

The Classroom Technique of the Isadora Duncan School of Dancing

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Theories of Isadora on the Dance

" All movement on Earth is governed by the Law- of Gravitation, by attraction and repulsion, resistance and yielding, it is that which make up the rhythm of the dance."

" Primary or fundamental movements must have within them the seeds from which will evolve all other movements, each in turn to give birth to others in an unending sequence of still higher expression, thoughts and ideas."

" One can throw oneself into the spirit of the dance and dance the thing in itself (* Dionysus)
or one can contemplate the spirit of the dance as one relates a story (* Apollo).

" True movements are not invented but, discovered."

" We find the ' dance of the future' in the dance of the past,
the dance of eternity. "

" The dance of the future will have to become a high religious art
as it was with the Greeks."

"For Art which isn't religious is not art but mere merchandise."

" I want you to dance only that music which goes from the soul
in mounting circles."

" Plunge your soul in divine unconscious 'giving' deep within it,
until it gives to your soul it's secret."

" My soul should become one with it and the dance
from that embrace."

* author's addition *

The center from which emanates all movement is the solar plexus.

Place your hands one upon the other and touch your solar plexus.

Stand erect, facing a mirror if you prefer, pull in your stomach muscles, feeling your chest naturally rise and take in air deeply.

Feel yourself relax. Feel your center, listen to the music.

Just feel and then move.

There are four positions of the feet. In Duncan Technique there are two angles through which we move our legs. First, the legs are either (a) at an angle or (b) parallel. The dance movements are executed, for example, through raising the knee up in front to chest height with toes pointed down. The lower leg and foot to chest height with toes pointed down, the lower leg and foot is parallel to the body. When the knee is raised sideways, the legs form a ninety degree angle to the body.

Natural body movement is the principle in Isadora's Art.

Therefore, we have first, second, third and fourth position- by stepping forward with the right from third. (reversing the legs) .

Positions of the Feet

First position

Stand erect with heels together. Toes are pointed outward. There is no extreme extension.

The feet do not naturally walk in 180 degree angles to one another.

Second Position

With a slight movement of the left foot (about 12 inches apart) away from the right, place weight evenly under the body.

Third Position

Stand on the right foot with the heel of the left foot closed to the instep of the right foot.

Fourth Position

Bring the right foot forward from 3rd position, with a small step and evenly place weight on both feet.

* The following theories are the author's explanation.

With feet together, incline your body weight over them looking straight ahead. By doing so, we incline the ankles

which should be taut, slightly over the feet. This gives us a slight angle.

Next, the tightened knees are inclined slightly over the ankles.

Then, finally, lean the hips over the knees.

Looking from a side-view the figure standing upright but, with the body properly and comfortably balanced.

To prove this, raise the left knee outward, pointing the extended toes to the side of the right knee and 'hold'- you won't falter.

This is the secret of standing on one leg while working the other.

Notice that you can move the raised leg front, side and back and you are perfectly balanced and there is no strain or loss of balance as long as you maintain the angle of inclination and the ankle, knee and hip areas are held firmly.

Movement

Duncan alignment of the body actually occurs during movements, not prior.

The barre work is a combination of movements executed in succession of continuous motion. In other words, the positions unfold in succession, one after the other and during barre are repeated four times on each side in harmonious flowing movement to the practice music. (You and You Waltz/Strauss)

Beginning exercises are executed at the barre. Place the right hand lightly on the barre and stand in first position.

Exercises are begun standing on the right and using the left to waltz time. The movements are repeated four times.

Then, bring the left leg to the fourth position front but, to cross in front closely to the right leg and we rapidly lift high on the toes and turn toward the barre. (Releve)

Now, face in the opposite direction, standing on the left foot, right foot ready. Repeat. All this is done in time to the music.

There must be continuous movement from one exercise to another whether the exercise is repeated on the same side or the opposite side or changes into the next exercise.

The sequence of barre movements usually last twenty to thirty minutes.

