

# Tango

## **Fast Facts:**

The *gauchos* (cowboys) of Argentina wore chaps that hardened from the foam and sweat of the horse's body, causing them to walk with flexed knees. Of a night they would go to crowded night clubs and ask ladies of the night to dance but since the gaucho hadn't showered, the lady would dance in the crook of the man's right arm, holding her head back. Her right hand was held low on his left hip, close to his pocket, looking for a payment for dancing with him.

No rise and fall in the steps. This should be a very level, flat dance. The legs are therefore always slightly flexed (i.e. the knees should be slightly bent at all times).

## **Distinctive moves:**

The Tango is a very emotional dance and this should be conveyed.

Must see lots of *clipped movements*.

The action must always be *staccato*.

Look out for sharp head turning and stops.

The hold is different in the tango. The man's left arm is more towards head level. The general hold is far more compact and the couple are much tighter together.

*Walks* - Should be done with the heels leading.

*Rock turns* - the dancers should rock while turning.

Look out for the *Links* - these are the sharp movements in-between the walks (the head turns from the girl). These are also known as *staccato* movements.

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## **Tango (International Standard, American Smooth)**

The tango was born in Argentina, in the late 1800s. In those days, the bars of Buenos Aires were filled with lonely immigrants from all over Europe and Africa, looking for diversion and company. Somehow, out of these eclectic dance traditions, a dance emerged that pantomimed communication between prostitute and pimp — from these crude beginnings came the sexually charged dance we see here.

Since then, the tango has been toned down somewhat, and has incorporated patterns from other dances such as the waltz and foxtrot, but it still packs a powerful punch, translating emotions into dance like nothing else.

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