"This is the One Step, and this is all there is to it. There are very many different figures, but they are in this same strict tempo. It is simply one step---hence its name."

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Fox Trot music is usually played in 4/4 meter (four beats in a measure with a strong accent on the first beat and a secondary accent on the third beat). The speed or tempo varies and is referred to as fast, medium, or slow. The way in which much of today's popular dance music is played was called Fox Trot music during the 1920's and 1930's.

In order to better understand how Slows and Quicks are combined into different rhythmic patterns the following analysis is given:-

(a) ____ ____ ____ ____ or ____ ____ ____ ____
     1   2   3   4   1   &   2   &

These lines represent pulse beats. Note they are the same length (size in space) and represents the same length in time. Example; each beat could be a second.

(b) _____ _____ or ____ ____ ____ ____
    1   2   1   2   3   4

These lines represent pulse beats but notice that these two beats are equal to 4 beats in (a) both in length (size) and in time endurance.

Line (a) are quick beats with each beat receiving a count. Line (b) are slow beats with each beat receiving 2 counts. In this case 2 quicks are equal to 1 slow and 4 quicks equal 2 slows.

By combining these SLOW and QUICK beats in different sequences, various rhythm patterns can be made which can be repeated or precede a different arrangement. Usually, however, in Fox Trot quick beats are always in even number (-2-4-6-8), whereas, slow beat may occur in any number.

(c) QUICK   QUICK   QUICK   QUICK
    1   2   3   4

(d) SLOW   SLOW
    1   2   1   2

(e) QUICK   QUICK   SLOW
    1   2   3   4

(f) SLOW _____ QUICK ____ QUICK ____
   1   2   3   4

Longer Rhythm Patterns

(g) QUICK ____ QUICK ____ SLOW _____ SLOW _____
   1   2   3   4   5   6

(h) SLOW _____ SLOW _____ QUICK ____ QUICK ____
   1   2   3   4   5   6

(i) SLOW _____ QUICK ____ QUICK ____ SLOW _____
   1   2   3   4   5   6

(j) SLOW _____ SLOW _____ QUICK ____ QUICK ____ SLOW _____
   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8

These rhythm patterns are sometimes called long and short: one long is equal to 2 shorts. Now if the dancer walks or steps (changing weight from one foot to the other) on the QUICK beats his rhythm is steady and even and his steps are short. Likewise, stepping on each SLOW beat his rhythm is steady and his steps are long and slower.

The first Fox Trot is described as 4 slow steps and 8 quick running steps and the rhythm lines would appear as

SLOW ____ SLOW ____ SLOW ____ SLOW ____ Q __ Q __ Q __ Q __ Q __ Q __ Q __ Q __
 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8

Through the years the sequence of S and Q changed and shorter patterns (previously described) were more suitable.

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