

ATLANTA SWING
DANCERS CLUB



An Introduction to West Coast Swing

Student Manual

A product of the Dance Improvement Program

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This document is a product of the Dance Improvement Program approved by the 2004 ASDC Board of Directors

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The desire to assist new dancers developing West Coast Swing skills was the impetus for the Dance Improvement Program. Analysis provided several promising avenues for development. I explored other clubs' approaches to this problem which I assumed to be widespread. I prefer to borrow a solution when possible but I found no sharable solution. A manual and video was the approach selected.

Material available was not free. Videos and syllabi were copyrighted. We had to pay for their use. I wanted material freely sharable as copyrighted material with free distribution. I wanted the Club to provide a gift to the dance community while developing material for local use. The result is the Introduction to West Coast Swing Manual and companion video. I hope many dancers and clubs find these materials useful and that other non-commercial clubs follow this model developing material to share with the national social dance community.

This project is not without problems or criticism. Mistakes were made. There are always better ways. I encourage critics to improve and expand this movement.

There are two clear segments to the dance community. The for-profit, competitive, professional segment and the social club, non-competitive, non-profit segment. The for-profit segment is more developed while the social segment seems larger. Both are important and vital to the dance community. I believe our project may result in more people dancing to the benefit of all.

Our material is designed for use in the context of lessons. Some clubs have professional instructor teach their lessons. Others use non-professional instructors when local instructors are not available or not supportive. I believe that clubs should keep their options open. Use of professional WCS instructors, professional instructors from other areas (ballroom, Latin, ...) and appropriately trained club members are viable approaches. The most important attribute of the instructor is, in my opinion, a commitment to a program which includes good instructional design, appropriate practice, and encouragement of students. A club member instructor with this commitment will produce better social dancers than a professional instructor without this commitment. There are successful club dance programs with member instructors.

I wish to thank the Board of Directors (2004) who supported this program. Most especially I wish to thank our president, Dixie Stanford, for her support and valuable feedback. The Board made the program possible and deserves credit. I was given free reign thus the mistakes are mine alone.

Finally, I want to thank Brandi Tobias who understood my vision and gave full support. I knew from the beginning that her interpretation of dance was beautiful and inspiring. In our work I found her to be professional, but most of all I admire her ability to teach. I stand in awe of her skill in teaching dance and I am not easily impressed after 30 years of teaching in a different environment.

W. Kirk Richardson, Program Director

The Dance Improvement Program

Atlanta Swing Dancers Club

W. Kirk Richardson, Program Director

October 2004

The Atlanta Swing Dancers Club provides instruction, practice, and music, factors crucial for improvement. After careful study and deliberation the Board of Directors established the Dance Improvement Program to enhance each factor. This program is explained below.

Instruction: Instruction is through the video library, dance workshops, and Club night lessons.

Video Library: Video instruction was augmented, especially in dance technique. All videos are classified as current or dated to aid appropriate choices.

Workshops: We brought Brandi Tobias (Northrup) to Atlanta for workshops and privates twice in 2004. Workshops will be scheduled on a continuing basis based on members' interest.

Club Night Lessons: New dancers attracted by Club night lessons have not improved their dance skills as quickly as desired and often do not stay with dance. The Board has developed a more coherent and dancer friendly approach to lessons. Brandi Tobias, a nationally recognized dancer and instructor, developed a West Coast Swing Basics manual for the Club. This manual specifies a series of one hour group lessons which is used for our Sunday night instruction. The manual is accompanied by video (provided by Brandi) demonstrating the patterns. Each student receives an Introduction to West Coast Swing manual and accompanying video. An instructors' manual allows the Club to offer an organized sequence of lessons taught in a consistent manner independent of the instructor. If, for example, a student misses the Whip lesson or wants to brush up on the Whip they may take the Whip lesson offered by any instructor and receive basically the same presentation. The lesson schedule is published on the Club's WEB site.

The Introduction to West Coast Swing manual contains the patterns, tips for practice, specific exercises designed to assist the student, frequently encountered problems, and more.

Phase 2 of the Dance Improvement Program is Enhanced Basics for West Coast Swing containing several variations for each basic pattern. For example, the Basic Whip variations could include power whip, reverse whip, the inside turn ending, and the double outside roll ending.

