

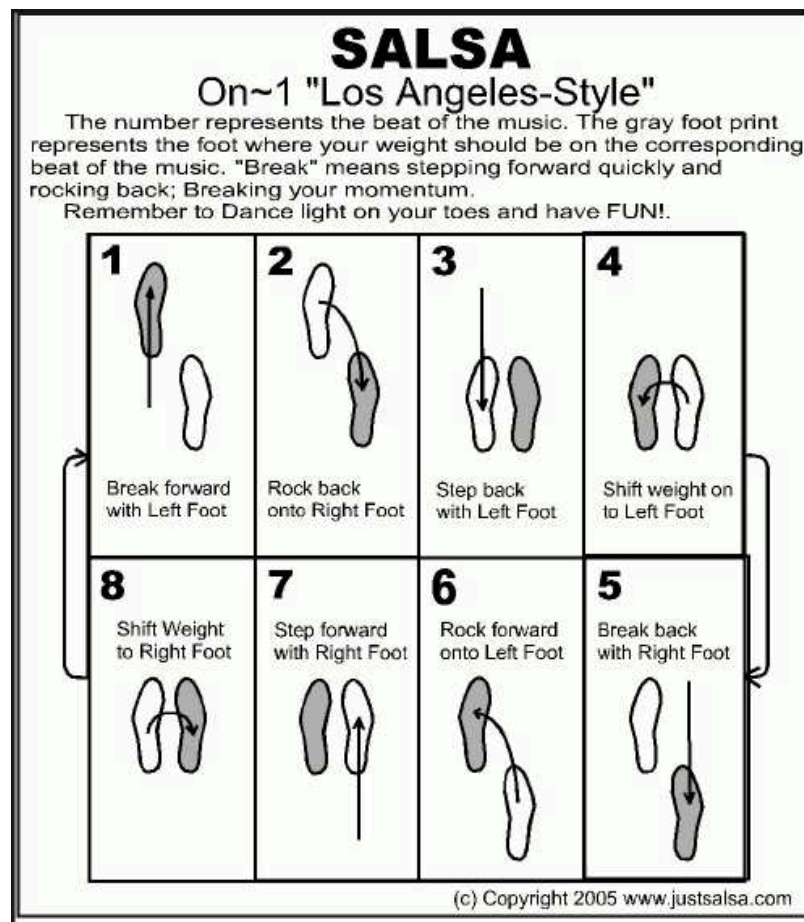
History of Salsa

As we learn different dance styles, it's important to understand the history behind them such as where they come from and the cultures that shaped them. Salsa is a perfect example of this fusion. Its foundations trace back to the Caribbean, where the Indigenous Taíno people used traditional percussion instruments (like early forms of maracas and güiros) that became core sounds in the music. African rhythms, brought forcibly through the transatlantic slave trade, added complex polyrhythms and call-and-response patterns that still define salsa's heartbeat today. And the partner-dance structure reflects strong Spanish influence, drawn from European court dances introduced during colonization. All of these elements merged in Cuba, the epicenter of salsa, where the term first described a style of Cuban music in the late 1930s before evolving into the vibrant partner dance we practice today. Salsa now includes many styles, from classic partner work to Rueda de Casino danced in a circle, and even the timing varies: here in LA we dance on1, while on2 is especially popular in New York.

Salsa Vida. (n.d.). History of Salsa Dance.

<https://www.salsavida.com/articles/history-of-salsa-dance/>

Salsa On1 Footwork



Salsa Dance Steps. (n.d.). JustSalsa.com. <http://www.justsalsa.com/salsa/dance/steps/>

Sample Salsa Dancing Videos

Here are some sample salsa dancing videos. These videos introduce many concepts that we didn't cover in our beginner lesson. For example you will see the partners dancing in closed form (where they dance pressed up against one another) which is much closer together than I demonstrated in our lesson, or even have their "shine" moments where they separate and dance individually for a few eight-counts. These videos will also exemplify advanced footwork and different types of turns. Pay attention to each dancer's stylization – those unique additions are how you add your own flavor to salsa dancing. While these videos might feel advanced, I think it's important to watch them, as they exemplify what salsa looks like "in the wild" as opposed to how they look in a classroom setting.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Df9GrBwgYjQ&list=RDQMJhnEK-itD5k&index=3>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwGp16NXgQU&list=RDQMJhnEK-itD5k&index=4>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0wyQKICKrM&list=RDQMJhnEK-itD5k&index=6>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGQHOajm7jQ&list=RDQMJhnEK-itD5k&index=8>

Here is a video of USC's very own latin dance team *Break on 2* performing at the popular LA latin dance venue *La Granada*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2xPHpurhq0>

If you are curious for a salsa on2 example

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/liisp01cNPA>

Suggested Readings

Exploures how salsa dance has emerged in the unites states, focusing on New York, Miami, and Los Angeles, also covers the history of salsa as a dance style.

McMains, J. E. (2015). *Spinning mambo into salsa: Caribbean dance in global commerce*. Oxford University Press.

An article about salsa dance performance which covers various spaces where salsa dance performance lives (including university dance teams like USC's Break on 2).

DANCE, S., & OWN, A. S. O. I. (2007). SALSA DANCE PERFORMANCE. *Technofuturos: Critical Interventions in Latina/o Studies*, 225, 269.

