

BALLROOM & DANCE TERMINOLOGY

adagio	
across	The foot position where one foot is placed on or over the path of the other.
action	A movement or type of movement (e.g. Pivoting Action, Lowering Action).
activate	To set in motion (e.g. Activate the moving leg).
Alemaná	An underarm turn in which the lady turns to the right under the right hand, used specifically in International Rumba and Cha Cha.
alignment	The direction that the feet are pointing in relationship to the room and to the line of dance. Alignment can also indicate the direction of the movement.
amalgamation	A combination of two or more patterns or movements.
amateur	A person who does not seek financial gain from the teaching or performing of dancing.
American style	<p>A type of ballroom dancing which evolved from social dancing and is now a fully recognized competitive style of dancing. The 9 main American dances are divided into two groups:</p> <p>(1) American Smooth, consisting of:</p> <p>Waltz Tango Foxtrot Viennese Waltz</p> <p>(2) American Rhythm, consisting of:</p> <p>Cha Cha Rumba East Coast Swing Bolero Mambo</p>
amount of turn	The amount of rotation of the feet which occurs on one step, or between two consecutive steps. In the charts, rotation is measured in fractions of a full turn. Body rotation is indicated only when different from the feet.
anchor step	A type of triple step where the feet stay anchored in one place.
anticipation	Premature action taken by the follower, before signal is given by the leader.
apart	Any dance position where the man and lady have no points of contact. Since there is no physical connection, the use of apart position is limited to visual lead and follow, or open choreographed dance routines.
appel	An accented movement in place, where the body weight is dropped sharply onto a flat foot. The Appel usually marks the beginning of a strong directional movement.
arabesque	A position of the body where the free leg is extended straight behind the body, usually lifted off the floor.
arm styling	Positioning and movement of the arms, reflecting the character of a dance or style of dancing.
arc turn	An underarm turn in which the lady turns to the right under the right hand, or to the left under the left hand.
arch	The part of the foot between the ball and the heel, which forms the shape of an arch.
Argentine Tango	A style of Tango which originated in the streets and salons of Buenos Aires, characterized by its

	passionate hold and complex leg and foot movements.
Associate	The first complete level of the International style syllabus, representing the foundation of movements and basic dance concepts.
attitude	A body position where the free leg is raised with the knee bent.
axis of rotation	An imaginary vertical line around which the body turns. Depending on the type of rotation, an axis can run through the center of the body, through one of its sides, or outside of the body altogether.
American Smooth	A subset of the American Style of Ballroom Dancing which includes the following 5 competitive dances: Waltz, Tango, Foxtrot, and Viennese Waltz.
across	A step taken in the direction of the foot position described in #1.
alignment	The positioning of the different body parts relative to one another. Proper alignment is achieved by vertically lining up the different "blocks of weight" of the body (head, shoulders, abdomen, and hips), allowing for the natural curve of the spine.
bar	A unit of music representing a group of consecutive beats. The number of beats in a bar or measure is measured by the time signature, and is determined by the ratio and relative strength of the naturally strong and weak beats occurring in the music.
base	The lower half of the body, including the feet, legs and hips.
basic figure	A standardized step pattern which, together with other patterns, constitute the basis of a dance.
beat	A steady and continuous pulse in the music, within which the rhythms are formed.
beat value	The duration of a note measured in beats. For example: The beat value of a "slow" count is two beats.
blending	The skillful combining of movements in a smooth and natural manner.
ball-heel	A type of footwork, abbreviated "BH". A "Ball-Heel" step is taken first with the ball of the foot in contact with the floor, and then with the whole foot flat. In the Latin dances, when a Ball-Heel step is being taken, the heel of the free foot will release from the floor while the toe maintains contact. In Tango, the heel of the free foot will release, except on back steps where the toe will release.
blocks of weight	The primary sections of the upper body arranged vertically. From top down: Head, Shoulder/Chest, Abdomen, and Hips.
body contact	The area of physical contact between man's and lady's body when in Closed, Promenade, or Outside Partner position.
body flight	The natural release of body weight from a swinging action. Body Flight is found in the ballroom swing dances.
body rise	Elevation of the body achieved by straightening the knees.
body swing	A pendulum-type swinging action of the body.
body turn	Amount of turn of the body when it is different from the feet.
body turns less	Indicated in the chart under Amount of Turn. Used primarily on the inside if a turn, when the amount of body rotation is less than the amount of foot rotation. A step taken with "body turns less" is usually followed by a step with "body completes turn".
body weight	The concept of the weight of the entire body as a unit. The relationship of the body weight to the feet is determined primarily by the Center, but can be affected by the weight of individual body parts.
Bolero	A slow Latin dance which originated as one of two forms of Rumba (Bolero Rumba and Son Rumba), and still shares many of the same figures. Bolero differs from Rumba in its tempo and style of music and movement.
Box Step	A pattern consisting of six steps, which when taken in its entirety, form the shape of a box.
break	A unit of two steps where the second step is taken in exactly the opposite direction from the first.
breakaway	A break which is taken in open position, with partners moving in opposition.
broken sway	Body sway which does not result from the natural swinging action of the body, such as is found in an Oversway.
Bronze	The first complete level of the American Medallist System, representing the foundation of movements and basic dance concepts.

