

How to Jazz

A SIMPLE
GUIDE TO
THE 1919
DANCES



by Monsieur Pierre

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THE WAY TO HOLD YOUR PARTNER.

FOREWORD.

THE aim of this little book is to present to the public a clear interpretation of the latest rages in the dancing world, with special reference to the all-conquering Jazz movements so much in vogue this season.

Every effort has been directed towards brevity, and it is confidently hoped that the simple language and straightforward diagrams will prove helpful to dancers of all degrees of proficiency, from beginners upwards.

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DIAGRAMS.

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| STRAIGHT JAZZ | 8 & 9 |
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NOTE.—In the above Diagrams the Right Foot is shown in Black.

I.

GRACE AND ELEGANCE.

SINCE you must walk before you can run, it is essential to devote a few lines to General Deportment in Modern Dancing before proceeding to illustrate any particular steps.

To-day a *smooth and graceful* movement is imperative. In fact, the main feature which distinguishes good from indifferent or bad dancing is *Style*.

Now Style cannot be attained unless a natural co-ordination of the actions of the body and limbs is carefully studied and observed in practice.

The following hints should expedite the desired result :—

Hold yourself erect as in ordinary walking, and do not look at your feet. Correct any tendency to bend your body in any way, and keep the shoulders level. The feet should pass each other in close alignment.

As the leg moves forward straighten the knee, and slightly withdraw the arm and shoulder on the same side, simultaneously. The knee of the rear leg is slightly bent.

In stepping backwards, point the toe well down, and gradually transfer the weight of the body to the

leg taking the step as the foot of the latter is inclined on the floor from toe to heel. The arm and shoulder on the same side should be slightly inclined forward.

THE WAY TO HOLD YOUR PARTNER.

The gentleman should place his right hand lightly on the lady's back, just beneath her left shoulder. The latter rests her left hand and arm easily on his right arm and shoulder, and extends her right arm in a graceful curve which is supported by the man's left arm.

II.

HOW TO STEER.

A CORRECT knowledge of steering is quite indispensable to anyone who wishes to dance well and in comfort. This is all the more important since variations nowadays do not follow in any definite order. They are introduced at will. Therefore, the man must guide his partner in such a way that she anticipates his every change of movement.

This is effected solely by varying actions of his right hand and arm—by slight pressure sideways, a gentle pull or by relaxation. These actions alter the lady's balance so that her body and feet automatically fall in the desired position.

In moving about a dancing room, the greatest attention ought to be paid to the "rule of the floor," which is anti-clockwise—i.e., from right to left.

If more dancers adhered to this rule, fewer collisions would occur—even in abnormally crowded rooms.

III.

THE JAZZ OR 1919 FOX-TROT.

THE latest development of the Fox-Trot is popularly known as the Jazz, and this fascinating form of dancing has now superseded those variations of the Fox-Trot introduced a few years ago.

The Jazz is a *three-step dance* done to *four beat time*. The three steps fall on the first three beats of the bar, the third being prolonged to last two beats, namely, the third and fourth.

There are three distinct movements, which may be described as the Straight Jazz, the Side Jazz and the Jazz-Roll. We will take them in this order.

THE STRAIGHT JAZZ.

This can be done either forwards or backwards. Start with a fairly long step on either foot, followed by a short one. The third step should be about the length of the first.

In taking the second step be careful to place the foot beyond the position reached by the other foot in the first step.

The weight of the body in the first step should be inclined with an easy lilt in the direction of movement, so that sufficient momentum is obtained to last through the three steps.

(For Diagrams see pages 8 and 9.)

Diagram I. STRAIGHT JAZZ.

3-4



3rd

2



2nd

1



1st

3-4



3rd

2



2nd

1



1st

Count
beats ↑



↑ Steps

Starting position

GENTLEMAN'S STEPS.

Diagram II. STRAIGHT JAZZ.

Starting position

Steps
↓



Count
beats ↓



1st



1

2nd



2

3rd



3-4

1st



1

2nd



2

3rd



3-4

LADY'S STEPS.

THE SIDE JAZZ.

