

Dance the Lindy Hop

If watching the tutorial video, approximate timings are given in brackets. Demonstration dance from approx. 4m 20s.

Dancing Individually

1. Rock-Step – Triple-Step (0-30s)

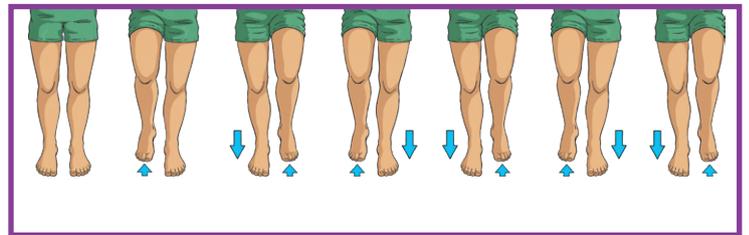
Start with your feet about hip-width apart. Shift your weight over to the right and step onto the ball of your right foot, then shift your weight to the left to step onto your left foot. This is the rock-step action.

Next, step on your right foot, quickly back on your left foot and then on your right foot again to create three small steps (in the space of what would be two normal steps). This is the triple-step.

Repeat the steps but this time you will begin with the opposite foot.

Continue practising the steps in place to get used to the rhythm and weight placement.

These basic steps form the building blocks for the Lindy Hop dance. They can be performed moving forwards, backwards, sideways or even while travelling in a circle. Kicks, jumps, spins and other tricks can be added to the basic steps to create variety over time.



2. Moving Forwards and Backwards (50s - 1m 5s)

Repeat the basic rock-step but on the triple-step travel forwards.

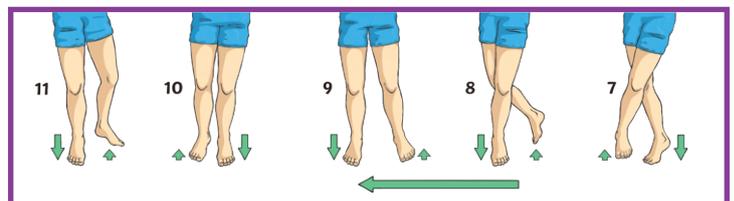
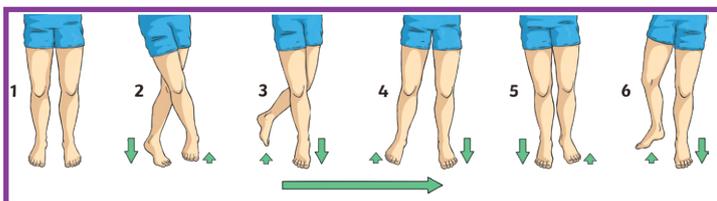
On the next rock-step you shift your weight forwards (for the rock) and then step backwards. Then, perform the triple-step travelling backwards.

Repeat the sequence moving forwards and backwards alternately.

3. Rotation – shown on video with partner (1m 18s – 1m 24s)

This time as you rock backwards, rotate your foot out to the side and turn your body as you step your foot backwards behind the other one. In the step, return to face forward.

In the triple-step, you can travel to the side.



Dancing with a Partner

When dancing the Lindy Hop with a partner, one person is the lead and the other the follower. The lead puts their arm around their partner's waist while the follower places their hand gently on their partner's shoulder.

1. Forwards and Backwards (1m 5s – 1m 18s)

Practise performing the rock-step-triple-step forwards and backwards, keeping in time with your partner.

2. Turns (1m 24s – 1m 50s)

Once you are comfortable dancing side by side, you can try some turns.

- The person who is the lead can try rotating from the side of their partner to face them during the triple-step. Keep contact in the arms but the lead can slide their arm across the back to the near side of the waist, while the follower can slide their hand gently from their partner's shoulder and down the arm instead. While facing one another, the partners can loosely hold hands with their free arms if they choose.

Practise dancing facing each other like this. You will need to coordinate your movements so that one partner moves forwards while the other moves backwards.

- Perform the rock-step side by side with your partner, then on the triple-step you both rotate to face each other while letting go with the arms; catch hold with the arms again on the opposite side of the body for the next rock-step. You should now be facing the opposite direction.

3. Spins (1m 24s – 1m 50s)

When you are confident at turning, you can attempt a spin. This is performed by the follower in the partnership. After the rock-step, the partners release arms. The follower performs their triple-step – while spinning through 360 degrees – across the front of their partner, who performs their own triple-step while standing in place. Catch hold of the arms on the opposite side of the body ready for the next rock-step.

4. The Swing Out

While dancing facing one another, you are in position to attempt a swing out. This is where you move from dancing close together to dancing at arm's length.

Perform the rock-step-triple-step while facing each other. After the next rock-step, the lead uses the arm around their partner's waist to gently propel them forwards. The follower then rotates the body on the triple-step to swing around to end up facing their partner, while the lead performs their triple-step in place. Both partners release the arms on the waist and shoulder during the swing out and instead they loosely grasp hold of each other's opposite hands so they are then dancing at arm's length from one another.

5. The Breakaway

During a breakaway section, the partners separate and dance on their own for a short time. This looks effective after a swing out. Experiment with different moves during your breakaway sections but remember to keep to the rhythm and timing of the dance. You can catch hold of each other's hands when you are ready to dance together again.

Why not try some jumps, kicks or spins in your breakaway section? Or you could speed up or slow down the Lindy Hop steps for effect. Maybe you could add some interesting arm movements, too. Be creative and enjoy yourself.

Have fun dancing the Lindy Hop!

