

Miscellaneous Figure Lists

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1 Preliminaries

1.1 Purpose of this document

This document doesn't have a clear purpose. While trying to learn the names of the various dance figures I created several lists of things that confused me or which I had trouble remembering. Since the lists were all in word-processed form I eventually decided to throw them all into a single document in case they were of use to anyone else.

Enjoy.

Just be warned that this document will be less polished and more chaotic than the other documents at dance.plussed.net

1.2 Sources

The 'official' data uses the ISTD theory books. See the guide called 'Reading Ballroom Dance Scripts' for a formal bibliography. References to 'unofficial' figures seen at socials refers to common practice in Sydney, Australia.

2 Similar Figures in Different Dances

Several figures appear in almost identical form in more than one dance. Where this occurs in the Standard Style Dances (Waltz, Foxtrot, Quickstep and Tango) often the only difference is the timing of the steps.

2.1 Rumba and Cha Cha

These are probably the two most similar dances. Replace the Cha Cha chasses by a single step and you get Rumba. They have a large number of similar figures with the same name. These are:

- Closed/Open Basic Movement, Basic movement in place
- New York to Left/Right Side Position
- Spot/Switch/Underarm Turns to Left/Right
- Left/Right Side Shoulder to Shoulder
- Hand to Hand to Left/Right Side Position
- Side Steps to Left/Right
- Fan
- Alemana

- Hockey Stick
- Natural Top
- Natural Opening Out Movement
- Closed Hip Twist
- Open Hip Twist
- Reverse Top
- Opening Out from Reverse Top
- Aida
- Spiral Turns, (Spiral, Curl, Rope Spinning)
- Turkish Towel – Not officially a Rumba figure according to the ISTD books, but a common social figure.

2.2 Waltz and Quickstep

Figures where the same name is used in both dances are:

- Reverse Pivot
- Back Lock
- Hover Corte
- Natural Spin Turn
- Back Lock
- Closed Impetus
- Reverse Pivot
- Progressive Chasse to Right
- Double Reverse Spin
- Closed Telemark

The single figure involving a different name is:

- Waltz: Hesitation Change – Quickstep: Natural Turn with Hesitation

The above are the official figures according to the ISTD syllabus. Common social figures:

- The Quickstep Forward Lock may occur in Waltz.
- The Waltz Turning Lock to Right may occur in Quickstep.

2.3 Waltz, Foxtrot and Tango

I think this is the only example of a figure appearing in three different dances.

- Fallaway Reverse and Slip Pivot – The Waltz version has two different acceptable timings, the Foxtrot version has five and the Tango version one. There is no single timing common to all three, but the Tango timing matches one of the Foxtrot timings.

2.4 Waltz and Foxtrot

- Basic Weave – Steps 2-7 of the Waltz version match steps 1-6 of the Foxtrot version.

- Closed Telemark
- Open Telemark
- Open Impetus
- Weave from PP – Steps 1-7 on Waltz and Foxtrot match except for a slight difference in alignments. The waltz version includes a note that an alternative initial alignment is viable, in which case the alignments then exactly match the Foxtrot version.

2.5 Waltz and Tango

- Contra Check

2.6 Foxtrot and Quickstep

- Change of Direction

For Quickstep, this is one of the ‘Additional Figures’ appearing right at the end of the ISTD theory book.

2.7 Samba And Jive

Samba Plait and Jive Chicken Walks

(They start on opposite feet, and usually adopt different timing, but are otherwise very similar.)

2.8 Waltz and Samba

This case has much less similarity than the previous examples, but probably still warrants a mention.

- Waltz: Steps 2 & 3 of: Whisk and Left Whisk
- Samba: Steps 1 & 2 of: Whisk to Right and Whisk to Left

3 Identical or Similar Name – Different Figure

In spite of identical or very similar names, the following figures are completely unrelated.

- Rolling off the Arm – Jive and Samba
- Natural Twist Turn – Foxtrot and Tango. (OK, they both have a natural twist, but most of the steps are different.)
- Chase in Cha Cha – The Chase in Tango
- Reverse Corte in Waltz – Back Corte in Tango

4 Back vs Reverse

Ever find you can’t remember whether a figure name uses ‘back’ or ‘reverse’?

In naming dance figures, reverse usually refers to the direction of rotation, while back refers to the man stepping backwards.

The following won’t list all figures with ‘reverse’ in the name, (though they’re in a later section if you need them.) It will just list those that seem to cause issues in remembering which name to use.

Back Whisk in Waltz – Man steps backwards and doesn’t turn

Back Lock in Waltz and Quickstep – Man steps backwards and doesn’t turn

Reverse Corte in Waltz – Reverse since it turns strongly to the left, though it also has a back step.

Back Corte in Tango – which is hard to justify. It still turns left, but has two backward steps, so I guess they decided the backward steps were the more prominent feature.

Reverse Wave in Foxtrot – This one is a problem. It turns both left and right. From the man's point of view its most significant feature is that most steps go backwards. Hence the name seems inappropriate and you'll just have to remember this one as an exception.