brush	The action of closing the moving foot to the standing foot, without changing weight, between steps.
backing	A term used in the description of Alignments, to specify movement which is backward (i.e. Backing LOD, Backing DC).
back line	The line across the back of the shoulders, from elbow to elbow. In Closed Position, a good Back Line is expansive and slightly rounded, with no pinching of the shoulder blades.
backward tango close	A Tango Close which begins with the man stepping back on the left foot.
back to back position	Dance position where man and lady face away from each other.
balance	The correct distribution of body weight between the feet or over the standing foot.
ball	The rounded part of the foot between the toes and the arch.
ball-change	A series of two consecutive steps, the first step being taken with the ball of the foot only. The rhythm is usually syncopated.
ball-flat	A type of footwork, abbreviated "BF". A "Ball-Flat" step is taken first with the ball of the foot in contact with the floor, and then with the whole foot flat.
beat	One single pulse of music. Beats are usually arranged into groups of 2, 3, or 4, called measures.
body completes turn	Indicated in the chart under Amount of Turn. Used primarily on the inside if a turn, usually following a step labeled "body turns less", where the amount of body rotation is less than the amount of foot rotation. When the body completes turn, it squares off with the feet.
ball	A type of footwork, abbreviated "B". A "ball" step is taken without the heel in contact with the floor, but with little or no rise resulting in the body.
Cabaret	A special single-dance division of Dancesport in which couples dance an exhibition-style piece to their own selection of music. The dance may incorporate lifts and/or drops, and is not limited to the pre-defined dance styles such as Smooth or Latin.
cadence	A definitive ending to a musical phrase.
canter timing	A rhythm used in 3/4 music where two steps are taken over the course of 3 beats; the second beat is skipped.
carriage	The position of the arms and top line while in dance position.
center	The place on the body just below the abdomen and above the groin. Balance is determined primarily by the placement of the center in relationship to the feet.
Cha Cha	An exciting, syncopated Latin dance which originated in the 1950's as a slowed-down Mambo. The Cha Cha gets its name and character from its distinct repetitive foot rhythm.
chainé turn	A turn or chain of turns which are continuous and directional in nature, in which one full turn is made with each two steps.
Chair	A strong checking action taken forward and across in Promenade Position, with the man's right and lady's left foot.
challenge position	A dance position where the man and lady are apart and without contact, facing each other.
change of weight	The full movement or transference of body weight from one foot to the other.
Closed Change	A movement used in the ballroom swinging dances which consists of three steps, the feet closing on the third step. The Change step is most frequently used to change back and forth between Left and Right Box Turns (Closed Turns).
chassé	A series of 2 or 3 consecutive lateral steps, where the feet are closed on the second step.
chassé turn	A turn consisting of 3 steps, where the feet are closed on the second or third step.
check	A pronounced discontinuation of movement through the feet.
choreography	A compilation of movements which make up a dance or dance routine.
clave	A musical instrument included in the rhythm section of many Latin bands, commonly used in the playing of Mambo and Salsa music.

closed division	A division of competition which involves the dancing of figures specific to a syllabus, to the exclusion of variations and choreography.
closed facing position	(Latin & Rhythm) A dance position where partners face each other slightly apart, with the normal hold.
closed figure	A figure which ends with one foot closing to the other, with a change of weight.
closed finish	The last part of a figure which ends with feet together, such as steps 4-6 of a Waltz Twinkle.
closed position	Refers to the normal hold where man and lady stand facing each other. In the smooth ballroom dances, partners stand very close together in body contact, slightly offset to the left. In the Latin dances, partners stand a few inches apart, either directly in front of each other or very slightly offset.
closed facing position	(Latin & Rhythm) A dance position where partners face each other, either slightly apart or in body contact.
closed turn	A turn consisting of 3 steps, where the feet are closed on the second or third step.
coaster step	A triple step in which the first step is taken in the opposite direction of the third, and the feet close on the second step.
collect	To complete the changing of weight to the standing foot by drawing the moving foot underneath the body.
combination	A group of consecutive patterns and choreography.
component	An small, individual unit of movement.
compression	The lowering of the center resulting from the bending of the knees, for the purpose of commencing movement.
connection	A means of communication between partners, either visually, or as an actual physical point of contact.
continuity movement	The continuous passing of the feet from one step to the next, without closing or chasse action. The concept of continuity-style movement is usually specific to the ballroom swing dances, and pertains to the third or last step in a measure. In American Style competitive dancing, continuity is not allowed in the Bronze Level.
contra body movement	The turning of the body against the standing foot, in the direction of the moving leg. Contra Body Movement is used to commence turns in the ballroom dances. Also known as: Contrary Body Movement, Contra Body Motion.
contra body movement position	The foot position achieved by placing the moving foot along the path of the standing foot, either in front or behind.
contra position	Dance position where man and lady are both moving toward each other's left/right side, both using the same foot.
control	The ability to maintain balance and stability throughout the body while dancing.
Corté	Spanish word meaning, "cut". The word Corte is used to describe several different figures, including the American style Tango Corte (Lunge), the International style Tango Back Corte, and the Waltz Reverse Corte and Hover Corte.
counterpart	The corresponding part to a pattern danced by the partner.
counter promenade position	A V-shaped Dance Position with the lady on the man's left side.
counter weight	Tension applied to a connection through the opposition of of the partners' body weight.
cross body lead	An American Style basic figure in which the man turns perpendicular the lady, leading her to dance forward on a path which crosses in front of his body.
cross body position	Dance Position where man and lady are at right-angles to each other, lady moving in front of man from his right to his left side.
cross turn	A turn consisting of 3 steps, where the feet are crossed on the second or third step.
cruzara	Spanish word meaning, "cross": A step taken with one foot crossed tightly over the other, either in front or behind.