Side steps are done alternately to the left and right. If to the left, step sideways with the left foot on the first beat and draw the right foot up close on the second beat. Then take another step to the left with the left foot, pausing on this for two beats—the third and fourth. Repeat to the right commencing with the right foot.

These side steps, when taken at a slight angle, are used to take corners and somewhat resemble the old Boston Step.

(For Diagrams see pages 12 and 13.)

THE JAZZ-ROLL.

This extremely popular movement differs from the Straight Jazz in the fact that the line followed represents a series of semi-circles alternating to the right and left, corkscrew-wise. (This will be clearly understood by glancing at Diagrams V. and VI.).

The steps are similar to those of the Straight Jazz, but the shoulders are swung round with an easy action, and the body inclined towards the centre of the semi-circle thus described.

The turning movement is started on the fourth beat of the bar, and completed on the first beat of the succeeding bar whilst the first step is being taken. Thus by the time the second step occurs the body will have effected fully the corkscrew figure.

The action of the Jazz-Roll is somewhat similar to skaters executing short Outside-Edges whilst facing each other. In fact, it is sometimes called the "Skating Step."

Usually the movement is effected by the man going backwards, but the position may be reversed.

(For Diagrams see pages 14 and 15.)

Diagram III. JAZZ SIDE-MOVEMENT.

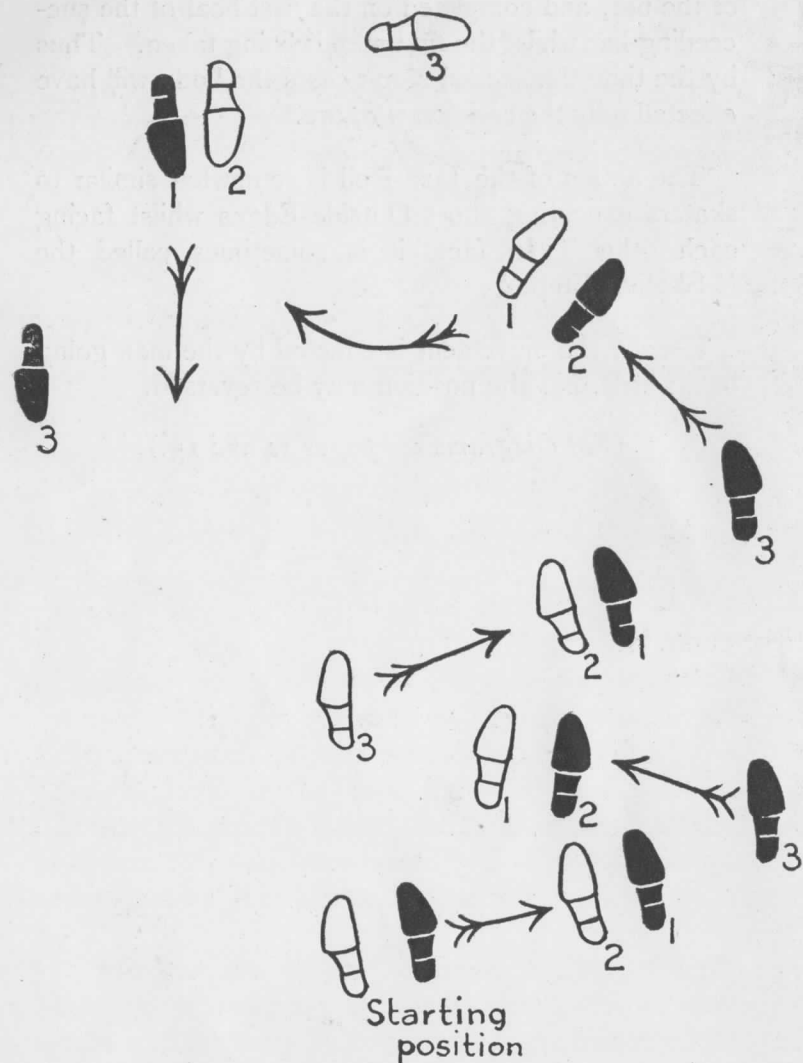


Diagram IV. JAZZ SIDE-MOVEMENT.

