

The earliest form of **SAMBA** from 1920s descriptions  
(Brazil)

The Brazilian Samba was introduced to Parisian society in 1922 by Monsieur Duque, of Maxixe fame, at his Montmartre dance hall Shéhérazade. The Brazilian orchestra *Las Batutas* provided music for the premiere. At this time the samba was virtually unknown outside of Brazil, but it didn't take long for it to spread from Paris to western Europe and the United States.

This samba was a 1922 version of the Brazilian Two-Step, known as *maxixe* a decade earlier. French dance masters noted the similarity between the two dances and further suggested that the music for samba and maxixe could be interchanged "without inconvenience."

The modern ballroom samba retains much of this original form, as introduced by M. Duque in 1922. Meanwhile the native samba has continued to evolve in Brazil, where it no longer resembles the early version.

The maxixe of 1913 was too complex to gain the widespread popularity of the other ragtime-era dances. Its only appearance at a tea dance might be by a single couple who had rehearsed a maxixe sequence. The samba, on the other hand, was easy enough to be enjoyed freestyle. The steps below may be enjoyed in any order, or in the following sequence.

**MUSIC:** An original *bal musette* samba recording from 1920s Paris, R. Powers cassette.

**RHYTHM:** 2/4

**TEMPO:** 124 bpm (note: this is faster than the earlier maxixe)

**FORMATION:** Cpls, in a Ballroom pos.

**STEPS:** Ftwk described for M; W use opp ftwk.

**Pas de Samba** (basic step, also called *les petits pas glissés*): M takes a small leap fwd L (ct 1); closes R to L (ct &); takes wt w/ L in place (ct 2), with a slight down-up-down motion, leaning slightly backward. Repeat opp, leaping bkwd R, leaning slightly fwd.

**Pas Tournant** (turning basic, also called *le tonneau*): Same as the Maxixe two-step: While starting to rotate CW (as a cpl), step L to L side, starting to bend body to R, starting to raise clasped hands (ct 1); close R to L (or cross R behind L) continuing to turn and bend (ct &); step L to L side, completing 180° turn and ending with body leaning to R side, M L (and W R) hands arched overhead (ct 2). Repeat to R side, continuing CW rotation, but leaning to L side, clasped hands coming down in a smooth sweep.

**Les débo''tés** (heel-and-toe, also called *assemblés de côté de fantasie*): Traveling sideways toward LOD, M facing away from ctr, M places L heel fwd diag/L while W places R toe bkwd diag/R (ct 1); M closes R to L w/ wt (ct &); M places L toe bkwd diag/L while W places R heel fwd diag/R (ct 2); M closes R to L w/ wt (ct &). Repeat.

**Assemblés de Côté** (slow side steps, also called *les glissades*): M steps L ft to L side w/ slight hip-lead (ct 1); bring R ft up to L w/ wt (ct 2). Repeat.

**Pas de Samba en Avant** (cross steps): M crosses L over R (ct 1); steps R to R side (ct &); steps slightly bkwd L (ct 2), with a down-up-down motion. Repeat opp, beg crossing R over L. Turn shoulders with ftwk. W dances mirror-image, beg crossing R over L.

**STYLING:** Very relaxed and smooth, yet somewhat bouncy and energetic.

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PATTERN

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Measures

1-8      **Introduction**      No action

**I Basic Samba**

1-8      Pas de Samba in place without rotating.

**II Turning Basic**

1-8      Pas Tournant rotating CW but not traveling LOD.

**III Heel And Toe**

1-4      Les débo''tés traveling sideways LOD, with 4 sets of heel-and-toe steps.

5-8      This is then executed turning CCW, with W traveling around the M who acts as a pivot point (his R foot stays in place) with 4 more sets of heel-and-toe steps.

**IV Basic Samba**

1-8      Pas de Samba in place without rotating.

**V Slow Side Steps**

1-4      M does 3 Assemblés de Côté toward his L side (3 meas); then M steps L to L side (ct 1) and lightly stamps R closed to L (ct 2) while inclining upper body slightly toward the R.

5-8      Repeat above traveling toward M's R side.

**VI Turning Basic**

1-8      Pas Tournant rotating CW.

**VII Cross-Steps**

1-8      Pas de Samba en Avant in place without rotation.

SEQUENCE: Repeat entire pattern from the beginning, parts I through VII.  
Then repeat parts I and II and continue the Turning Basic for 6 more measures.