

Slow Two Step Is Smooth and Flowing

by Harold & Meredith Sears

The name Slow Two Step is a bit of a misnomer in that the tempo really isn't particularly slow. It is slower than most of our regular Two Steps but about the same as Waltz or Foxtrot, maybe 28–35 measures per minute. But most Slow Two Step figures do begin with a slow count, a slow side step that feels lazily drawn out.



For instance, the **Slow Two Step Basic** is done in a facing position, perhaps butterfly or closed position. We step side with the lead foot, cross behind (woman also) with the trail foot, and recover (sqq); repeat with the trail foot: side, cross behind, and recover. Don't rush that slow initial step. We step side, reaching, drawing the toes out there, flowing smoothly to the side step. Use all the music that is there in the first slow beat.

Sometimes we think of the second and third steps as a "rock-recover," but the rocking step is pretty tight. Don't make it a rock apart, as you might in Swing, and don't give it a bounce as you might in Jive. Slow Two Step isn't jivey—it's smooth. Don't rise to your toes and pop up like a jack-in-the-box. Don't let your body weight fall back. Don't really even take weight fully on the behind step, but turn the foot out, place toe to heel of the supporting foot, and push back in a springy sort of way. You can even reach on the third step, making it more of a flowing thru step, rather than a simple recover step. Either way, we want horizontal elasticity in the arms, not vertical bounce in the legs.

The Basic is a figure that stays in place. **Traveling Chasses** is a figure that progresses. We might be in a cuddly low butterfly facing line of dance. Step forward with the lead foot (woman back) turning 1/8 left-face. Step side toward diagonal line and wall, and then close left to right

(woman right to left). In the second measure, step forward and turn 1/4 RF to face diagonal line and wall, step side, and close. Often, we repeat this figure, turning to the diagonal each time, leading with the man's right shoulder and then his left.

Notice that we both turn the same direction, first left and then right. The idea is to keep the shoulders parallel and to "slice" forward with the body at an angle, swaying a bit to the man's left and then to the man's right. Also, keep tone in the arms. The man pushes forward as though pushing a wheelbarrow, curving it a little left and then a little right. The woman's arms must be toned, too, giving him something to push against. If you find it difficult to remember which way to turn your body, just think that these are *traveling* chasses. To make the side step a traveling step, you must turn toward the foot that took the forward step—first left, and then right.

Finally, let's try to take our steps ball-flat rather than heel-toe. On a side step, let the inside edge of the ball of the foot contact the floor first, and then softly roll onto the flat of the foot. On a forward step, reach out with an extended foot, let the ball of the foot touch first, and then lower to the whole flat of the foot. Walking heel to toe introduces foot rise into our dancing. We do this in Foxtrot and especially in Waltz. Walking ball-flat keeps us more level. Slow Two Step is a smooth, flat, gliding, elastic style of dance.

Annette's addition:



It's always interesting to know where a rhythm come from. "The Night Club Two Step" is often the name under which "our" STS is known. Here is some information I have put together from bits and pieces found on the Internet:

Night Club Two Step is a slow, romantic, floaty dance that features rock steps and long glides across the dance floor. It is done to contemporary and popular ballads.

History

Nightclub Two Step is one of the most practical and versatile social dances ever conceived. It is designed to be used with contemporary soft rock ("love song" type of music). This type of music is common just about everywhere: nightclubs, radio etc.

This simple romantic dance fills a gap where no other ballroom dance fits. It gives the dancer, either beginning or advanced, the opportunity to express and create without a rigid technique being required.

Dance Characteristics

Nightclub Two Step is an easy dance that almost anyone can learn. Its key characteristic is a rock step (5th position break) followed by a side step with a slight sway. The frame is relaxed somewhere between a Latin and Ballroom frame – similar to a Bolero frame with a little more distance between the partners.

The Creator



Buddy Schwimmer is a well-known Swing instructor based out on the West Coast. He was born into a family of dance champions. As a 15-year-old teenager Mr. Schwimmer developed Night Club when he noticed that most of his friends just stood still and clung to their dates when romantic songs like "Soul and Inspiration" by the Righteous

Brothers were played at their parties. Acknowledging that there were some virtues to a 3-minute standing clench, Mr. Schwimmer still figured there had to be a more interesting alternate style of dance than that. Finding none, he invented his own dance and called it the "**Nightclub Twostep**".

Spanning the years from the 30s classic "Stardust" to the Disco era classic "Lady in Red" to the more recent hit "Circle of Life" from the "Lion King", over time as Mr. Schwimmer has refined his dance and added patterns, **Night Club** has been growing in popularity across the country on a steady basis.

The dance is versatile enough to be danced to any 72-90 beat per minute romantic song there is if that is what you wish to do. **Night Club** spans an enormous range of music from an In Sync love ballad to a Gloria Estafan Latin torch song to a Platters hit from the 50s to Bill Withers' 70s hit "Ain't No Sunshine When She's Gone". Up to now, most of you either found your seat or did the vertical Bear Hug when songs like these were played. **Night Club** gives you a fascinating alternative!



Musical Information

Time signature: 4/4

Tempo: 16-22 measures per minute

Timing: 1&2, 3&4, 5&6, 7&8

Beat value: $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ - 1

This seems to indicate that it is danced QQS rather than SQQ – it all depends on which beat you start, of course.

Here is a You Tube link for a demonstration

http://images.google.be/imgres?imgurl=http://www.321danser.com/images/Photo%2520Images/2009_05_15Don/images/MVI_1925a.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.321danser.com/joey.html&usq=_6y7KhciLtaqNkK66xllmO0dVBAI=&h=263&w=350&sz=40&hl=en&start=24&sig2=Uz3cYyAsguDVFDroqe6Wbw&tbnid=pC4XnJ3vw8HsnM:&tbnh=90&tbnw=120&prev=/images%3Fq%3DNight%2Bclub%2Btwo%2Bstep%26gbv%3D2%26ndsp%3D18%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DN%26start%3D18&ei=D7BBS6iPI8mOjAfX-aStDQ