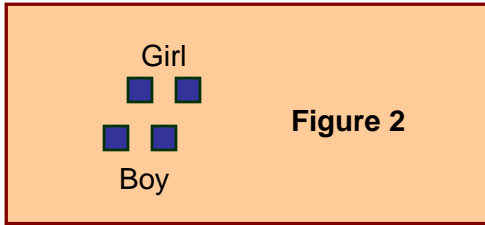


Figure 2

Balancing

Next we add two more actions, the forward balance and the side balance. For forward balance, like the box action, male starts with the left foot one step forward on the first half of a bit. On second half of the bit he put his right foot one step forward next to the left foot. This completes one bit (unlike box we don't do diagonal movement of right foot). We stay in this position for bit 2 and 3 (see Figure 3). Keep the right foot elevated resting only on toe, this keeps you ready for the next step and saves the time. On the first half of bit 4, bring right foot back to its original position and on second half bring the left boot one step backward to its original position. This time keep the left foot elevated for the next action. Hold this position in bit 5 and 6. That's it all about simple forward balancing. The side balancing is exactly like this except for the fact that forward-backward vertical motion is replaced by left-right horizontal movement (again see Figure 3). In balancing female obviously follows male with mirror actions.

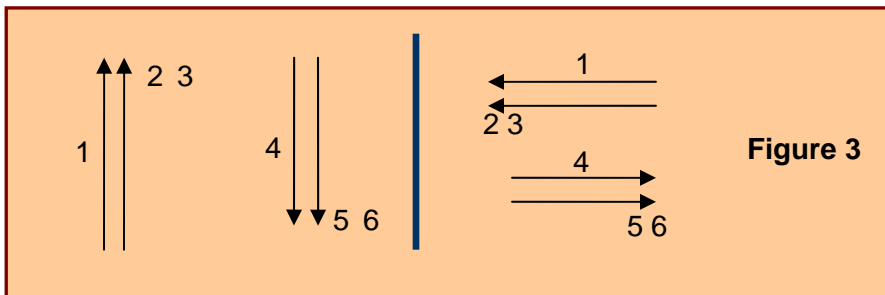


Figure 3

Putting things together and adding rotation

As mentioned before a waltz dance is combination of box and two balancing actions done in some sequence. Now this some sequence may be guided by the music or decided by male on his whim! The point here is how female will if male wants box, or balancing? For example, on the first bit, with forward step of male's left foot she don't know if he doing box or forward balance, that is if she should bring other foot on next half bit or wait for the second bit. It's male job to let her know about his intention in that

fraction of second with his right arm which is on her back by guiding her body. That is, if he is going for the forward balance he should hold her body going towards his right on second bit.

Finally, one can put rotations in all the six dance types. In Waltz couple rotates anti-clock wise. What I mean by rotations is while doing these 3 actions the couple rotates around themselves. It's more fun and more difficult too and intensive is you don't see the same wall or person at all the time!