To help understand how this works consider the following.

- ❖ The starter step has many variations. All variations are acceptable but this is confusing for new students taught different variations by different instructors.
- ❖ Or consider two beginners trying to practice the starter step. Good instructional strategy requires the same variation for both students. Thus, the Basics manual will contain one variation of the starter step for instructors to teach and for students to practice.
- ❖ Students who master this version may learn additional versions in the Enhanced Basics lessons, workshops, from video, and from private lessons.

Practice: Skillfully presented lessons with good instructional design provide the basis for practice. Practice is perhaps the most important component of learning and maintaining dance skills. The Sunday night club dance offers an opportunity for practice in a night club environment. Alone, this is not adequate.

Beginners practicing with beginners leads to obvious difficulties. Practice with an established dancer is valuable so the Club has established the Practice Assistants (PAs) program. PAs are established dancers committed to assisting new learners by attending practice parties and by asking beginners to dance at the Club night dance and elsewhere. They also assist in the basics lessons and work with students individually.

PAs learn both the leader's and follower's footwork for the basic patterns. When dancing with beginners the PAs follow the Club's WCS manual, the instructional basis for the student. PAs are given appropriate training in workshops and individually.

Students, when practicing, need to stop on the dance floor, talk to their partner about a problem they experience, repeat a pattern several times, get immediate feedback on their dancing and more. This is not possible in a night club ambience.

The club offers practice parties for members. These parties promote working together to learn dance. Some varied approaches to practice for practice parties are

- **Structured video practice** - in a group lesson structure, specific vignettes from instructional videos are presented and the students emulate what they see.
- **Open practice** - students are encouraged to ask for assistance, dance with PAs, and work together.
- **Self-video** - students are video taped and immediately observe the tape for self evaluation.
- **Taped slots** - the floor is taped marking the slot, the leader's position, and the follower's positions visually showing learners if they are holding the correct positions.
- **Topic Corners** - a specific topic such as "Holding the Four Foot" is discussed.

Music: The final component is music. Not only is music necessary for dancing but the type and speed of music influences learning. Beginners should practice slowly until the movement is committed to muscle memory.

The Introduction to West Coast Swing manual contains suggested practice music. The first 30 minutes of open dancing on Club night is selected from the practice music list.

Our View: The Club functions to recruit new dancers and encourages dancers to fully explore dance opportunities and availability of instruction in Atlanta. We recognize that a variety of approaches to WCS exist and prepare students for this experience. We want them to understand there are many starter steps, many ways to execute the side pass, and other variants so they will value exposure to these variants as a valuable addition to their dance skills. To the extent this program is successful the dance community will be larger and all members of the dance community will benefit. Instructors will have more students. Studios will have more clients. And, best of all, we all will have more people as dance partners.

The Introduction to West Coast Swing manual is available on our WEB site. The Board wishes to share it with all dancers. You may print the manual for personal use and may distribute the manual under terms of the copyright. Working together, the Club's members are a positive force for enhancing the dance experience in Atlanta. Please join us in this commitment.

Important Notice

The manual and companion video are designed as support materials to be used with lessons from a proficient instructor. We advise beginners NOT to use these materials alone.

General structure of the basic six-count patterns.

Start from a connected one-hand hold at end of the anchor of the previous pattern. Weight must be poised back.

Count 1 – Initiation

On Count 1 the hand goes straight down the slot.

Lady: Step forward.

Man: Small step, may step back, slightly to the left, or hook to the right,.

Count 2 – Lead

From center.

Counts 3&4 - Execute

On Count 4 the foot is on the spot where it started or on the same spot on the other side of the slot.

Lady: Establish distance on Count 4 then establish leverage (connection) prior to moving foot to the Count 5 position.

Man: Set foot and hand anchor on Count 4.

Counts 5&6 – Anchor-in-place

Lady:

5 Left foot behind right, toe to heel

& Replace weight to right foot

6 Left foot placed with the arch to the heel of the right foot

Man:

5 Right foot behind left, toe to heel

& Replace weight to left foot

6 Right foot placed with the arch to the heel of the left foot

General structure of the basic eight-count patterns.