cuban motion	The rotation of the hips around the spine achieved by the alternate bending and straightening of the knees. Specific to American Style Rhythm dancing.
cuban walks	Forward or Backward walks taken with Cuban-style hip motion.
Cucarachas	A basic International figure consisting of side breaks to the left and right. Also used in American Style, but under the alias Side Breaks or 2nd Position Breaks.
cuddle position	A variation of the Shadow Position where the man and lady are in very close contact. Usually, the hands are connected in the following way: Man's LH to Lady's RH, and Man's RH to Lady's LH. Also known as Flirtation Position.
cut time	The time signature of 2/4. Each measure contains two beats. Samba and Tango are examples of music written in Cut Time.
center	[Ballroom] The middle of the dance floor. In the Alignments section of the charts, the Center is the direction exactly opposite the Wall.
connection	Tension applied to a physical point of contact through the manipulation of body weight toward or away from it.
clave	The common, underlying two-measure rhythm of Afro-Cuban music such as the Mambo. The Clave rhythm accents specific beats within the two measure phrase; One measure contains two accents while the other contains three.
choreography	The creation of movement which makes up a dance or dance routine.
change weight	To completely move or transfer the body weight from one foot to the other.
Cabaret	A special single-dance division of Dancesport in which couples dance an exhibition-style piece to their own selection of music. The dance may incorporate lifts and/or drops, and is not limited to the pre-defined dance styles such as Smooth or Latin.
cadence	A definitive ending to a musical phrase.
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carriage	The position of the arms and top line while in dance position.
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closed division	A division of competition which involves the dancing of figures specific to a syllabus, to the exclusion of variations and choreography.
closed facing	(Latin & Rhythm)

position	A dance position where partners face each other slightly apart, with the normal hold.
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collect	To complete the changing of weight to the standing foot by drawing the moving foot underneath the body.
combination	A group of consecutive patterns and choreography.
component	An small, individual unit of movement.
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cuban walks	Forward or Backward walks taken with Cuban-style hip motion.

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center	[Ballroom] The middle of the dance floor. In the Alignments section of the charts, the Center is the direction exactly opposite the Wall.
connection	Tension applied to a physical point of contact through the manipulation of body weight toward or away from it.
clave	The common, underlying two-measure rhythm of Afro-Cuban music such as the Mambo. The Clave rhythm accents specific beats within the two measure phrase; One measure contains two accents while the other contains three.
choreography	The creation of movement which makes up a dance or dance routine.
change weight	To completely move or transfer the body weight from one foot to the other.
East Coast Swing	A subset of Swing derived from Lindy Hop and Jitterbug, making use of refined (American Style) ballroom technique.
English style	The internationally recognized style of ballroom dancing, as originally established and codified by the English.
enveloppé	An action whereby the free foot is pointed forward, lifted off of the floor with the leg straight, and then, by bending the knee of the free foot, drawn inward toward the knee of the supporting leg.
exhibition ballroom dancing	The performing of ballroom dances in a stylized, theatrical presentation.
expression	Effective communication of feeling, character, and emotion felt by the dancer.
extended forward walk	Latin-style forward walk commenced by extending the foot in front of the body in a pointed position. The most common usage of the extended forward walk is the lady's step #4 of the Alemana Turn in Cha Cha or Rumba.
expression	Facial gestures that convey emotion.
facing	A description of the alignment of the body, when it is the same as the feet.
fake	Changing from the usual foot by either skipping or adding a step to the normal step pattern.
fallaway position	A V-shaped dance position similar to Promenade Position, but with man and lady moving backward.
Fan	A basic figure used in the International Style Rumba and Cha Cha, incorporating the Fan Position.
fan position	Dance position where man and lady stand at right-angles, lady on man's left side. Man holds lady's right hand in his left.
Feather	A Foxtrot movement involving 3 progressive steps, the third step usually taken with lady in Right Outside Partner Position. Types of Feather movements: Feather Step, Feather Finish, Feather Finish from PP, Hover Feather, Curved Feather, Back Feather.
Fellow	The fourth complete level of the International system, representing the highest level of achievement of syllabus patterns and concepts.
figure	A standardized step pattern which, together with other patterns, constitute the basis of a dance.
flat	A type of footwork, abbreviated "F", or "WF" (for whole foot).
flex	To incline the foot in such a way that it is placed at an angle nearly perpendicular to the leg.
flick	An extension of the lower leg taken in a sharp or staccato manner.
flirtation position	A variation of the Shadow Position where the man and lady are in very close contact. Usually, the hands are connected in the following way: Man's LH to Lady's RH, and Man's RH to Lady's LH. Also known as Cuddle Position.
floor craft	The ability to maneuver around the dance floor in a skilled, controlled, and courteous manner.

