

THE RUMBA

The Rumba, originally from Cuba, is unique among ballroom dances. The music has a seductive, primitive charm, and yet, when correctly danced, the Rumba is as smooth as the Fox Trot, as decorous as the Waltz. The one essentially different characteristic of the Rumba is hip motion. When you dance the Waltz or the Fox Trot, you place your weight on each foot as you take a step. But in the Rumba, you place each foot first before transferring the weight.

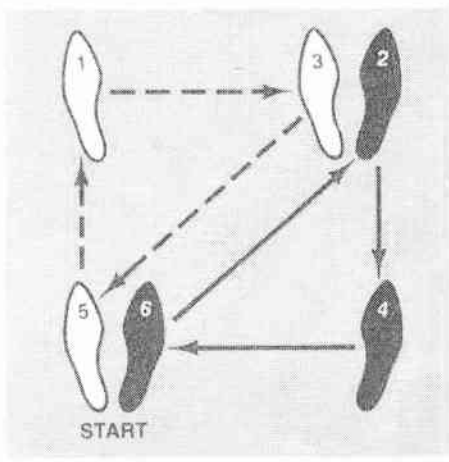
Here is the trick of getting the Rumba motion. As you take each step with a slightly bent knee, keep your weight on the other foot. Then transfer the weight to free the other foot for the next movement. For instance, when you step forward with your left foot, your left knee is bent and your weight remains behind on your right foot. The effect, which is the same as when walking up a flight of stairs, results in the slight rhythmical swaying of the hips known as Rumba motion. And although learning the motion takes time, you will find that it is also indispensable in doing the Cha-Cha, Merengue, Mambo, and other Latin dances.

To practice the Rumba motion: Start with your feet together. Without moving your body forward, take a short step forward with your left foot, bending your left knee . . . and as you bend your left knee, be sure that your weight is on your right foot. (When you bend your knee be sure that you do not stoop. The body should be held erect.) Your right foot should be flat on the floor, with your right knee straight. Transfer your weight to your left foot as you straighten your left knee.

Now repeat the step with your right foot. Take a short step forward. The right knee should be bent, with the weight on the left foot and the left knee straight. Transfer your weight to your right foot as you straighten your right knee.

Start forward now, stepping slowly as described, first left, then right. If you hold your hands on your hips as you walk, you will notice that your weight shifts from side to side. That is the Rumba motion. That's all there is to it. You don't have to swing your hips or consciously move any other part of your body.

Now practice the motion to *Dance Party* Rumba music. When you have mastered it, adapt it to the Rumba steps shown here, accenting the slow count.



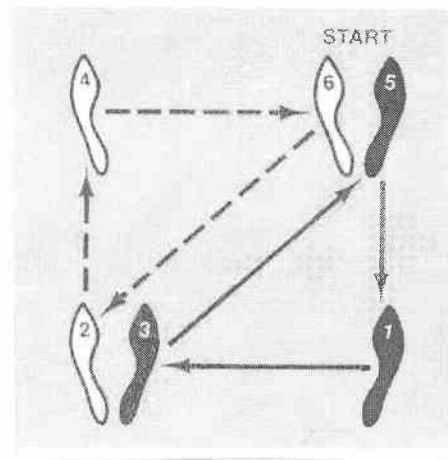
The Rumba Box Step

MAN'S PART

1. Step forward with left foot (slow).
2. Step to right with right foot (quick).
3. Bring left foot next to right (quick).
4. Step back with right foot (slow).
5. Step to left with left foot (quick).
6. Bring right foot next to left (quick).

WOMAN'S PART

1. Step back with right foot (slow).
2. Step to left with left foot (quick).
3. Bring right foot next to left (quick).
4. Step forward with left foot (slow).
5. Step to right with right foot (quick).
6. Bring left foot next to right (quick).



The Open Rumba Walk

The Open Rumba Walk is a most effective-looking pattern. The man takes very small steps throughout.

MAN'S PART

- 1, 2, 3. Release your right-hand hold of your partner on count 1 and lead her with your left hand to take the first three counts of the Left Box Turn. You will be in what is called open dance position as you turn and step forward with your left foot (slow), to right side with right foot (quick), and bring left foot next to right (quick).
- 4, 5, 6. Lead your partner to step forward as you step back with right foot (slow), with left foot (quick), and again with right foot (quick), circling to your right.
- 1, 2, 3. Continue stepping back left, right, left, still circling to your right.
- 4, 5, 6. Bring your partner back to closed dance position as you dance counts 4, 5, and 6 of the Rumba Box Step.

WOMAN'S PART (Open Rumba Walk)

(Study the man's part at left below before attempting your own part.)

- 1, 2, 3. As the man releases his right-hand hold, he will lead you to step into the first three counts of the woman's part of the Left Box Turn, starting back on your right foot.
- 4, 5, 6. The man will lead you to progress forward, circling right and stepping with left foot, right foot, and left again (slow, quick, quick).
- 1, 2, 3. You will continue circling right and stepping forward, right foot, left, right.
- 4, 5, 6. The man will resume regular closed dance position as he leads you in counts 4, 5, and 6 of the woman's part of the Rumba Box Step.