Count 1 – Initiation

Count 2 – Lead

Counts 3&4 - Execute

Count 5 – Secondary Lead

Count 6 - Execute

Counts 7&8 - Anchor

Note: The **natural position** for the lady's hands, arms and elbows when the hand is not being held (i.e., a one handed connection or free move) is up and in front. This is where the man will reach for her hand. When practicing the basics never let the arm hang to the side. Never let the elbow and upper arm close to the side.

Characteristics of WCS

1. Danced in a slot.
2. No lilt (bounce).
3. Anchor at the end of each pattern.
4. Top is quiet.
5. Connection is extremely important (Partner, Floor, Music).
6. Cat like, elastic, unhurried, sensual (ECS is dog like).
7. Involves play.

Some Good Rules for Practice

1. **Relax:** Relax all muscles not necessary for your frame. Never lock a knee. Develop tone, not tension. Almost all beginning dancers, without awareness, are too tense. Allow postural sway.
2. **Practice correctly:** It is important to practice a pattern as correctly as you can because you learn what you practice. When learning to spin, for example, limit the turn's magnitude to maintain your balance and frame. Bigger turns come naturally with practice and will be executed correctly.
3. **Practice everything** at once. When you are practicing the anchor keep your posture, frame, rhythm, slot, ... again you learn what you practice.
4. **Practice alone.** Try to know your footwork, frame, and rhythm before partnering to practice a pattern. Use practice time with a partner for connection and lead/follow practice. If you don't know your part then your partner's benefit from the practice session is diminished.
5. **Tape a slot** on the floor. Mark the man's starting/ending position in the middle and the lady's starting/ending positions on both ends of the slot.
6. **Video** tape your practice. Save to monitor your progress.
7. Use **slow music** when practicing with music. Once you can execute well then practice to faster music for rhythm. Often beginners prefer faster music as the errors are not as obvious, but this defeats the purpose of practice.
8. **Connect** to the music. Select practice music that makes you want to dance. Practice expressing how you feel through movement while ignoring patterns, but keeping frame, posture, and technique.
9. **Warm up** before practice.
10. **Follow the hand, not the man!**
11. **Look** at your partner. Ladies, you should be looking at or looking for your partner at all times. Men, you should do the same except when you are checking the floor to be sure you will not run into someone.

Common General Errors

1. Squeezing the hand (the grip of death).
2. Spaghetti arm.
3. Rigid arm.
4. Locked knee.

5. Arm leading.
6. Arm following.
7. Rushing turns (be sure to take 3 steps in the triple step).
8. Leaning on partner. Ladies, do NOT press down on the man's hands (open position) or arm (closed position).

To correct an error you must first be aware of the error. Monitor your body to develop self awareness of your body's location in space and time. Ask others for feedback. Beginners frequently are unaware to the point of denial when informed of an error.

Basic West Coast Swing Patterns

Seven basic WCS patterns are taught in the Atlanta Swing Dancers Club (ASDC) Basics class sequence. New students are encouraged to start with Lesson 1 and cover the lessons in order. The lessons build and each lesson contains a review. A lesson is essentially the same regardless of the instructor. Many students find it useful to repeat lessons several times. After your first series, you may wish to attend selected lessons covering material where you feel remediation is needed. Check the ASDC's web site for the current lesson schedule.

Lesson 1: First learn the basic rhythm while in place. Patterns taught: Sugar push and underarm pass. Learn hand hold, how to move your feet, and to execute the proper footwork with rhythm.

Lesson 2: Review. Patterns: Left Side Pass and Closed Basic.

Lesson 3: Review. Learn the triple step exercise. Pattern: Side Tuck.

Lesson 4: Review. Pattern: Basket Whip. Learn more on connection.

Lesson 5: Review. Pattern: Basic Whip.

Lesson 6: Review and practice.

Each pattern is presented on one page. There is a common format with the leader's and follower's footwork in parallel columns. Material on count, rotation, starting position, connection, comments, exercises and common errors is presented. Skill building exercises are listed in the lesson where we recommend initiation of practice. Exercise details are in the back of this document.

The basic patterns and the Triple Step Exercise are on the DVD format video companion to the Introduction to West Coast Swing Student Manual.

