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BALLET

THE ART DEFINED

2nd ed.

Louise Frazer

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Ballerina and Artistic Director

Conservatory of Ballet Arts Company

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PREFACE

Ballet: The Art Defined is a handbook for beginners as well as professional dancers. Chapters one through four list and define technical terms for positions, techniques, and directions used in the classical ballet classroom. Chapter five describes stretches that are beneficial for developing flexibility in the legs and body. The last chapter is an outline of an adult ballet class that will introduce students to classical ballet, while exercising the entire body.

Most of the definitions and stretches are illustrated with photos to aid the reader in understanding the particular technique. I would like to thank my four students who posed so patiently for the photos: Stephanie Ambandos is eighteen years old and has studied ballet for eight years. Rachael Clark is fifteen years old and has studied ballet for eleven years. Jennifer Connal is eleven years old and has studied ballet for four years. Juliet Jacobsen is eleven years old and has studied ballet for five years. Erin Johnson is twelve years old and has studied ballet for six years. Louise Frazer is the model for all the performance photos and many of the other photos. Many thanks to my husband, Dr. Lester Ingber, President of Physical Studies Institute (PSI), for photography, layout design and editing, and for guiding me through the technicalities of writing a book. Conservatory of Ballet Arts Company is a subsidiary of PSI, a California nonprofit scientific and educational corporation. PSI typeset this book.

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September 1983

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INTRODUCTION

Mention the word "ballet" to a lay person and he or she will probably have an image of delicate ballerinas in beautiful tutus floating or spinning effortlessly across a stage with an easy smile on their face. This of course is the art of ballet, to make movement look easy and to place the audience in a fantasy land. However, ballet is considered to be one of the most strenuous sports activities. Becoming proficient at it is far from effortless! Dancers must continually study to perfect their ballet technique.

The study of classical ballet can provide a knowledge of an artistic and disciplined body activity while studying other related concepts in music, mental concentration, and general awareness of the body. Students of any age can benefit from the mental and physical rigors of ballet. There are no shortcuts to learning to move correctly and creatively while integrating techniques with music. Creativity and smoothness comes only after long regular training, to acquire basic body placement and technique. Students wishing to pursue a conventional professional career as a danseur (male dancer) or danseuse (female dancer) require a self-discipline that will push their mental and physical concentration further than the average student during training. Becoming a professional dancer need not be the goal of everyone taking this discipline. The training can increase the student's proficiency in several other professional fields, or it can lead to other creative artistic outlets. Ballet training usually is the basis for many forms of dance. After only a few years of ballet, the dancer may easily fit into musical comedy, jazz, modern, and ethnic dances.

Classes in beginning ballet bring into focus body placement, correct muscle development, stamina, and flexibility. Constant attention must be given to perform a few body movements correctly rather than to learn a large amount sloppily. After a few months, these techniques and exercises can be useful to a majority of students interested only in keeping in shape, or to increase one's general sense of well being.

It takes a great deal of concentration at this level to remember the correct placement of the torso, feet, hands, and head. Adding music increases the need for concentration and is an incentive for rhythmic movement. Creative use of music is very important in the dance classroom. In many cases, music may be the incentive needed for a child or adult to put more effort into their work. At a higher level, ballet movements and music come together to provide the dancer with an opportunity to express their own musicality and dramatic ability. Rhythms within rhythms can be choreographed for a dance from a simple piece of music. It usually takes a dancer eight to ten years to reach a level where he or she can execute demanding techniques with musical and dramatic flair. After three or four years the dancer should have the ability to perform cleanly, but without the smoothness and grace of a more experienced person.

Good choreography requires knowledge of techniques executed by advanced or professional dancers, and a strong sense of musicality and creativity. Choreographers can be very effective and successful even though they do not have the physical ability to be an accomplished dancer. There are few rules to follow for the choreographer and there are unlimited vehicles to convey the idea or atmosphere the choreographer wishes to present. Creative choreography can be done at any level to allow the dancer to learn in a creative environment. Children given simple dances to practice once or twice a week along with their regular class work can begin to express themselves through the music. Suddenly, all the single techniques they have been doing for months have been formulated into an interesting and fun activity.

There are many different styles in classical ballet. It is often confusing to students who work with more than one teacher because the teachers will have different ways they insist on having techniques done. Assimilating these different methods of technique may be the best way around these situations, because very often all are correct. The Bournonville, Cecchetti, English, and Russian schools are major systems of ballet instruction. In some ways they differ greatly, and in others they concur. The basic language of ballet is international, but the variations of it are limitless. A perceptive dance student, or professional dancer should be open to absorbing variations on a theme as a way to acquire knowledge, creativity, and their own sense of style.

