

# Class Notes: Kick-Step (B) Tiers 2&3

## Week 1: Tier 2 - Clockwise & Anti-Clockwise Rotation

### Both

- The man and woman must maintain pressure through the arms, with elbows staying close to the hip. Remember - *pressures should be constant!*
- Maintain frame:
  - Men should not try to move the woman through a rotation that is greater than the woman's footwork will allow.
  - Women should track the man's right shoulder as he rotates, also being guided by the pressure through the lead.
- The man may be thought of as the centre of the circle, with the woman moving along the edge of the circle. The man's footwork is not large, but is centered underneath his body with the emphasis on body position and rotation.
- Pay attention to the movement and momentum of the dance to determine when a rotation in a given direction will a) work, b) feel comfortable, and c) look good.

### Clockwise Rotation

- The man uses his back-step to commence the rotation, moving slightly forward and turning in towards the woman (**BODY LEAD**):
  - This is an approximately 90° rotation that, providing the elbows stay close to the hip, creates a push from the man's left side of body into the woman's right side of body.
  - When using a double hand hold, the body rotation also pulls the man's right side away from the woman. Providing the elbows stay close to the hip, this should also cause the woman to move slightly forward through the back step and initiate her body rotation.
- Pressure through the lead arm (man's left, woman's right) continues to "squeeze up" through the kick-step (2+→3+). As the kick-step is completed (On 4) the man pushes through the lead arm back towards the woman's right hip. Both the man and woman pivot approximately 90-180° to complete the rotation.
- The pressure applied through the kick-step may cause some women to hesitate or shy away from fully positioning their body over the foot prior to the pivot. However, good body position is necessary to allow the pivot to be executed smoothly.
- The kick-step back (5,6) allows the close body position to relax and the pressure through the arms to "stretch out", ready to continue into the next back-step.

## **Anti-clockwise Rotation**

- The man pulls in through his left arm towards his left hip with the momentum of the woman's back-step to lead the anti-clockwise rotation:
  - The man's back-step becomes a back-cross in front. The initial rotation achieved is typically  $<45^\circ$  but provides a clear **BODY LEAD** for the woman and pulls her slightly forward.
  - If performed from closed position, the man's right hand can be used to strengthen the lead using gentle pressure into the woman's back. The pressure is applied during the cross-step in front and into the kick-step (2→3).
- The pressure achieved through the initial body rotation is maintained into the kick-step (3,4):
  - For the woman most of the movement through the rotation is achieved by positioning through the kick-step, moving forward and around the man. A small amount of rotation occurs through the pivot once the kick-step has landed.
  - For the man the kick-step occurs directly beneath the body. The rotation occurs through a pivot on the supporting (right) leg.
- The momentum of the anti-clockwise rotation sends the woman away from the man:
  - Keep the elbows close to the hip - do not allow the arms to stretch out.
  - The last kick-step (5,6) may be used to close with partner if over-extension has occurred.
  - Alternatively, the man may take the last kick-step (5,6) away from the woman to open out into a side-by-side position. When doing so, it is important that the man maintains a pressure through the lead arm back into his side; otherwise the woman is likely to be flung away!

**Your Notes:**

## Week 1: Tier 3 - Kick-Ball-Change; Open Kick Out

### *Kick-Ball Change*

- The kick-ball-change (KBC) is used instead of the standard back-replace. The kick steps (through 3,4,5,6) remain unchanged. Timing is 1, ½, ½
- The kick involves a lift through the hip, but this is not as pronounced as for other kicks in our footwork. The ball of foot flicks toward the floor, but this is not a point through the toes. **Don't prance!**
- The ball-change requires compression through the knees and ankles, Kick-PUSH-PUSH.
- The KBC has some rise and fall, **but there should be no bounce!** Bouncing is often caused by extension through the knee and ankle of the supporting foot while kicking. Keep your foot pressure into the floor.
- Keep arm pressure with your partner constant. Do not let the motion of the KBC cause your arm to start bopping up and down.

