

Argentine Tango Steps and Styling

Basic Tango Position

It is almost an embrace. The couple is facing each other. Upper body is erect, knees are slightly flexed.

M's R hand is on W's R shldr blade and he offers his L hand to the W. M's elbow is very close to his waist without touching it and his hand (the palm) is facing the L side of his chest. His head is slightly turned to his L (like looking at his L hand). His feet are together with his toes toward W's feet, which are also together facing his feet with her toes. Leave a few inches of space between your toes and your ptrs' toes.

W's L arm embraces M (with the upper part of her arm touching his R arm at biceps level and the palm of her L hand resting on his R shoulder blade). With the R hand, W holds M's L hand. Her head is slightly turned to her R (like looking at their hands).

Basic Step and Styling

The basic step is performed in 8 cts. Start with the R ft for the M (or leader) and with the L ft for the W (or follower). Meas are not given because the leader can vary the timing of each pattern, taking it across the musical phrases.

Cts

Pattern

Man:

- 1 Small step bkwd on R.
- 2 Side step on L to L.
- 3 Long step fwd on R, stepping so that their R outside thighs touch lightly.
- 4 Step fwd on L.
- 5 Step fwd on R twd L (feet together pos); back to Basic Tango pos.
- 6 Step fwd on L between the W's feet (almost touching her L leg, inside, knee level).
- 7 Side step on R to R,
- 8 Step on L toward R (feet together pos).

Woman:

- 1 Step fwd on L.
- 2 Side step on R to R.
- 3 Long step bkwd on L, touching his R leg lightly, outside, thigh level,
- 4 Long step bkwd on R.
- 5 Leaving R ft in place, step on L across over her R ft with L ft into parallel pos with R ft and touching it. Take wt.
- 6 Long step on R diag bkwd R.
- 7 Side step on L to L.
- 8 Step on R toward L (feet together pos).

Styling: In general, M always walks fwd and W bkwd. Both, M and W have their body weight lightly fwd, leaning on each other a little, When they walk (fwd, bkwd, or sideward) their feet are in a natural parallel position (no turn out); stepping first on the toes, then ball of the foot, then heel. When they go from one step to another, they always pass by feet together position, without stopping or waiting.

Ocho (eight)

It is performed by W only and also it is the only W's step with its own name, because all the other figures are named after M's steps.

It is the most traditional figure and one of the most important because from this figure the M can perform almost endless variations. Its name came from the drawing of the number 8 on the floor with her toes.

A complete Ocho is performed in 2 cts with 4 movements and the M leads the figure, which can be done fwd, bkwd, or sideward.

Ocho forward: This step can be inserted after ct 5 of Basic Step.

<u>Cts</u>	<u>Pattern</u>
&	Feet together wt on the L ft, pivot lightly CCW to face the L diag. fwd.
1	Step fwd on R.
&	Bring the L ft to the R ft (feet together) and pivot lightly CW to the R, wt on the R ft.
2	Step fwd on L.

Men leading Ocho forward

<u>Cts</u>	<u>Pattern</u>
&	Feet together, wt on the R ft, wait until the W is in feet together pos or with her wt on her L ft, then pivot CCW to the L diag fwd making her pivot with his upper body (frame).
1	Step on L ft diag bkwd to R.
&	Twist the frame (upper body) to R, leading the W's pivot, and bring R ft over L ankle.
2	Step fwd on R following her step.

To repeat, Twist frame to L, leading W's pivot, and bring L ft behind R ankle (ct &).

The Ochos can be performed as many times as the leader wants, but always on even counts.

Ocho backward: This step can be inserted after ct 2 of Basic Step.

<u>Cts</u>	<u>Pattern</u>
&	Feet together wt on the R ft, pivot CCW to face diag L fwd.
1	Step bkwd on L.
&	Bring the R ft to the L ft (no wt) and pivot CW to face slightly diag R fwd.
2	Step bkwd on R.

Men leading Ocho backward

<u>Cts</u>	<u>Pattern</u>
&	Feet together, M wt on L ft (W wt on R ft), twist the frame to the L to make W pivot to M's L and step onto R beside L.
1	Step diag fwd on L to L, (following W's step), wt on L.
&	Twist the frame CW to the R (when the W has wt on her L ft) to make her pivot bringing R ft beside L (no wt).
2	Step diag fwd on R to R, following W's step. Take wt on R.

Giros (turns) Women

From the 5th pos of the Basic Step, the following steps complete a half circular path around M's R side.

<u>Cts</u>	<u>Pattern</u>
&	Bring L ft to R ft (no wt) and pivot 180o on R CW to R.
1	Step fwd on L ft, twist upper body to L to face M's upper body.
&	Pivot on L CCW to L, bringing R ft beside L (no wt), facing M.
2	Step on L to L, (wt on both ft).
&	Bringing R ft to L ft (no wt), pivot on L CCW to L, keeping upper body facing M's upper body.
3	Step bkwd on R crossing behind own L ft.
uh	Bring L to R (no wt) while pivoting CW to R, keeping facing ptr with upper body.
&	Step on L to L (wt on both ft).
uh	Bring R to L (no wt) pivoting CW on R to R.
4	Step fwd on R.

Styling: Pivots are led by W's hips, but only to the degree that her hips are 90o to M's hips. W follows a circular path around M ... sometimes twist at the waist to keep the facing.

The following steps complete a half turn to M's L side.