I. TURN-OUT, POSITIONS AND PLACEMENT OF ARMS

A. Turn-out

IA-1: **turn-out.** All positions and steps in ballet are based on "turn-out." Turn-out is the ability to rotate each leg and foot 90 degrees out from the hip joint. Care must be taken so that the knee of the standing leg is always directly over the toe, and that all the toes are touching the floor. The working leg and standing leg always use the inside thigh muscles to execute steps in a turned out position. Dancers/students frequently use the correct muscles for turn-out when standing in a preparatory position, such as first or fifth position, but lose the feeling of turn-out when they actually perform the step. A common error, especially made by beginning students, is to turn-out the feet farther than the knees and thighs will rotate. This results in "rolling" of the knees and feet, a condition which can cause injury to the knees, and place to much strain on the inside ankle ligaments. Most beginning students must start with their feet turned out less than 90 degrees until they achieve enough flexibility and strength in the hip and thigh to hold a perfect turn-out. Turn-out from the hip is necessary to give the dancer's legs freedom of movement in any direction and at varying height. It takes a period of time to develop turn-out depending upon the dancers physical structure, and self-discipline. Some dancers may never achieve a full 90 degree turn-out because of their physical structure. Other dancers are gifted with a natural turn-out and feeling for proper body placement. Instructors must be very careful not to force turn-out or extensions on children when they are first starting to dance. Their turn-out and flexibility must be developed gradually in order to avoid injuries and bad habits. The instructor should take into account the different physical structures of his or her students, and work with them accordingly in order to develop the student's full potential as a dancer.

B. Placement

IB-2. Correct "placement" of the upper body and arms, along with turn-out, is required for balance, correct muscle development, and an aesthetically pleasing line of the body. In any position, the hips are centered over the legs, the upper body is slightly in front of the hips, and the waistline remains in a line parallel to the floor. Control and proper carriage of the upper body needs to be cultivated along with muscle development in the legs. Advanced ballet technique can only be reached when the whole body is strong and has a light and "lifted" feeling.

Fig. IB-2. Shown is the proper position of the upper body. The rib cage is lifted and the body is slightly in front of the hips.

IB-3. Upon assuming a ballet stance, pull up the stomach, and lift up the rib cage. Keep the chin level and the shoulders relaxed. Next, tuck under the hips to achieve as flat a back as possible. The more the hips are tucked under, the more turn-out can be achieved in the legs. This feeling of pulling up and tucking under should be maintained while dancing, and after long practice, it will become a natural way of holding the body.

Hyperextending the hips, or "swaying the back," is not only unappealing, but puts a strain on the lower back. It is also impossible to turn-out correctly from this position.

Fig. IB-3. Shown is an incorrect way of standing. The hips are sticking out, and the back is in a "swayed" position.

IB-4: **placement of the arms.** Arms held in any of the five positions are held in a smooth curve. The shoulders are the highest point, the elbow next, and the wrist and fingers are on the same level as the elbow. Shoulders are always relaxed so that the neckline is visible. Never place the arms behind the shoulders as this causes the body to go off balance and produces an unpleasing line.

Correct positioning of the arms is essential to give the dancer balance and line. Graceful and flowing port de bras (movement of the arms) give a polished finish to dance steps. For most students it is difficult to coordinate graceful port de bras with difficult leg techniques. Therefore, it is very important to incorporate even simple port de bras in early training.

Fig. IB-4: placement of the arms. This is the correct way of holding the arm and fingers in à la seconde position.

C. Basic Five Positions

There are five basic positions in ballet from which all steps begin and end. They are devised to provide balance in any position of the body. The development of turn-out and body placement starts with learning these positions.

IC-1: **first position.** Legs together, and heels touching with the feet turned out in a straight line. Arms are held on each side of the hip in front of the body.

IC-2: **second position.** Feet and legs are turned-out in a straight line approximately a foot and a half apart. Arms are held parallel to the feet slightly in front of the shoulders.

Fig. IC-1: first position.

Fig. IC-2: second position.

IC-3: **third position.** Both feet are fully turned-out. The heel of the front foot is placed in front of the instep of the back foot. The same arm as the front foot is over the head, while the other is held to the side of the body. Third position is usually used by beginning students as a substitute for fifth position which is more difficult.

IC-4: **fourth position.** The feet are approximately a foot apart with the front foot exactly in front of the back foot. The front heel and toe should be parallel with the back heel and toe. The same arm as the front leg is placed at the rib cage level, while the other arm is held to the side of the body.

Fig. IC-3: third position.

Fig. IC-4: fourth position.

IC-5a: **fifth position.** One foot is directly in front of the other with the heel of the front foot touching the toe of the back foot and vice verse. There are three levels of fifth position for the arms. Fifth position "en bas" is done with the arms at hip joint level, fingertips touching.

Fig. IC-5a: fifth position. The arms are being held in fifth position en bas.

IC-5b: **fifth position en avant.** This is done similarly to IC-5a, but with the arms at rib cage level.

Fig. IC-5b: fifth position en avant.

IC-5c: **fifth position en haut.** This is done similarly to IC-5a, but with the arms over the head, "framing the face."

Fig. IC-5c: fifth position en haut.

II. DIRECTIONS OF THE BODY

II-1 **devant.** In front.

II-2 **à la seconde.** To the second position.

Fig. II-1: devant. Shown is tendu devant.

Fig. II-2a: à la seconde. The leg and arms are in à la seconde position en l'air.