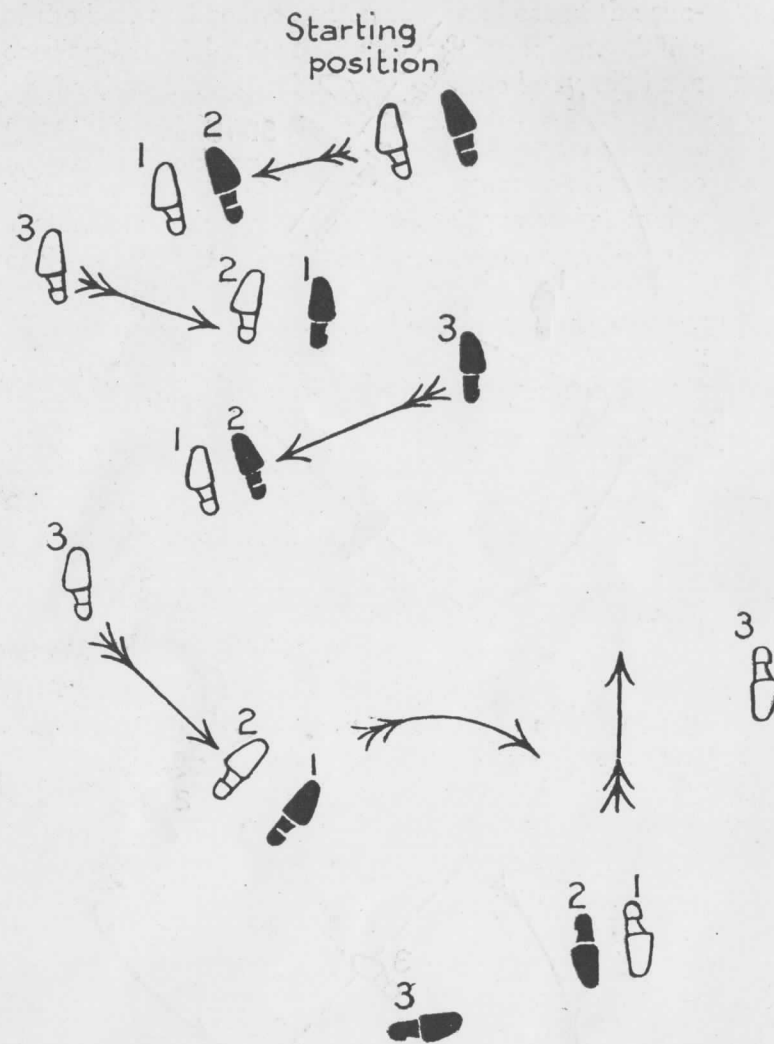
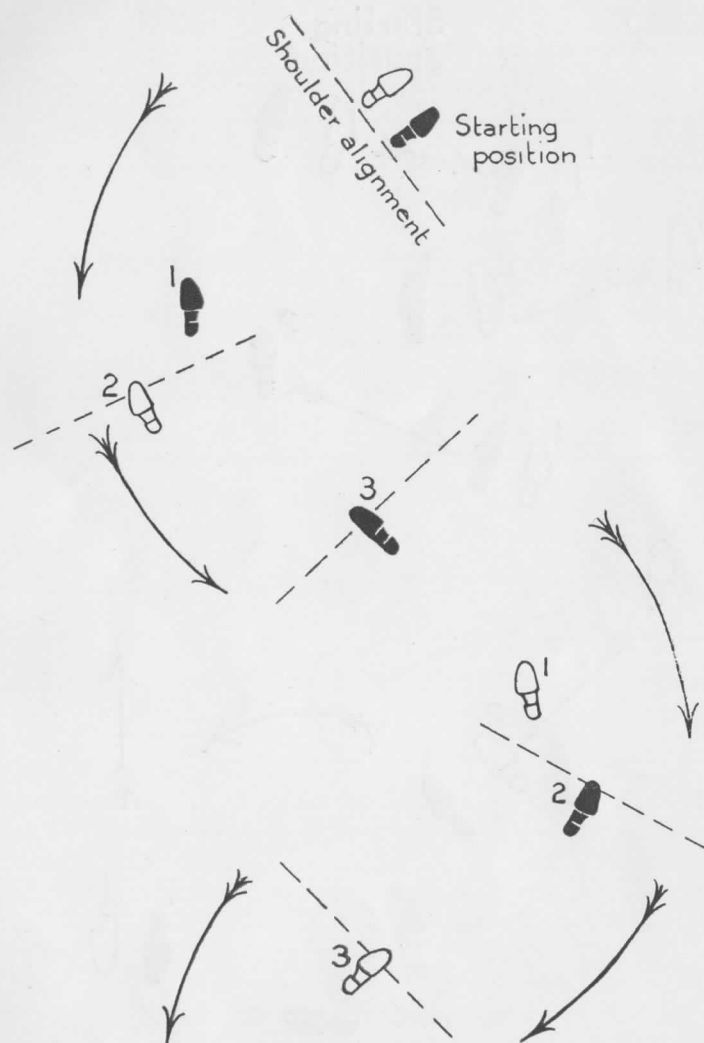


