

ballroom

Get the kids waltzing and shimmying to burn off all that energy.



An introduction to ballroom dancing

It doesn't get more varied than ballroom – you can choose from the waltz, foxtrot and tango. Or go for some of the Latin dances – the samba, rumba or jive for example. Each dance has its own character. The waltz creates beautiful shapes, the tango uses sharp swivels and flicks. The Latin dances are fiery and full of rhythm – the samba is fast, the cha cha cha is cheeky and full of surprises.

Dressing up is part of the fun and there's plenty of opportunity to show off!

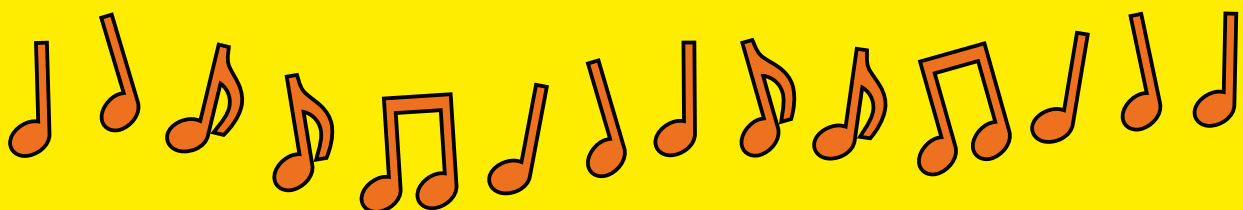
Suitable for: Girls and boys of all ages.

Equipment: None, although kids may enjoy dressing up in colourful costumes.

Music: Any sort of music with a strong tempo – jazz, disco, rhythm and blues, Latin. Pop music also works really well.

Space: Kids will need room to dance in pairs and spin each other around – parents will need to choose a dance that fits the space available.

Safety: Make sure the room is clear of objects with sharp edges or things children can trip over. A little warm up is important, before any stretches begin, to avoid the risk of pulling a muscle or feeling sore afterwards. Try a few jumps and shakes of the body, tensing and releasing muscles, in time to the music.



ballroom dances to try

A huge variety of dances and moves feature in ballroom dancing. Start the music and encourage the children to put lots of energy into it. And smile!

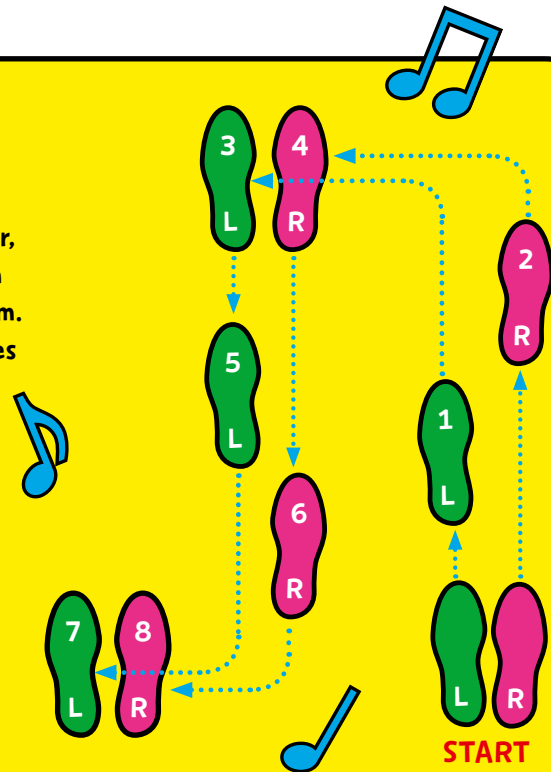
Basic steps

Foxtrot

Stand upright with your feet together. Face each other, lady puts her right hand in his left. His right hand is on her left shoulder blade, her left hand is on his right arm. The lady's movements mirror the man's - so as he moves forward, she moves backwards, and so on.

For the man:

1. Step forward with your left foot (slow step)
2. Step forward with your right foot (slow step)
3. Sidestep to the left with your left foot (quick step)
4. Move your right foot to your left foot (quick step)
5. Step backward with your left foot (slow step)
6. Step backward with your right foot (slow step)
7. Sidestep to the left with your left foot (quick step)
8. Move your right foot to your left foot (quick step)



Samba

Like the Foxtrot, the lady faces the man and her movements mirror his, stepping back as he steps forward and so on.

Just before the first beat of the music both rise up on the balls of your feet.

For the man:

1. Step your left foot forward and set your heel down on the first beat
2. Step your right foot forward and to the right, staying on the ball of your foot
3. Step your left foot over to join it, then bring both heels down on the second beat
4. Now complete the other two sides of the 'box', starting by stepping your right foot back for beat three
5. Step your left foot back and to the left, staying on the ball of your foot
6. Back to starting position