The ideal class is for the student to pay attention closely to the music so they all start and turn and finish in unison.

Most of the Duncan work is done high on the balls of the feet.

The back is erect and the stomach held in.

Our movements radiate outward from the solar plexus. The area in the center of our chest a few inches above the naval.

The constant up and down movements of the body is essential to the building of strong , fast feet and flexible ankles and legs.

It, as well, strengthens the rest of the body.

A dancer should study a sculpture called the ' Dancing Maenad ' [in a Berlin Museum]. The ' Dancing Maenad 'of the ancient Greeks, in my opinion, depicts force, softness, a vitality, and grace, swiftness and impetus. Most importantly then, is the movement.

The torso, arms, legs and neck follow as the body moves in place or covers a given space.

Isadora always stressed to her pupils that they should not make a movement until they were imbued with that inner emotion to feel from the solar plexus before commencing to dance. Isadora expressed the hope that in the future her dancers would go on to create new dances and her Art would become the "Dance of the Future."

Classroom Barre Exercises

These exercises are performed in the sequence in which I learned them from Lillian Rosenberg was trained by Irma Duncan.

I will explain here in detail the class work which is divided into different categories. The beginning class starts with the barre with combination movements. This is followed by gymnastic exercises done as a group in a circle.

This is followed by the Walk and Movement through the body.

The second segment of the class is devoted to various dance movements: Waltz Step, The Run, Leaps and Swing Step, etc.

The proper study of each category takes at least twenty minutes so, each of the three areas of work over a one hour class is twenty minutes. Ideally, two hours is best. Of course, the dancer must perfect her technique at home several hours every day.

Forward and Backward Bending

Holding the barre in the right hand, turn out the right foot to a ninety degree angle with the barre. Place the pointed left toes forward touching the floor. The arms are held curved slightly at the elbow resting on the inside of the pelvic bone. As the left foot is placed forward the left arm is simultaneously raised palm side down. Hold the arm in the shoulder. Do not lift the shoulder. Raising is through the top of the hand. The elbow is slightly curved.

Feel a slight rising, fluid, flowing movement. The head rises slowly-simultaneously- as the hand rises. The head should be erect as the wrist and upper palm

travel up past the chest. As the arm continues upward the fingers naturally unfold and extend to the ceiling as the eyes look up to the ceiling.

Not stopping, continue back, bending back from the waist with the arm traveling back with the body. After reaching the farthest extension, continue up and forward again and lower the arm and wrist as you bend down to touch the toes of the extended left foot and the head drops forward.

After touching the toes, travel upward and repeat the back bend. The right leg should be kept straight as well as the left. Repeat four times and turn to the right side. Repeat four times with right leg extended on the floor.

Front Leg Swings

Hold the barre and stand in first position. Step back on the left foot, simultaneously, holding the arm extended back on the left side. Throw the left leg, knee straight, toes pointed up in front of the body and the arm travels and touches the toes as the foot points in front. The left leg is swung up in front as you raise up on the toes of the right foot. As the left foot swings back to starting position, the right heel also simultaneously comes down on the floor. Repeat four times left and right.

Side Leg Swings

Hold the barre right. Stand in third position, left heel in the right instep. Hold the barre firmly in the right hand, left hand out to the side. Step on the right toes, bending slightly in the knee as you begin to simultaneously, thrust out to the left side - the left leg with the toes pointed, knees straight. As your body forces upward and the right knee straightens, the left leg is firmly held in tight at hip level. Hold for a second and begin to return the left leg behind the right. The right foot is still up on the toes as the left leg is returned, knee straight. The body weight rocks. The full sole of the foot remains on the floor, as the foot slides back behind the right to the third position. Only the ankle of the left foot flexes. As the left foot comes to a full stop on return, the right foot and leg simultaneously come down and the right foot is also firmly on the ground. The body weight rocks - right hip to left - before repeat throw out of the leg.