### *Open Kick-Out*

- The OPEN KICK-OUT (OKO) is used instead of the standard second kick-step (5,6) in a RETURN. It is a directional kick to the side of body that relies upon counter-balance and counter-pressure with partner.
- The first four beats (1→4) of the RETURN are unchanged. However, it is important to ensure that good arm position is achieved, with elbows back in close to the hip by the end of the kick-step (i.e. by 4). A relaxed RETURN, which may be generally suitable for dancing, will not provide solid pressure or connection with partner for the OKO.
- Pressure is applied through the body into the supporting foot (**GROUNDING**) as the first kick-step is completed (4+). Simultaneously a body crunch is commenced between the hip and ribs (man's left; woman's right) as the outside leg (man's right; woman's left) is pulled up in towards the body.
- The second kick is directed straight to the side of the body, pushing through the ball of foot (5):
  - No karate kicks with the heel; no ballerina points through the toes.
  - The push through body into the OKO causes the body crunch to transfer from one side to the other. This produces a hip motion that is reflected in body pressure with partner.
  - The OKO will cause a slight body lean in towards partner, which is lessened with better body crunch during the kick. Both partners want to achieve the same amount of body lean so that there is an even counter-balance.
  - Counter-pressure must remain inwards and upwards toward partner. If the body tilts or arm(s) drop through the kick, be ready to head towards the floor!
- The kick is pulled back in towards the body, using the same muscle pressure through the body crunch (5+→6). *Use your stomach to push and pull through the kick, rather than trying to simply lift and extend/retract the leg.*
- The step, in conjunction with the pull back through the kick, is used to return to frame with partner and prepare for the following back-step/KBC (6).

Your Notes:



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## Week 2: Tier 2 - Turning Link; Concertinas

### Turning Link

- Similar to the BASIC LINK, the man leads in towards his left hip, continuing through the **PUSH-PULL** out of the back-step.
- The man's back-step comes forward and to his left, moving out of the woman's line of dance, while the woman is brought directly forward (1,2).
- The man uses his kick-step to come across the woman's right forearm, his left hand resting against his left hip, while bringing his right hand up to catch the woman's left hip (3,4). The resulting position places the man and woman side by side, but facing the opposite direction to each other.
- The man's left arm and woman's right arm should form a right angle, connected with a solid **WRIST ANGLE**. The man's right hand should cup the woman's left hip, while the woman's left hand should apply gentle pressure into the man's right shoulder.
- The man and woman pivot 90° to 180° clockwise on the supporting foot:
  - Upon completion of the kick-step (4+) the man pushes back through woman's right arm towards her hip.
  - The man maintains pressure through both arms during the pivot, using his whole upper torso to move the woman's body into position.
  - The woman pivots further than the man to finish in closed position.
  - Overextension should be avoided by keeping the arms in close to the body.
- The final kick-step back (5,6) should match partner and be used to close any overextension that has occurred during the pivot.

### Concertinas

- Similar to the TURNING LINK the CONCERTINAS involve a pivot following the first kick step with bodies positioned to the side of partner. The pivot is a full 180° that is achieved using counter-balance and a mutual push/pull through the arms.
- From a double hand-hold the man pulls back through his arms in towards his hips, continuing through the **PUSH-PULL** motion out of the back-step.
- The man's back-step comes forward and to his left, moving out of the woman's line of dance, while the woman is brought directly forward (1,2).
- The man uses his kick-step to come across the woman's right forearm, his left hand resting against his left hip, while bringing his right hand up to the woman's left hip (3,4). The resulting position places the man and woman side by side, facing opposite directions, with their waist across partner's right forearm.
- The man and woman pivot 180° clockwise on the supporting foot, the rotation is generated using pressure through the body - not by swinging the arms:
  - Upon completion of the kick-step (4+) the man pushes back through woman's right arm towards her right hip, while pulling through his right arm towards his right hip. *The arms move in one smooth motion from hip to hip.*
  - The man initiates the push through the arms with a rotation and slight push forward through the stomach muscles on his left side. As the elbows remain in

by the side, this provides pressure from his body, through the arms, and into the woman's body.

- The man uses the “wind-up” through his body to compress through the left arm before providing a smooth, yet snappy extension to push through the rotation - *squeeze in, stretch out.*
- During the pivot as the man pulls back in towards his hip through the right arm, he also pulls back through the stomach muscles on his right side. This action is complementary to the left hand side - *stretch out, squeeze in*
- The woman matches the pressure provided by the man so that her pivot is synchronized with the man and the connection with partner remains constant. *Do not rotate through the pivot early or pull back through the hip as though it were a spin - this causes your body to come away from the man, resulting in a loss of pressure.*
- Both the man and woman maintain arm and body pressure through the pivot, using the whole upper torso to move the body into position - side by side, facing opposite directions, with waist across partner's left forearm.
- Overextension should be avoided by keeping the arms in close to the body, pushing/pulling straight towards partner's hips - NOT pushing back and around!
- The CONCERTINA is a pivot side-by-side with partner. It is NOT a kick from one side of your partner to the other!
  - Kick-step forward onto the supporting foot and make sure that body weight is fully over the foot before pivoting. *Commit!*
  - Avoid rotating through the body before the foot has been placed for the pivot.
  - Don't be afraid to get close - put your waist right across the arm of your partner before the pivot. No gaps.
- The final kick-step back (5,6) is used to separate from partner and re-centre in face to face position ready for the following back-step.