following	Correctly reacting to the movements and signals given by the leader, through one or more connections (visual and/or physical).
follow through	The passing of the moving foot underneath the body between steps.
foot positions	Indication of the placement of the feet relative to each other. Examples: LF Forward, RF Side, LF Diagonally Back.
foot pressure	Pressure applied to the floor through the free foot, often a result of having partial body weight on it.
foot rise	Elevation of the body through the use of the ankles, by pushing up onto the balls of the feet.
footwork	The part of the foot in contact with the floor at a specific point in time. Examples: Ball, Heel, Inside Edge of Whole Foot.
formation team	A group of three or more dancers who perform ballroom-style routines.
Foxtrot	A smooth dance introduced to the public in 1913 by Harry Fox, noted for being the first dance to incorporate into the rhythm a combination of Slows and Quicks. Foxtrot is characterized by smooth, walking-style movements, but can be adapted to fit a variety of musical tempi and style, or to fit onto small, crowded nightclub dance floors.
frame	The position of the arms and top line while in dance position.
free leg	The leg that does not have the majority of body weight, being free enough to move.
freestyle dancing	Any style of dancing that does not involve the dancing of pre-conceived steps, figures or choreography. Often associated with solo (non-partner) dancing.
freestyle division	A division of competition whereby the man leads the lady through an improvised set of figures, without relying on pre-determined choreography or dance routines.
fan	A swivel taken on one foot, ended with the free foot pointing to the side.
foot positions	The five positions of the feet as defined in Ballet, which are: First Position (together) Second Position (apart, side by side) Third Position (heel to instep) Fourth Position (apart, one foot forward) Fifth Position (toe to heel)
free foot	The foot that does not have the majority of body weight, being free enough to move.
flex	position of the foot which is achieved when the heel is still in contact with the floor, but the ball is not. nd (2): Flexed Foot
Gancho	A "hooking" action of one leg around another.
Gold level	The third complete level of the American Medalist System, representing advanced patterns and concepts. Gold is not a level associated with social dancing.
Grapevine	A series of four steps, arranged in the following sequence: forward, side, back, side. The sequence may begin with any one of the four steps, and can repeat for any number of counts.
guapacha	(Wah-pah-CHA) A rhythmic variation commonly used in certain basic Cha Cha actions, including the Basic Step, the Turning Basic, and Time Steps. Guapacha timing is similar to basic Cha Cha timing, with the exception that the step which normally occurs on beat 2 is delayed 1/2 of a beat, causing it to be taken on the "&" count between 2 and 3.
heel	The part of the foot directly below the ankle and behind the arch.
heel-ball twist turn	A type of Twist Turn taken with the weight distributed equally between feet, on the heel of one foot, and the ball of the other. The turn is executed by crossing one foot either in front of or behind the other, and then twisting in the direction of the forward foot. When the turn is complete, the feet will have closed into first position, having turned approximately 3/4 of a full turn.
heel pull	A type of Heel Turn where the moving foot is "pulled" back and to the side of the supporting foot, slightly apart. The footwork of the moving foot is as follows: Heel first, then Inside Edge of Foot, then Whole Foot.
heel turn	A turn taken with the weight over the heel of the supporting foot. The movement commences with back step (Toe-Heel). The turn begins when the free foot closes to the supporting foot, being held parallel throughout the turn. The weight then transfers to the closing foot at the end of the turn.
hesitation	An action in which progression is temporarily suspended or checked, the weight being held on the

	supporting foot for one or more beats.
hip motion	Any movement of the hips, either independently of the torso and spine (such as Latin hip motion), or in unison with the torso and spine (such as is the case in the smooth/swinging dances).
hip twist	Any twisting action of the hips around the spine.
Hockey Stick	A basic figure used in International Rumba and Cha Cha, taken from Fan Position and involving a Loop Turn for the lady. The figure gets its name from the hockey stick- shape of the path that the lady moves along throughout.
hover	A step taken high on the balls of the feet, for the purpose of changing of direction and/or rotation, and allowing enough time for the moving foot to brush toward (or to) the standing foot.
Hustle	A fast but smooth-moving dance which originated in the nightclubs of the 1970's disco era, as a modified version of swing. Hustle is noted for its fast and elaborate spins and turns, especially for the lady. It is also very easily adapted to crowded, nightclub dance floors.
heel	A type of footwork, abbreviated "H", or "HF" (for Heel-Flat). A "heel" step is taken first with the heel in contact with the floor, and then with the whole foot flat. (The "Flat" is usually implied).
heel lead	A step which is taken commencing with only the heel in contact with the floor. The toe lowers to the floor when the majority of body weight is placed on it. This type of footwork is often notated "heel", or simply, "H".
heel-toe	A type of footwork, abbreviated "HT". A "heel-toe" step is taken commencing with only the heel in contact with the floor. The toe lowers when the majority of body weight is placed on it. Near the end of the step, the heel lifts from the floor, causing the body to rise.
heel-ball	A type of footwork, abbreviated "HB". A "heel-ball" step is taken commencing with only the heel in contact with the floor. The toe lowers when the majority of body weight is placed on it. The heel then disengages from the floor without body weight, although not enough to cause any rise of the body.
Hip Twist	A Latin dance figure involving a twisting action of the hips danced by the lady.
impetus	The driving force behind a movement or rotation.
inside foot	The foot which is closer to the partner when in Promenade, Outside Partner, or Side-by-Side Position.
inside underarm turn	An underarm turn in which the lady turns to the left under the right hand, or to the right under the left hand.
instep	The part of the foot which is on the inside edge, between the ball and the heel.
International style	The internationally recognized style of ballroom dancing. The 10 International dances are divided into two groups: (1) International Standard (Modern), consisting of Slow Waltz, Tango, Viennese Waltz, Slow Foxtrot, and Quickstep. (2) International Latin, consisting of Cha Cha, Samba, Rumba, Paso Doble, and Jive.
International Standard	A subset of the International Style of Ballroom Dancing which includes the following 5 dances: Slow Waltz, Tango, Viennese Waltz, Slow Foxtrot, and Quickstep.
Impetus	A basic International figure involving a Heel Turn for the man.
Jive	The International version of Swing. In spite of its fast tempo, Jive is still danced in triple-rhythm.
Jitterbug	An older style of Swing danced in single-rhythm, to very fast big band jazz music of the thirties and forties.
kick-ball-change	A movement involving a small kick or flick of the lower leg, followed by a ball-change action. Usually taken in a syncopated rhythm, such as 1&2.
lateral movement	Movement to the side.
Latin hip motion	The characteristic movement of the hips found in the Latin and Rhythm dances. It is achieved by rotating the hips around the spine.
Latin	A subset of the International Style of Ballroom Dancing which includes Cha Cha, Samba, Rumba, Paso Doble, and Jive.
Latin walks	Forward or backward walks taken with Latin Hip Motion.

