

Class Notes: 4-Beat Tier 1

Week 1: Basic Footwork and Rotation

- 4 Beats = 4 Actions: Back - Step - Side - Side
- Body position is kept low through the knees, with each step pushing into the floor.
- The push into the floor is through the inside edge of the foot, using the stomach muscles to provide pressure through the body. The pressure into the floor rolls from the inside edge of foot to the outside of the foot with the side to side motion.
- Hands are connected man's left hand to woman's right hand. The woman's hand is cupped over the back of the man's fingers, with both man and woman achieving a solid **WRIST ANGLE**.
- Gentle pressure through the hands in the basic position is kept **INWARDS & UPWARDS**.
- The man's right hand rests on the woman's waist. A rolling pressure through the hand can assist the lead and momentum into moves. Similarly, the woman's left hand rests upon the man's shoulder and may be used to push or balance through the dance.
- Elbows remain close to the side in the basic position and keep returning to this position throughout the dance. **DON'T CHICKEN WING**.
- The man pulls in through his left arm towards his left hip with the momentum of the woman's back-step to lead the anti-clockwise rotation. The man's right hand can be used to strengthen the lead.
- For the clockwise rotation the man uses his back-step to position himself in front of the woman (**BODY LEAD**). On 3 the man then pushes with his left arm back towards the woman's right hip. The man's right hand can be used to strengthen the lead and maintain a closed body position.
- The emphasis through the dance is on the 3 count (1-2-3-4). This is the count on which most moves are executed.

Your Notes:

Week 2: Under-Arm Turn and Return; Basic Link

Under-Arm Turn

- The lead commences out of the back-step, the man's left arm swinging up through the 2 count so that the upper arm is positioned straight to the side of his body and the elbow at woman's shoulder height.
- The man also provides a **BODY LEAD** by stepping slightly forward with the 3 count. This will tend to take the woman's step forward and to the side, providing a good position to spin.
- The man and woman's arms form an "A" shape, hands meeting in the middle. The **WRIST ANGLE** is maintained at all times.
- The woman maintains the cup shape of her hand and applies a gentle pressure into the back of the man's fingers **INWARDS & UPWARDS**.
- The man applies pressure from his wrist through his fingers **DOWN INTO THE PALM** of the woman. **DO NOT** grip the woman's fingers with the thumb.
- The Under-Arm Turn is executed on the 3 count using an extension through the man's elbow and gentle push through the wrist and fingers. The hand movement is around the woman's head - **THE LEAD SHOULD NOT EXTEND AWAY FROM THE MAN**.
- The turn on the 3 count is sharp, matching the general emphasis of the dance. This "stretches out" the 4 count allowing the woman more time to position and steady herself prior to the next move.
- The man may use the right hand to further emphasize the sharp turn on the 3 count. The pressure applied is to assist the woman's rotation - it should not push the woman away into the turn.
- A slight pressure back through the man's wrist and arm is used to help keep the woman close through the Under-Arm Turn. However, the woman will spin quickly and often 'fall away' from the man with the momentum of the dance. The woman's footwork should be kept tight to limit travel and overextension through the arms.
- The woman uses her eyes as she executes the Under-Arm Turn; first, looking out under her arm as she steps into the spin, then back to the man as she steps on the 4 count. This improves balance through the Under-Arm Turn and preparation for the next move.
- Upon completion of the Under-Arm Turn neither the man nor the woman should feel like they are coming apart from each other. Remember:
 - Maintain **WRIST ANGLE**
 - Maintain compression through the arms
 - Don't lean away from your partner during the turn
 - Use the step on the 4 count to achieve good body position
- **STRETCH OUT - SQUEEZE IN - STRETCH OUT.**

Return

- From the Under-Arm Turn the man has shifted from looking at his WRIST TO WATCH. The arms remain at woman's shoulder height, with the hands roughly at the woman's head height. The woman matches the man's arm angle.
 - DO NOT tense up through the neck and shoulders
 - DO NOT drop or raise the elbow from shoulder height
 - Maintain arm pressure, but DO NOT "lock up" through the arms
- The arms stretch through the back-step. Both the man and woman PUSH gently away from partner on the back step and PULL in with the forward step (PUSH-PULL). The pull comes from the side towards the man's right shoulder.
- The woman moves towards the man's right shoulder. On the 4 count, the man may either step in on the return to immediately return to a closed position or step slightly back to be in an open face to face position.
- Momentum through the rotation of the dance encourages the open face to face position. STRETCH OUT - SQUEEZE IN - STRETCH OUT.

