

Types of Ballroom Dancing

With ballroom dancing growing in popularity, more and more people are choosing to learn how to dance. Until recently, ballroom dancing wasn't an ideal activity for everyone - it was mainly reserved for the older generations and the wealthy. When most people think of ballroom dancing, they tend to think of a gentle trot around the dance floor to slow, acoustic music. However, ballroom dancing involves so much more than a typical slow dance. There are several types of ballroom dancing, so let's take a look at the variations.

Believe it or not, the swing is actually a type of ballroom dance. This light-hearted dance involves concentrated footwork and lifting or twirling your partner. It became popular in the 1920's and was originally invented at the Savoy Ballroom in New York. A spin-off of the Lindy Hop, the swing dance combined fast twirls and steps to the beat of jazz music. Today, the swing dance is still performed in an old-fashioned manner using the exact same techniques developed decades ago.

The jive is a very popular form of ballroom dance that is closely related to the swing. It involves several of the same steps and techniques, but is more fast-paced and involves more movements of the arms rather than the legs and feet. Although considered to be a Latin dance, the jive became very popular in America during the 1950's "rock and roll" era. The basic concept of the jive involves changing the weight from one foot to another and is best performed to classical and upbeat music, such as oldies or jazz.

The paso doble is a Spanish dance that has become a favorite among ballroom dancing. This particular dance probably contains the most meaning and sentimental value among all ballroom dances. In the paso doble, the male represents the bull fighter while the female represents the cape of the matador. The dance is a symbolic representation of the bravery of bull fighters and their ability to tame the wild beast. It is dramatic in nature and the steps are quick, concise, and forceful.

The Rumba is a dance that demonstrates the unique love and attractions between a man and woman. It is based around the concept of a lady's pursuit of the man, with the steps representing the woman's charm. Often, the woman dances around the man and has quick and withdrawn steps, as the man pursues her. This is a Latin-based dance and is considered to be a very sensual performance in ballroom dancing.

The waltz is a dance that originated in Germany in the 17th century and is a familiar favorite among dances in the ballroom. The dance moves are smooth and

precise as the couple dances in a side to side motion, usually in a circular pattern. The waltz is a very popular dance in weddings and special events and is considered to be one of the most romantic dances.

Last but not least, the tango is a dance performed which demonstrates the history behind Argentinean cowboys and their dance partners from centuries ago. Often the cowboys would attend night clubs after a day of riding their horses and would not shower, which compelled the women to embrace them in the crook of the cowboy's right arm. This dance hold became a popular dance and soon developed into a favorite in ballroom dance. The dance moves are very sharp with quick head turns.