Fig. II-2b. Shown is a relevé à la seconde with the arms in third position, from the variation in the "Black Swan Pas de Deux."

II-3 en arrière. Backward.

Fig. II-3a: en arrière. The tendu is being done en arrière.

Fig. II-3b. Attitude en arrière, sur la pointe.

II-4 **derrière.** Behind.

II-5 **en croix.** In the form of a cross. Applies to a step that is executed devant, à la seconde, and en arrière.

II-6 **ouvert.** Open.

II-7 **fermé.** Closed.

II-8 **en dehors.** Towards the outside. When the working leg on rond de jambe or pirouette circles or turns away from the standing leg, it is going en dehors.

II-9 **en dedans.** Towards the inside. When the working leg circles or turns toward the standing leg, it is going en dedans.

II-10 **dessous.** Under. The working leg passes behind the supporting leg.

II-11 **dessus.** Over. The working leg passes in front of the supporting leg.

II-12 **en avant.** Forward.

II-13 **à la quatrième devant.** To the fourth position front.

Fig. II-12: en avant. The dancer is executing a port de bras en avant.

Fig. II-13: à la quatrième devant. Shown is a tendu being done à la quatrieme devant.

II-14: **à la quatrième derrière.** To the fourth position back.

II-15: **croisé.** Crossed.

Fig. II-14: à la quatrième derrière. Shown is a tendu being done à la quatrieme derrière.

Fig. II-15a: croisé. Croisé devant with the leg en l'air.

Fig. II-15b. Arabesque croisé derrière. The arms are placed as in the Russian method of croisé derrière.

Fig. II-15c. Arabesque croisé derrière. The arms are placed as in the Cecchetti method of croisé derrière.

II-16: **ecarté.** Spread.

II-17: **effacé.** Shaded.

Fig. II-16: ecarté. Petit battement with the legs and arms in ecarté position.

Fig. II-17: effacé. Echappé en relevé in effacé position.

II-18: **en face.** Facing the audience.

II-19: **épaulé.** Shouldered.

Fig. II-18: en face. The dancer is standing 5th position and facing en face.

Fig. II-19: épaulé.

II-20: **épaulement.** Shouldering. The placement and use of the shoulders. This is very important for style and line.

II-21: **allongé.** A position of the body that is stretched and leaning almost horizontally forward.

Fig. II-21: allongé. Arabesque allongé.

II-22: **cambré.** Leaning to the side from the waist.

II-23: **en tournant.** With a turn.

II-24: **downstage.** To the front of the stage, or towards the audience.

II-25: **upstage.** To the back of the stage.

III. BARRE WORK

Beginning the ballet class with "barre work" is essential to the novice as well as the professional dancer. Depending upon the instructor, the barre work will take up about forty minutes of an average class. It is designed to warm-up all the muscles in the body, study correct body placement, develop speed and control, and increase flexibility. All techniques performed at the barre are the basis for the more difficult techniques used while actually "dancing."

III-1 The hand grasping the barre should be kept in front of the shoulder with the thumb on top, and the fingers lightly holding on to aid in balance. Never wrap the hand around the barre, or lean the elbow on the barre.

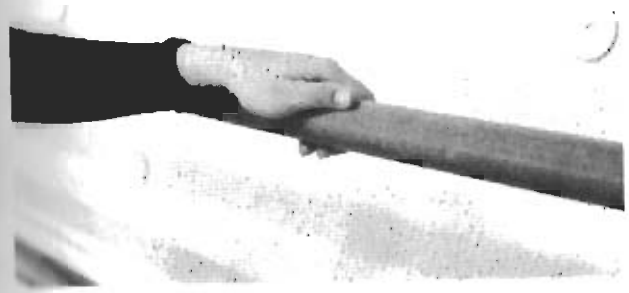

Fig. III-1. The correct way to hold the barre.

III-2 **standing leg or foot.** The leg or foot that is supporting the body on the floor.

III-3 **working leg or foot.** The leg or foot that is executing the step.

III-4: **demi-plié.** Small bend. Bend the knees over the toes as far down as possible without lifting the heels off the floor.

III-5a: **grand plié.** Large bend. Bend the knees and lift the heels (except if in second position) to achieve a full bend with the hips centered over the heels of the feet. In first, third, fourth, and fifth position, the heels should remain on the floor as far down as possible before lifting, and should be replaced as soon as possible upon rising.

Fig. III-4: demi-plié.

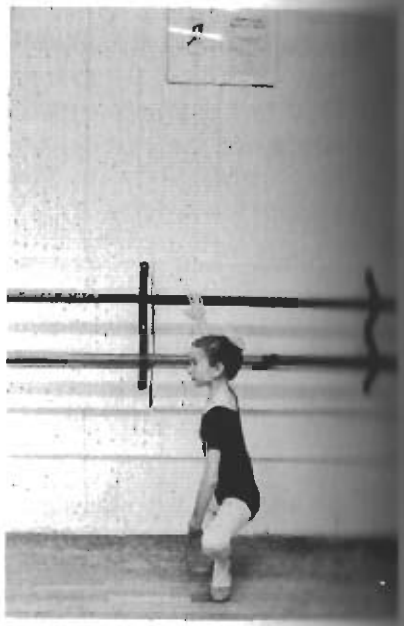

Fig. III-5a: grand plié. Grand plié in first position.