leading	Effective communication of intended actions on the part of the man, through the use of his own body movements, and through one or more connections to his partner (physical and/or visual).
Left Cross Turn	A half-turn to the left, consisting of 3 steps, where the left foot crosses in front of the right foot on the third step. This is also known in Viennese Waltz and International Tango as a Basic Reverse Turn, but is often specified as a Cross-Turn when differentiating it from a basic Closed Reverse (Chasse) Turn.
leg swing	A pendulum-type swinging action of the leg underneath the hip.
Lindy	The grandfather of all forms of Swing, named after Charles Lindberg, and originating at the Savoy ballroom in the 1930's as a modified form of Charleston done in dance position. Lindy Hop is currently enjoying a revival with a new generation of swing clubs, musicians, and dancers.
Lindy timing	8-count timing as found in many of the Lindy basic actions, taken as follows: 1, 2, 3&4, 5, 6, 7&8, or 1&2, 3, 4, 5&6, 7, 8. The 8-count timing is used in almost all forms of swing, but is most commonly referred with this terminology in ballroom Swing and Jive.
line	Lines, real or imaginary, created by the positioning of the various body parts in a visually pleasing manner.
line dancing	A type of non-partner dancing, primarily associated with the Country & Western genre, where a group of people will dance through a pre-choreographed sequence of movements in unison. The choreography is generally simple, as it is intended for mass-consumption. Examples of Line Dances are the Electric Slide, the Tush-Push, and the Slappin' Leather.
linear	Movement which follows a straight direction, as opposed to movement which is rotational.
line of dance	The counterclockwise flow of traffic around the dance floor. The Line of Dance represents the general direction of movement overall, and is only pertinent to dances that travel continuously around the floor, such as Foxtrot, Waltz, Tango, and Samba.
lowering	The lowering of the body from a position of rise, through the action of the ankles/feet. Not to be confused with compression.
line	A pose which creates pleasing body lines.
Mambo	A fast Latin dance, similar to Salsa, which comes from Cuba. Mambo was brought to America in the 1940's and 50's and eventually adapted as an American style ballroom dance. Most of the movements emphasize the second beat in the measure, suggestive of the Clave rhythm which is fundamental to Mambo music.
measure	A unit of music representing a group of consecutive beats. The number of beats in a bar or measure is measured by the time signature, and is determined by the ratio and relative strength of the naturally strong and weak beats occurring in the music.
medalist system	The universally recognized system which represents the various levels of dance proficiency. The levels are: Bronze (social or foundation standard) Silver (intermediate standard) Gold (advanced standard) Some schools recognize higher standards with names such as "Gold Star" and "Supreme Gold", but there are no set standards of naming conventions for these levels.
Member	The third complete level of the International system, representing advanced movements and dance concepts.
Merengue	An energetic Latin-style march which originated in the Dominican Republic, which emphasizes a straight-ahead 8-count rhythm taken with Cuban Motion. Merengue is now also a subset of the modern club-style Salsa dances.
metronomic motion	Movement of the body or part of the body which emulates the swinging action of a metronome: An upper portion of the body travels at a faster rate of speed than a portion of the body below.
Modern style	The former term for the International Standard style of ballroom dancing. See also International Standard.
moving	A description of the direction toward which the body is traveling, specifically when it is different from the body's facing alignment and/or pointing alignment.
moving foot	The foot that does not have the majority of body weight, being free enough to move.
musicality	The ability to hear and interpret music in a way that is both mechanically correct and artistically expressive.