Sugar Push

Count: 1 2 3&4 5&6

Rotation: No rotation

Starting Position: Open facing position, one or two-hand hold

Connection: Leverage to compression (Count 3) to leverage (Count 4).

Comments: If one-hand hold is used, the man catches lady's free hand on Count 2 and releases again on Count 4. Ladies, establish your position on Count 4 and STAY THERE.

Exercises: Shopping Cart. Hand Hold.

Common Errors: Moving "four" foot. Arm leading.

Man's footwork

- 1 Left foot back
- 2 Right foot back and slightly to the right
- 3 Left foot behind right, toe to heel
& Replace weight to right foot
- 4 Left foot forward and slightly left
Anchor-in-place
- 5 Right foot behind left, toe to heel
& Replace weight to left foot
- 6 Right foot placed with the arch to the heel of the left foot

Lady's footwork

- 1 Right foot forward
- 2 Left foot forward
- 3 Right foot behind left, toe to heel
& Replace weight to left foot
- 4 Right foot back
Anchor-in-place
- 5 Left foot behind right, toe to heel
& Replace weight to right foot
- 6 Left foot placed with the arch to the heel of the right foot

NOTE: The last three steps are the same in all the basic patterns so they may be indicated by **Anchor-in-place** as shown below. The notation system emphasizes that the last three steps of all pattern in this series are the same thus the importance of committing them to muscle memory early in your training. Note: the lady's anchor in the Side Tuck is slightly different.

Man's footwork

- 1 Left foot back
- 2 Right foot back and slightly to the right
- 3 Left foot behind right, toe to heel
& Replace weight to right foot
- 4 Left foot forward and slightly left

Anchor-in-place

Lady's footwork

- 1 Right foot forward
- 2 Left foot forward
- 3 Right foot behind left, toe to heel
& Replace weight to left foot
- 4 Right foot back

Anchor-in-place

Under Arm Pass

Count: 1 2 3&4 5&6

Rotation: ½ rotation to right (man) or left (lady) between counts 2 and 4.

Starting Position: Open facing position, one-hand hold

Connection: Leverage on Count 1, release as hand goes over head, leverage on Count 4.

Comments: On beat 2, man turns his left hand so the palm faces the lady to indicate a turn, gently lowers the hand as she completes rotation on Count 4.

Exercises:

Common Errors: Woman passes under man's hand. Too much help from man during turn. Man moves right foot on & (should replace).

Man's footwork

- 1** Left foot back and slightly side
- 2** Right foot crosses over left as shoulders begin a slight rightward rotation, man should be out of the track
- 3** Left foot is placed slightly in front of right, ball of the foot only
- &** Replace weight to right completing the ½ turn rotation (use left foot to turn body)
- 4** Left foot side into the track

Anchor-in-place

Lady's footwork

- 1** Right foot forward
- 2** Left foot forward, head turns to look over left shoulder to begin rotation, body does not yet rotate
- 3** Right foot side down track, ¼ rotation completed
- &** Left foot crosses in front of right, body completes rotation before foot is placed
- 4** Right foot back

Anchor-in-place

Left Side Pass

Count: 1 2 3&4 5&6

Rotation: ½ rotation to left between counts 1 and 4

Starting Position: Open facing position, one-hand hold

Connection: Leverage on Count 1, release, leverage on Count 4..

Comments: Man's rotation creates lead, no excess pull is necessary

Exercises: Steady Hands. Hold-the-Quarter.

Common Errors: Same as underarm pass.

Man's footwork

1 Left foot hooks behind right as man commences to turn left

2 Replace weight to right foot as ¼ turn is completed

3 Left foot behind right, toe to heel

& Replace weight to right foot

4 Left foot forward and into the track as body completes the ½ turn rotation

Anchor-in-place

Lady's footwork

1 Right foot forward

2 Left foot forward, head turns to look over left shoulder to begin rotation, body does not yet rotate

3 Right foot side down track, ¼ rotation completed

& Left foot crosses in front of right, body completes rotation before foot is placed

4 Right foot back

Anchor-in-place

Closed Basic

Count: 1&2 3&4

Rotation: No rotation.

Starting Position: Starts in closed position with man facing intended track

Connection: Lady's shoulder "in" man's right hand. Her left hand rests lightly in his right hand.