Diagram V.

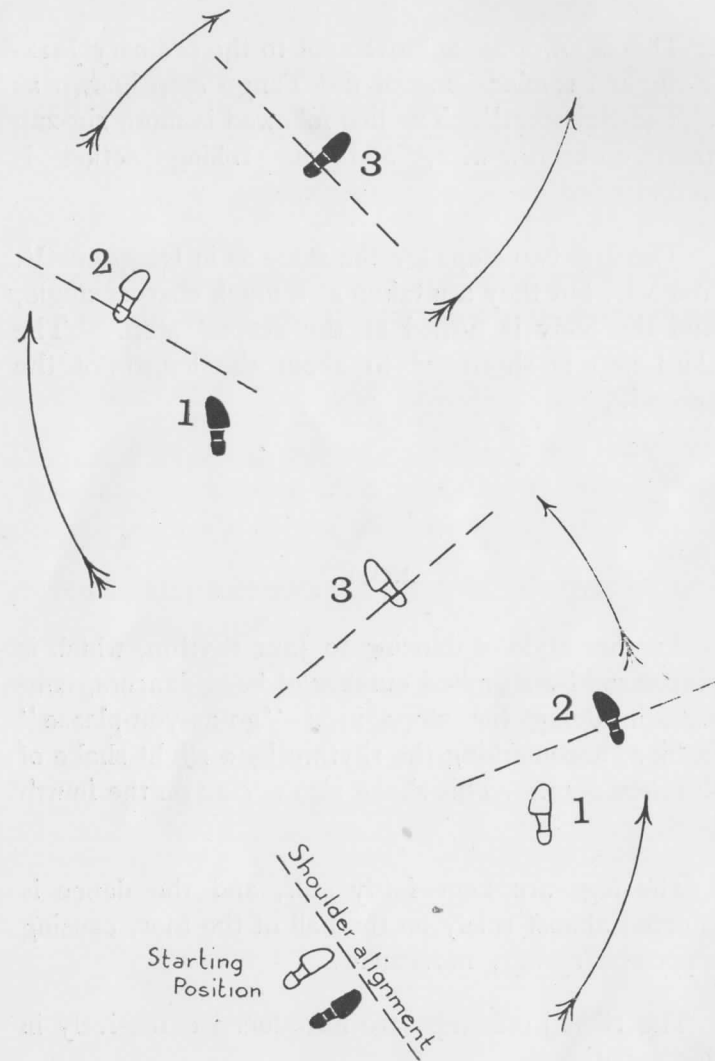
JAZZ-ROLL.



GENTLEMAN'S STEPS.

Diagram VI.

JAZZ-ROLL.



LADY'S STEPS.

THE TANGO JAZZ-ROLL.

This is an optional movement to the ordinary Jazz-Roll, and reminds one of the Tango step known as "The Scissors." The line followed is more zig-zag than corkscrew-wise, and the rolling action is accentuated.

The first two steps are the same as in Diagrams V. and VI., but they are taken at a much sharper angle, and the body is turned at the second step. The third step is shortened to about the length of the second.

NOTE.

