

Dancing Made Easy: Six Elements of Ballroom Dancing

Forward
Back
Left
Right
Triples (Chasse – Left/Right)
Rock Steps (Forward/Back/Side)

Every step in every dance is made up of these 6 Elements.

Four Steps to Dance Success - Basic Step Elements

- Walking Steps (Forward/Back)
- Side Steps (Left/Right)
- Triple Steps (Chasse – Left/Right)
- Rocks Steps (Forward/Back/Side)

Dancing Made Easy as 1, 2, 3

Three basic elements of dance

1. walking steps - forward and back
2. chasses side steps - left and right
3. step in place

Partnership Dancing Rules

These are all the rules you need to communicate every step in every social dance unambiguously.

Attitude:

- Safety, Courtesy, Comfort
- Natural, Freedom, Partnership
- Clearly Defined, Easy, Fast, Universal

Balance: everyone maintains their own balance.

Connection: the woman maintains the connection.

- Frame: the woman maintains her frame when the man moves the connection horizontally.

Direction: the woman maintains her direction.

- Three directions: straight, turn, circle
- The woman stops when she is (a) blocked or (b) reaches the end of her connection

Leader: invites, guides & initiates movement; determines speed, direction & alignment. Create & direct the follower's momentum.

Follower: responds to the signals, energy & movement of the leader.

Body Leads - Feet Follow. Connect with body & move from center.

Dance with intention through the center of your core in time & space.

Elements of Dance:

Body, Action, Space, Time, Energy Relationship

Who, What, Where, When, How, Why
A dance moves through space & time with energy using relationships.

Dancers always hear how they need to have good posture and move forward from the center of the body, but achieving this can be a challenge. Those with poor posture often find it hard to know when their posture is going. Imagine someone pulling you forward by grabbing your belt and pulling on it. That's the way you should always be moving forward.

The 10 Commandments of Ballroom Dancing

1. **Nose follows toes**
2. **The problem always happens the step before**
3. **Your feet should always be pointed in the same direction**
4. **Every step must come from the supporting foot**
5. **You can't travel and turn at the same time**
6. **You must be on a heel to take a heel, and a toe to take a toe (smooth dancing)**
7. **Your center must always be towards your partner**
8. **When turning left, look left. When turning right, look more left. (smooth dancing)**
9. **Your elbows must always be in front of your body**
10. **Never stop moving**

Beginners Basic Ballroom Dancing Tips Summary

Our upper body initiates movement and the direction of that movement. Our legs place our feet and our feet provide balance.

Put more thought into moving and turning the upper body than you dedicate to foot position.

Place all your weight on the foot that is landing on the floor.

Keep the frame correct all the time. Keep your head up, always.

Correct posture, hold and frame provide consistent signals to the following partner and help you both to learn more quickly.

Look like a dancer and you will start to dance like one.

At first concentrate mostly on the above items and then work on timing once you have established some good habits.

Condense the steps and practice wherever you are.

If you make a mistake in a step sequence keep going. Don't start back at the beginning.

Wear light leather shoes with suede soles. Heavy shoes or trainers will be fine at first but will soon impede your progress.

Search You Tube for instructional videos of the steps you want to practice.

Be happy to learn at the speed that your mind and body is comfortable with, rather than the speed of the most able couple in the class.

(dance@ballroom-basics.com)

DANCE CONCEPTS

Below The Waist:

Basic Movements

- Rock
- Walk
- Triple
- Box

Components:

- Rock
- Walk
- Side
- Triple
- Tap

Elements of a Step:

- Release
- Foot Placement
- Change Weight
- Settle Weight

Hip Movements:

- Lateral
- Settling
- Twisting
- Rotational

Leg Lines:

- Hip to Knee
- Knee to Ankle
- Ankle to Foot

Getting To Know Your Feet:

Things Feet Can Do:

- Close
- Pass
- Lock

Footwork (generally):

- Heel
- Toe
- Heel Toe
- Toe Heel
- Ball Heel

Footwork (specifically):

- Inside Edge of Foot
- Inside Edge of Ball
- Inside Edge of Toe
- Flat Foot
- Outside Edge of Heel

Foot Positions (Right & Left):

- Forward
 - On Line
 - Slightly Cross (CBMP)
 - Cross (CMBP)
- Forward Slightly Side
- Diagonal Forward
- Side Slightly Forward
- Side
- Side Slightly Back
- Diagonal Back
- Back Slightly Side
- Back

Beyond Footwork & Position:

- Footwork
- Foot Position
- Pattern
- Amalgamation

Above The Waist

Dance Positions:

- Closed
- Open
- Parallel Right & Left
- Promenade & Reverse
- Shadow (4)
- Shine

Recurring Properties:

- Twinkles
- Spirals
- Fans
- Spot Turns
- Pivots
- Wheels
- Tucks
- Swivels
- Hesitations
- Under Arm Turns
- Grapevines
- Streamline

Where To Go & How To Get There

Directional Movements:

- Forward
- Back
- Left
- Right
- Up
- Down
- Turning Left
- Turning Right

Line of Dance Directions:

- Line of Dance (LOD)
- Against LOD
- Diagonal Wall
- Diagonal Center Against LOD
- Wall
- Center
- Diagonal Wall Against LOD
- Diagonal Center

Leaders & Followers

Ways to Lead:

- Sustain
- Activate
- Disallow

Jobs for the Leader:

- Direction
- Timing
- Power
- Steps

Jobs for the Follower:

- Flexibility
- Movement
- Selling
- Collection

ELEMENTS OF DANCE

1. Walking- heel first
2. Chasse- step-together-step (ball of foot hits first, then close)
3. Box- combines walking and chasse
4. Rock- transfer weight to one foot, then replace weight to other foot
5. 5th Position Rock Step- As you step back for the rock step, turn the back toe out. This gives you more hip action (rumba, swing)
6. Triple Step- 3 steps to the side (step-together-step)

DANCE POSITIONS

1. Closed- (foxtrot, waltz, tango)
2. Closed- (rumba, cha cha) less arm bend than #1, partners are about 1 foot apart. (swing) lower the lead hand to side
3. One Hand Hold
4. Right Open
5. Left Open
6. Promenade
7. Practice- 2-hand hold which allows you to be farther apart.