Comments: All steps are small with minimal lateral movement of the body. Side tuck and left side pass are common following patterns to open position.

Exercises: Stork

Common Errors: Too much lateral movement. Lady leaning on man.

Man's footwork

- 1 Left foot side and slightly back
& Right foot crosses in front of left
- 2 Left foot side
- 3 Right foot side and slightly back
& Left foot crosses in front of right
- 4 Right foot side

Lady's footwork

- 1 Right foot side and slightly back
& Left foot crosses in front of right
- 2 Right foot side
- 3 Left foot side and slightly back
& Right foot crosses in front of left
- 4 Left foot side

Side Tuck

Count: 12 3&4 5&6

Rotation: ½ rotation to left for man, ½ rotation right for lady preceded by approximately 1/8 rotation to left as a preparation for the turn (“tuck in, turn out”)

Starting Position: Starts in open facing position, two-hand hold

Connection

Lead: Man lifts left hand pulling slightly in toward him on Count 3 to create the tuck, extends left hand down the track releasing the right hand on Count 4 allowing the lady to complete rotation

Comments: At the end of the pattern, the hand connection will be “upside down” Any right turning figure such as an under arm pass will correct the connection. The man’s footwork is identical to the Left Side Pass.

Exercises: Triple Step Exercise.

Common Errors: Lady dancing &34 rather than 3&4. Lady turns on Count 4. Man over leads tuck with left hand.

Man’s footwork

- 1** Left foot hooks behind right as man commences to turn left
- 2** Replace weight to right foot as ¼ turn is completed
- 3** Left foot behind right, toe to heel
- &** Replace weight to right foot
- 4** Left foot forward and into the track as body completes the ½ turn rotation

Anchor-in-place

Lady’s footwork

- 1** Right foot forward
- 2** Left foot forward
- 3** Right foot slightly in front of left, ball of foot only as body turns slightly left
- &** Left foot crosses in front of right
- 4** Right foot forward straight down track

Anchor-in-place (Tuck Ending)

- 5** Left foot forward, ball of foot only
- &** Replace weight to right foot as rotation is completed (use left foot to turn body)
- 6** Left foot placed with the arch to the heel of the right foot

Locked Whip (aka Basket Whip)

Count: 12 3&4 56 7&8

Rotation: 1 full rotation between counts 1 and 6 for man, no rotation for lady

Starting Position: Starts in open facing position, two-hand hold (2nd hand may be caught on the way to Count 2)

Connection:

Lead: On Count 2 man flips left hand to face palm toward the lady while maintaining contact with the right hand.

Comments: Lower the left hand on 3& as she passes to end in a wrap position. Release right hand on the way to Count 5 to end in a one-hand hold.

Exercise: Eyes Closed

Common Errors: Lady steps back on Count 4 prior to lead.

Man's footwork

- 1** Left foot back and slightly side
- 2** Right foot crosses over left as shoulders begin a slight rightward rotation, man should be out of the track
- 3** Left foot is placed slightly in front of right, ball of the foot only
- &** Replace weight to right completing $\frac{1}{2}$ rotation (use left foot to turn body)
- 4** Left foot side completely across track
- 5** Right foot side down track as body completes $\frac{1}{4}$ rotation
- 6** Left foot steps into track as body completes $\frac{1}{4}$ rotation

Anchor-in-place

Lady's footwork

- 1** Right foot forward
- 2** Left foot forward

- 3** Right foot forward
- &** Left foot closes to right
- 4** Right foot back (very small step)
- 5** Left foot back

- 6** Right foot back

Anchor-in-place

Basic Whip

Count: 12 3&4 56 7&8

Rotation: One full rotation to right between counts 1 and 6

Starting Position: Starts in open facing position, one-hand hold

Connection: Leveraged on Count 1, again on 3&4, again on Count 6.

Lead: Man compresses with left hand causing lady to rotate on Count 2. When in closed position, the lead is in the man's right hand.

Comments: Man takes lady into closed position on Count 2 and releases to a one-hand hold on Count 5.

Exercises:

Common Errors: Making it a circular rather than a linear pattern. Lady keeping her right arm tense when in closed position.