The sequence is :

R step

L toe out

L return

rock (rocking is a quick weight transfer L to R)

throw out again

Combination Leg Swings

The leg is thrown out sideways, arm out to side.
Return with the left foot in front of the right foot, arm up high,
forward on toes.
Throw left leg out again from front to side.
Return left leg to behind right foot,
arm extends up behind the left shoulder.
The body weight is back on the left foot, right toes pointed forward.

Sequence:

LF out to side
LF front
LF out to side
LF back

Pliez

Stand in first position. Hold back straight, stomach in. Slowly lower body weight bending in the knees until you 'sit' on the heels.
The arm is softly extended out to the side, the arm lowers as the head and body lower. The elbow of the left arm rests in front of the body near the left pelvic bone. Slowly 'swish' the top of the wrist toward the center of the body with the fingers pointed downward an inch from the floor. Suddenly, rapidly rise up on the toes, feel the energy shooting up from the legs up through the body and back as the wrist travels straight up in front of the face and opens up overhead and you look up to the ceiling.
After the raising up on the toes is complete, slowly, open the left arm extended out to the side with the palm opened upward.
Then, turn the left palm from up to over (under) to face down and continue to lower the left arm to the sides as the body, simultaneously, lowers to first position.
Repeat four times left and right.

Pendulum

Hold the barre with the right hand. Stand in fourth position , left foot back, on toes with left extended back , chest open, body facing front of the room.

Sway arm forward, palm ' pushing air ' and at the same time - lift the left leg off the floor in back.

Holding, throw the left leg forward as the left arm moves back.

Create a ' Pendulum ' movement rapidly throwing the left leg in front and back as the arm simultaneously sways front and back but, in the opposite direction from the leg.

Do four times. Repeat on the other side.

Horizontal

Stand erect with feet together facing front. Lift left knee up high, close to chest, left arm extends front with palm hanging over knee.

(Do not touch knee) Continue movement by 'reclining' until the body with arm extended- is parallel -as much as possible with the floor.

- behind your head.

After the body is fully 'reclined' extend the left leg and point toes out in front. The entire body should be horizontal (parallel) to the floor.

Come up and lower arm to the side after the body comes erect.

Three Point Rise

Stand in first position with left arm extended up to the side, take a light 'lift' of the left knee -high to chest- up in front of the body.

Swing the left knee down and up to thigh height and up to the side with toes pointed toward the side of the right knee .

Do not touch knee and keep the left lower leg vertical to the floor- parallel to the body.

Then again, swing the leg and lift up behind the body as an Italian Arabesque (with the lower leg bent).

The difference here is to keep the knee out to the side with the lower leg below the height of the knee (which is hip height).

In Duncan , we do not raise the knee higher than the hip in dancing. The foot is not pointed but, hangs naturally.

To repeat, swing the left leg back to front raised front.

Sequence:

Up front on toes

Down on right heel and as you swing to side and up on toes

Down on heel, swing to back and up on toes.

To end, bring back position to first position

This position is held parallel to the body.

The arm is either held continuously out to the side, palm

to side and out to side also, for the final third lift of the leg behind the body.

Side Arm Bends

Stand with feet apart (twelve inches apart), arms to side.

Cup left elbow over the head and let the fingers droop.

Bend the body three times to the right side.

On the four count (waltz time) let the body come up but, keep the arm over the head.

repeat four times to the left and four times to the right.

* Hold the torso up. Don't allow your spine to sink or bend except to left or right. never 'sit' on the hips.

Hip movement is used in the Walk and various Duncan movements, although it seems we lean to a particular hip.

We are not 'sitting' on the hip. There is a difference.

Front Alternating Leg Lifts

Facing the barre, grip with both hands. Upon right toes, lift the left knee up to chest height.

Alternating left to right, right to left, rapidly, as you go up on the toes of the standing leg.

Side Alternating Leg Lifts

Stand the same as in the ' Front Alternating Leg Lifts'. This time, up on the right toes as the left knee is raised up to the side.

Down on the left, up on the right side. Repeat rapidly.