Another style of dancing to Jazz rhythm, which is patronised by a limited number of keen dancers, consists in doing the steps in a "go-as-you-please" fashion, and marking the rhythm by a slight shake of the shoulders. This shake also occurs on the fourth beat.

The legs are kept fairly stiff, and the dance is effected almost solely on the ball of the foot, causing a peculiar springy movement.

The Side Jazz steps are introduced extensively in this variation.

IV.

THE ONE-STEP OR RAG.

THIS invigorating dance is done to quick ragtime music, and is really a fairly fast walk forwards and backwards.

The corners are taken by moving one foot in the required direction and moving the other close up, keeping even time, to allow the shoulders to be brought round gradually as the movement occurs.

In walking forwards this same side step can be introduced as a variation.

An occasional change seen in the One Step is the Twist or Twirl. In this the two dancers spin progressively from left to right, keeping their right feet rigid and close together in the centre of the circle.

V.

THE HESITATION VALSE.

THERE are four steps in the Hesitation Valse. The first three fall on the three beats of the bar in valse time, *but the fourth occupies the whole of the succeeding bar.*

Gentleman's Step.—Take the first step with the right foot, the second with the left. In the third step the right foot is drawn close to the left one, the latter taking the fourth and remaining on the floor for the next three beats.

During this Hesitation Step the disengaged foot is swung slowly past the one resting on the floor.

The movement is re-started on the right foot so that the Hesitation or pause of three beats *always occurs on the left foot.*

Lady's Step.—This is the same as for the man, but with opposite feet.

Difficulty is frequently experienced in this dance in

respect to steering, which, however, can be simplified by observing the following rules :—

The man should start the dance by proceeding forwards with a few walking-steps, reminiscent of the *Lame Duck Walk*, counting One as the right foot touches and Two-Three as the left foot goes down, and repeat until ready to start the Hesitation Step, when the right foot operates as described previously.

Do one Hesitation backwards, and make a half-turn whilst doing the next One-Two-Three step to your left. Next Hesitate going forwards, make another half-turn, this time to the right, and Hesitate backwards.

When coming to a corner, pivot with the left foot on the Hesitation Step until the turn is effected.

(For Diagrams see pages 20 and 21.)

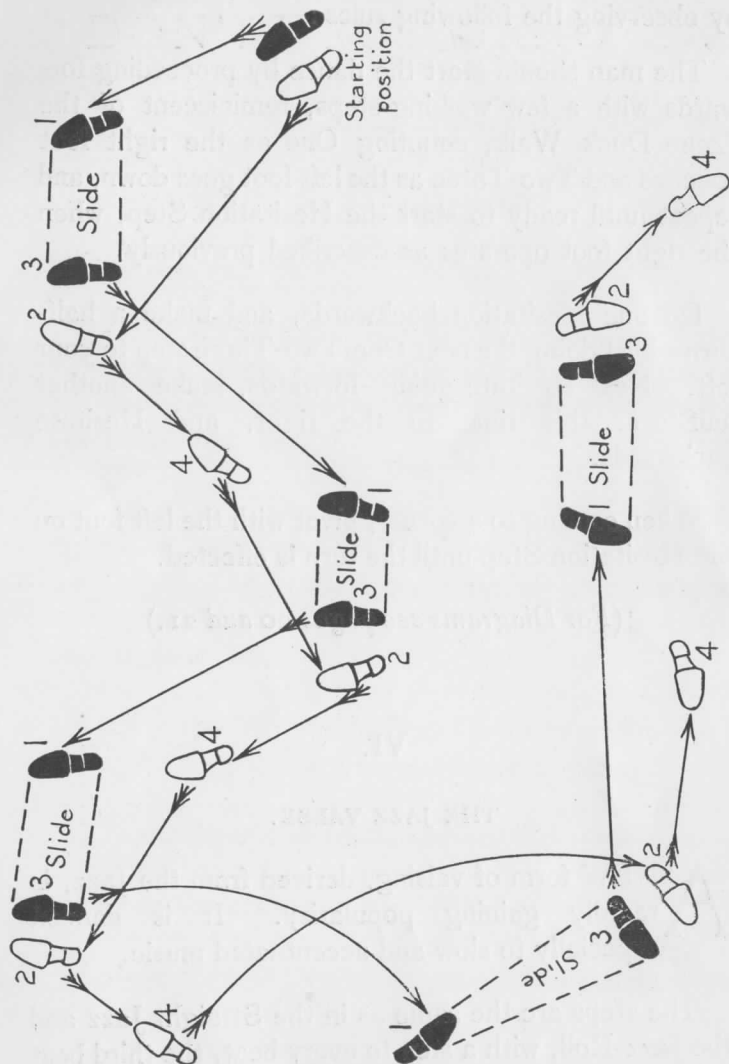
VI.