Man's footwork

- 1** Left foot back and slightly side
- 2** Right foot crosses over left as shoulders begin a slight rightward rotation, man should be out of the track
- 3** Left foot is placed slightly in front of right, ball of the foot only
- &** Replace weight to right completing $\frac{1}{2}$ rotation (use left foot to turn body)
- 4** Left foot side completely across track

- 5** Right foot side down track as body completes $\frac{1}{4}$ rotation

- 6** Left foot steps into track as body completes $\frac{1}{4}$ rotation

Anchor-in-place

Lady's footwork

- 1** Right foot forward
- 2** Left foot side down track as body completes $\frac{1}{4}$ rotation

- 3** Right foot back down track as body completes $\frac{1}{4}$ rotation
- &** Left foot closed to right

- 4** Right foot forward (body weight should remain back over left foot until on the way to beat 5)
- 5** Left foot side down track as body completes $\frac{1}{4}$ rotation

- 6** Right foot back down track as body completes $\frac{1}{4}$ rotation

Anchor-in-place

Exercises

Eyes Closed:

Objective: Train the lady to respond to the physical lead of the hand rather than the visual lead of the body movement. Follow the hand not the man!

Partner: Required.

Practice with the lady's eyes closed (or wear a blindfold).

Men, if the lady does not follow, you should make sure that your lead is clear. Do not be spaghetti armed.

Hand Hold:

Objective: Learn to hold the appropriate tone in the hands and arms keeping connection at all times. Learn to "communicate" with your partner through the connection.

Partner: Required.

Take a one or two handed open position. Leader, move around (from center) ignoring foot work and patterns. Both dancers should concentrate on keeping the correct hand hold. Do not use the thumbs.

The one hand open hand connection is essentially the middle and ring finger of the lady's right hand hooked around the middle and ring finger of the man's left hand. The man's palm is facing his right and lady's palm is facing the floor. The pinky and index finger of both partners should be relaxed and closed to the rest of the hand, but they are not absorbing any pressure from the connection. It is important that these finger are not tense as they will tend to push the hand out of the connection altogether. The lady's hand should be deep enough into the man's hand that the outside of her pinky is in contact with the man's palm. The thumb of both partners should be relaxed and uninvolved in the connection.

Ladies, keep your fingers curved (shape like the letter C). Do not open your hand. An open hand causes the man's contact to move to your finger tips. This is a very insecure feeling for the man and may cause inadequate leads. Proper hand hold is essential for proper execution of the basics.

Hold-the-Quarter.

Objective: Learn to hold the appropriate tone in the hands while keeping connection at all times.

Partner: Required.

In a one hand open position place a quarter between the two middle fingers of the lady and man. Practice the sugar push and left side pass. The objective is to not drop the quarter. The hands are “alive”, they adjust to maintain a good connection. The hands are not “locked” in place.

Shopping Cart (or revolving door).

Objective: Learn to create leverage and compression from center rather than from the arms. This exercise helps you find your center and develop elasticity. Note that this is a “no time cost” exercise practiced during a normal activity.

Partner: Not required.

Place both hands on the handle of a stationary cart. Move your center forward causing the hands to press against the cart’s handle propelling it forward. Keep tone but not tension in the arms and hands so the force is moved from your center to the cart smoothly, without a jerk. NOTE: This is a compressed connection.

While pushing the cart forward with both hands stop your center causing the cart to stop. Keep tone but not tension in the arms and hands so the force from the moving cart is absorbed by your center smoothly, without a jerk. NOTE: This is a leveraged connection.

Steady Hands.

Objective: Learn to move the hands smoothly and keep them in proper position.

Partner: Required.

Take a one handed open position. Place an object (such as a small book) on the connected hands. Practice sugar pushes and left side passes while maintaining the book on the hands.

Stork.

Objective: Become accustomed to standing on one foot, i.e. being single weighted. Note that this is a “no time cost” activity as it is practiced during normal daily activities.

Partner: Not required.

Most sports (tennis, golf, boxing, . . .) require weighting both feet at once, i.e. being double weighted. Also people are likely to be double weighted when “standing around” at a dance or cocktail party. Dancing often requires single weighting.

Practice single weighting when waiting in line, riding the elevator, and engaging in other daily activities. The un-weighted foot may be off the floor or just touching the floor for balance.

