

SLOW WALTZ VARIATIONS

AT THE 2011 SANTA CLARA WALTZ WEEKEND

Brief reminders of steps taught by Richard Powers and Angela Amarillas

One of the beauties of Box Step Waltz is that thousands of dancers already know it. Therefore it makes a convenient departure point for being creative.

BOX STEP WALTZ

He steps forward L, side R, close L to R with weight, back R, side L, close R to L with weight. She does the same pattern starting on the 4th step, back R.

TURNING BOX STEP WALTZ

This usually rotate CCW, reverse waltz. This doesn't have to be a Strictly Ballroom box step waltz, closing precisely on count 3 and turning 90°, but can be just a simple easygoing left turn waltz rotating as much as you wish.

BASIC TWO-STEP (Night Club Two Step)

Coming right out of a waltz step, she 1) steps side R, 2) rocks L behind R, 3) replace R, 4) Side L, 5) rocks R behind L, 6) replace L. He mirrors her. The very first time she is still stepping back R, not side, which isn't a problem.

LEAD'S COUNTER-SWAY (from the Bossa Nova)

It's the same but he points free foot to the opposite side of her rock-steps. If she seems uncertain as to what to do, he should join her in the rock steps the first time, before adding the opposing movement.

CROSS-THROUGH TRAVELING ZIGZAGS (from the Bossa Nova and other slow waltz)

He leads the Simple Two-Step but moves forward toward LOD, helping her over-rotate to cross R through, diagonally toward the outside wall, LOD, on 3. Repeat opposite.

WALK-AROUND DRAPE (from the Bossa Nova)

From Swingout handhold, he leads her to walk forward, toward his right side, as he crosses forward to his left, bring his R shoulder fwd into his R hand, placing her R hand on his R shoulder, and extending his L hand to the side, shoulder level. The entire time his R arm is floating out to his R side, palm down. His steps may be forward L, side R and back L. She walks forward behind his back to take his L hand with her L, and keeps walking fwd as he walks backward, 2 bars (these are bars 2 and 3, after wrapping in on the first.) Then his L hand leads her into an Inside Free Spin (she turns CW on the spot) as he stops in place, or heads toward his right a little. Catch hands to end with a rock step in swing-out position.

BREAKING OUT OF THE BOX

Follows travel *forward* through most variations. Since she walks forward on count 4 of the Box Step Waltz, this is the best time to break out of the closed frame.

THE BALLROOM TWINKLE (my least favorite name of a step ;)

He lets her back farther away on 1, begins to lead a cross-step on counts 2 and 3. (Lead's hint: also look toward your left.) Both cross rear foot through on ct 4, crossing through the "open side door" toward the held hands.

CROSS-STEP WALTZ VARIATIONS

Think of count 4 as count 1 of ANY cross-step waltz variation you know. You'll be phase-shifted off the music by one measure, but all of the variations still work.

RETURNING TO THE BOX STEP WALTZ FROM CROSS-STEP WALTZ

Cross-step on 1, side step squaring the frame on 2, close feet together on 3, begin a Box Step on 4. It's clearer of the transition is into a turning box.

PIVALOOP RETURN TO CLOSED BOX STEP WALTZ

From a Box Step Waltz, the Lead dives forward under his L arm on 4-5-6, breaking out of the box. Waltz-Walk traveling side-by-side on 1-2-3, raising inside held hand to shoulder height. Just before count 4 he drops the held hand down and back, to lead her into a CW Outside Turn on 4-5-6. This easily closes to a squared Box Step Waltz frame.