

## Some Dancing Tips For Jive

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### **Abbreviations used in these notes**

1. LOFP - Left Open Facing Position (facing partner, lead hands joined)
2. CP - Closed Position
3. SCP - Semi Closed Position
4. LOD - Line of Dance
5. RLOD - Reverse Line of Dance
6. PU - Pickup

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While sometimes people think of Jive as a "jumping dance" Jive is really a very "in the floor" dance. The main pattern in this rhythm is a Jive chasse. This is similar to a figure you already know - the side 2-step - but quicker. You could count the timing for the Jive chasse "quick - a - quick". This chasse can be taken in any direction, with or without a turn. Throughout dancing the Jive, your weight should be felt mostly on the balls of your feet, but your heels will be very close to the floor. In our sessions we will be putting this basic action to use as we help you learn some of the Jive figures.

The basic figures in jive have a "rock, recover, - side-close, side, - side-close, side" with the timing being "slow, slow, - quick-quick, slow, - quick-quick, slow". This we also called "normal jive timing". The "side-close, side" is also called a jive chasse or a triple. You will normally start with the lead foot.

In describing the steps in the jive chasse, we say they are "in the floor"- you can imagine that you have chewing gum or glue on you shoes and you can't lift them up very high.

Most of the time, when a chasse is said to be forward or back, it is also slightly side - so not straight back.

We will explain a few of the figures here, by long not all of them, but just want to give you a basic understanding of the rhythm. We will also not go into detail for all the figures we list here, but want to give you some pointers to help you remember them.

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## **JIVE BASIC**

Rock apart, recover, jive chasse, jive chasse.

You will usually start in LOFP and will come to CP during the first chasse. Usually after this figure your next "rock, recover" step will be a rock back in SCP. So you will both turn from CP to SCP, then do the rock back. (This is called a fallaway step; the position is a fallaway position. That is a position where you both take a step backwards in SCP.)

## **FALLAWAY ROCK or FALLAWAY BASIC**

Start in CP, turning to SCP both rock back, recover to face, jive chasse twice.

## **FALLAWAY THROWAWAY**

In this figure the man's footwork is different than the lady's. You start it for both of you like the fallaway rock, so starting in CP, turn to SCP and both rock back, recover

- **Man** - the man will now dance a jive chasse side and then a chasse forward and side (making 1/4 left face turn on these two triples) as he leads his partner away from him by keeping the joined lead hands low. If you start the figure facing wall you will end in LOFP with the man facing LOD.
- **Lady** - the lady will dance a side chasse turning left face going to a PU position, then she will finish the figure by making a back/side triple (chasse).

## **LINK ROCK**

This figure is like the opposite of the throwaway. Here you come back together. The figure starts in LOFP and ends in CP. It turns right face, usually between 1/8 and 1/2. Normally if started in LOFP with man facing LOD, it will end in CP with the man facing wall. Like the throwaway, the chasse is different for the man and for the lady.

You start the figure with you both doing a rock apart, recover.

- **Man** - the man will now dance a jive chasse forward bringing his partner back to him, as the couple turns 1/4 right face he will continue with a chasse side.
- **Lady**- the lady will chasse forward to her partner, as the couple turns 1/4 right face she will continue with a side chasse.

## **CHANGE RIGHT TO LEFT**

The man's footwork on this figure will be similar to the fallaway throwaway. But in this figure (and the "opposite" one, change left to right) the lady will make an underarm turn. To lead the lady into this turn, the man will raise the joined lead

hands. You start this figure generally in CP and end in LOFP. It usually turns 1/4 so if started with the man facing the wall it will normally end with the man facing LOD.

### **CHANGE LEFT TO RIGHT**

As said, this is the "opposite" of a change right to left. Here the lady will make a left face turn under the joined lead hands. You end the figure generally in LOFP, not in CP (unless told to). The figure also usually turns 1/4, but can turn up to 1/2. Usually if you start in LOFP with man facing LOD it will end in LOFP with man facing the wall.

### **CHANGE HANDS BEHIND THE BACK**

In this figure the lady will use her right hand the whole time. The man will start with his left hand, then during the first triple he will change the lady's hand to his right hand and on the last triple he will change back to his left hand - so the figure will start and end with lead hands joined. It is normal jive timing and starts and ends in LOFP. The whole figure makes a 1/2 turn.

### **PRETZEL TURN**

The most important thing to remember about a pretzel turn is that you keep the joined lead hands low (and joined). Then you should only be able to turn the correct way. Keeping the hands low will help you to make the turn. It is normal jive timing.

### **SPANISH ARMS**

In this figure you will keep both hands joined the whole time. The whole figure turns 1/2 right face. It is normal jive timing. It starts with a rock apart, recover. Here if you did not have both hands joined, you must join them. The man in this figure will make about a 1/4 right face turn on each triple. The lady on the first triple will "wrap in" turning 1/4 left face, then on the second triple she will "unwrap" by turning 3/4 right face.

### **AMERICAN SPIN**

The timing for an American Spin is normal jive timing. It starts and ends in LOFP and the figure does not turn. The man does the footwork of a jive basic. After the rock apart, recover the lady will come towards the man on her first

triple - on the last step of this first triple the lady will push off of the man's left hand and she will make a full right face turn, in place. Her second triple will be like the end of a jive basic - just a side - close, side. It is important here for both partners to have tension on the joined lead hands. Also it is important that the man does not push the lady - he gives resistance as she pushes off herself. That way she can control her spin.