natural underarm turn	
natural opposite	The description of the movement which corresponds directly and naturally to the movement danced by one's partner, in a manner which is either parallel or mirrored.
Natural Resolution	Term used by Argentine Tango dancers to describe the natural resolve to the end of a musical phrase (a cadence). The pattern itself is very similar to the first four steps of a Box Step, and is usually taken as the ending of another pattern, such as the Cruzara. Note: Since Tango dancers do not use the terms natural and reverse to describe right- and left-turning movements, the term "Natural Resolution" can be very misleading to a ballroom dancer; It frequently turns to the left.
natural turn	A turn to the right.
Nightclub Two-Step	An easy-going social dance, similar in movement to the Bossa Nova, first introduced in the 80's by Buddy Schwimmer and popular amongst the West Coast Swing crowd. Nightclub 2-Step is normally danced to medium-tempo pop love songs and M.O.R., using combinations of Slow-Quick-Quick and Quick-Quick-Slow rhythms.
no foot rise	An action of rise which is taken through the knees and body only, but not through the feet. When backward walks are indicated as having no foot rise, the toe of the forward foot should release from the floor, allowing the heel to remain in contact as it draws inward toward the standing foot.
Open Break	Break or Rock Step taken in Open-Facing position, often with partners moving in opposition.
open division	A division of competition which can involve the dancing of variations and/or choreography.
open figure	Any figure which involves the continuous passing of the feet, without a closing or chasse action. (also see Continuity).
open finish	The last part of a figure which ends with feet passing, such as steps 4-6 of a Foxtrot Open Left Turn (Silver level).
open position	Any dance position where man and lady stand apart or slightly apart, without taking a closed position dance hold.
open facing position	A variation of Open Position where man and lady stand apart, facing each other, usually with a one- or two-hand connection.
open turn	A turn consisting of 3 steps, where the feet pass continuously throughout all three steps. Example: Open Left (Reverse) Turn, Open Finish.
opposition	Movement taken in a direction opposite of the direction of one's partner.
outside foot	The foot which is farther away from one's partner when in Promenade, Outside Partner, or Side-by-Side Position.
outside partner position	A variation of the Closed Position where the tracking of the man and lady's feet are slightly offset. When in Outside Partner Position, the person moving forward will step in CBMP, to the partner's right or left.
outside underarm turn	An underarm turn in which the lady turns to the left under the left hand, or to the right under the right hand.
off time	To dance in a way that is not synchronized with the beat of the music.
parallel position	Two of the most prominent American teaching systems define Parallel Position differently: School #1 defines Parallel as being the same as Outside Partner Position, with man and lady facing each other, slightly offset. School #2 defines Parallel as being the same as Shadow Position, with man and lady facing the same direction, slightly offset.
Paso Doble	A dramatic French-Spanish Flamenco-style march danced in 2/4 time, with man portraying the matador in a bullfight, the lady as his cape. Paso Doble is usually danced to España Cani, the Spanish Gypsy Dance.
pattern	A small group of individual steps or movements.
pencil turn	A spin on one foot, with the free foot held next to the standing foot in first position.
pendulum motion	Movement of the body or part of the body which emulates the swinging action of a pendulum: A lower portion of the body travels at a faster rate of speed than a portion of the body above.

phrase	A self-contained musical statement which has a definite beginning, middle and end ; A musical passage or sentence. In dance music, the length of the phrases is often consistent and predictable, (such as 2, 4, or 8 measures), but odd-measure phrases are not uncommon.
pitch	The inclination of the body forward or backward.
pivot	The turning of the supporting foot against the floor (general context).
pivoting action	Any movement or action which includes the turning of a weighted foot (general context).
point	To extend the foot in such a way that it is placed at an angle roughly parallel to the leg.
pointing	Refers to the alignment of the feet when different from the direction the body is facing or moving.
poise	The pitch of the body and placement of the body weight relative to the feet.
Polka	A fast and lively Bohemian dance of Polish origin, danced to traditional German "oom-pah" music in 2-4 time. The basic movement is characterized by three steps and a hop.
positions of arms	The five positions of the feet as defined in Ballet, such as First Position (arms down, at sides), Second Position (arms extended to side), and Fifth Position (arms raised above head).
posture	The positioning of the different body parts relative to one another. Good posture is achieved by vertically aligning the different "blocks of weight" of the body (head, shoulders, abdomen, and hips), allowing for the natural curve of the spine with minimal distortions.
press line	A body position seen in Paso Doble and occasionally Tango, where the weight is split between the feet, but favoring the front foot. The front leg is bent with the foot arched high on the ball, while the back leg is straight with the foot flat on the floor.
pressed forward walk	A type of Latin Walk whereby the weight is placed onto the ball of the foot with knee bent. The heel is usually lowered and knee straightened before the next step is taken.
push	Tension applied to a connection through the manipulation of body weight toward it.
pull	Tension applied to a connection through the manipulation of body weight or away from it.
professional dancer	A person who seeks financial gain from the teaching or performing of dancing.
progressive movement	Movement which travels forward or backward through space.
progressive rotation	Movement which is both progressive and rotational in nature. Examples of progressive rotation are Pivots, Chainé Turns, and the Viennese Left Cross Turn.
projection	Extension of the body position, posture, movement, energy and volume to a performance level.
promenade position	A V-shaped dance position where both man and lady move forward and in the same direction, toward the open end of the "V".
pronate	To roll the foot so that the top angles inward (inside edge to the floor). Pronation is a common technique in Latin and Rhythm styles.
push & pull	Tension applied to a connection through the manipulation of body weight toward it (push) or away from it (pull)
phrase	A self-contained piece of choreography that has a definite beginning, middle, and end ; A dance passage or sentence. Choreography is normally either phrased to fit specific musical passages, or to match common general song structures.
pivot	A turn in the direction of the forward foot, taken following a forward or backward progressive movement, with weight held over one foot.
pivoting action	A turn in the direction of the forward foot, taken following a forward progressive movement, where the majority of rotation occurs as the weight is leaving the supporting foot.
point	An extended position of the foot which is achieved when the toe or ball is still in contact with the floor, but the heel is not.
quick	A musical count which encompasses one beat of music, exactly one-half the time of a "Slow".

