

SwingStep Syllabus Overview

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Swing1-Swing6,

User Note

Our syllabus is based on deliberate choices we made, that make sense for the core principles we feel are important for the dance (e.g. trade-off of learning detailed technique versus learning a lot of classic moves). If you have different priorities then obviously your choices should be different!

- *Each course is 6 weeks long.*
- *Each class is between 75-80 min of teaching time.*
- *Our students need to sign up to the following class each course round*
- *We try to keep the groups together as much as it makes sense (number of students).*

Also: we regularly make updates and changes to our syllabus, based on new experiments and experiences. This version is current as of Fall 2015.

Swing 1

Swing 1 Course Goals:

- Basic rhythms: charleston (for fast music, primarily groove-walk, some exposure to kick-steps), and triple-steps (for slower music).

- Basic positions: side-by-side, open position (brief exposure to face-to-face closed position).
- Technique focus: direction changes, some rotation. Both leaders and followers are responsible to dance their own bodies in rhythm.

Class 1

- side by side basics ('groove walk' rhythm, lead & follow of direction changes)
- kick-the-dog variations and some playful elements (eg freeze and mess-around)

Classes 2, 3, 4

- transitions between open and side-by-side
- open position passes (eg follower's underarm turn)
- introduction to kick-steps in some movements

Classes 5, 6

- introduction to triple-steps (primarily in side-by-side)
- focussed on visual lead & follow of triple-steps

Swing 2

Swing 2 Course Goals:

- Focussed on basics in triple-step rhythm. Includes lots of face-to-face and open position movements.
- Lots of classic moves, but also lead/follow control to vary those classics when they want (e.g., changing a 6-count passby into an 8-count using a "slingshot-style" redirection).
- Basic musicality in dancing: reacting to phrases in swing music.

Class 1

- basic face-to-face variations (slingshots, promenades)

Class 2

- sendout (contrasting with send-shot)

Class 3

- transitions between open and closed
- open position passes (e.g., follower's underarm turn)

Class 4

- introduction to musicality

Classes 5, 6

- more slingshot variations, including a fancy-looking texas-tommy variation
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Swing 3

Swing 3 Course Goals:

- Tuck turns!
- Lots of variations to provide contrast, variety, and fun; these all work toward a main goal of Swing 3 which is for students to have a solid tuck turn.
- Technique focus includes more control/understanding of different arm modes (rotational, tuck, linear), as well as more practice with clear body movement for redirections and rotations.
- The course finishes with some exposure to mixing between triple-steps and charleston (either groove-walks or kick-steps) within the dance.

Classes 1, 2, 3

- tuck turns in charleston mode (both groove walk and kick-step): classic closed-to-open tuck turn as well as open-to-open variations, entrance to sailor step (both slow and fast turn versions)

Classes 4, 5

- tuck turns in triple-step mode: classic closed-to-open tuck turn, as well as 8-count redirection variations)

Class 6

- mid-tempo music
 - mixing between triple-steps and charleston (both groove-walks and kick-steps)
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Swing 4

Swing 4 Course Goals:

- Swingout!
- Note: our swingout for beginners is not focussed on concepts like linearity/stretch during the 4-5 of the swingout (in the closed position), but rather is based on rotational concepts. It's not the most common build-up we have seen from other schools, but is highly successful for our students.
- The basic swingout uses a rock-step on 1 for the follower, but we also introduce swivels later in the course.

Class 1

- lindy circle and variations
- circle (from closed) into outside turn

Class 2

- swingout from closed

Class 3

- full swingout

Classes 4, 5, 6

- lots of swingout practice, one or two variations (eg texas tommy)
 - intro to swivels, including switches
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Swing 5

Swing 5 Course Goals:

- More charleston movements/positions: tandem, airplane & hand-to-hand. Introduction to classic positions and moves, building up a repertoire so that the student can feel comfortable dancing a full song with charleston moves.
- More focus on kick-steps than before. Includes both linear and rotational movements. Technically, more body control within the kick-steps.

Classes 1, 2

- hand-to-hand

Classes 3, 4

- tandem
- (includes chase into tandem, as well as transitions between hand-to-hand and tandem)

Class 5

- airplane charleston

Class 6

- fun entrances into hand-to-hand
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Swing 6

Swing 6 Course Goals:

- This course is split into two independent halves: sugar pushes and charleston swingouts.
- Sugar pushes: more detailed control of cycle of movement, being flexible with your triple-steps; awareness that one move can have different styles / feeling / footwork.
- Charleston swingouts: more control with momentum and rhythm within fast movements.

Class 1

- touch-step sugar pushes

Classes 2, 3

- triple-step sugar pushes
- varying amounts of energy/travel (traveling versus “hovering”)

Class 4

- charleston swingouts (groove walk)

Classes 5, 6

- charleston swingouts with kick-step variations