Basic Link

- Continuing through the PUSH-PULL out of the back-step, the man pulls in towards the left hip. On the 3 count, both the man and the woman step towards each other, with the man coming forward and around the woman.
- The man catches the woman, right hand on her waist, to step back with her on the 4 count into the closed position. More rotation can be achieved with a closer body position, the man's arm coming further around the woman's waist.
- The woman's steps remain small and are used primarily to keep body position with respect to the man. The woman is the centre of the dance; generally, *the man moves into and around the woman.*

Your Notes:

Week 3: Open and Closed American Spins

Open American Spin

- The lead commences with a 45° **WRIST ROLL** towards the woman's left hip, continuing with the momentum of the forward step out of the back-step (through the 2 count). The man's elbow 'locks in' at the hip, with the arms forming a right angle with his body (end of 2).
- The woman has a slight body twist in toward the man and the hands compress into the **WRIST BLOCK**. The block is softened by some yield through the man's arm position.
- **THE LEAD IS NOT SIDE TO SIDE!** This promotes either over- or under- rotation by the woman and exerts unnecessary strain through the shoulder and neck muscles of the man and woman.
- On the 3 count, the man pushes straight back down the woman's arm toward her right hip, pushing through the back of his fingers to provide momentum into the spin.
- The man **TRACES** from the woman's elbow to catch. Left hand under, right hand over. The woman should not need to go chasing after the man's hand.
- For the left hand lead the man's arm comes across the body, using the back of the hand to block (**REVERSE WRIST BLOCK**).