Knee To Chest Leg Throw

Stand as before, facing the barre and holding with both hands. Raise up on the right toes. Draw the left knee up to the chest as your upper body bends over it.

Throw the left leg (knee straight) back out straight and up behind you (as in a French Arabesque- with sole of foot up- not to the side- as in the Russian Arabesque).

As you throw backward, of course, your upper body comes erect and head and upper torso are bending backward.

As you reach the most extended position- return the left knee up in front with the head bent over.

Step on the left toes and repeat this same exercise on the right. Reverse and repeat.

Drawing Forward Leg Throw

Grip the barre with both hands. The body is at arms length from the barre. Step forward with the right foot - placed near the barre.

" Draw' or 'pull ' your body toward the barre with the right hip 'leading' (there is a bending down and up in the knee).

The 'dragging' forward of the left foot (toes pointed and turned out to the side) knee straight is 'drawn' up to the barre, third position.

Up on left and right toes. The body is forced upward, back arched, head up. Step on the left foot. Bending in the left knee.

The entire left foot is on the floor. Throw the right foot and leg - knee straight up behind hip height.

As you throw the right leg and ' push off ' the floor with the right toes- you are still holding the barre with both hands.

During this 'push-off ' and upward to the back - turn the head over the right shoulder and incline the head upward (extend neck up).

The back extension is returned with a bend in the knee. Reverse sides.

Repeat.

Argentine Tango Exercise

Hold barre with right hand. Kneel on the left knee, right foot on the floor, knee bent, bring left arm up and back as in a Tango.

Arch back and rise up on right leg to standing position and throw the left foot out straight in front of the body. Touch toes with left hand as in ' Front Leg Swing '. Swing left leg back and kneel again on left with right foot in starting position.

Repeat four times on left and right.

Hip Thrust

Stand with the right hand on the barre with feet parallel about twelve inches apart.

Arch the back backwards, thrust hips forward with knees bent forward with arm extended to the side, push hips out and ' ripple' through the arm to the fingertips.

The 'ripple' is an undulating movement from the shoulder to the lower arms and then to the wrists and fingertips, drawing the back of the hand in and out like waving palm leaves and the waves of the ocean.

Hinge

Without holding the barre, arms to sides, begin to bend down in the knees with the feet together -parallel, one foot apart,

From the head to the knees the body should be on a perfectly straight slant - a line .

Bend as far into the ankles as possible. Heels should rise off the floor with arms and hands down.

Double Hinge

Stoop over knees. Bend head and shoulders over knees. Stomach ' sinks in'. Push up body and up through knees and thighs to ' Hinge ' position and back down to "Double Hinge 'position.

Pivot

Stand in the center of the room in fourth position, right foot front.

The left foot should be turned out to a ninety degree angle.

With weight on the back left foot, raise arms overhead - coming up in front.

Lean over the extended toes of the right foot - which is touching the floor.

Bend over from the waist - holding in the stomach. In an arched, rounded arm movement, palms down -

bend over with the left knee bent slightly, right knee straight.

Then, straighten the left knee as you bend in right knee and ' push through ' forward - stretching the right leg up on the toes

and stretching the back left leg to toes extended on the floor.

" Pivot' to the opposite direction by turning on the toes to the left with arms still extended up.

Now you are in the opposite position. Bend down and repeat ' push through' knees as before and

'Pivot' back again to the starting position.

Gymnastic Exercises

Arm Swings

Feet together, arms overhead, swing down and up (feet apart twelve inches). Repeat.

'Bobbing' arms folded. 'Bob' twice and come up.

Side Arm Cross

Feet wide apart, hands on hips, cross right hand to touch the outside of the left foot. Repeat left to right, four times.

Slant

Start with the left foot forward, right foot back, on right side, sliding right hand down along thigh. Repeat other side.

Body Roll

Stand erect. Bend forward from the waist - leaning the body above the waist - to hang loosely with arms dangling. Roll to the right side, keep moving to the back and left to come forward. Reverse.

