
Teachers Korner

by Kelly Gellette

Questions and Answers

1. *Why should a woman learn to dance alone?*

- For better understanding of steps and possible combinations.
- To dance spontaneously with her partner, not before or after him.
- To overcome stiffness (nervous, muscular).
- To enable her to dance with more animation.
- The woman gains confidence and ease of movement, and will do steps automatically and not in a strained, mechanical manner.
- To improve balance so she does not need to rely on her partner at any time for support.

2. *List some practical suggestions to increase gracefulness.*

- Always hold feet in one of the five positions.
- Accent the loud musical beat together as a couple.
- Keep heels and knees close together in first position.
- Let the ball of the foot touch the floor first in all back steps.
- Stand erect, but with knees flexed.
- Always follow through on fourth position steps.

3. *Does everyone have a sense of rhythm?*

YES. In some people it is dormant as they have had no occasion to use it. By listening intently to the music and by humming and tapping the foot they can regain their sense of rhythm. In some cases it has to be developed.

4. *List suggestions on how to avoid being heavy.*

- Perfect rhythm must be developed. Lagging behind (before or after a partner) makes a person appear heavy.
- Know what you are doing. Confidence comes with practice. Lack of confidence tends to make you pause and to look and feel heavy.
- Do not try to relax, thus burdening your partner with your weight. Controlled relaxation comes with knowledge and confidence.
- Dance "off" the ball of the foot.
- Practice each step until you know it well and can do it equally well with both fast and slow music. Learn to dance "alone."

5. *What is the secret of leading?*

- **Know** what you are doing. If you know the steps you can do them well yourself. Hold your partner gently but firmly.

- When dancing with a partner for the first time, do only simple steps. Introduce the variations gradually. It is important to disguise all effort.

6. *What are some points on how to follow?*

- Know how to dance the basic steps.
- Familiarize yourself with the various basic steps most men do. Learn the man's part of a few of these basic steps . . . enough so that you may have a fair appreciation of what he may do.
- Learn to dance alone. By doing so your dancing will gain expression, animation and be spontaneous. Instead of merely following or waiting to be led, you are actually dancing *with* your partner.

7. *All basic couple dances start on the left foot for the man. How can he begin a right turn?*

He may begin a right turn by stepping back on the left foot in the Two-Step. Using a preparatory pattern on counts 1, 2, 3 in the Waltz, he can then start to turn right on counts 4, 5, 6. Execute a forward Polka step for counts 1&2 in the Polka, then start to turn right on counts 3&4.

8. *What three rhythms are used in Waltz?*

(1) Basic, 1 2 3 4 5 6

(2) Hesitation, stepping only on the first beat of the measure.

(3) Canter, stepping on the first beat of the measure, holding "2," and stepping on 3.

9. *Why should the leader carry his right elbow at a proper height?*

- To keep contact with partner's left arm
- To give a definite lead
- Aids balance

10. *What does posture mean?*

Efficient body carriage.

11. *What is an arch?*

An arch is a body movement where the torso assumes an arch position. The knees are *not* locked.

12. *Define a Camel (walk)*

The non-support leg does a knee pop prior to the stepping leg taking a step with a straight leg. The stepping leg's hip is moved outward after the step is taken onto a straight leg, and the non-stepping hip is lowered.

13. *Define Contra Body*

The support leg, hip, and shoulder turn toward the direction of the stepping non-support leg. Used to commence all turning movements.

14. What is a Corté? (aka Lunge)

A Corté is a dip. The dancer pliés to a sit position on one leg with the non-support leg extended forward. Thighs are parallel.

15. Define a Knee Pop

When the knee moves forward and backward by raising and lowering the leg's heel from and to the floor.

16. What is a Flick?

When the non-support leg moves from first position to a back position, with the toe pointing down or back using only the knee joint. The non-support leg's knee remains next to the support leg's knee.

17. Describe a Figure Fore (Four)

The non-support leg flicks backward, kicks forward, swivel flicks crossward, and then steps forward while the body swivels in the direction of the non-support leg, making a figure four.

18. Describe a Plié

The body lowers with the weight evenly distributed over both feet.

19. What is Extension?

Extension is the ability to stretch or extend a part or parts of the body gracefully without ruining the line; balancing or centering of the remaining part or parts.

20. What is Separation or Isolation?

The ability to use one part of the body without involving the use of the adjacent part of the body.

21. Define an Accent

Emphasis given to the first underlying beat in each measure.

22. How many measures to a melodic phrase in Waltz?

There are 8.

23. Define a Break

It means to change direction.

24. What is a Chassé?

A series of side steps in any rhythm. Taken as quick steps in Polka. Counted as 1,&2,&3,&4 or &1,&2,&3,&4,&.

25. Why do all couple dances usually start school figures on the left foot for the man?

To be able to end each pattern and start the next pattern in L.O.D.

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