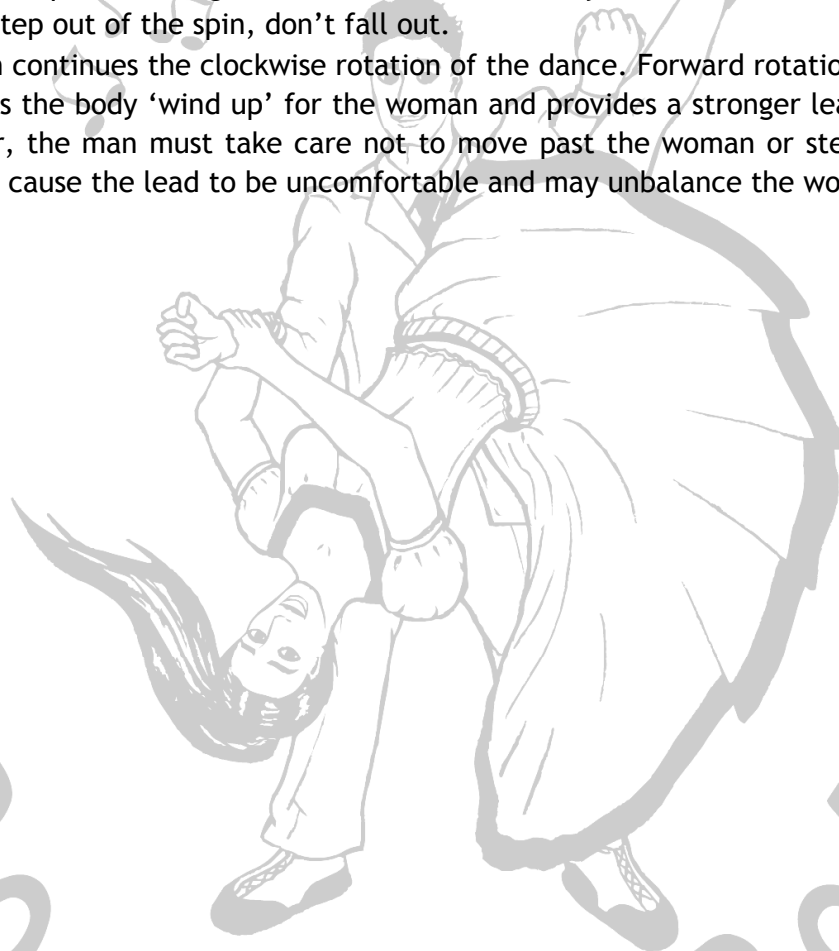
Closed American Spin

- Holding right hand to right hand, the lead continues with the momentum of the woman's forward step out of the back-step (through the 2 count), raising the upper arms to shoulder height:
 - Man's right elbow is positioned in front of woman's left shoulder.
 - Woman's right elbow is positioned in front of woman's right shoulder.
 - Forearms form an "A" shape, with hands meeting in the middle just above the woman's head.
 - Both the man and the woman achieve a solid **WRIST ANGLE**
 - Pressure is maintained **INWARDS & UPWARDS**
- The push into the spin is achieved through an extension through the man's elbow and gentle push through the wrist, using the fingers to push down into the woman's palm of hand. The hand movement is around the woman's head - **THE LEAD SHOULD NOT EXTEND AWAY FROM THE MAN.**
- The woman maintains a gentle upward pressure into the man's fingers and keeps her hand cupped. This should match the man's push into the hand, not push his arm away
 - **DO NOT** open up the palm of hand.
 - **DO NOT** grip onto the man's fingers.
- The man halts/steadies the spin upon completion using a grip through the fingers and heel of palm. **DO NOT** clamp onto the woman's fingers with thumb and forefinger.
- Arm/hand motions remain close to the body and should not swing out to the side as the spin is completed.

Both

- The woman's first step into the spin uses the momentum from her 'wind up' to push into the floor. Combined with the stomach muscles, this energy is used to 'drive' the woman's spin. This prevents slow or dragging spins.
- The woman steps slightly back and to the side to position her body straight above the ball of right foot. The woman pushes into the floor through the right foot and closes her left knee into the right knee to provide additional momentum for the spin.
 - Eyes up, looking for the man at the end of the spin.
 - Additional momentum may be generated by pushing off with the right arm into the spin and using the left arm about the body.
 - Step out of the spin, don't fall out.
- The man continues the clockwise rotation of the dance. Forward rotation on the 3 step increases the body 'wind up' for the woman and provides a stronger lead for the spin. However, the man must take care not to move past the woman or step in too close. This will cause the lead to be uncomfortable and may unbalance the woman.

Your Notes:



Week 4: Pass Behind The Back; Belly Rub; Back Rubs

Pass Behind The Back

- From an OPEN RETURN, the man transfers the woman's hand from his left hand to the right hand (through the 1 count).
- Coming forward out of the back-step, the man's draws the woman's hand toward his right hip (through the 2 count).
- The man takes a definite forward and slightly side-on step as the lead continues the momentum of the woman's forward step. The resulting position places the man and woman almost side by side, with the man's body turned slightly away from the woman.
- The man continues his anti-clockwise rotation, stepping around to the left in an -180° turn. The step on the left foot is CLOSE and SLIGHTLY BEHIND the right foot.
- The woman's steps are kept small and are used to position the woman close behind the man's back in readiness for the following lead.
- The man transfers the woman's hand from his right hand to the left hand. The arms stay close to the body, with the transfer occurring in the middle of the man's back near the waist line (through the 3 count).
- On the 3 count, the man swings the left arm up into an UNDER-ARM TURN.
- The woman's steps will almost form a straight path from one side of the man to the other. Some slight turn towards/away from the man may be required through the move, particularly as the man rotates through the dance.
- Finish (on the 4 count) face to face.