**Your Notes:**

## Week 2: Tier 3 - Concertina Sweeps

- The CONCERTINA SWEEPS replace the standard kick-steps used in a CONCERTINA with a sweep on each leg. Body pressure into partner and arm movements remain unchanged, but body positions shift slightly and additional attention is required to pressures into the floor.
- Body positioning relative to partner is achieved solely through the back step (1,2). This differentiates the CONCERTINA SWEEPS from the CONCERTINA, where the first 4 beats are used to place the man and woman side by side.
  - From a double hand-hold the man pulls back and down through his arms, towards his hips at slightly lower than waist height.
  - The lead brings the **PUSH-PULL** motion of the back-step towards the floor.
  - The man pushes forward and down through the supporting foot, positioning body weight completely over the ball of foot ready to pivot (1,2).
  - The woman completes her back step towards the man (1,2) and skips forward onto her right leg with pressure into the floor, as she commences to sweep on the left leg (+3).
  - The man should be positioned slightly to his left of the woman, maintaining some space between the feet. This provides room for the leg to come back in under the body during the first sweep.
  - Due to the additional distance between the man and woman's supporting foot, a strong push forward through the upper body is used to keep connection with partner.
- The first sweep (left leg) commences from behind the body, pulling forward and around to close back in next to the supporting foot under the body (3,4):
  - The sweep is a push from the stomach and groin, not a swing from the leg.
  - Pressure into the floor is maintained by a constant push through the supporting leg and pressure through inside edge of foot and toe of the sweeping leg. This pressure is better achieved with lower body position.
  - The weight on the supporting foot is through the ball of foot to enable the body to pivot with the sweep. A flat foot will cause the sweep to appear jerky and prevent rotation with partner into the side by side position.
  - Once the sweep has completed, there is a full transfer of weight from one foot to the other.
- The second sweep (right leg) commences from beside the supporting foot, extending forward and around to come behind the body in preparation for the back-step.
  - Once the sweep has completed, there is a full transfer of weight from one foot to the other for the man.
  - The woman does not transfer weight onto her right foot at the end of the sweep like the man. Rather she pulls the leg under the body and holds the weight before pushing back into her back step on the right foot. A tap without transfer of weight may be used to steady prior to the back-step.

- Each dancer should support their own weight and pivot through each sweep independently balanced. However, the “lock-in” through the arms is used to counterbalance and is also used to provide connection with partner for the timing/momentum of the sweep.

**Your Notes:**





## Week 3: Tier 2 - The Neckbreaker

- A 12 beat move, comprising of 2x6 beat halves:
  - 1-6: The man brings the woman beside him, maintaining his body orientation so that both he and the woman face the same direction, with the arms held at shoulder height.
  - 7-12: Using both arms, the man turns the woman into position directly in front of him - this creates the “neck-breaker” position. The woman positions herself in front of the man’s body to spin at a comfortable distance. When done correctly, the spin is slightly more than 1½ rotations.
- 1-6:
  - Holding right hand to right hand, the man leads out of the back-step from the woman’s right hip towards his right shoulder (2).
  - The lead continues to extend through the elbow, directly to the right of the man’s shoulder as the woman kick-steps into position beside the man (3,4). The man maintains his original body orientation so that both he and the woman face the same direction.
  - The second kick-step is used to steady position with partner (5,6). A left hand to left hand hold is taken, positioned at the woman’s left shoulder and just in front of the man’s right shoulder. *NB: It is an acceptable variant for the man to take hold of the woman’s left shoulder with his left hand.*
  - Final position should result with both of the woman’s hands resting just above her shoulders. The man’s right arm is positioned directly to the side of his body at shoulder height, while the left arm is held across his body.
  - The man’s hands are cupped over the top of the woman’s hands, with the palm of his hands providing gentle pressure into the back of the woman’s hands. The woman provides a slight push up into the man’s hands.
    - The man should not push down into the woman’s shoulders or drop through his arms to ‘rest’ on the woman. Nor should the woman drop her arms and pull the man over the top of her. **Each partner holds their own weight!**
    - A gentle pressure through the man’s forearms into the woman’s shoulders is acceptable and can assist the following lead into the neck-breaker position, providing pressure and connection through the body during the rotation.
- 7-12:
  - Using the arms and upper body rotation, the man rolls the woman through the back-step (7,8). The rotation turns the woman’s body out from the man (7) and then is brought back in toward him (8).
    - The roll through the back step requires a lead through the arms, but should not be achieved using large arm movements.
    - Done correctly, the roll through the back-step should use a stretch through the stomach and torso (**CONTRA-BODY PRESSURE**), which creates a pull back in towards partner as the step forward is taken.