THE JAZZ VALSE.

A NEW form of valseing, derived from the Jazz, is rapidly gaining popularity. It is danced especially to slow and accentuated music.

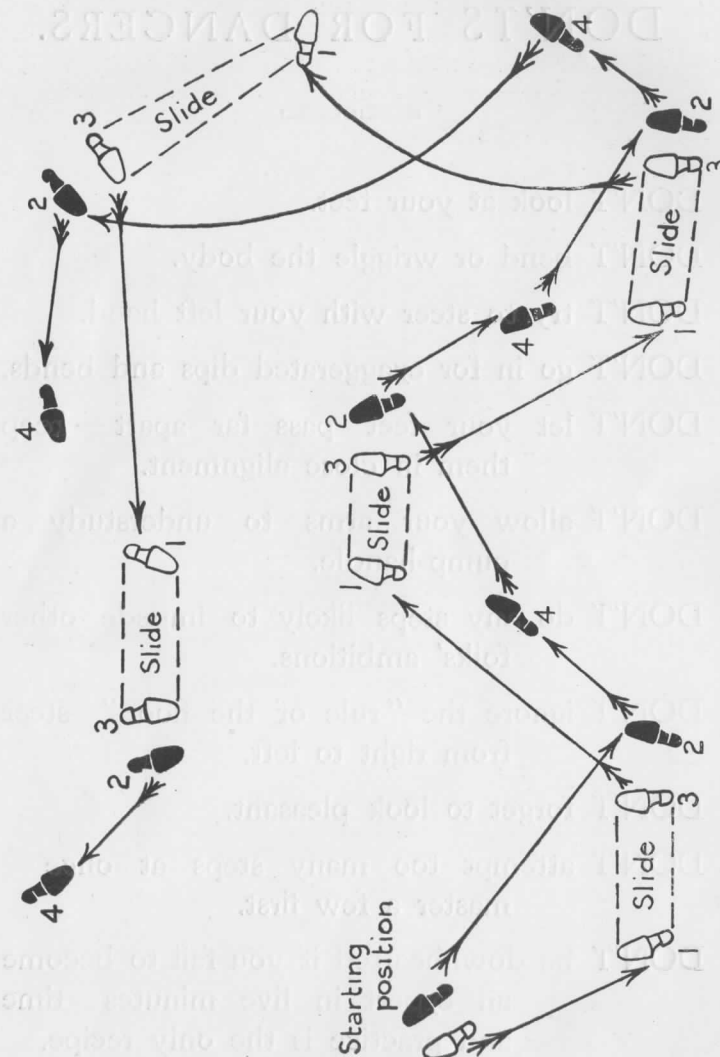
The steps are the same as in the *Straight Jazz* and the *Jazz-Roll*, with a step to every beat, the third beat being somewhat accentuated.

Diagram VII. HESITATION VALSE.



GENTLEMAN'S STEPS.

Diagram VIII. HESITATION VALSE.



LADY'S STEPS.

DON'TS FOR DANCERS.



DON'T look at your feet.

DON'T bend or wriggle the body.

DON'T try to steer with your left hand.

DON'T go in for exaggerated dips and bends.

DON'T let your feet pass far apart—keep them in close alignment.

DON'T allow your arms to understudy a pump-handle.

DON'T do any steps likely to impede other folks' ambitions.

DON'T ignore the "rule of the floor"—steer from right to left.

DON'T forget to look pleasant.

DON'T attempt too many steps at once—master a few first.

DON'T be downhearted if you fail to become an expert in five minutes—time and practice is the only recipe.