Back Open Promenade in Tango – Man does eventually step backwards. Turn is to the right, so it's natural rather than reverse.

5 Open and Closed

When 'Open' or 'Closed' appears in the name of a figure, there are three different aspects of the figure that it might refer to.

5.1 Open or Closed Position

Rumba and Cha Cha Closed Basic Movement and Open Basic Movement are usually danced in Closed Position and Open Position respectively. (We have to say 'usually' because according to the theory book it is 'legal' to dance the Open Basic Movement in Closed Position, but that's not something I've seen anyone do.)

Rumba and Cha Cha Closed Hip Twist and Open Hip Twist start from Closed Position and Open Position respectively.

5.2 Normal Position or Closed Position vs Promenade Position and/or Counter Promenade Position

For Telemarks and Impetus figures, the Closed version stays in Normal Position while the Open version ends in Promenade Position. This effects:

- Closed Impetus (Waltz and Quickstep); Open Impetus (Waltz and Foxtrot).
- Closed and Open Telemark (Waltz and Foxtrot)

Samba Closed Rocks and Open Rocks – In the Open Rocks the lady turns more, opening out to Promenade Position (PP) and Counter Promenade Position (CPP). By contrast, the Closed Rocks don't stay in Closed Position throughout, since the lady does turn, but she turns less and doesn't reach PP or CPP.

5.3 Open or Closed Foot Position

Tango Closed Promenade and Open Promenade end with feet closed or open (meaning apart) respectively.

In the Waltz Closed Changes, Closed refers to the feet being closed at the end of the step. (By contrast, in the Outside Change the feet end open, so we could make a case for calling it the 'Open Change', but the more striking feature of that move is that the man takes the final step Outside Partner.)

Tango Open Reverse Turns are a little odd in that there isn't a corresponding 'Closed Reverse Turn', but there is a Basic Reverse Turn. On step 3 of the 6 steps of the Basic Reverse Turn, the man's feet are crossed, (which is sort of closed) and the lady's feet are closed, while both have feet open in the corresponding step in the Open Reverse Turns.

6 Other Miscellaneous Name Lists

This section is a miscellaneous collection of lists of similar or related names. Usually, when I constructed the lists I had no idea if they would be useful, and in many cases I'm still not sure.

Since I'd already done the work of creating them, I couldn't find a good excuse to exclude them. If you find yourself trying to recall which cortes occur where, or how many reverse turns Tango has, maybe they are useful.

6.1 Basics

Unfortunately, 'Basic' is a very common name. In dance classes it is common for a figure in each Latin American Dance to be called 'the basic', rather than using its full name, which is usually too long to be easily called while a dance is in progress.

Hence it can be hard to remember the full correct name for each dance's 'basics'. Here is the list.

- Rumba and Cha Cha have similar basics called Closed Basic Movement, Open Basic Movement and Basic movement in place. A reference to 'The Basic' usually means the Closed Basic Movement, probably without turn.
- Jive has a 'Basic in Place' which has a note that it is mainly used as an exercise to develop rhythm and action. However, a reference to 'The Basic' usually means a different figure, the Fallaway Rock.
- Samba has Reverse Basic Movement, Natural Basic Movement, Side Basic Movement and Progressive Basic Movement. A reference to 'The Basic' usually means the Reverse Basic Movement without turn.

6.2 Natural Turns & Reverse Turns

The difficulty here is that these two names, and minor variations of them, occur in many dances, often with very little similarity between the figures other than the direction they are turning.

This is just a list of the figures in each dance using natural and reverse anywhere in the name.

Dance	Natural	Reverse
Waltz	Natural Turn Natural Spin Turn	Reverse Turn Reverse Corte Double Reverse Spin Reverse Pivot Fallaway Reverse and Slip Pivot
Foxtrot	Natural Turn Natural Telemark Natural Twist Turn Natural Zig Zag from PP Natural Hover Telemark	Reverse Turn (incorporating Feather Finish) Reverse Wave Fallaway Reverse and Slip Pivot
Quickstep	Natural Turn Natural Turn with Hesitation Natural Pivot Turn Natural Spin Turn Natural Turn and Back Lock	Chasses Reverse Turn Reverse Pivot Double Reverse Spin Quick Open Reverse
Tango	Natural Twist Turn Natural Promenade Turn	Open Reverse Turn, Lady Outside Open Reverse Turn, Lady in Line Progressive Side Step Reverse Turn Basic Reverse Turn Fallaway Reverse and Slip Pivot
Rumba and Cha Cha	Natural Top Natural Opening Out Movement	Reverse Top Opening Out from Reverse Top
Jive		Reverse Whip
Samba	Natural Roll	Reverse Turn Reverse Roll

6.3 Cortes

A list of which cortes occur where.

Waltz: Reverse Corte, Hover Corte

Quickstep: Hover Corte

Tango: Back Corte