- Continuing with the motion of the roll through the back-step, the man uses both arms to guide the woman forward and around directly in front of him through the kick-step (9,10).
- The arms are kept close to the body. The man's right arm moves forward and around the woman's neck, as pressure is simultaneously applied back through left hand into the woman's left shoulder (9→10). This provides the "neck-breaker" position.
- Although the woman is being positioned by the man through the arm lead, she must still ensure that her foot is placed suitably to spin:
  - Kick-step (9,10) to position the right foot directly in front of the man.
  - Place the step at a comfortable distance away from the man's body. The roll through into position can make it easy to continue the rotation and step into the man.
  - Ensure that your body weight is held directly above the foot. While the man is leading through the arms, it is acceptable to provide some counter-pressure to guide the positioning in front of the man. *The man has no reason or excuse to pull you on top of him.*
  - Push out of your stomach through the kick-step into the floor (**FLOOR PRESSURE**). Combined with the upward push into the man's hands this should provide **BODY PRESSURE** through the right side of the body.
- Upon the completion of the kick-step, the woman should have weight completely over the right foot, body positioned at a right angle to the man in preparation to spin.
- The man simultaneously pulls back through the right hand and pulls through with the left hand to provide the lead into the spin (~1¾ rotations).
  - The left hand releases after the initial "snap", while the right hand continues to push through as per a CLOSED AMERICAN SPIN.
  - Due to the additional rotation through the spin, slightly further pressure may be applied through the fingers and **WRIST ROLL**.
- Balance through the spin is more important than maintaining the kick-step action. Due to the additional rotation required for the NECKBREAKER, it is acceptable for the woman not to kick (on 11) and simply step out of the spin (12).

Your Notes:



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## Week 3: Tier 3 - Double+ Spins; Spin Theory

### Double+ Spins

- A DOUBLE SPIN is a 720° rotation achieved *without* transfer of weight, typically across the space of 2 beats -
  - Relative to a single spin, the man provides an additional pressure into the lead for a DOUBLE SPIN. This pressure is applied slightly sooner than the pressure for a single spin - just before the woman steps rather than just after she steps.
  - DOUBLE+ SPINS are best performed flat, using a constant pressure into the floor and a constant pressure through the body towards partner.
    - A flat spin allows the emphasis through the lead, which provides the momentum for the additional rotation, to be applied/followed without potential interference due to changes in body position/pressure.
    - A flat spin maintains a constant centre of gravity and is thus much easier to maintain balance.
  - Primarily when in open position, a DOUBLE+ SPIN may transition up/down or in/out (through the arms and legs) to provide presentation, e.g. a sweeping leg that pulls inwards and upwards into a multiple spin.
    - Such transitions provide significant changes in momentum and the balance point for the spin. This is difficult to control and requires a lot of practice.
    - Generally, movements inwards/upwards will create a faster spin; movements outwards/downwards will slow a spin
- Triple and quadruple spins apply the same principles as a double spin, applying proportionally more pressure through the lead and into the floor to secure the spin through the additional rotations:
  - When performing an open spin, it is at the discretion of the woman whether or not to push herself through 2, 3, or 4 rotations. This is achieved using more/less arm leg momentum into the spin, pull into the centre of the body, and push from the stomach muscles through the hip.
  - A triple spin is difficult to lead or perform in closed position. This is due to the odd number of rotations across an even number of beats (3 over 2 or 4), requiring two quicker spins finished by a slower gathering/positioning spin for the back step.
  - A quadruple spin in closed position is (theoretically) possible across 2 beats, providing emphasis through the lead pressure every half beat for a rotation (+,1,+,2). Of course this requires immaculate body position and pressures, connection with partner, and timing. It is far easier (relatively!) for a quadruple spin to be performed across 4 beats (1 beat = 1 rotation), provided that balance can be maintained for the duration.
- A DOUBLE SPIN is impressive enough for most things! Save any spins with greater rotation for those moves that provide good momentum or pressure for the spin and may require slightly greater than usual rotation, such the NECKBREAKER or CATAPULT.

## Spin Theory

- Good spins are all about good pressure and body control. Most important is the pressure through the foot into the floor (**FLOOR PRESSURE**) that connects with the pressure out of the stomach into the leg - and the rest of the body (**BODY PRESSURE**):
  - If there is no push through the foot of the supporting leg, your body is merely resting on top of the floor with no form of stabilisation. Particularly in an open spin, this lack of contact pressure deprives you of a reference point for control through the rest of the body.
  - If there is no control through the body (**BODY PRESSURE**), trying to control a spin is much like trying to rotate a wet piece of spaghetti - the top, middle, and bottom will not move together and the middle will tend to wobble side to side. **BODY PRESSURE** connects your body as one piece from top to bottom and thus provides the primary control for connection between you, the floor, and partner.
  - **BODY PRESSURE** extends out from the stomach through the whole body, but will be felt most strongly through the supporting leg and the leading/following arm - i.e. the points of connection.
- As you cannot spin on a flat foot, **FLOOR PRESSURE** must be applied through the ball of foot or through the heel. However, it is difficult to position the body directly over the heel or provide compression (you lose the use of the ankle); hence almost all spins take place on the ball of foot.
- There is a lot of weight in the arms, leg, and head and failing to control these parts of the body will seriously affect balance and momentum through the spin:
  - The most stable position is for arms, legs and head to remain locked in one position. However, this restricts body motion and is often difficult to achieve while keeping the momentum of the dance.
  - It is preferable to use arms, legs and head while maintaining balance. Therefore, they should be kept centered to the body but not necessarily static. Nevertheless, it is good practice to keep these parts of the body stationary during most of the spin.
    - *Don't look at your feet while your spin!*
    - *Don't let your arms and legs fly about wherever they like!*
  - The arms, legs and head may be used to "drive through" a spin, using a shift in body weight into the centre of the spin to provide more speed and direct momentum into the floor. "*Drill*" into the floor.
- Prevent disorientation through the spin, but visually spotting for one point at the start and finish of a rotation. Further to the points above, spot with the eyes and not with the head.

