

Walk In, Dance Out... Teaching Sequence

Teaching someone how to dance? Fantastic!

Since one can teach only what one knows, be clear what you intend to teach. There is information on this website that explains the timing and patterns more fully. An initial outline of sequence of patterns for five common rhythms is outlined below.

It is suggested to begin with **Social Foxtrot** because

- This rhythm can be danced to music played about 85% of the time at most social dance situations!
- Learning just one pattern allows one to dance it repeatedly. Get students dancing to music as early as possible to convince them that, indeed, they CAN dance. Just the basic pattern with all forward steps (**Walk, -, Walk, -, Run, Run, -** note commas indicate ends of beats; hyphen indicates the previous movement requires two beats) can be used to dance most of the night in a social dance situation (so folks literally can walk in and dance out the first night of a class!).
- Every Social Foxtrot pattern can begin from the normal Dance Position, begins with the same foot, and essentially is just a slight variation of **Walk, -, Walk, -, Run, Run,**
- There are numerous patterns for variety in Social Foxtrot. And since Single Swing has the same rhythm pattern, it can be combined with Social Foxtrot for even greater variety!

Taught in the order listed below, a limited number of components can be introduced with “everyday” language so that learning builds sequentially on ideas previously introduced. Adapt the pace of learning to the needs of the students. College students often can master one rhythm in a two-hour class; senior citizens with no music background need several weeks with much actual practice for one rhythm. It is not important to get through the entire list before moving to another rhythm. It is important that students enjoy learning to dance. Descriptions are generally stated for the Lead; Followers do the natural opposite.

1. Focus on the **timing** pattern (Slow, Slow, Quick, Quick) with four changes of weight in six counts. Timing seems to be a stumbling block for many. Help them master the **Boom, -, Boom, -, Tic, Tic,** timing pattern.
2. Teach the **Social Foxtrot** patterns (all SSQQ), one at a time, providing practice dancing each to music repeatedly and then the Leads selecting introduced patterns randomly to dance with their partner:
 - a. Walk, -, Walk, -, Run, Run,
 - b. Social Foxtrot Basic: Walk, -, Walk, -, Side, Close,
 - c. Forward and Back Basic: Forward, -, Forward, -, Side, Close, Back, -, Back, -, Side Close,
 - d. Zig Zag (On Diagonal) Forward, -, Forward, -, (“Square”) Side, Close, (On Diagonal) Back, -, Back, -, (“Square”) Side, Close,
 - e. Promenade Basic (Introduce Promenade or Semi-Closed position): Forward, -, Forward, -, (to Dance Position) Side, Close,
 - f. Promenade with Twirl: Follower twirls right-face under joined lead hands (does an “underarm turn”), stepping forward then back with partial turns on each step as Leads Walk forward two steps.
 - g. Zig Zag with Twirl: The Follower’s two forward steps are substituted for twirl two steps as above.
 - h. Rock Back, -, Recover, -, Side, Close, (The rock-recover sometimes called “Dip” or “Corte”)
 - i. Left Rock Turn (Rock Forward, -, Recover Back turning Left-Face, -, Side, Close,

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2. Teach the **Single Swing** patterns (SSQQ), one at a time, providing practice intermingling each one with the other ones as well as with the Social Foxtrot patterns:
 - a. Single Swing Basic: Side, -, Side, -, Rock Apart, Recover,
 - b. Promenade Basic: (In Promenade or Semi-Closed) Forward, -, Back, -, Rock Back, Recover,
 - c. Basic with Twirl (Right to Left)
 - d. Reverse Twirl (Left to Right)
 - e. Trade Places (Change Hands Behind the Back)
3. Practice the timing pattern for the **Waltz** (1,2,3; 4,5,6). Two measures of six **evenly-spaced** counts and **six** changes of weight (done as pairs) continue the same pattern of *Leads* beginning patterns with the left foot. Introduce concept that with three changes of weight to a measure, alternate feet begin the first step of alternate measures and it is perfectly acceptable to begin many patterns with either foot.

Teach the **Waltz** patterns, one at a time, interspersing them with other **Waltz** patterns.

- a. Waltz Box (Forward, Side, Close; Back, Side, Close)
 - b. Left Turning Box (Forward/Turn LF, Side, Close; Back/Turn LF, Side, Close; Forward/Turn LF, Side, Close; Back/Turn LF, Side, Close;
 - c. Progressive Waltz: Forward, Side, Close; Forward, Side, Close;
 - d. Open the Box ("Waltz Away" and "Waltz Together" in round dancing)
 - e. Hesitation Left Turn: Forward, -, - ; back/turn, side, close;
 - f. Right Box (Leads begin with right foot)
 - g. Right Turning Box (Leads begin with right foot; turns are RF)
 - h. Waltz Box plus a Turning Box
4. Practice the Box with the **Rumba** timing pattern Slow, -, Quick, Quick; Slow, -, Quick, Quick; (SQQ;SQQ: 8 counts), and introduce Rumba patterns (noting there are variations of how rumba is defined):
 - a. Rumba Box: Forward, -, Side, Close; Back, -, Side, Close;
 - b. Back Box: Back, -, Side, Close; Forward, -, Side, Close;
 - c. Right Box (Lead begins with right foot)
 - d. Rumba Box with Underarm Turn (Lead does Rumba Box twice while Follow does underarm turn and circles around to face partner in second and third measures)
 - e. Rumba Box Turning with Underarm Turn (last pattern is modified so Lead turns LF at the beginning of the third measure)
 5. Practice the new timing pattern for the Chasse´ (a triple step) with the timing pattern Quick/and, Quick, (Q/&Q).
 - a. Chasse´ Left and Right: Side/Close, Side, Side/Close, Side;
Then teach the following patterns based on the timing: QQQ/&Q:
 - b. Cha Cha Basic: Rock Forward, Recover, Side Chasse´; Rock Back, Recover, Side Chasse´,;
 - c. Forward Cha Cha Basic (Rock Forward, Recover, Back/Lock, Back;) and Back Cha Cha Basic (Rock Back, Recover, Forward/Lock, Forward;)
 - d. Shoulder to Shoulder
 - e. Back Shoulder to Shoulder
 - f. New Yorker
 - g. Hand to Hand