III-5b. Grand plié in second is done with heels on the floor. Be sure that the hips remain centered between the legs.

III-5c. Grand plié in fourth position is the most difficult to keep the hips centered, and the waistline and hips facing forward.

Fig. III-5b. Grand plié in second position.

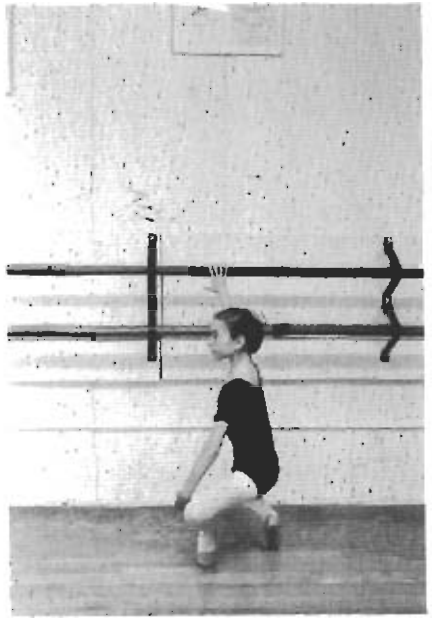

Fig. III-5c. Grand plié in fourth position.

III-6: **port de bras.** Movement of the arms.

III-7: **relevé.** A lifted step. Rise up onto the ball of the foot (or onto full pointe with pointe shoes). A relevé can be executed on one foot or both feet.

III-8: **piqué.** To prick. Step onto demi-pointe or sur la pointe (see III-10) on a straight knee.

III-9: **demi-pointe.** Standing on the ball of the foot.

Fig. III-7: relevé. The dancer on the right is doing a relevé in fourth position croisé sur la pointe. The dancer on the left is doing a relevé passé sur la pointe.

Fig. III-9: demi-pointe.

III-10: **sur la pointe.** Standing up on the toes. Sur la pointe is done only in pointe shoes.

III-11: **tendu.** To stretch. Slide the foot out from a closed position to a full pointe, and slide back again without leaving the floor.

Fig. III-10: sur la pointe.

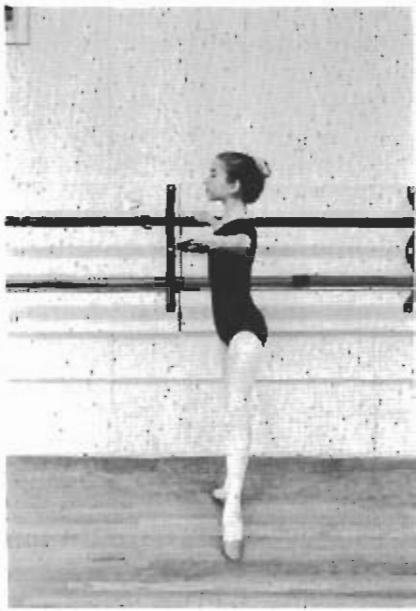

Fig. III-11: tendu. Tendu à la seconde.

III-12: **petit battement.** Little kick. From a closed position, brush the leg out to a full pointe approximately four inches off the ground. In some styles, this step is known as "degagé," or "battement jeté."

III-13: **battement relevé.** A lifted beat. From an extended tendu or petit battement, drop the heel to the floor and spring it back to the pointe again. The body weight transfers from over the standing leg to, centered between the two legs, to over the standing leg again.

Fig. III-12: petit battement. Petit battement devant.

Fig. III-13a: battement relevé. Start with the weight on the standing leg, and the working foot pointed.

Fig. III-13b. Put the heel down and center the body between the legs.

Fig. III-13c. Transfer the weight back to the standing leg and point the working foot.

III-14: **pas de cheval.** Step of the horse. A pawing motion with the foot. From the fifth position, wrap the working foot around the ankle, extend out fully in one smooth motion and close straight into fifth position. Pas de Cheval does not wrap en arrière.

Fig. III-14a: pas de cheval. Wrap the foot around the ankle.

Fig. III-14b. Extend the foot out en l'air or à terre, fully pointed.

III-15: **passé.** To pass. Lift the working leg from fifth position fully turned out so that the toes are touching the knee of the standing foot and the knee of the working leg is at a right angle to the body.

III-15a. **passé ouvert.** The toe of the lifted foot touches the side of the knee on the standing leg.

III-15b. **passé devant.** The heel of the working foot rests just below the knee of the standing leg.

Fig. III-15a. passé ouvert.

Fig. III-15b. passé devant.

III-15c. **passé derrière.** The heel of the working foot rests in back of the knee of the standing leg.

Fig. III-15c. passé derrière.

III-16: **retiré.** A withdrawing motion. The execution of a passé is sometimes referred to as a "retiré." Retiré is the withdrawing of the working leg from an extended position en l'air to closed position. An example is the reverse of a développé.