Three Point Dance

Several dancers hold hands in a wide circle. Point left toes to touch floor to the left, hop, left foot back on the floor.

Hop, let go of hands, crossing arms passed each other and up in front and jump up, hold hands. Repeat.

Jumps (10)

Stand erect, first position. Hold palms up in front as if carrying something. Elbows bent. Keeping arms in this position, jump in place.

Jump high to 'touch the ceiling' come down on toes, then the foot, bending in the knee slightly to cushion the jump.

Frogs (10)

Stand feet together, hands, palms up - in front of the body.

Jump up, heels nearly touch in the air under you.

When the feet come down, push off and do another 'Frog'.

Do not take an extra jump before pulling up legs as in the 'Jump'.

Side Kicks (10)

Same front hand position as in the 'Frog', "Jump" up and kick the legs out to the sides.

Scissors (10)

Same as 'Side Kicks' but, legs kick front,

Right Leg /back, Left Leg and come down.

Jump up front (L) and (R) back, in place.

Jump Turns

(four to the left and four to the right)

Palms up, jump up high, very straight and spin your body in a circle landing in start position.

Shake out. Repeat on the reverse side.

Floor Exercises

1. Sit on the floor, bend to touch the head to the knees, stretching arms.
2. Extend legs out to sides and bend over each knee- alternating.
3. Sit with legs crossed and holding one ankle extend that leg up in the air. Stretch.
4. Lie on your stomach holding your ankles and rock back and forth on the stomach.
5. Lie on your back and bring the foot to a ninety degree angle of the body. Flex and do the other leg.
6. Lift leg with foot flexed to a ninety degree angle to the le. and the leg to a ninety degree angle to the body.
Alternate legs, then
7. Lie on back, raise legs overhead and with 'squared' ankle (ninety degrees) touch the toes to the floor above your head.
(After awhile, you may be able to press the entire sole of your foot to the floor.)

The Center

Walking

Before commencing the Walk I should describe how we walk in Duncan Technique.

Stand erect and feel the Solar Plexus. Stomach in, seat tucked in, hips inclined backwards. raise the right knee to hip level, not doing anything with the foot.

Slowly place the foot down on the floor a small step in front.

In Duncan, we place the toes, then the whole foot, finally the heel.

It is a 'rolling' action, not: toe/heel, /toe/heel .

All weight is on the left leg (remember to ' hold' in the ankle, knee and thigh).

Place the right foot down naturally as in walking. After the weight is on the right leg release the weight from the left leg,

still keeping the left foot on the floor, the body is moved forward now on the right hip, the left toes stretched on the floor behind the left leg.

Slowly release left toes, bring left leg gradually from hip to knee to foot to resting position in front.

Now the left toes are touching the floor.

continue through the foot to heel, then transfer weight again, this time to the left.

Continue walking forward in this manner. Practice walking faster and slower.

The weight is transferred through a shifting movement from one hip to the other.

The Walk

(variations 1 through 9)

Walk in a circular path around the room. (Rosemunde by Schubert)

Walk slowly forward.

Still walking slowly, lower the eyes to the floor as the head is being gradually lowered, slowly, as carrying a heavy weight.

Raise the right palm down, drooping at the wrist. The elbow is curved slightly outward, the shoulder is not raised.

The arm extends forward, the motion of the body and arm and feet must have a condition of slow labored movement forward.

Gradually, the head comes erect, arm comes down to the side.

This time the head is slowly raised up, eyes look upward and the left arm is raised up to shoulder height, hand drooping from the wrist.

Slowly, bring the head erect and allow the arm to return to the side.

When we return the arm to the body the elbow rests on the inside of the hip, hands open, slightly curved inward to the sides.

After the body comes erect, pick up the speed of the walk, slightly and as you walk, raise your arms up like a bird in flight, palms face down.

Walking still faster, raise the arms over the head out to the sides.