Your Notes:



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## Week 4: Tier 2 - Centre of Attention

- The CENTRE OF ATTENTION is a modified BACK RUB where, instead of rotating through position with partner, the man draws the woman in a circle around his body to finish in the same position as she started - i.e. the woman moves 360° around the man.
- While coming forward and left out of the back-step (BACK-STEP CROSS), the man draws the woman's right hand toward his right hip (2→2+) while bringing the woman's left hand toward his right shoulder.
- The man releases the hold through his left hand coming through the kick-step (3+), while the woman traces with her right hand across the man's back as per the BACK RUB.
- The man continues to face the same direction through the kick-step (3,4). The man's kick-step comes across the body (KICK-STEP CROSS) to enable the woman move through position more comfortably.
- The second kick-step (5,6) brings the woman forward back in front of the man, while the man's kick-step is performed almost on the spot.
- Through the kicks (3→6) the man provides a constant pressure through his right arm, creating a tight loop by bringing the arm up, over and around his head.
  - *The man does not stand in one spot and swing the woman around him!* This requires the woman to cover too much distance to keep the kicks tidy and tends to cause the timing of the figure to lag.
  - The man should not be rigid through the body, but roll through the stomach muscles and shoulders to wrap the woman around him as close as possible while providing space for her to move through.
  - The pull through the man's right arm must be at a consistent pace, timed with the speed of the music, so that the woman does not hesitate through her kicks and completes the figure in time and prepared for the following back-step.
- The woman should ensure that she completes each kick-step with her body weight directly above her supporting leg. Although the man pulls the woman through position, the weight should not drag behind the lead.

**Your Notes:**

## Week 4: Tier 3 - The Rolling Tunnel (Dip)

- The ROLLING-TUNNEL is a modified BACK-RUB. As the woman turns in towards the man, rather than running his hand across the woman's back, the man provides a pressure lead through the right shoulder blade. This lead causes the woman to duck under the man's arm as the change of place with partner is completed. The ROLLING-TUNNEL may then be finished using an optional dip across the man's body.
- From a double hand hold, the man provides a standard lead into the BACK-RUBS out of the back-step. However, as the woman turns through into position (-CUDDLE position) through the change of place (3→4) the man raises his right arm to shoulder height, bringing the woman's left hand up under her right shoulder. *The shoulder height lead is important for the woman to distinguish between the ROLLING TUNNEL and a standard BACK-RUB.*
  - The man should control the height of his leads throughout the dance. *Waist/shoulder/head high leads should always be led at waist/shoulder/head height.* There must be distinction between lead heights if the woman is to be able to follow.
  - The woman should make sure to keep paying attention to the lead heights provided by the man. Also watch for slight changes in body position that will indicate a difference between figures that the man may lead.
- As per the BACK-RUB, the man uses his footwork to move around in front of the woman through the change of place. However, the movement through the first kick-step may be delayed/restricted slightly to help provide solid pressure into the lead.
- The man attains pressure through the back of the woman's right shoulder blade using his wrist and forearm, while the back of the hand presses up underneath the woman's right arm bicep (3+→4).
  - The combined pressure down through the woman's body and upwards through her arm encourages the woman into a forward ducking motion underneath the man's arm.
  - The pressure applied through the lead builds as the woman rolls into position and firms as the TUNNEL motion is commenced. The man drives and secures the woman's turn underneath his arm, primarily through strong use of the wrist.
- The woman may spin or triple-step through the TUNNEL motion (5→6):
  - Allow the man to position his hand (and yours) underneath the shoulder while rolling in. *Try not to let habit or complacency cause you to fight or block the man's lead for the ROLLING-TUNNEL, rather than the BACK-RUB.*
  - Prepare to spin or triple step as the man raises your left hand toward your right shoulder through the first kick-step (3,4).
  - While it is more fluid and consistent with the footwork, spinning through TUNNEL motion requires a REVERSE SPIN and is much more difficult to perform.
- The woman continues to travel down the line of dance as she ducks under the man's arm (4+→5), using the final step out of the roll (6) to ensure that she is centered and upright before moving into the back-step.