III-17: **rond de jambe à terre.** Circle of the leg on the ground. Fully extend the working leg directly in front, and complete a half circle away from the body to the back (rond de jambe en dehors). Pull the leg straight into first position. The leg rotates from the hip socket, and the body does not move. Reverse (rond de jambe en dedans).

III-18: **grand rond de jambe en l'air.** Large circle of the leg in the air. Extend the working leg in front or back at 90 degrees or higher to the standing leg, and carry it in a half circle around to the from or back without dropping the level of the leg or tilting the body.

III-19: **rond de jambe en l'air à la seconde.** Circle of the leg in the air in second position. For en dehors, extend the leg à la seconde then bring the toe into meet the standing knee, make a half circle away from the body and finish à la seconde again. For en dedans, bring the leg into the standing knee with a half circle towards the body and extend it out straight again.

III-20: **sur le coup de pied.** On the neck of the foot. Wrap the working foot around the ankle with the knee turned-out in the hip socket as far as possible.

Fig. III-20: sur le coup de pied.

III-21: **battement sur le coup de pied.** Beating on the neck of the foot. From the sur le coup de pied position the foot hits the back of the supporting ankle and then in front again continuously. The knee should not wiggle back and forth. If it is turned out as far as possible in the hip socket, it will remain still.

III-22: **serré.** Tight. For serré devant, beat a fully pointed foot in and out on the the hollow of the heel. For serré derrière, beat the heel in and out on the back of the ankle. Also known as batterie and battu devant or derrière.

III-23: **coupé.** To cut. From fifth position, bend the working knee and sharply point the foot at ankle level either front, side, or back. In coupé devant, the toe touches and the heel presses away from the standing leg. In coupé derrière, the heel touches and the toe is pressed away from the standing leg. In coupé ouvert, the toe touches the side of the ankle.

Fig. III-23: coupé. Coupé derrière.

III-24: **frappé.** To hit. From a sur le coup de pied, or coupé position, strike the ball of the foot on the ground and brush it out to a full pointe about four inches off the floor in any direction, and return to coup de pied, or coupé.

III-25: **flic-flac.** A lashing motion. Execute a petit battement à la seconde, sharply brush into coupé devant, turn towards the barre on the standing leg, and switch the legs in coupé devant. The standing leg is now the working leg. Reverse, turning away from the barre and using coupé derrière.

III-26: **attitude.** A position derived from the statue of Mercury by Giovanni. Bend the working leg to the front, side, or back with the knee facing to the side. Keep the body straight.

III-26a: **attitude devant.** Ideally, the heel and knee of the working leg should be almost on the same level.

Fig. III-26a. attitude devant.

III-26b. **attitude à la seconde.** The foot is always in front of the knee.

III-26c. **attitude derrière.** The knee and foot must be on the same level, or the knee higher than the toe.

Fig. III-26b. attitude à la seconde.

Fig. III-26c. attitude derrière.

III-27: **développé.** To develop or unfold. Begin in a closed position and bring the working leg through sur le coup de pied, passé, attitude, and finally to a fully extended position. The waistline and upper body must remain straight no matter how high the développé is extended.

III-28: **fondu:** To melt. Demi-plié on both legs and lift the working leg to a coupé position. Slowly straighten legs and extend the working leg completely out. Slowly return to coupé position again.

III-29: **grand battement.** Large kick. Brush the leg from a closed position 90 degrees or higher from the floor and return it lightly to the closed position. The torso stays straight over the standing leg, and the working leg is completely turned out in the hip socket. The leg should be on a hinge in the hip socket, only the leg moves. If one has difficulty keeping the supporting leg and torso in a straight line, the grand battements should be lowered until strength and flexibility is developed to achieve a higher level.

III-30: **en cloche.** Like a bell. It refers to the brush from a position devant, through first position, to a battement and grand battement are frequently done several times back and forth.

III-31: **balancoire.** Similar to en cloche, but usually swings of the leg. An example is: Grand battement devant, swing the working leg through the first position, battement attitude derrière and back again.

IV. CENTER WORK

The center work listed here has been placed in this order: adagio steps, moderate steps, small jumps, small beats, large jumps, and turns. These are the steps in their basic form. More complicated steps can be made by adding extra turns, beats, or combining steps. Delightful and technically demanding combinations can be choreographed by combining steps from different categories at varying speeds. The port de bras have not been included for most of the steps since there are so many variations of port de bras that coincide with each step. Different schools and styles have their own version of port de bras and head placement.

IV-1 **adagio.** At ease. A series of exercises done at a slow tempo to develop control, line, and balance. Adagio is also the name given to the part of a pas de deux where the ballerina dances supported by a male partner.

IV-2 **arabesque.** A pose on one leg with the other leg fully extended in the back. The back leg must be in a straight line with the body, and the waist should be in a line parallel to the floor. The number of arabesque positions, based on which arm is forward and where the dancer is facing, varies with the different system of teaching. Three basic arabesques are listed here:

IV-2a: **first arabesque.** Face directly to the side in arabesque, and bring the same arm forward as the standing leg. The other arm is halfway between the back and second. Palms of the hands are facing down, and the arms are stretched in a soft line.