Then, as the music surges, throw your head back fast and at the same time, cross in a swaying motion the opened palms at the wrists in front of your face.

Continue to an open arm position, the arms should open to the shoulder position the same time the head slowly has reached an erect position.

You can slowly lower your arms to the sides but, slightly bent at the elbows.

Walking faster, bring the arms and opened palms to your left hip- looking down.

Then, open your right arm and walking as if you were following your right hand, the left trailing behind, march forward, faster.

Still moving, turn from the left side to the right- hands reversed now.

Leading with the left arm (the right arm behind you) bring the left arm to the right arm on the right hip.

This time, each movement is held for two paces...approximately.
Then, in a faster running walk, sway both arms over your head and move ' through the body 'crossing the arms in front from side to side above the head and back.

Vary movements while continuing the swaying movements. Slow movements until palms are at sides as I have explained before.

The head is erect.

Walking slowly forward, turn to look at your fellow dancers behind you. Extend arm and hand as if " waving Good-bye".

Turn forward, bringing the arm down , slowly walking forward.

This is the "Wave Good-Bye". A similar motion only with the arm raised higher and moving back to the front in a waving motion - is the "The Beckoning"

Waltz Step

Feet in third position, hands on hips (for practice).

Rise up on left supporting foot while the right foot raises and is placed in front, one step on heel.

Repeat step. Don't close, instead, right foot raises up on toes while left foot steps forward of right foot and right foot instep closed to left heel.

There is also hip to hip weight shift as in the walk.

On the risings, the thighs and legs come under the body. the body weight precedes the placement of weight on the foot.

Sequence

Step (R) close (L) step (R)

Step (L) close (R) step (L)

Body weight falls forward, first on the right hip.

Waltzing Backward (3rd position)

Step back on (R) close (L) heel to (R) instep, Step back on (R) again.
Step back past (R) with (L) and close (R) heel to (L) instep

Waltzing in Place

Arms out to side, step sideways onto (R), close (L), Step (R).
Sway left stepping left (L), close (R), step (R).

Diagonal Across the Room Waltzing

Going from one end of the room to the other, arms out to sides,
step (R), close (L), step (R) and slide left knee up front and swing at an
angle out to left side and place foot. Then, step on (L) close (R) , step (L)
draw (R) knee up to stomach in front and swing at an angle out
to (R) side. continue down the room.

Waltz Turn

With left hand on hip, 'beckon' (R) arm outstretched
-palm up in front of the body.
Simultaneously, make (L) waltz step forward on (R) ,
close (L) , step (R) raising (R) arm curved over the
head at the same time turning the body to the right to face
the opposite position from which you started.
High on toes, the left foot (on toes) placed behind the body on completion
of turn - come off left toes to rest heel (L)
step, one waltz step, forward (R)- at the same time
bringing the right arm down in starting 'The Beckoning'
forward and the left knee bent with left foot resting
on the floor lightly behind the body.

Waltz Movement for Grace and Balance

Arms to the left side near hip. Step forward on the (R) . Right arm toward ceiling. (L) back resting, extended near body (not touching).

Draw (L) leg up to (R) 3rd position and draw body up to the arm position (look up).

Step back again with (L) drawing (R) foot back and the arms come down to (R) to left hip. Repeat.

Polka step

Take two hopping steps forward on the right foot with the left knee up.

Two hopping steps on the left foot with the right knee up.

The steps are small, light and close together.

Bouncy Run

The body travels as the knees are raised in each "little bouncy run " like a pony trotting. Land lightly on the toes.

Swing Step

Stand erect with arms outstretched to sides.

Raise the right knee high in front of the body .

As you place the right foot down to " push-off " the body high, the left leg is swung back.

A small hop on the right leg is taken as the left leg swings forward.

The left leg places on the floor and the right leg swings back.

As you swing the knee (bent) back, the knee should be hip height, no higher. [as an Italian arabesque]

The lower leg is hung below the knee and the foot hangs, loosely.

