

# Lead and Follow

## INTRO – GENERAL COMMENTS, TIPS, POINTS TO THINK ABOUT, ETC

- Following & Leading are different but equally important skills
- A good lead/follow is like a good conversation - you don't have to yell, you only need to talk
- All you really need is a whisper
- Anyone who says women 'just' follow are being disrespectful to women.
- Following is not about knowing the patterns
  - You only need to know the basic footwork patterns i.e. inside turn, Copa etc.
- Lead and follow is **VISUAL** as well as **TACTILE**
- Follow the lead not what the teachers is doing.

## • NO LEAD – NO FOLLOW

## CONNECTION

- Leading is achieved with the **BODY** not the **ARMS**
- 5 Pressure
  - Exercise 1 - Palm to palm
  - Exercise 2 – Hook
  - Exercise 3 - Leaders palm up/palm down, leader jumps
- Followers
  - Lock Chest and Back muscles
  - Keep upper and lower arm pliable but responsive
  - Understand where your own body weight is
    - teetering and ready to move in either direction
    - 'An inverted pyramid'
  - Maintain pressure of connection by movement of body weight, not from movement of arms
- Leaders
  - Understand where your own body weight is
  - Understand where your partners weight is
  - Create movement from the centre of your body.
  - Change pressure of connection by movement of body weight, not from movement of arms

## DANCE FRAME, POSTURE, CLOSED POSITION

- Lead and follow is a communication of body weight changes
- Top-line
- 4 points of contact
- Grapefruit NOT beach ball
- Make connection
- Feel partners body weight
- Exercise 4 – Rock step
- Upstairs is asleep whilst the party is going on downstairs

## RIGHT TURN

- Follower
  - Upper arm parallel to floor
  - Grip Orange in armpit
  - Hand is a **CUP** not a **VICE**
  - Don't rush the turn
- Leaders
  - Stay as close as possible to the follower
  - 5 - Lead hand to leaders left allowing follower to step to her 2 o'clock
  - 6 - Lead hand moves to centre over woman's head allowing her to turn and prep her right foot for turn
  - 7 - Lead hand remains centred over follower to allow follower to spin remainder of turn
  - 1 - Lead hand brought down to followers shoulder

## NATURAL TOP, BACK CHARGE

- Elbows down
- Connection
- Boing - elastic arms
- Step slightly into each other on 2 - A 'Ball Change'
- Bodies angled in a V away from one another

# Lead and Follow

- Firm dance frame
- Parallel chests in closed position

## INSIDE TURN, COPA, CRUCIFIX - 'CHECKS'

- Check on 5 - indicates something nasty this way comes!
- Check to where the followers 5 foot should be placed
- Followers
  - Upper arm parallel to floor
  - If in doubt elbow down
  - Cup hand
- Leaders
  - With travelling turns keep lead hand moving and slightly in the direction of travel
  - Hand slightly above level of followers head.
  - Don't rotate lead hand back into yourself unless that's what you mean to do!
  - No Thumbs - Fingers only.
- Copa timing is 'and 3' into the presentation

## SPINS – 'SETUP'

- Indicate on 7
- Finish prep by 3
- Lead hand is at correct height to lead spin i.e. at followers head height
- Prep is 'V' on it's side
  - 3
  - 1
  - 7
- Follower
  - Upper arm parallel to floor
  - Grip Orange in armpit
  - Shoulders down
  - Fingers are a **CUP** not a **VICE**
  - **Spin to the LEADERS timing.**
- Leaders
  - Stay as close as possible to the follower
  - Leading forearm as close to parallel with the floor as possible
  - Shoulders down
  - Use middle 1 or 2 fingers in the woman's CUP
  - Coffee cup on Followers head
  - Continuous lead - don't twitch or crank
  - **LEAD TO THE MUSIC.**
  - Finish lead 1/2 turn before end
  - Allow woman to brake herself
  - Offer resistance in lead arm to allow the follower to use it to aide braking and to help steady herself

## PRACTICE TURN PATTERN

- CP Cross body lead to open break
- LR Natural Top
- Right 2 O'clock turn
- Drop Woman's Right hand into Mans Left hand
- RR Crucifix
- Woman's 1 1/2 right turn
- LL RR Copa
- LL Inside Turn

## FLOOR AND LEADER CRAFT

- The **LEAD** is responsible at **ALL** times for **FOLLOWERS SAFTY**.
- Look before you Lead
- Followers don't stray from the Lead – stay within protective shell
- On a crowded floor - keep it compact (the sign of a good dancer!).
- Lead only at and slightly above the followers ability
  - Most followers want to be challenged but not Baffled or even scared!
  - Only lead patterns where the follower can control her own body weight and balance.

# Lead and Follow

- Don't make her do things the follower doesn't have the footwork for just because you have a strong lead and can drag her around.
  - It's not good for your lead
  - It's not good for her learning
  - It's not enjoyable by 99% of followers
- If you don't know the level of your partner then start easy and build up slowly.
  - Try
    - Right Turn
    - Inside Turn
    - Single Spin
    - Copa
    - Double spin
    - Etc.
- If a follower can't complete a single spin on time and reasonable securely **DON'T LEAD A DOUBLE!**
- Don't lead on the social dance floor patterns that you've not previously 'mastered' to some degree. It's not enjoyable following a badly lead pattern.
- **DANCE ON TIME – LEAD ON TIME**, give the follower a fighting chance at following.
- If it all goes pear shaped laugh it off – everyone makes mistakes; the best dancers just cover theirs up better!

## SUMMARY

### • NO LEAD – NO FOLLOW

- Leading is not pushing or pulling
- For a leader to lead well you must understand the follower's footwork for what they are leading.
- Followers Rules
  - Never hold on
  - Never let go
  - Don't think, do it but use some common sense
  - Spot down the slot
  - Keep an eye on your leader
  - If you've not got hold of a leaders hand look for it