- Tuck your head into your left shoulder as the man provides the pressure into the TUNNEL.
- Keep your eyes and head up, looking towards the man until you must tuck your head to come under the man's arm. As soon as you have cleared the man's arm, bring your eyes and head up and refocus on the man in preparation for any following lead.
- The man pushes the woman through the TUNNEL with his hand, maintaining pressure into the back of her shoulder blade as she turns. Once the TUNNEL is complete the man may either release pressure so that the woman completes her rotation without hold, or continue to wrap his arm around the woman to secure the DIP.
  - For the man the DIP requires that the final kick-step is used to position alongside the woman; i.e. a full change of place with the woman, as per a standard BACK-RUB, is not achieved.
    - The depth of the DIP is determined by how far the man lowers through the supporting leg.
    - The man may rotate through the feet into a lunge position that allows the dip to move lower, as the woman does not get stuck across his leg.
  - Once secured in hold with the man, the woman lowers into the DIP with her weight supported by her right leg as the left leg extends into a point.
    - Pressure should be applied through the left foot into the floor - try to keep your body in one straight line from head to toe.
    - Don't throw your head back - keep the weight centered over the supporting foot.
    - Maintain pressure in hold through the arms. Hold yourself against the man; *do not make him catch you!*

**Your Notes:**

## Week 5: Tier 2 - The Drag Walks

- Approaching the finish of an OPEN RETURN the man provides an arm and body lead away from the woman and into the floor. This brings both dancers lower, with the additional depth through the knees providing greater pressure into the floor. The DRAG WALKS are then commenced in side-by-side position, with both dancers slowly stepping across to the right as the man “drags” the woman away.
- The man takes the last kick-step (5,6) of an OPEN RETURN to his right, pushing down through ball of foot into the floor through his body. This shift of weight, while bringing the elbow of the left arm back in close to the left hip, brings the woman down and in towards the man as her RETURN completes.
- Maintaining the pull in toward his side through the left arm, the man steps across to his right on the left foot; the woman follows on her right foot. Either 2 or 4 steps may be taken to the right before taking a back-step to return to basic footwork.
  - The steps are slow, each step taking two beats to complete. However, the movement across the floor should be one continuous motion - this means using the body as well as the feet!
  - Each step rolls through the ball of foot, which is matched by a roll through the hips as the walks are kept low and pressure into the floor is maintained.
    - The man alternates between outside→inside edge of foot to inside→outside edge of foot.
    - The woman alternates between inside→outside edge of foot to outside→inside edge of foot.
  - During the walks a counterbalance is achieved as each dancer keeps weight through the body down and away from partner, while simultaneously pulling back towards partner through the connecting arm. This creates the “drag”.
- To indicate that the DRAG WALKS are about to finish, the man provides a gentle back-pressure through his left arm and shortens the size of his final step. This causes the connection with the woman to “squeeze up”, providing pressure through the arms that is continued into the lead for the woman’s back-step.
  - *SQUEEZE and PUSH-PULL (7→8,1,2 - when taking 4 steps)*
- The DRAG WALKS may also be led from a ROLL-OUT position, using a similar arm pressure towards the floor.
  - The lead occurs on the man’s right arm (rather than the left); hence the DRAG WALKS are taken towards the left.
  - As both feet may be planted with equal weight in this position, this entry is useful for DRAG WALKS (or other travelling moves) where the man and woman are stepping with the same leg - i.e. matching actions.
  - As the man’s body position relative to the woman tends to be static during the ROLL-OUT, it is difficult to provide a strong body lead or pressure away from the woman into the DRAG WALKS. A definite pressure toward the floor must be achieved for the woman to distinguish the lead from a standard ROLL-OUT.

Your Notes:



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## Week 5: Tier 3 - The Rotating Cuddle

- From a CUDDLE, the following back-step is replaced by two steps rotating clock-wise around partner. This may be followed by a standard ROLL-OUT, or a variety of exits that more fully utilise the momentum generated through the rotation.
- The man secures the woman in the CUDDLE position, bringing his body in towards the woman as he pulls her slightly closer through the arms. As this occurs, the man may use slightly greater pressure through the right arm back towards his hip to provide a lead for the clockwise rotation.
- The clockwise rotation should commence as the man turns his body in towards the woman through the CUDDLE, with the kick-step on the right foot coming forward and around (5,6).
- The man continues to step forward and around as the woman steps back and around (1,2). Both dancers should work to maintain connection through the side of the body, pushing into the center of the rotation (towards partner) as they step.
- The man must prepare arm and body positions for the exit as the two rotating steps approach completion. More momentum may also be desired, which is achieved by stepping down into the rotation.