Each time you swing - swing your foot back

- turn your head to look at it.

The arms movements flow gracefully to the fingertips.

The hip thrusts back and forward with each swing of the legs.

The leg that swings forward is brought straight up and back.

The tendency (which is wrong during a forward swing) is to swing by the lower leg and foot ' out - up - in the air ' and then raise the knee to the body. This is wrong.

The body loses momentum for the exercise is to thrust the body forward to continue traveling around the room in a circle with each jump on the standing leg to thrust the body straight up to the ceiling.

Twirl

#1

Raise the body up on the right toes with the body slightly inclined to the right corner of the ceiling.

The right fingers, palm down, are outstretched upward toward the right corner, eyes follow.

The left hand, palm down also, is held out to the left side of the body. Hold for balance.

Return to start position, placing palms at left hip, right foot closes front to left instep.

#2

Repeat pose. Jump off right toes when the body descends.

Step over to the outside of the right foot with the left and holding arms down in front - make two additional little steps in place to complete the turn.

This is done along a straight line.

#3

Rapid Twirl Movement

Incline the right side of the body toward the right corner of the room.

Place right foot in same direction of body (right corner).

Lift foot, place again and ' push-off' body upward (jump).

The left knee is slightly bent, (L) leg extended from the hip, raised to slightly below hip level.

The right arm stretches upward. The left arm is held out - behind the body. The left foot returns close to the right foot.

You do a turn in place. Step on (L), Step (R), Step (L), completing the turn, after the return of the left foot (after the jump)

the left foot closes close to the right foot.

But, in turning, it is actually crossed in front of the right foot.

Return (L) Step (turn-crossing Right) Step (R) still turning, Step (L).

Jump Turns

Jump up and turn. During turns, the right hand ' flicks' at the wrist in a circular motion and the left arm remains outstretched.

Turns are repeated in rapid succession. Rapid turns in dance necessitate a rapid turn of the head toward the direction you are moving.

This prevents dizziness. If you become dizzy, step and bend over knees a minute.

Gypsy Dance Step

Hands on hips, start (R) foot forward

Left shoulder forward

step on (R) foot

Shoulder back (feet together)

Reverse to Right, shoulder front.

Russian Step

Hold arms out to shoulder level, step (R) across front (L).

Step (R) and turn head (L) and look up, inclining shoulder movements.

Mazurka (Slide)

Stand erect, right side facing the length of the room.

with left hand on hip and right arm and fingers outstretched toward the other end of the room,

slide very fast on toes. "Grab' the floor with leading foot. The outside of the right foot facing the same opposite length of room.

Move out fast and drag the left foot up to the side of the right.

The right comes off the floor as it is placed each time to glide and the left stays on the floor to pull to the right.

Upon reaching the opposite end of the room, reverse hand positions and lead with the left foot back , toes in starting position.

SKIP

Rise up on the toes of both feet. Raise (R) knee and place (R) foot down, hop (R) as you swing left leg up behind with knee bent out to left side at an angle. Hop on right again as you swing left leg forward and place (L) foot on the floor.

When left foot is placed, the right leg (knee bent) is swinging up behind as in the start position with the left.

Arms are held out to sides. and flow along with the movement through the body. When the leg swings back, there is a tremendous hip thrust forward as the leg swings back, the chest and pelvic area ' caves-in '.

RUN-RUN-SKIP

High up on toes, knee (R) up, Down on (R) hard.

Run two steps and hop up on the left.

Run-Run-Skip (R) up

Run-Run-Skip

The Run

Start in the corner of the room. Up high on toes, arms reaching, stretched up to the ceiling. Bend over as falling onto a bed, body straight.

As you fall -bend down at waist, arms bent at elbows, back at sides, the sides of thumbs resting on hips.

Fast, small, quick steps, pull in stomach, lift feet parallel - knees up to stomach during run.

As you reach the next corner of the room.

Suddenly, raise up, come up, turn, facing the next corner.

go down as before, repeat all four corners of the room.

