

SAMBA - BALLROOM DANCE CLASS NOTES

Samba is the most active Latin America dance which originated in Brazil. Music for Samba is fiery, yet lyrical, and the dance is very light as far as footwork is concerned. The body rise and fall is characteristic and is always turning and at the same time swaying back and forth at a pendular angle.

Samba Rhythm:

There is controversy over the way samba rhythm should be counted. It is sometimes counted in 2/4 meter as in the two step. It may also be counted in 4/4 meter with cut time, with a dotted $\frac{1}{4}$ note followed by an $\frac{1}{8}$ note and a $\frac{1}{2}$ note, followed by the long final beat and counted slow, quick, slow. For our purpose in this class we will consider it 2/4 time with a quick, quick, slow rhythm pattern. It has a double accent on each of the two major beats and these downbeats are represented by the down movements of the dance.

<u>Quick</u>	<u>Quick</u>	<u>Slow</u>	rhythm pattern
1	and	2	counts
/	—	/	accent
up down	—	down	cue

The execution of the up down up down weight change is the secret to the smooth springing rhythm. There is a change of weight, from one foot to the other, on each of the three beats, down-up-down, by a preliminary lift up of the body on the upbeat of the music sets the rhythmical swing in motion.

Samba Style:

There is total body action in the samba. An easy springing motion comes from the ball of the foot, the flexible ankle and the easy relaxed knee. The upper body is held firmly poised, never sagging, and seeming to sway forward and back about an axis which centers in the diaphragm. The arm position when not in contact with a partner is held out from the body, a little above waist level, bent at the elbow parallel to the floor, palm down.

Dance or Variation

Basic Step
(forward and back)

Fwd L Step R next to L Step L in Place

Q Q S

Bwd R Step L next to R Step R in Place

Q Q S

Cue:

Forward Change Weight Floor Pattern
Backward Change Weight

Lead:

Man increases tension of his right hand on her back, man leans backward slightly after stepping forward with his left foot and rocks forward after stepping backward with his right foot. Lady's movement is reversed.

Continued...

Style: Steps are small. Feet are close together on change step. Rise and fall of body begins on upbeat with a rise of body.

Basic Turn: Man leads out to left with left foot as he steps forward. By leading to the right, he can make a right turn.

Slow Side Close Swd L Close R to L, take weight on R
S S
Repeat 3 times moving left, last time do not take weight right but be ready to go back to the right; take 4 side close steps to right.

Lead: Man pulls to the stepping side. The rock is discontinued as is the down up motion. The rhythm is even.

Sideward Step Swd L Step R behind L Step L in Place
Q Q S
Swd R Step L behind R Step R in Place
Q Q S

Cue: Side Change Weight
Side Change Weight

Lead: Man turns lady 1/4 CCW as he steps Left and he turns her 1/2 CW as he steps Right

Chasse (left), closed position Swd L Step R behind L heel
Q Q

Note: When repeated over and over it will cause travel to left side, it may be done to the right side starting with right foot

Side Basic and Chasse Pattern
1 side basic L
1 side basic R
4 chasse steps L
1 basic side R
1 basic side L
4 chasse steps R

Lead: Head leads as style indicates below. Man guides L or R increases body tension.

Continued...

Side Basic (Cont.)

Style: Couple remains in closed position. Both turn head to look over shoulder to the side (man's left and lady's right) when taking chasse left (to the opposite for chasse right).

Copa Step (open position)

Fwd L step back in place on R toe Drag L foot back, take weight L
 Q Q S

Fwd R step back in place with L toe Drag R foot back, take weight R
 Q Q S

Cue: forward and pull
 forward and pull

Lead: Man leads into open position from the back half of basic samba step. Copa step will begin on left foot. Man leads to closed position when his step begins with the right foot and he may go back to basic samba step.

Scissors Step

Cross L over R	Swd	Tg	Cross R over L	Swd	Tg
Q	Q	S	Q	Q	S
L	R	L	R	L	R

Scissors with Heel and Toe Pattern

Lead from Copa Step
 Position - Apart, man's left hand holding lady's right

Cross L front R	Swd	Tg	Cross R front L	Swd	Tg	Cross L front R	Swd	Tg
Q	Q	S	Q	Q	S	Q	Q	S
L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L

Follow with - Heel and Toe (The heel is placed diagonally forward to the left, the toe goes behind.)
 Q Q S
 R R

Continued...

Cross R front L Swd Tg Cross L front R Swd Tg Cross R front L Swd Tg
 Q R Q L S R Q L S R Q R Q L S R
Follow with Heel and Toe

Repeat above
 Pick up Basic

Copa Cabanna

After a basic fwd -

Break Fwd to a side by side position - lady is on man's left - step will be:

Fwd (toe out, turn back on partner)	Tg	PI	Fwd (toe in toward partner)	Tg	PI
Q R	Q L	S R	Q L	Q R	S L

Repeat - out - then in again
 RLR LRL

Fwd (toe out)	Tg	PI	Circle L on Q	Q	S (lady circles R)
Q R	Q L	S R	L R L		

end in conversation position

5 Copa steps (begin with R foot)
 Pick up Basic

Key to abbreviations:

- Fwd - forward
- Bwd - backward
- Swd - sideward
- LOD - Line of direction
- Q - quick step (a quarter note)
- S - slow step (a half note)
- CCW - counter clockwise
- CW - clockwise