Move your center point of balance so you feel your weight shift to different parts of the weighted foot. Can you shift your weight to the ball of the weighted foot? This is where you have your weight most of the time when swing dancing. Can you shift your weight back so it is behind the ankle? This is where your weight is at the end of the anchor-in-place. Notice that you can shift your weight to the inside and outside of the weighted foot. You are more stable when the weight is on the inside of the weighted foot.

Prior to beginning a dance each person should be single weighted on the appropriate foot. This facilitates leading/following as movement is initiated through the center from the weighted foot. Ladies, if you are weighted properly a good lead will cause you to move appropriately, you do not have to actively move yourself. If you do not feel this perhaps you are not waiting for the lead (or perhaps the man is not giving a lead). You need to give the man a chance to lead you! Premature movement degrades the connection and thus the dance.

Triple Step Exercise (Anchor-in-place). Used on counts 5&6 (6 count pattern) or 7&8 (8 count pattern).

Objective: Commit the anchor triple to muscle memory. Practice till automatic and you will be able to attend to other motions while correctly executing the essential anchor-in-place.

Partner: Not required. Both men and ladies should practice the leader's and the follower's part.

NOTE 1: On 6 the dancers Center Point of Balance is anchored behind the heel of the forward foot.

NOTE 2: There is NO bounce in the anchor-in-place. Use a mirror to insure that your head and shoulders do not go up-and-down.

Lady: The right foot stays on the same floor spot during the final 4 weight changes. This spot is established when the right foot is placed on Count 4. Mark the correct floor position with tape. Practice placing the foot in that position on Count 4 and then keeping the foot on that same spot during the anchor-in-place. Note that you should mark the position on both sides of the center of the slot when practicing passing patterns.

5 Left foot behind right, toe to heel

& Replace weight to right foot

6 Left foot placed with the arch to the heel of the right foot

During the anchor-in-place steps the right foot does NOT move from its spot on the floor. A frequent error for beginner ladies is to pull the man out of position by moving back in the slot during the anchor-in-place.

The head and chest remain centered and balanced over the left foot on &. The change-of-weight motion is in the hips and legs.

Man: The left foot stays on the same floor spot during the final 4 weight changes. This spot is established when the left foot is placed on Count 4. Mark the correct floor position with tape. Practice placing the foot in that position on Count 4 and then keeping the foot on that same spot during the anchor-in-place.

5 Right foot behind left, toe to heel

& Replace weight to left foot

6 Right foot placed with the arch to the heel of the left foot

During the anchor-in-place steps the left foot does NOT move from its spot on the floor.

A frequent error for beginner men is to push the lady out of position by moving forward in the slot during the anchor-in-place.

The head and chest remain centered and balanced over the right foot on &. The change-of-weight motion is in the hips and legs.

Walking a straight line.

Passing knees

Move center down line

Feet follow form.

Important Notice

The manual and accompanying video are designed as support materials to be used with lessons from a professional teacher. We advise beginners NOT to use these materials alone.

Terms & Concepts

Center, Compression, Connection, Elasticity, Follow, Lead, Leverage, Positions (Open [1 & 2 handed], Closed)

Recommended Practice Music

By Brandi

Blues

Ray Sharpe - Alva's Baby Blues
Tom Waits - Heart Attack and Vine
Junior Wells - Sweet Sixteen

Contemporary

Craig David - Hidden Agenda
George Michael - As
Joss Stone - Super Duper Love

Funk

Sarah Conner - French Kissing
Mary J Blige - Do Nothing 'til You Hear
From Me
Angie Stone and Alicia Keys - Brotha
Eric Sermon - Music

Country

Delbert McClinton - Shaky Ground
Little Texas - She's Cool
Ty Herndon - Steam

Others

Wade In The Water	Eva Cassidy	Gospel	
Give Me Just One Reason	Tracy Chapman	Jazz	
Twenty Four Seven	Glen Jones	R&B	92 bpm
If It Ain't One Thing	General Jackson	R&B	93 bpm
Lie No Better	Delbert McClinton	Rock	96 bpm
Blue Light Boogie	Taj Mahal	R&B	97 bpm
Eat at Joe's	Suzy Boggus	R&B	99 bpm
634-5789	Wilson Pickett	R&B	102 bpm
Memphis Women	T Graham Brown	R&B	110 bpm
She's A Bad Mama Jama	Carl Carlton	Hip Hop	115 bpm
Don't Stop Doin' It	Anastacia	Pop	115 bpm
Everybody	Backstreet Boys	Pop	115 bpm
I Heard It Through The Grapevine	Marvin Gaye	Soul	115 bpm

Instructional Videos

Instructional Videos. These may be very helpful. Slow motion can show details missed at normal speed.