You never come down off the toes in this movement.

The Leap

Start with (R) front forward, knee bent back
(L) leg stretched out, arms straight back at sides.

Start to run, body down, head up.

Just as you are about to leap, suddenly, lift the body, arch the back, simultaneously the arms come up at the sides (palms down) like a bird and the (R) leg is thrust up and out while the (L) leg is straight behind.

The knee of the back leg must be straight.

Tanagra Figures

Stand erect, feet parallel, bend back over and droop head forward slowly raising (simultaneously) the right knee to a ninety degree angle.

Simultaneously, raising the left arm to shoulder height, hand drooping, then swing raised knee to right side (a step) and place foot on the floor and at the same time raising the hand from in front to your face sideways - as if you were calling someone.

Then, continue it's movement straight to the right past your face .

Then, to come erect, pass the left hand from the right past your face to the left. Bring down , simultaneously, dragging the right foot and knee to the left leaning leg to a standing position.

Repeat on the left side.

Also, there are numerous combinations of other arm movements.

Raise arms over the head, curve it over the head turning the head into the arm to the left, then to the right.

Lying Down and Rising (to Liebestraum)

Place your left foot forward as if taking a step near the edge of a pool of water. Let your hand come in front as if you were looking down to pick a flower. Still looking down, bend down on the left knee and place your body weight on the right knee - with toes extended on the floor behind.

Then, delicately, sit backwards on your right hip with the left foot in front, slightly raised up by the knee.

Raise your arm up in a gesture forward over your head.

Slowly, slide back on your right hand, slowly lowering yourself to a lying position and the left arm comes down gracefully to where the fingers touch the inside of the elbow near the forearm.

Completely relax on your side. The left leg is extended, the body is at a straight up and down angle. The left foot into the right knee.

Slowly, raise yourself up with your left hand and extend arm until you are in a sitting position. Then, extend the left arm over the left leg and looking in that direction, come to a full sitting position.

Then, turn forward with your arms outstretched - chin lifted.

With arm extended out to sides, raise up on the right knee, looking up as if you were rising to meet the morning Sun.

Draw the left leg into your right knee.

Lower your head and neck and back down looking at your arms to a crossing at the wrists, fingers down a couple of inches from the floor.

(Do not touch the floor). Raise up on the left foot and knee. With head still down, arms down, then raise up to an erect position.

The hands crossed at the wrists, drawing up slowly through the middle of the body and as the body comes erect, the right foot is parallel with the left.

The hands crossed under, raise to the chin up past the eyes to open and extend over the raised head as if greeting the Sun. Then, with a stop forward, again on the right foot, we go to greet the Sun.

Swaying of Arms (to Beethoven's 3rd Piano Concerto)

Arms outstretched overhead, sway together -side to side - overhead. Bring wrists together and sway in and out at the wrists.

The arm movements are the natural flowing outward from the body.

Isadora discovered these movements by watching the branches of trees and the waves, the wings of birds.

The arms portray the emotions of the human being. stand erect, hands down at sides, elbows slightly resting on the hips .

Bring the right hand slowly to the center of the body. Do not raise from lowered position. Turn the arm so the palm faces out to the right side.

The head lowered, slowly raise the hand up past the solar plexus. Start raising the body . Gradually, the chest comes up, the chin up, the palm passes the eyes until, after passing the forehead, the hand stretches upward and opens out over the head and overhead-opens to the side.

Slowly, the arm descends to the side. As the arm reaches the side, shoulder height, the palm (now facing up) reverses and turns to face downward.

This movement continues down and (never stopping) until the arm rests at the side, reverse sides, do left arm.

Do both arms crossing palms at wrists at center of the body.

Then, as the arms are both stretched out to the sides from the shoulders, flex the fingers out straight so that the fingers and palms form a straight line.- not a curve or a 'claw' look.

' Undulate ' the arms. ' Ripple through ' the upper to lower arms to the hands from the shoulders in a rounded motion.

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