

DANCE TIPS & TECHNIQUES

POSTURE: (practice constantly)

Center weight over both feet
Roll down with rounded back
Tuck pelvis forward
Tighten lower abs.
Roll shoulders back & down
Relax neck & lift chin

WHEN WALKING: (practice daily)

Take smaller steps, keeping feet under you
Place one foot in front of the other, as if on a balance beam
Keep feet close to floor, tracing through to step forward
Allow free foot to roll through the ankle,
stepping down with a flat foot as you drive your weight forward
Avoid extending the front foot and reaching for your next step

MIRROR EXERCISES FOR LEG LINES:

Low kicks at 45 degree angle across body
Walk-over (pivot, step, pivot, step)
Step across & point to side
- All with feet parallel, toes pointed & contra-body

SPINNING: (one foot technique)

Turn on right foot to the right, left foot to the left
Twist shoulders toward weighted foot, then unwind
Bring feet together, keeping weight on one foot
lift heels to turn - put them down to stop - use head to spot
Engage the thighs

RULES OF WEST COAST SWING FOR FOLLOWERS:

Walk forward on count 1

Keep your footwork small & tight (engage your thighs) - to define "the slot"

Stop your body momentum on count 4 (end of the slot)

Do your anchor step (5&6) in place

PERSONAL GROOMING:

Dancing is an activity where two people come in close contact. Before a dance or dance lesson:

- Shower and use a deodorant
- Brush teeth and use mouthwash or breath mint
- Abstain from foods that produce strong odors, like those heavy in garlic
- The odor of cigarettes on one's breath or clothing can be very unattractive
- Go easy on the cologne/perfume (some clubs have banned these due to allergies)

During a dance:

- Check your grooming periodically
- During active dance sessions, freshen up and towel off periodically in the bathroom
- Gentlemen, you can carry an extra shirt with you to the dance, in case you need a change.

THE RIGHT SHOE

Dancing is easier, safer & more comfortable while wearing shoes designed & made for that purpose.

Dance shoes are trim, lightweight & flexible, with thin, suede soles that let the dancer "feel" the floor,

while neutralizing a floor that may be too slick or sticky.

Since dance shoes are a "specialty" shoe, they usually cost more than an everyday street shoe,

but they are well worth the investment, once you are past the "introductory" phase of your lessons.

You can make do for a while in a pair of street shoes, as long as they are comfortable, with thin leather

soles and low heels. Ladies, make sure that if you wear a sandal style, it has straps that keep the shoe

securely on your foot - no flip-flops, slides, or sling-backs.

You can also compromise by having suede soles applied to your favorite pair of street shoes at a shoe

repair shop.

When you go to class or to a dance, it is a good idea to take an extra pair of shoes in case your feet become uncomfortable.