Fig. IV-2a: first arabesque.

IV-2b: **second arabesque.** Face directly to the side in arabesque, and bring the opposite arm to the standing leg in front at shoulder level. The other arm is halfway between back and second. Palms of the hands are facing down, and the arms are stretched in a soft line.

IV-2c: **third arabesque.** Face directly to the side in arabesque, and bring the same arm forward as the standing leg. Lift it to the same level as the forehead. Bring the other arm forward to the shoulder level. Palms of the hands are facing down, and the arms are stretched in a soft line.

Fig. IV-2b: second arabesque.

Fig. IV-2c: third arabesque.

Fig.IV-2d. First arabesque, sur la pointe, in the variation from the "Black Swan Pas de Deux."

IV-3: **temps lié.** Connected movement. Slide one foot out from a closed position to an open position, and place all the weight on the leg that is sliding out. Open the arms smoothly with the legs.

IV-4: **penché.** A bending forward. From arabesque position, tilt the body forward while lifting the leg in back. Only go down as far as the back can stay arched. The lifted leg extends above the hip line. Penché is also done in other positions and directions.

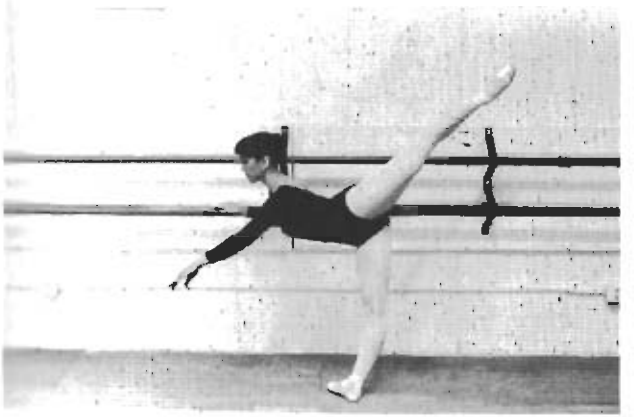

Fig. IV-4: penché.

IV-5: **promenade.** Pivot on one leg en dehors or en dedans. The ball of the foot on the supporting leg never leaves the ground. Promenade supported by a partner is done on demi-point or sur la pointe in various positions.

IV-6: **petit allegro.** Small, fast movements. Steps such as changements, entrechat, etc. are usually done "petit allegro."

IV-7: **sousu.** Relevé from fifth position with the feet snapping tightly together on demi-pointe or sur la pointe.

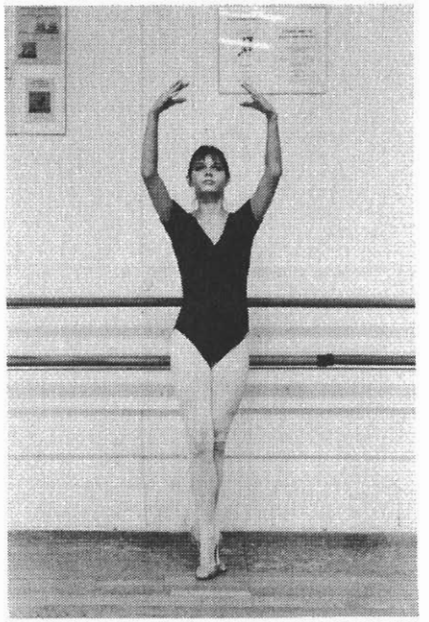

Fig. IV-7: sousu.

IV-8: **soutenu.** Sustained or held. From fifth position, extend the back leg out à la seconde, supporting leg in demi-plié, circle the leg to the front, pull into fifth position en relevé, and make a complete turn towards the back leg on both feet. Soutenu may be done en dehors and en dedans.

IV-9: **detourné.** Roundabout. Turn backwards in fifth position swiveling on demi-pointe and landing with the opposite foot in front. Also known as soutenu dessous.

IV-10: **tombé.** To fall. Transfer all the body weight from one leg to the other, landing in demi-plié.

Fig. IV-10: tombé. Tombé to the side.

IV-11: **pas de bourrée.** A bourrée step. It is the transfer of weight from one foot to another. Start with the left foot in coupé derrière in demi-plié, step up onto demi-pointe on the left foot, place the right foot in second position on demi-pointe, and bring the left foot to plié flat in front with the right leg now in coupé derrière. The transfer of weight is back, side, front for en dehors pas de bourrée, and front, side, back, for en dedans. Pas de bourrée is also done en tournant.

Fig. IV-11a: pas de bourrée. All the weight is on the standing leg.

Fig. IV-11b. The first transfer of weight in the pas de bourrée.

Fig. IV-11c. The second transfer of weight in the pas de bourrée.

Fig. IV-11d. The third transfer of weight in the pas de bourrée.

IV-12 **bourrée.** Bourrée is actually a type of French folk dance. It has nothing to do with the way the word is used in ballet today. Relevé in fifth position. Slide the front foot out devant or à la seconde a few inches, and pull the back foot into meet it in fifth continuously. Bourrée is usually done by the ballerina sur la pointe.

