Latin Introduction

Approved Syllabus · Latin American Style

Abbreviations Used

Abbreviation	Meaning
B	Ball (of foot)
BF	Ball (of foot) Flat
Basic (A)	Basic with alternative bounce
Basic (B)	Basic with basic bounce
C	Centre
CBP	Contra Body Position (CBMP)
CP	Closed Position
CPP	Counter Promenade Position
DC	Diagonal Centre
DW	Diagonal Wall
FP	Fan Position
HF	Heel Flat
I/E	Inside Edge
L	Left
LF	Left Foot
LOD	Line of Dance
LSP	Left Side Position
OP	Outside Partner
Open P	Open Position
P	Position
PO	Partner Outside
PP	Promenade Position
R	Right
RF	Right Foot
RSP	Right Side Position
TP	Tandem Position
T	Toe
W	Wall
WF	Whole Foot

Definitions

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Alignment

Alignment is the position of the feet in relation to the room. Given as **Facing** and **Backing** when feet and body are in line, and **Pointing** when the foot has a different alignment to the body.

Alignment is of importance in progressive dances such as Samba and Paso Doble. Cha Cha Cha, Rumba and Jive are non-progressive dances.

Amount of Turn

Amount of turn is measured between the feet and expressed as a fraction of a circle.

The direction of the turn should be included in answering questions on amounts of turn (for example, ¼ R, ½ L, etc). Many figures in Latin are flexible in the amount of turn that can be applied, so it is quite normal to see amounts of turn such as ¾ to R over steps 5-8.

Contra Body Movement

Contra Body Movement is the turning of the opposite side of the body towards the moving foot, which is moving forward or back. It is usually used to initiate turn.

CBM is seldom used in Latin, but the term CBMP (below) is used, and it is extremely important for all students to have a clear understanding of the difference between the two. **CBM is a body action, while CBMP is a foot position.**

Contra Body Movement Position (or Contra Body Position)

Contra Body Movement Position is a foot position where the foot is placed on or across the line of the supporting foot, either in front of or behind the supporting foot.

The term Contra Body Position has been used in the charts to provide a clearer distinction between this foot position and Contra Body Movement.

Footwork

Footwork describes the part of the foot that is in contact with the floor.

Usually given as 'T' (toe) or 'BF' (Ball Flat), but there are times when it is desirable to be more descriptive, such as 'IE' (Inside Edge).

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Foot Position

Foot Position is the position of one foot in relation to the other.

This is generally described in terms such as Right Foot Forward, Left Foot to the Side, etc. Other foot positions include PP (Promenade Position), OP (Outside Partner) and Contra Body Position.

Line of Dance (LOD)

Line of Dance is an imaginary line drawn around the outside of the dance floor in an anti-clockwise direction.

Rhythm

The regular occurrence of accentuated beats.

Tempo

The speed at which music is played, measured in bars per minute.

This measurement of music in bars per minute is unique to dancing, as musicians measure music in beats per minute. For example, a Rumba played at 27 bars per minute would equate to 108 beats per minute for a musician.

Time Signature

Time Signature is a musical notation which defines the number of beats in a bar of music (top number), and the type of note that makes up the bar (bottom number).

Summary of Recommended Tempi and Time Signatures

For DanceSport Australia competitive events.

Dance	Tempo	Time Signature
Cha Cha Cha	30 bars per minute	4/4
Samba	50 bars per minute	2/4

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Dance	Tempo	Time Signature
Rumba	27 bars per minute	4/4
Paso Doble	62 bars per minute	2/4
Jive	44 bars per minute	4/4

It should be noted that while DanceSport Australia lists these speeds as recommended, many dancers and coaches prefer much slower speeds for practice.

The tempi above are single recommended values. Rule 22.2 of the Rules of DanceSport expresses the recommended Latin tempi as ranges; each value above falls within the corresponding range in that rule, which remains the authority for competition.

Description of Holds

Normal Hold

Stand feet apart, facing partner approximately 15cm apart, with the head erect, the body naturally upright and shoulders relaxed.

The Man's right hand is placed on the Lady's left shoulder blade, and the Lady's left arm rests lightly on the Man's right arm, following the curve of his arm to the shoulder. The Man's left hand is raised in a gentle curve to the level of the eyes. The Lady's right hand is placed in the Man's left hand with her fingers between his thumb and first finger. The hands are lightly clasped.

Closed Position

Facing partner, slightly apart, and normal hold.

Alternative holds may be:

1. Man's left hand holding Lady's right hand
2. Man's right hand holding Lady's left hand
3. Double hold
4. No hold

Contact Position

Facing partner, with light body contact, and normal hold.

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Open Position

Facing and away from partner, approximately at arm's length. Man's left hand holding Lady's right hand.

Alternative holds may be:

1. Man's right hand holding Lady's right hand
2. Double hold
3. No hold

Fan Position

Lady at right angle to Man, to his left side, on an imaginary line approximately 15cm in front of him. Man's left hand holding Lady's right hand.

Promenade Position

Lady on Man's right side, with the Man's right and Lady's left sides towards each other, slightly apart, and the opposite side of the body turned outward to form a 'V' shape.

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