### *Roll-Out Exit*

- The ROLL-OUT exit provides a natural continuation to the ROTATING CUDDLE as the man is not required to alter his body or arm positions during the rotation.
- The rotation generates significantly more momentum into the ROLL-OUT action than a back-step. Both partners must therefore take care to control over-extension through the arms, while the woman must place her kick-step and not allow herself to simply be flung out to the side.

### *Closed (Double) American Spin Exit*

- The CLOSED AMERICAN SPIN exit requires that the man position the woman in front of his body and provide sufficient space so that the woman can maintain balance through the spin.
  - Towards the end of the clock-wise rotation (1,2) the man extends through his arms while turning his body in towards the woman. The right arm wraps around the woman's waist as the left hand raises towards head height (i.e. into the lead for the CLOSED AMERICAN SPIN).
  - The man continues the kick-step forward and around the woman, while the left arm/hand firms to provide pressure for the spin (3,4).
  - Pressure through the man's right arm will cause the woman's kick-step to continue to roll through back and to the right (3,4). While the momentum of the rotation will cause the woman's body to turn away from the man, the upper torso and head remains oriented toward the man.
  - To unwrap from the semi-CUDDLE position the spin will require approximately 1½ rotations. However, the momentum through the rotation is such that 2+ rotations in the spin is achievable - with good balance and leads (4→5+).

- The man should be using his whole body (i.e. left and right arms AND the twist through the body) to provide momentum into the woman's spin. However, it is easy to generate a good flick but push the woman away or neglect to provide the top pressure through the spin that the woman requires for balance:
  - Maintain a solid pressure through the fingers and wrist down into the arm and ensure that the left arm does not “drift” with the momentum of the rotation.
  - Flick through the right arm by using the hand about the waist, working through the hips. *Do not throw the woman's arm away to the side.*

**Your Notes:**



## Week 6: Tier 2 - The Rotating Gate

- Similar to the ROTATING CUDDLE, the ROTATING GATE replaces the back-step with a clock-wise rotation with partner. Due to the arm positions, the exit requires that the woman turn out of hold before any other action is taken.
- The man secures the woman in GATE position, bringing his body in towards the woman as he positions the arms. As this occurs, the man may use slightly greater pressure through the right arm back towards his hip to provide a lead for the clockwise rotation; this should be accompanied by a lead forward through the left arm.
  - *Be careful!* As the GATE brings the woman's arm behind her body, too much pressure back through the right arm can damage the woman's shoulder.
  - The left arm lead must be small; otherwise it may be interpreted by the woman as the exit lead.
  - Body pressure and position is more important for the lead into the rotation than arm work.
- The clockwise rotation should commence as the man turns his body in towards the woman through the GATE, with the kick-step on the right foot coming forward and around (5,6).
- The man continues to step forward and around as the woman steps back and around (1,2). Both dancers should work to maintain connection with partner by pushing into the center of the rotation (towards partner) as they step.
  - Note that, due to the arm positions, a full side-by-side position like the CUDDLE cannot be achieved. Consequently, less through body pressure with partner can be generated - it is more difficult to generate momentum and keep control.
  - The man must secure the woman's position through the right hand/arm during the rotation. Pressure into the hip through the palm and fingers can be used to help provide direction and provide inward pressure. Pressure applied through the hips will also help ensure that there is no pull back through the arm/shoulder.
  - While retaining a hand-shake hold, a gentle pull back through the wrist of the left hand may be used during the rotation to indicate to the woman that she is not to turn out.
- The man must prepare arm and body positions for the exit as the two rotating steps approach completion. More momentum may also be desired, which is achieved by stepping down into the rotation.
- The basic exit is an UNDER-ARM TURN for the woman, rolling out of hold under the man's left arm as the man's kick-step continues to move forward and around clockwise (3,4).
- Many alternative exits are possible that utilize the momentum and body movement achieved during the rotation.

Your Notes:



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## Week 6: Tier 3 - (Gate into) The Towel

### *The Towel*

- The TOWEL is a figure wherein the man and woman circle side by side, changing position with partner through the rotation.
  - The TOWEL has 3 main variants according to whether the arms are using a basic double hand hold, are crossed left over right, or crossed right over left.
  - The back step is replaced with a rotating step, which in some variants may be used to change position with partner.
  - The kick-steps (3→6) are used typically used to reposition, allowing emphasis for the rotation through the rotating steps (1,2).
- Through all TOWEL variants, timing and co-ordination with partner for the change of position is imperative - this is provided through **consistent arm pressures**. Good body pressure into the rotation, like any rotating move, is also important to maintain connection with partner.
- According to the variant, the TOWEL will use similar leads into/through position as for the GATE, NECKBREAKER, FLIRT, and SPANISH ARMS.
- Through the change of position with partner, the man aims to lead in one continuous motion through both arms while using the body to maintain frame with partner. A smooth change requires movement through the whole of man's body to wrap around the woman while the kick-steps are taken into position. ***The woman should not simply be dragged around the man!***
- According to the entry hold, choice of position transfers, and momentum, many exit variations are possible. Consequently, ***the man must clearly lead his chosen exit as it is not a pre-defined element of the TOWEL.***

