

Ballroom Dancing - The Viennese Waltz and the Quick Step

The Viennese Waltz which was derived from the Austrian Landler is an elegant fast paced, whirling dance where the partners hold each other as if in a romantic embrace. This raised more than a few eyebrows of "polite" society. The rise in popularity of the Viennese Waltz, like the standard waltz, can at least in part be contributed to the music of Johann Strauss and to Vienna's famous ballrooms. As with the standard waltz the music can be either vocal or instrumental and can be classical, country, or even rock.

The Viennese Waltz is a faster paced dance than the standard waltz which also makes it somewhat more challenging to do. Like the standard waltz the Viennese Waltz incorporates a simple, elegant rotation and swinging movements, though there should be no foot rise on the inner turns. The Viennese Waltz also requires a good deal of stamina, the equivalent, actually of the amount of energy that would be needed to dance a polka.

The Viennese Waltz uses a right turn (natural turn), a left turn (reverse turn) and two change steps that link the moves between the turns. Dancing the line of dance (direction of traffic - turning left at the corners of the dance floor) and rotating in a clockwise direction is the Natural Turn. Following the line of dance and rotating in a counter-clockwise direction is the Reverse Turn. The step links (change steps) allow you to change directions while still following the line of dance.

The step links are simply two normal steps down the line of dance followed by a third step sliding the moving foot to the standing foot. By performing a string of change figures you can work your way through the tight spots on a crowded dance floor then resume the rotation. The "sway" is simply leaning slightly in the opposite direction of the line of dance movement

• Ballroom Dancing - The Quick Step

The Quick Step: The Charleston, the Black Bottom, the Shimmy and probably a couple other dances all melded into a faster version of the Fox Trot, which in 1923 became known as the Quick Step. The evolution of the Quick Step ended with a dance that utilizes a lot of movement, hops, runs, Quick Steps and rotation. It is a very brisk, energetic dance that was developed with very fast paced jazz music from the ragtime era.

The Quick Step is a fast, happy, lighthearted dance, the footwork can be a little complex using a slow, quick, quick, slow, quick, quick tempo. Like other dances the slow steps on the heel, Quick Steps on the toes.

The Quick Step utilizes a fast paced up and down swing motion. It's important to look light on your feet even though the movements are powerful. Due to the quickness of the dance keeping in sync with your partner and trying to keep similar tension in the legs is a necessity. More so than the other dances facial expression is vital to express the fun aspect of the dance.