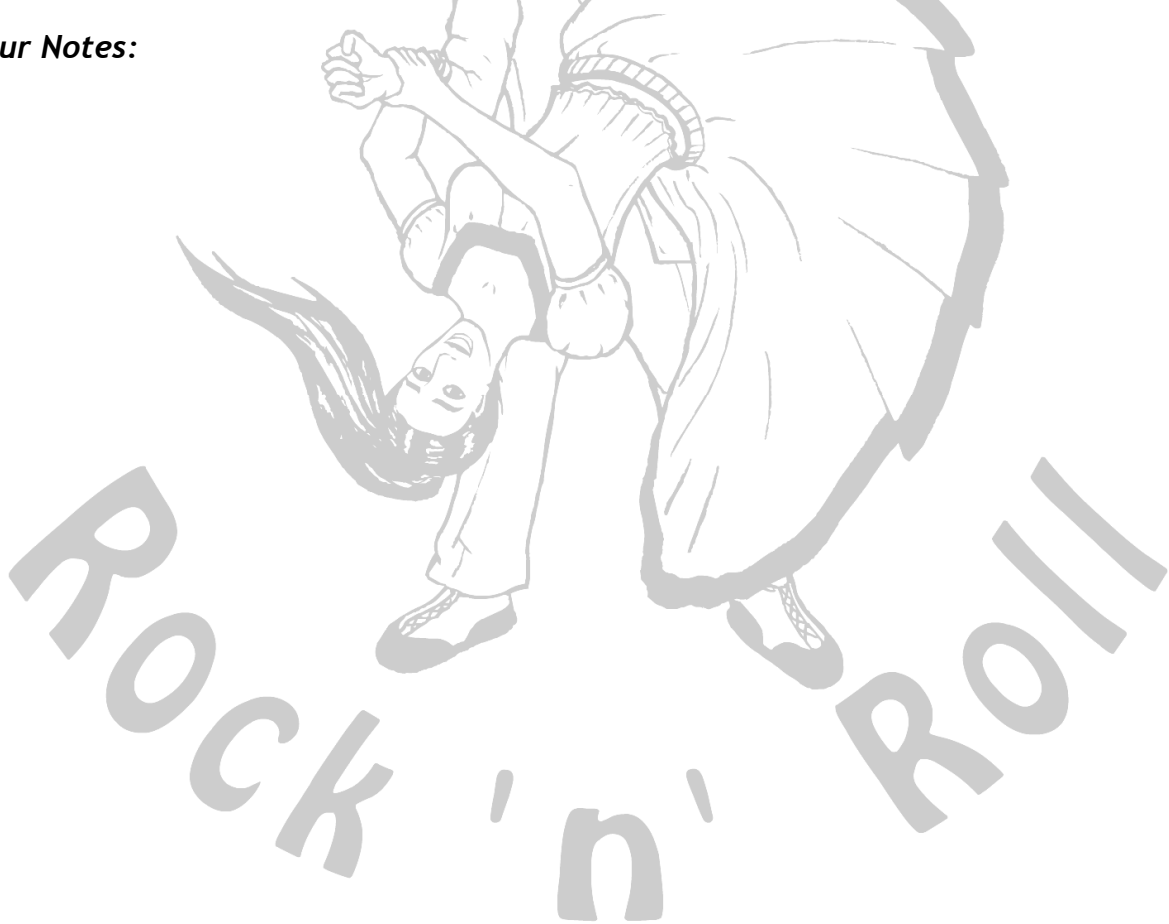
Belly Rub

- Body positions and footwork for both the man and woman is much the same as the PASS BEHIND THE BACK. Key differences are:
 - The lead occurs on the man's left hand. There is no initial transfer of hands.
 - The lead places the woman's hand on the man's left hip.
 - The woman runs her hand across the man's stomach as the man completes the turn (BELLY RUB).
 - The man may spin and over-rotate (or double spin).
 - The man catches with his left hand over the top of the woman's left hand.
- Finish face to face - may be followed by a RETURN or BACK RUBS.