IV-13 **precipité.** Fast. Begin in fifth postion with the right leg back. Brush the right leg just barely off of the floor while turning the body slightly so that you are facing effacé devant. Quickly replace the right leg with the leg by kicking the left leg forward and landing in tendu croisé devant in plié. Precipité is done at similar speed to a fast glissade.

IV-14: **glissade.** To glide. Start in fifth position. Brush the right leg à la seconde with the supporting leg in demi-plié, transfer weight onto the right leg, fully pointing the left leg and close the left leg back into fifth position. Do not jump from one leg to the other. Glissades may be done à la seconde, devant, and en arrière.

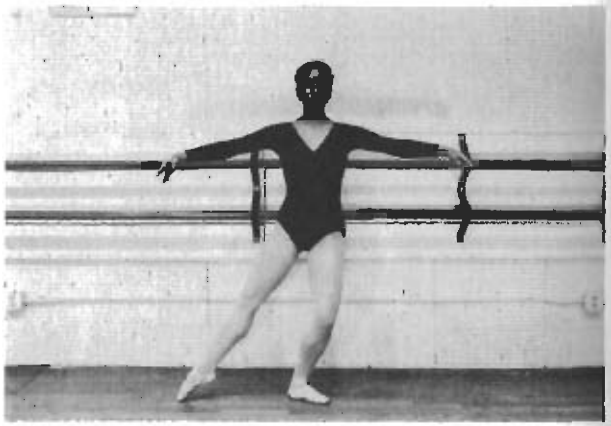

Fig. IV-14a: glissade. First movement of glissade to the side.

Fig. IV-14b. Transfer the weight for the second movement of glissade.

Fig. IV-14c. Ending position of the glissade.

IV-15a: **balancé.** A swaying step usually done to 3/4 time. It consists of three transfers of weight from one foot to another. Step out flat in demi-plié, place the other leg derrière and step onto demi-pointe lifting the first leg slightly off the ground. Come down in demi-plié replacing the weight onto the first foot.

IV-15b: **balancé en tournant.** Complete a balancé to one side. Finish facing to the back. Complete another balancé on the other side turning in the same direction and ending facing front.

IV-16: **contretemps.** Point the left leg derrière. Jump off of the right leg and sweep the left leg around in front, replacing the right leg. The right leg extends to the side, ready to repeat the step on the other side, or, to go on to a new step.

IV-17: **chassé.** Slide. From fifth position, slide the front foot out devant or à la seconde in demi-plié. Push off the working leg, jumping with the legs in fifth position en l'air. Land in fifth position demi-plié. Chassé is also done jumping in fifth first, landing in fifth, then sliding the front foot out.

IV-18: **balon.** The ability to appear light and suspended in the air.

IV-19: **echappé.** Escape.

IV-20: **echappé en relevé.** From fifth position demi-plié, slide the feet out equally to second or fourth position on demi-pointe with the weight centered between the legs. Pull the legs together back to fifth position demi-plié.

IV-21: **saut.** To jump.

IV-22: **echappé sauté.** From fifth position demi-plié, jump to a second or fourth position and back to fifth position again.

Fig. IV-22: echappé sauté. Position en l'air for echappé sauté to second position.

IV-23: **jeté.** A thrown step. Brush the working leg à la seconde, jump straight up landing in derrière before the first leg touches the ground.

Fig. IV-23a: jeté. The leg brushes to the side.

Fig. IV-23b. Position en l'air for jeté.

Fig. IV-23c. Landing position for jeté.

IV-24: **assemblé.** To bring together. From fifth position, brush one leg out en l'air with the standing leg in demi-plié. Push off the standing leg so that both feet have left the ground, and land both feet together in fifth position demi-plié.

Fig. IV-24a: assemblé. The leg brushes to the side.

Fig. IV-24b. The position en l'air for assemblé.

Fig. IV-24c. Land both feet at the same time in assemblé.

IV-25: **assemblé italien.** Execute an assemblé, but bend both knees tucking the feet together slightly to the side of the body before landing.

Fig. IV-25: assemblé italien.

IV-26: **sissone.** Scissors. Push from both feet in fifth position splitting the legs en l'air, traveling forward slightly, and landing in arabesque demi-plié or fifth position demi-plié. Sissone may also be done in à la seconde and en arrière.

IV-27: **sissone ouvert.** Land sissone with one leg en l'air in an open position.

IV-28: **sissone fermé.** Upon landing, immediately drop the lifted leg to fifth position demi-plié.

IV-29: **failli.** A failed step. Bring the leg from arabesque through first position to a fourth position lunge devant.

IV-30: **failli assemblé.** Begin in fifth position croisé. Execute a sissone ouvert landing facing the opposite corner (effacé), failli to fourth position devant, and assemblé with the back leg landing in croisé fifth again.

IV-31: **temps de cuisse.** Thigh step. Do a sissone fermé preceded by a sharp coupé or petit battement by the working foot, and then quickly replace it in preparation for the sissone fermé.