### *Gate Position to Mixed Arms Hold*

- From the back-step or rotating steps (1,2), the man leads his left arm up over the woman's head as though providing a basic exit from the GATE. However, the kick-step is taken forward and in front of the woman as she begins to turn out (3,4).
- The man continues across in front of the woman through the second kick-step (5,6), taking a definite step to the right to swap sides with the woman. During the transition, the man brings his left arm over his head and down to the left side, while the right hand pushes up toward the right shoulder.
- Coming into the rotating step (6+), the man's left arm extends across the woman's waist with the right hand "sitting" on his right shoulder. A solid wrist angle should be achieved through both sides to 'lock' the arms in position and provide pressure to lead through the rotation (1,2) - the left arm pulling forward and around as the right arm pushes back and around.
- Following the rotation, the arms may be brought around to swap position with partner, maintaining the MIXED ARMS HOLD. This requires that the man rotate through his body to accommodate the woman's rotation, in a similar fashion to the transition of body position described for the SPANISH ARMS. Multiple changes of place may be led.



### ***Exit into Neckbreaker (Fast and Slow)***

- Rather than changing place into a MIXED ARMS HOLD with the woman on his right hand side, the man may take both arms to woman's shoulder height in preparation for a NECKBREAKER exit (Slow).
- An alternative NECKBREAKER exit may be used, commencing through the change of place with the woman as the man moves from right to left (Fast).
  - The kick-step (3,4) is used to position behind the woman as the arms are brought into the NECKBREAKER position. A lot of rotation through the torso is required to provide suitable arm pressure coming into the spin.
  - The woman uses the momentum of the TOWEL to continue through rotation into the NECKBREAKER spin (4→5).
  - The man's second kick-step (5,6) is optional. It is more important that a solid frame and lead is provided for the woman's spin. Good connection and pressure must be maintained so that the woman is not pulled down on top of the man or flung away through the spin.

### ***Spanish Arms***

- A standard back-step is taken in double hand-hold (right-left hand, left-right hand). The man may tack the back-step slightly across to the left in conjunction with an upper torso roll to the right to provide pressure into the lead for the woman's turn (1,2).
- Through the first kick-step (3,4) the man leads the woman to his right using split arms, the left arm staying low as the right arm raises to the woman's head height.
  - The man's left hand rolls across in front of the woman's waist, then rolls back to place the back of the wrist against the woman's waist (**WRIST ROLL**). This achieves a **REVERSE WRIST BLOCK** on the man's left hand and a **RIGHT ANGLE BLOCK** on the man's right hand.
  - The woman's right arm is placed behind her back, while the left arm is raised in a complementary **RIGHT ANGLE** into the man's **RIGHT ANGLE BLOCK**.
- Through the second kick-step (5,6) the woman completes any necessary rotation as the man follows her through body position. The man and woman should finish facing opposite directions, with body weight moving back and around (clock-wise) from partner.
  - Both the man and woman should step back towards partner so that the **SPANISH ARMS** position is not overextended.
  - In the TOWEL, the pressure achieved through the blocks is extended through into the rotating steps. Pressure into the **RIGHT ANGLE BLOCK** continues to push back and to the right, while pressure through the **REVERSE WRIST BLOCK** pulls back into the man's side to help maintain connection with partner and close body position through the rotation.

- The rotation through the SPANISH ARMS to the man's left uses the same actions and pressures, but with opposite arms/directions. However, when changing place the woman must now 'unwrap' before turning into position on the other side.
  - The man must return his arms to the starting double hand-hold position (3,4) before continuing through into the lead to the other side of his body (5,6). The transition should be smooth:
    - As one arm finishes lowering, the other arm begins to be raised.
    - The upper torso rolls through position with the woman to provide a consistent pressure through the arm leads and to slightly lessen the amount of rotation the woman must perform.
  - When changing sides the woman must complete almost twice the amount of rotation required to achieve the initial SPANISH ARMS position. This requires a spin on the right foot following the first kick-step (3,4), with the second-kick step (5,6) performed underneath the body.
    - *The woman should prepare the kick-step into the spin using the same methods and principles for any other spin.*
    - The man should make sure that his arm and body positions are controlled and will not put the woman off balance during the spin. *This will require body rotation as the arms are changed through position.*
    - The man moves about the woman and should not pull the woman around him. *The man moves through the kick-steps to make the woman's rotation as easy as possible.*

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