Quickstep	An English style ballroom dance which is characterized by fast movement, often including a variety of hops, kicks, skips, lock steps and chassés.
reverse underarm turn	
rhythm	The underlying pulse created by the various musical and percussive instruments playing a piece of music; The beat.
reverse turn	A turn to the left.
rhythm	The beat value or combination of beat values of the notes and accents in a given piece of music, musical phrase, melody, or note.
Rhythm	A subset of the American Style of Ballroom Dancing which includes the following 5 competitive dances: Cha Cha Rumba East Coast Swing Bolero Mambo And can also include some additional social dances: Merengue Hustle Samba West Coast Swing
rise & fall	The continuous changing of body elevation through the use of the feet, ankles, and legs.
rock step	A shifting of weight back and forth from one foot to the other, in place.
rondé	A circling action of the free foot and leg.
rotational movement	Movement which causes the body to turn towards a new alignment or orientation.
rubato	Not in a constant tempo; Frequently accented with varying speeds and pauses.
Rumba	A slow- to medium-tempo Latin American dance in 4/4 time, which is characterized by sensual, provocative movements and gestures, Latin-style hip motion, and playful and flirtatious interplay between man and lady.
straight	Without sway to left or right.
Spot Turn	In American Rhythm, a step in closed position in which one partner walks forward in a tight circle, while the other partner moves back out of the way by hooking one foot behind the other, and stepping side alternately. (Known in International Latin as a Natural Top.)
standing foot	The foot which bears the majority of the body weight.
step	A pattern formed by a small group of steps or movements (short for "step pattern").
supporting foot	The foot which bears the majority of the body weight.
swinging dances	Smooth dances characterized by swinging movements such as Slow Waltz, Foxtrot, Viennese Waltz, and Quickstep.
Swing	A generic term to describe any form of Swing, such as East Coast, West Coast, Jitterbug, Lindy Hop, etc.
syncopation	A deviation from the basic or expected rhythm.
Salsa	A popular Latin nightclub dance which evolved as a modified form of Mambo.
Samba	A rhythmical Brazilian dance in 2/4 time which has been adapted for modern Ballroom dancing and incorporated into the repertoire of the International Standard syllabus.
Samba bounce	Rhythmical bouncing motion of the Samba, achieved by the continuous flexing and straightening of the knees, as well as the usage of the feet and ankles. Samba is noted for it's distinct style of movement, which incorporates both Latin hip motion and the signature "Samba Bounce".
shadow position	Dance position where both man and lady face the same direction, with one partner either directly in front of the other, or slightly offset to the left or right. As the name implies, Shadow position is usually taken with partners shadowing each other's movement, on the same foot and in the same direction. Partners can be closed (in body contact), semi-closed (slightly apart but within arms reach), or

	completely apart.
shine position	Dance position where dancers stand apart, facing each other. The term "Shine Position" is usually associated with modern social Disco and Latin freestyle dancing, where dancers improvise and "show off" to their partners.
shoulder leading	Position of the body such that the shoulder (and usually the entire side of the body) corresponding to the moving foot is in advance of the other side. For example, when the right foot moves forward, the right side of the body moves forward in advance of the left side. Opposite of Contra Body Movement.
sickle	To roll the foot so that the top angles outward (outside edge to the floor). This is almost always considered poor technique. Also known as supination.
side by side position	Dance position where man and lady stand side by side. They can have a one-arm or one-hand hold, or stand apart without a connection.
side leading	Position of the body such that the side of the body corresponding to the moving foot is in advance of the other side. For example, when the right foot moves forward, the right side of the body moves forward in advance of the left side. Opposite of Contra Body Movement.
Silver	The second complete level of the American Medalist System, representing intermediate to advanced patterns and concepts. Silver level is not a level associated with social dancing.
slow	A musical count which encompasses two full beats of music, exactly twice the time of a "Quick".
slow dancing	A free-form type of social dancing to slow ballad or blues music. Slow dancing has no pre-determined basic steps or stylistic interpretation, although it is typically characterized by a compact dance hold or even a full embrace, with dancers swaying back and forth in a slow, steady rhythm.
Slow Foxtrot	The International version of Foxtrot characterized by long, slow linear movements.
Slow Waltz	An International or American Style dance in 3/4 time which developed from the much faster Viennese Waltz. Slow Waltz is characterized by rise and fall and rotational movement.
slot	A narrow rectangular section of dance floor used in nightclub dances such as West Coast Swing and Hustle, making efficient use of dance floor space.
spin	A very fast turning action.
Spiral Turn	A turn which takes place after a forward step. With weight on the front foot a turn toward the free foot is made. The free leg then bends and wraps around the standing leg as one or more turns are completed.
Spot Run	A movement in which the man and lady run around each other in a small circle while in a dance position.
spotting	While turning, the action of focusing on a fixed point and turning the head at a different speed than the body.
Spot Turn	A turn consisting of three forward walks in one small area, usually completing one full turn over three steps. (Known in American Rhythm as a Walkaround Turn).
standing leg	The leg which bears the majority of the body weight.
step	A change of weight from one foot to the other.
stretch	To extend a limb or muscle to full length, or to increase the extension possible.
Sugarpush	The basic step of West Coast Swing.
supinate	To roll the foot to the outer edge.
supporting Leg	The leg which bears the majority of the body weight.
stride	The length or extension of a step.
sway	The inclination of the body to the left or right, usually away from the direction of movement.
swing dances	Group of dances including East Coast Swing, West Coast Swing, Lindy Hop, Jitterbug, Jive, Balboa, Shag, and Charleston.
swinging action	The action of swinging the body weight from foot to foot as though suspended from an anchor point high above, like a pendulum.
swivel	The action of turning on a weighted foot.