Back Rubs

- A **DOUBLE HAND HOLD** (left hand to right hand/right hand to left hand) is taken coming into the back-step (through the 1 count).
- Continuing out of the back-step the man leads towards his right shoulder, the left arm moving over the woman's head (through the 2 count).
- The man takes a definite forward and slightly inwards step as the lead continues the momentum of the woman's forward step. The resulting position rotates the man in towards the woman, the woman coming forward across the man's right forearm with her left arm wrapping across her stomach.
- The man releases the woman's left hand and traces his right hand across her back (**BACK RUB**) as he continues the turn in and around the woman (through the 3 count).
- The woman achieves a ~180° turn, taking her left arm out straight from the body as it nears completion for a double hand catch.
- The man stays facing the woman as she rotates; the woman keeps looking for the man.
- The man's back rub is effectively the same, commencing with the man leading himself across the woman's right arm, raising her left hand over his head.

Your Notes:



Week 5: Cuddle and Roll-Out

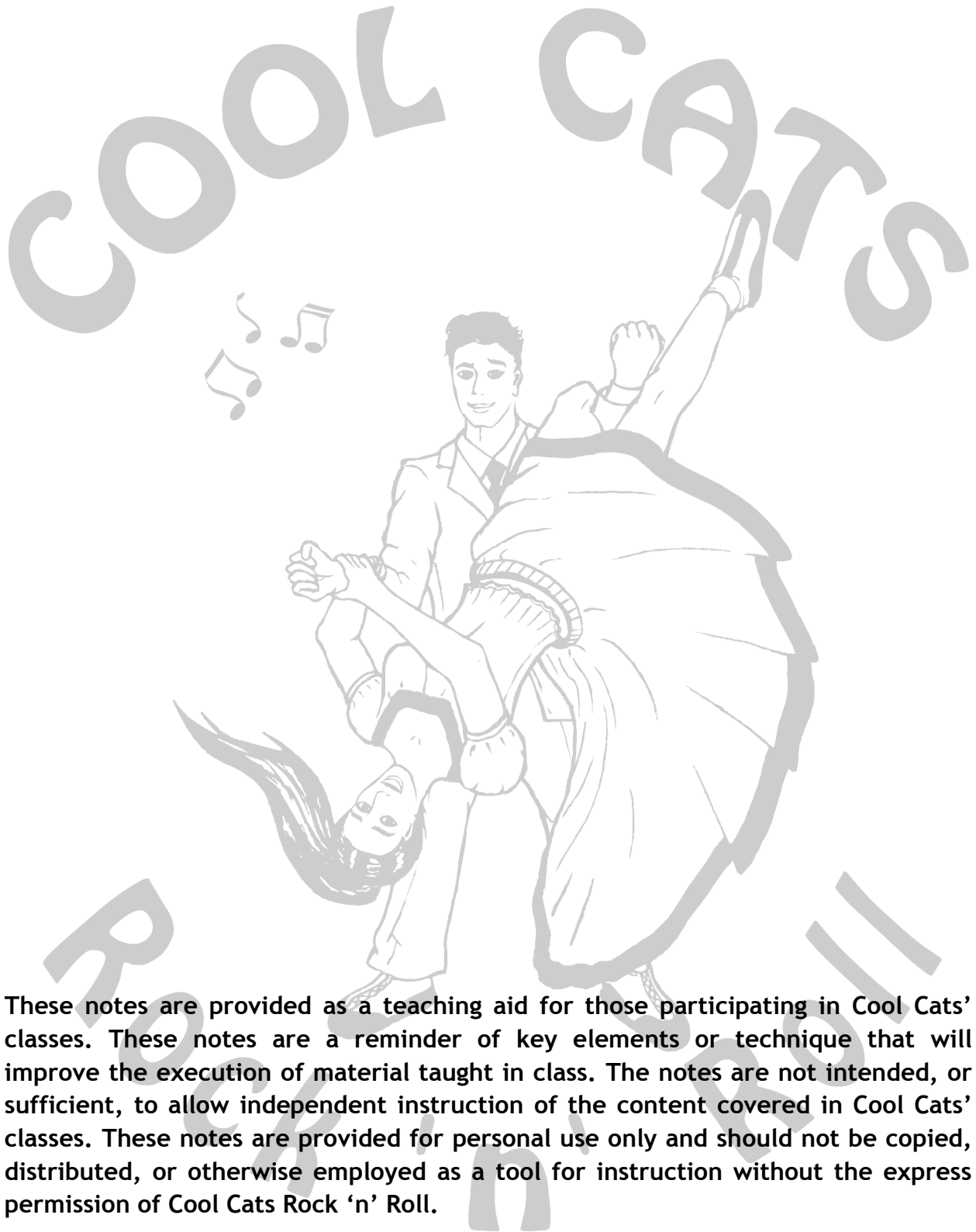
- Using a **DOUBLE HAND HOLD**, the lead commences with the woman's forward motion out of the back step (through the 2 count). The man's left arm leads towards his right shoulder, using the same motion as the lead for the **BACK RUBS**.
- The man keeps hold of both hands as he continues the clockwise motion of the dance (through the 3 count). The woman steps back in towards the man so that the **CUDDLE** is brought in close. There should be no space between the man and the woman as she completes her rotation.
- The man keeps his arms close to the body and 'locks in' the **CUDDLE** - give her a hug!
- Both the man and the woman will take a small step back and around as the clockwise motion of the dance continues (through the 4 count).
- The lead for the **ROLL-OUT** is a slight roll in towards the man with the woman's forward motion out of the back step (through the 2 count). **SQUEEZE IN, STRETCH OUT.**
- Pressure is used through the man's right hand (wrist and fingers) to commence the pull into the roll out. The wrist rolls away to the right as the right elbow is brought in to the man's side - like throwing a Frisbee (through the 3 count).
- As the woman rolls she keeps her arms in close to the body, the left elbow kept in to her side with the right arm moving around the waist. Footwork is kept small.
- The **ROLL-OUT** is straight to the man's side. Bodies are positioned in line with each other and the arms form a "W" shape. It is not a full arm extension for the man or the woman. *Roll-out, DON'T fling-out.*

