



# UCWDC® Judge Certification Couples Dance Fundamentals Curriculum

## Section 1: The Dances – Basic Concepts

### Triple Two, Polka, Nightclub, Cha Cha, Waltz, Two Step, East Coast, and West Coast Swing

#### I. Core Concepts - 8 Dances

##### A. Timing

1. Definitions
  - a. Time Signatures: Waltz: 3/4, all other dances 4/4.
  - b. Dancer's Timing: Stepping on the correct beat of the music with relations to figures/patterns in each dance.
  - c. Strike of Weight & Degree of Weight Change
    - i. Part of the moving foot makes contacts with the floor.
    - ii. Transfer of weight from one foot to the other.
    - iii. Amounts of weight transfer.

##### B. Rhythm

1. Definitions
  - a. Rhythm (Music Definition): Regular occurrence of accented beats.
  - b. Rhythm: (Dance Definition): Accented steps that correspond to the regular beats.
  - c. Syncopation (Music Definition): Temporary displacement of accented beats.
  - d. Syncopation (Dance Definition): A change in regular accented beats for a limited time and return to normal rhythm.
2. Measured Vs. Non-Measured
  - a. Measured Dance: figures/patterns continually match measures of music.
  - b. Non-Measured dance: are based on 6 counts and do not match each measure.
3. Dance Rhythms
  - a. Audio Recognition: Various ways to vocally express rhythm(s) of each dance.
  - b. Visualization of Rhythm: Movement depicts rhythm(s) of the dance, apparent in time value of steps.

##### C. Motion

1. Definitions
  - a. Repetitive Action which defines the dance.
  - b. Repetitive Actions which facilitate the dance.
  - c. Occurs through weight changes and rhythm.
2. Visualization of Motion
  - a. Match movement and steps to accented beats.
  - b. Acceleration and Deceleration
  - c. Difference in time value of steps specific to the dance

##### D. Character



# UCWDC® Judge Certification Couples Dance Fundamentals Curriculum

## Section 1: The Dances – Basic Concepts

### Triple Two, Polka, Nightclub, Cha Cha, Waltz, Two Step, East Coast, and West Coast Swing

1. Definitions
  - a. Culmination of Timing, Rhythm and Motion
  - b. Emotional context per dance
  - c. Story Line
2. Visualization of Character

#### **E. Defining the Dance**

1. Definitions - “Signature Figures” and “Signature Variations”
  - a. A particular series of steps (patterns/figures) common to each dance
  - b. Identifies the foundation of the dance.
  - c. Signature figure variations build upon the foundation of the base figure.
2. “Signature Figures & Variations” Implications
  - a. Must be present throughout a majority of the dance.
  - b. Absence or lack of indicates the dance is not defined.

#### **F. Spatial Structure**

1. Definitions
  - a. Organized collection of signature figures which visually show the expected use of the floor.
  - b. Appropriate Collection of Signature Figures & Variations
2. Progressive Spatial Structure
  - a. Counterclockwise movement around the floor.
  - b. Natural flow of the dance must be maintained.  
Examples: Triple Two: wide weaving, curving, banking.  
Waltz: diagonal, linear, rotational.  
Polka: narrow weaving, rotating, streamlining.  
Two Step: weaving, streamlining, catapulting.
  - c. Phrase changes should address an appropriate wall.
  - d. Ninety degree turns perpendicular to the edge of the floor, used to block choreography to face the front are only allowed at the end of a wall; curving or angling is appropriate.
3. Non-Progressive Spatial Structure (West Coast and Nightclub)
  - a. Basic pattern begins with a slot parallel to the edge of the floor.
  - b. Natural flow and figures of the dance must be maintained.
  - c. Geometric shapes are appropriate.  
Examples: West Coast: swing in a rectangle or sets of boxes  
Nightclub: diamonds, squares, and circles



# UCWDC® Judge Certification Couples Dance Fundamentals Curriculum

## Section 1: The Dances – Basic Concepts

### Triple Two, Polka, Nightclub, Cha Cha, Waltz, Two Step, East Coast, and West Coast Swing

4. Non-Progressive Spatial Structure - Cha Cha and East Coast
  - a. Patterns may or may not travel from the starting position.
  - b. Travel may occur when open space is available and must not interfere with another couple.
  - c. Patterns may or may not return to the original position.
  - d. Patterns may be linear and/or rotational.