syncopate	To deviate from the basic or normal rhythm.
syncopation	Any rhythm which contains notes or accents in between downbeats or primary beats. The more notes or accents that occur between beats, the more syncopated a rhythm is said to be.
The Chase	A Cha Cha figure where the man and lady dance variations of the Progressive Basic movement in an Apart dance position. The lady will either follow the man visually, or improvise freely on her own until the man picks her up into a connected dance position.
The Conversation	An out-of-date term to describe basic Promenade patterns.
tension	Tautness in the muscles sufficient to maintain tone.
Tango	In the American and International ballroom styles, a dance in 2/4 time, which originated in Argentina and is characterized by catlike walking action and staccato head movements.
Tango Close	In American Smooth, the ending of most Tango patterns: forward on the left foot, side on the right foot, and left foot closes to right foot without weight. Timing: Quick Quick Slow.
tempo	The speed of a dance or a piece of music, measured in measures per minute or beats per minute.
tension	Muscular effort or strain.
Theatre Arts	A category of ballroom competition which includes lifts and drops. Also known as Adagio.
Three Step	One of the characteristic patterns of the Slow Foxtrot, comprised of three forward steps beginning on the left foot taken in-line with the lady. Timing Slow, Quick, Quick.
timing	The synchronizing of body movements to the beat or feel of the music.
time signature	A musical device used to indicate the number of beats which occur in each measure or bar.
toe	The part of the foot which extends forward from the ball.
toe-heel	The footwork used on a lowering action, abbreviated "TH". Commencing from a position of rise, the foot moves first with the toe in contact with the floor. The heel is then lowered to the floor, and the body lowers and weight shifts over the foot.
toe release	The action of lifting the toe of the front foot from the floor, and maintaining contact with the heel of the front foot while taking a backward walk.
top line	The line created by the head, neck, shoulders, arms and back, usually in dance position.
tracking	The placement of the feet created by passing the free leg under the body along very narrow imaginary tracks.
triple step	A series of three consecutive steps, usually syncopated within two beats of music.
Tuck In Turn	In Swing, a turn which is led by the man causing the lady to wind up, or "tuck-in", then leading her to spin in the opposite direction.
turn	An action involving rotation.
turnout	A position of the feet in which the toes point away from each other.
Twinkle	A dance figure or pattern, usually consisting of 3 steps, involving a pronounced rise & fall action. There are many versions of a Twinkle, the most common being found in American style Waltz and Foxtrot.
twist	The action of turning the feet against the floor.
twist turn	A type of turn executed on the spot, with both feet maintaining contact with the floor. The body weight is usually held between the feet.
Two Step	A Country & Western dance in 4/4 time, traveling very swiftly around the line of dance.
The Chase	A Tango figure which usually commences in promenade position.
toe	In footwork descriptions, refers to a step taken high on the toe, with the heel kept up off of the floor, coinciding with rise or an up position.
toe-heel	The footwork used on any back step, regardless of whether the body is in a position of rise or not. The foot moves backward first with the toe in contact with the floor. The heel is then lowered to the floor, and the body weight shifts over the foot.

The Twist	A popular dance of the 1950's popularized by Chubby Checker.
timing	The synchronizing of movement of two bodies, or of the various actions within one body.
underarm turn	An action where one partner turns while passing under under joined hands.
upbeat	Music, tempo or rhythm which is fast or high in energy.
upbeat	A non-primary beat, such as count 2 or 4 in music of 4/4 meter.
variation	A non-standard or non-syllabus step pattern.
Viennese Waltz	A fast ballroom dance in 3/4 or 6/8 meter, often associated with the music of Johann Strauss.
variation	A modified version of a common step pattern.
walk	A step taken forward or backward.
Walkaround Turn	(American Style) A turn consisting of three forward walks in one small area, usually completing one full turn over three steps. (Known in International Latin as a Spot Turn).
Waltz	A ballroom dance in 3/4 time which first developed in Vienna as a fast paced dance to the Strauss music of the time, and eventually evolved into the slower version we now know as Waltz (or Slow Waltz).
weight connection	Connection created by both partners leaning their body weight in toward each other, or pulling their body weight away from each other.
weight change	The full transference of body weight from one foot to the other.
West Coast Swing	A slotted swing dance in 4/4 time, characterized by its smooth and linear style.
Whip	A dance figure common in Swing dances such as East Coast Swing, West Coast Swing and Lindy Hop, which gets its name from "whipping" action of the lady around the man.
Whisk	A figure or pattern involving the crossing of one foot behind the other.
window	A position of the arms formed by two partners with connected hands, which forms the shape of a window.
zig zag	A figure or pattern involving sharp or angular changes of direction.