<u>Cts</u>	<u>Pattern</u>
&	Bring L ft to R ft (feet together pos) and pivot on R to R.
1	Step fwd on L fwd, twist to L to face M's upper body.
&	Pivot on L to L (feet together pos) with wt on L, facing M.
2	Step on R to R, wt in center.
&	Bringing L ft to R ft (no wt) pivot on R to L, keeping upper body facing M's upper body.
3	Step bkwd on L.
uh	Bring R to L (no wt) while pivoting to R, keeping facing M
&	Step to R with R, wt in center
uh	Bring L to R (no wt) pivoting to R on R.
4	Step fwd with L.

Giros (turns) Men

Instead of the Basic Step ct 5 (feet together pos), cross R ft behind L ft (Ballet pos IV), knees slightly bent and together. The M is the center of the W's "giros" turning himself in the same spot on the ball of his feet and this will change his body wt a little from the center to fwd, with the followings movements for the lead of:

Half turn CW to the R

<u>Cts</u>	<u>Pattern</u>
&	Twist upper body CW to the R to lead W's pivot.
1	Shift wt fwd on L ft.
&	Pivot on both ft CW to R, changing wt to the center, facing W.
2	Continue leading W around as she steps L.
&	Pivot on both ft CW to R.
3	Keep pivoting on R shifting wt gradually onto R as W steps bkwd with her R.
4	Keep pivoting to the R until all the wt is shifted to the R ft, ending with ft twisted, toes pointing twd W (M's ft never move from original place on floor.)

Half turn CCW to the L

<u>Cts</u>	<u>Pattern</u>
&	Twist upper body CCW to the L to lead W's pivot.
1	Shift wt fwd onto the R ft.
&	Pivot on both ft to L, changing wt to both ft, facing W.
2	Continue leading W around as she steps on R.
&	Pivot on both ft to L.
3	Keep pivoting to L shifting wt gradually onto L as W steps bkwd with her L.
4	Keep pivoting to L to finish in the Ballet pos IV (Beginning pos.)

The M's half turn to the R and the half turn to the L, make up a Tango full turn ("giro").

If you do only half the step, it has a different name. To the R side it's called "Contra Molinete" or "Media Vuelta". To the L side it's called "Molinete". Both half turns can be repeated 2 or 3 times.

Corrida (to run)

Cts

Pattern

Woman:

- 1 Step bkwd on R.
- 2 Step bkwd on L.
- 3 Step bkwd on R.
- & Step bkwd on L.
- 4 Move R ft bkwd (wt remains on L) R ft pointed in a turned out pos, the upper body slightly twisted to the L (following the M's lead). This pos is called "Corte."

Man:

- 1 Step fwd on L.
- 2 Step fwd on R.
- 3 Step fwd on L.
- & Step fwd on R.
- 4 Move L ft fwd (no wt). Stop the W with the frame (upper body) bringing her twd you and twisting slightly to the L, before she puts her wt on the R ft. The M's L ft is pointed in a turned out pos, the wt remains on the R ft. This pos its called "Corte." To recover from "Corte," slowly drag extended L ft back to Basic Tango pos (feet together).

Styling: The "corrida" it is also called "caminada" (the walk) and has to be performed "cat like," that means very smoothly without ups or downs, trying to keep the same level all the time. There are different variations of "corrida"—this is the basic one.

Barrida (to sweep)

Cts

Pattern

Man:

- & Feet together, wt on the L ft, twist the frame CCW to the L (when the W has the wt on her R) to make her pivot to his L and change wt to M's R.
- 1 Step diag fwd on L to L (following W's step).
- & Twist the frame CW to the R (when W has the wt on her L) to make her pivot, the wt is still on L.
- 2 Move the R ft fwd, twd the W's L ft, touching firmly the outside of her L ft with the inside of his R ft and stop her move from two different points: his frame and his R ft.
- & Keep the frame in place (in this way the W don't move), change wt to the R ft, at the same time bringing the L ft twd her L ft touching firmly with the inside of the L ft the W's inside L ft, like making a "sandwich" with their ft, ("mordida"). The M's wt is still on the R ft.
- 3 Pivot a little on R ft CW to the R before stepping to the L with L ft, trying to go around her.
- 4 "Barrida" (sweep) the floor with the R ft carrying the W's L ft with it.

Woman:

- & Feet together, wt on the R ft, pivot CCW to the L diag bkwd.
- 1 Step bkwd on L.
- & Bring the R ft to the L ft (no wt) and pivot CW to the R diag bkwd, wt on the L ft.
- 2 Step bkwd on R, leaving L ft extended where it was, wt on R ft.
- & Wait (he stops leading).
- 3 Wait (he is not leading).
- 4 Pivot CW to the R on R ft, "rest" your L ft on the M's R ft and let him move it (that is the "barrida").

Styling: The "barrida" has a lot of different variations depending how it is performed: fwd, bkwd, sdwd, continuous, inside, outside, etc. The one described above is the basic "barrida inside." If you repeat the same move with the same ft, it is a "continuous barrida inside," the W is the center and the M tries to describe a circle around her.

Mordida (the bite)

It is like a sandwich. When it is performed with the ft to ft level it's called "mordida baja" (low); if it is performed with the knees to knees level it's called "mordida alta" (high). Can be done by M and W. When it is performed by the W, it has to be done like an ornament, between two beats. The M can do it using one or two beats and also he can do it between beats.

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