Your Notes:

Week 6: Gate - Side to Side

- The lead pulls through with the woman's forward motion out of the back step (through the 2 count). The man's right hand is brought straight towards his hip and is followed by a **WRIST ROLL**.
- The woman turns in to face the same direction as the man, stepping slightly back and around to stay close to the man as the clockwise rotation of the dance continues (through the 3 count).
- Some space between the man and the woman is typically required so that the woman's arm position is comfortable.
- The man's fingers should turn inside the cup of the woman's hand to achieve a **HAND-SHAKE HOLD** behind the woman's back. A matching hand-shake hold is taken in front of the body (on 3).
- Pressure is maintained through the palm and fingers of the right hand. However, the woman's hand must be allowed to roll within the curved palm of the man's hand to achieve the correct position:
 - Woman's back of hand rests at waist height near the right hip.
 - The man is responsible for taking the final hand-shake hold. The woman should not try to fumble for the man's hand, but let her hand roll into position.
 - The man **MUST NOT** grip the woman's hand between the thumb and forefinger during the **WRIST ROLL**. Maintain connection by pushing into the woman's palm of hand as she turns.
- Similar to the **CUDDLE**, the clockwise motion of the dance does not stop. Both the man and the woman will take a small step back and around as the clockwise motion of the dance continues (through the 4 count).
- The man commences the **SIDE TO SIDE** with the forward motion out of the back step and slight body rotation (through the 2 count) **BEFORE** starting the arm/wrist motion that turns the woman (on 2).
- **Body position and momentum before arm leads!**
- The man uses a **WRIST ROLL** through both hands to help turn the woman. Pressure through the right hand and into the woman's back may be used to strengthen the initial lead (through the 3 count).
- The woman turns almost on the spot during the basic exit. The man steps forward and around (clockwise) while bringing his left arm up over the woman's head, leading past her right shoulder (through the 3 count).
- The woman maintains gentle pressure through the arms as the exit is led, keeping the arms in towards the body as she turns. This is important to ensure good connection with the man and to allow alternative exit variations to be led.

Your Notes:



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