-- The ASDC companion video accompanies the ASDC Introduction to WCS Manual. Brandi dances each pattern and demonstrates the footwork. The Triple Step Exercise is also covered. Other ASDC videos in DVD format are available for connection, extended basics, and workshop patterns.

-- ASDC Instructional Library. We have VCS tapes and DVDs. See the complete list on the Club's WEB site.

-- Recommended WCS videos for your home collection.

1. West Coast Swing - Basic Level by Michael Kiehm and Brandi Northrup. Build a solid foundation with basic six and eight-count patterns and timing; lead techniques for men; spin and turn techniques for women.

2. Spins and Turns - Volume 1 by Michael Kiehm & Brandi Northrup. An introduction to pivot turns, traveling spins, stationary spins, and ways to get more than one turn out of a spin.

3. Spins and Turns - Volume 2 by Michael Kiehm and Brandi Northrup. Advanced techniques. Advanced techniques such as attitude spins and turns that require a man's counter-balance.

These can be purchased on tape or DVD at <http://www.starlightdance.com/store/>

WEB Sites

<http://www.swingworld.com/default.htm> The site of Skippy Blair, the best known WCS teacher in the country. She probably has taught far more students than any other teacher. The site contains several articles including Centering, Competition Music, Critical, timing, Gift of Dance, Relationships, Rolling Count, Walk Like a Dancer, WCS List – 22 foundation patterns, 3-Toe Base.

http://www.eijkhout.net/lead_follow/index.html Lead/follow, connection, balance & turning, general tips and more. This site contains unedited contributions from various sources. It is interesting and informative but can be contradictory and wrong so carefully evaluate what you read here.

<http://music.dancenantucket.org/music/> Contains a list of songs, many with a short clip for listening.

Books

Franklin, Eric 1996, Dynamic Alignment Through Imagery. Human Kinetics, Champaign, IL

Franklin, Eric 1996, Dance Imagery for Technique and Performance. Human Kinetics, Champaign, IL

Franklin, Eric 2004, Conditioning for Dance. Human Kinetics, Champaign, IL

Smoky Mountain Boogie

Smoky Mountain Boogie - Spring Break for Swing Dancers. One of the best parties of the year.

On the final weekend of March, approximately 800 swing, shag and bop dancers from numerous states and dance clubs flock to the Smoky Mountain National Park section of Tennessee to savor a four-day dance party called "Smoky Mountain Boogie," an annual event co-hosted by the Atlanta Swing Dancers Club and the Smoky Mountain Shaggers of Knoxville. Day and night, the dancers boogie, party and quench their thirst for fun like college kids on the beach during a spring break.

Hotel rooms have views of distant mountaintops immersed in a blue haze and nearby hills covered with gray bare oaks, dark green pines, new green leaves and all these dappled with redbud blossoms that shine purple and pink under a bright sun in a blue clear spring sky.

DJs spin disks in their dual CD players on the stage. The music brings dancers to their feet dancing shag, west coast swing, bop, east coast swing, cha-cha or some combination. The music comes with lively swing beats, romantic rumba beats, or playful cha-cha beats, but they all have distinct 4 beats to a measure so that any one of the swing dances can be danced. Crowds of 300 to 400 dancers take to the floor smiling as they dance. Tunes with booming beats that puncture the air inflame the dancers to swing, to sway, to spin, to swivel, to pivot, to whip, to belly roll, to prance and to boogie walk, their feet drawing out infinitely varied figures on the floor, their faces beam with smiles. This is just the beginning of a fun packed annual event that features complimentary dance workshops, hospitality suites, great music and hosts.

For more information about Smoky Mountain Boogie please visit our website at: www.atlantaswingdancers.com or email us at [smboogie@earthlink.net](mailto:samboogie@earthlink.net)