El Tango Argentino de Salon

As described by Nicanor M. Lima, Buenos Aires, ca. 1916
Reconstructed by Richard Powers

Men's steps are described. Women dance opposite, unless otherwise noted. The notation system is explained at the bottom.

II. Saltitos  Rapid movements

Saltito 1

Saltito 2

Saltito 3

Saltito 4

III. Pasos paseos  Traveling steps

Pasos paseos serenos

Pasos paseos acompasados

reaching forward (or back) with the free foot while settling down lower on the supporting foot.
Sometimes done swaying the body to the opposite side of the supporting foot.
Pasos paseos alternados

\[
\begin{array}{c}
W \ U \ L \ R \ L \ R
\end{array}
\]

one Pasos Serenos followed by one Pasos Acompasados, etc., like “a person who limps.”

You can also use these alternating steps to do vueltas, 3/4 vueltas, half vueltas, and quarter vueltas, either to the R or L.

Volcando el medio  Crossing over toward the center

In closed promenade position, this is leading the rear feet of both dancers to cross over the forward feet. The lead is clearly given.

Volcando afuera  Crossing over behind

This is leading both to cross behind.

Volcando el medio pattern  A symmetrical grapevine

\[
\begin{array}{c}
W \ U \ L \ R \ L \ R
\end{array}
\]

Woman dances mirror-image.

IV. Cruces de pies  Crossing the feet

Advancing:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
W \ U \ L \ R \ L \ R
\end{array}
\]

like a Serpentine. Woman crosses behind.

Cruces de pies laterales (Grapevine)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
W \ U \ L \ R \ L \ R \text{ or } L \ L \ R \ L \ R
\end{array}
\]

while the woman crosses either opposite or mirror-image.

- Possibly continue with a grapevine back to place, beginning with the other foot, as one changes back in the Paso Lateral.
- This may also be done “spinning” (girando), which might be counter-crossing.
V. Pasos de tango acompasados

These are any S-QQ combination of a Paso Paseo Sereno plus a Saltito

Avanzando  Advancing, a slow step plus Saltito #1

\[ \text{WP} \; \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \ \bullet \ \downarrow \\
\end{array} \text{ or } \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \ \downarrow \ \bullet \\
\end{array} \text{ or combine them } \text{WP} \; \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \ \bullet \ \uparrow \ \downarrow \ \bullet \ \uparrow \ \downarrow \ \\
\end{array} \]

Note: the 3rd step arcs to place, it doesn't brush by the L.

Retrocediendo

\[ \text{WP} \; \begin{array}{c} \downarrow \ \bullet \ \uparrow \\
\end{array} \text{ or } \begin{array}{c} \downarrow \ \uparrow \ \bullet \\
\end{array} \]

Slow step plus Saltito #2

\[ \text{WP} \; \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \ \bullet \ \downarrow \\
\end{array} \text{ a short step back, with a slight plié, immediately raising } \uparrow \text{ R} \]

Also do forward L, back R, and back R

Slow step plus Saltito #3

\[ \text{WP} \; \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \ \bullet \ \downarrow \ \text{ locking or } \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \ \bullet \ \uparrow \ \downarrow \ \\
\end{array} \text{ or } \text{WP} \; \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \ \bullet \ \uparrow \ \downarrow \ \bullet \ \uparrow \ \downarrow \ \\
\end{array} \]

VI. Vueltas  A spinning, traveling waltz-like turn.

\[ \text{WP} \; \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \ \bullet \ \downarrow \ \text{ locking or } \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \ \bullet \ \uparrow \ \downarrow \ \\
\end{array} \text{ or } \text{WP} \; \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \ \bullet \ \uparrow \ \downarrow \ \bullet \ \uparrow \ \downarrow \ \\
\end{array} \]

VII. Molinetes  Turns on the spot.

Almost any combination of walks, saltitos and crossings, turning in place.

- Same as French Rueda, R side pos, woman advancing, man is the axle, but the man steps in place w/o crossing feet. She may walk w/ slow or quick steps.

- Same, but she does a grapevine around him.

- Woman is the axle.

- Same as American Pomander turn, both advancing, neither is an axle.
VIII. Paso Lateral  Side steps

\[ \text{RLRL or RLRL} \] or to the other side

To change directions:

After \[ \text{RL} \] then \[ \text{LRL} \] approaching halfway \[ \text{R} \] Then go back \[ \text{LR} \] etc.

IX. Pique Acompasado  Quick alternating steps

\[ \text{LR} \] back in place \[ \text{LR} \] in place, repeat. Like a double hesitation.

Woman’s steps are not explained.

Corrida  His grapevine, but her side-close steps

He dances: \[ \text{LRLRLRLR} \] she does \[ \text{RLRL} \] etc.

X. El Ocho

\[ \text{RLRRLRLR} \] or \[ \text{RLRRLRLR} \]

or \[ \text{LRRLRLRLR} \] etc.

XI. Sentadas  Figures that pause, or "sit" on the rhythm. Some also have a sitting posture. French dance manuals called these Cortes.

The S-QQ or QQ-S timings on the following are not clear yet.

Sentada 1

\[ \text{R} \] or \[ \text{L} \] with a bit of a sitting posture

Sentada 2

\[ \text{LR LR} \] sitting
Sentada 3
\[ \circ WP LR LR \text{ sitting} \]

Sentada 4
\[ \circ WP LR LR \text{ sitting} \]

Sentada 5
\[ \circ WP LR LR \text{ sitting, with the same arcing, non-brushing path.} \]

Note: the 3rd step arcs to place; it doesn’t brush by the L

Sentada 6
\[ \circ CP WP LR LR \text{ sitting} \]

Sentada 7
\[ \circ WP LR \]

Sentada Unica
\[ \circ WP R PP LR LR CP \]

XII. Media Lunas  Short patterns that are repeated to the opposite side with the opposite feet.

Media Luna 1  “Sanjuanina”
\[ \circ WP LR LR LR \text{ sweeping the trailing foot as usual} \]
Media Luna 2 “vai-ven”

Media Luna 3 “jujeña”

Media Luna 4 “doble cuatro” or “riojana”

Media Luna 5 “salteña”

Media Luna 6 “Entrerriana”

Media Luna 7 “Santafecina”

Media Luna 8 “Mendocina”

Media Luna 9 “Tucumana”

Media Luna 10 “Porteña”

Crosses are diagonals, not tight crosses.
XIV. Terminaciones  Endings, or Salidas
He says that these conclude passages, and that he will describe twenty of them in Volume 2.

XV. Corridas  Runs
Four steps within one bar of music.

SOME SAMPLE NOTATION CODES:

- L  R  \( \uparrow \)  \( \uparrow \)  \( \downarrow \)  \( \downarrow \)
- slow  quick  step  fwd  point  without  weight  behind  R  close  L  to  R  with  weight  waltz  pos.
- \( W_P \)  \( R_S \)  \( \theta \)  \( 1/4 \)
- right  side  position  turn  to  the  right  (CW)  turn  1/4  CCW

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