Fig. IV-31a: temps de cuisse. Coupé before the sissone.

Fig. IV-31b. Place it in fifth for the temps de cuisse.

Fig. IV-31c. Immediately execute a sissone fermé.

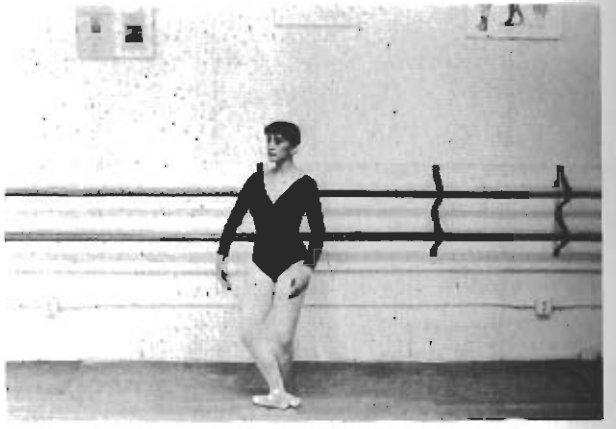

Fig. IV-31d. Land in fifth position demi-plié for temps de cuisse.

IV-32 **temps levé.** A raised movement. Jump or hop on one foot with the other leg in any position en l'air.

Fig. IV-32a: temps levé. Beginning a temps levé from arabesque.

Fig. IV-32b. Position en l'air for temps levé.

Fig. IV-32c. End as you began in a temps levé.

IV-33: **pas de ciseaux.** Scissor step. Jump from fifth position, split the legs wide apart en l'air and return to fifth position.

Fig. IV-33. A pas de ciseaux executed in à la seconde position.

IV-34: **pas de chat.** Step of the cat. Lift one leg in passé demi-plié, spring off the floor, and lift the other leg to passé before the first leg touches the ground. Replace the second leg in fifth position.

Fig. IV-34a: pas de chat. First leg lifting.

Fig. IV-34b. Position en l'air in a pas de chat.

Fig. IV-34c. Place the second leg in fifth position at the end of a pas de chat.

IV-35: **pas de chat à la russe.** Execute a pas de de chat, but before landing, the first leg must stretch out straight to à la seconde. Land both legs together simultaneously.

Fig. IV-35: pas de chat à la russe.

IV-36: **pas de basque.** Basque step. Face croisé in fifth position. Execute a quarter rond de jambe à terre en dehors with the front leg. Make a half turn to the opposite corner during the rond de jambe, and transfer all the body weight onto the working leg. The standing leg is now pointed in an écarté position. Complete a quarter rond de jambe from écarté to en arriére, and temps lié forward. This is pas de basque en dehors, à terre. It may also be done en dedans and en l'air.

IV-37: **pas de couru.** Running step. Classical ballet dancers always run with the toes touching the ground first, and rolling down to the heel quickly.

IV-38: **ballonné.** A bouncing step. Brush the working leg à la seconde, supporting leg in demi-plié, and spring off the floor landing with the working leg in coupé devant. Incline the body and head over the standing leg. Reverse, inclining the body and head over the working leg.

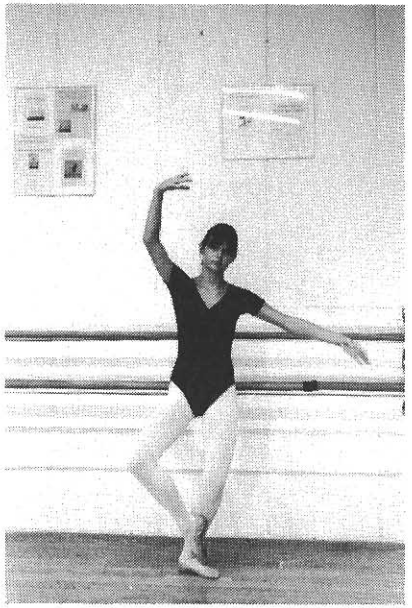

Fig. IV-38: ballonné. Ending position for a ballonné devant.

IV-39: **ballotté.** Tossing movement. Assume a fifth position effacé. Lift the back leg to passé in demi-plié, spring off the floor, lifting the other leg in passé and extending it in front as the back leg lands in demi-plié. Reverse, bringing the extended front leg immediately to passé.

IV-40: **soubresaut.** A sudden bound. Jump in the air in fifth position, slightly arching the back and traveling slightly forward.

Fig. IV-40: soubresaut.

IV-41: **emboité.** Interlocked step. Begin in fifth position en face. Jump from both feet, lift the back leg to a coupé devant, and land in demi-plié on one leg facing back. Continue to turn in the same direction, jumping from one leg and landing facing front with the other leg in coupé devant. Continue the half turns, alternating legs in coupé devant.

Fig. IV-41a: emboité. Position after the first half turn.

Fig. IV-41b. Position after the second half turn in emboité.

IV-42: **saut de basque.** A Basque jump. Step to a lunge effacé in fourth position. Brush the back leg front through first position, jump off the supporting leg in à la seconde position en l'air facing back, and bring the leg that was supporting into passé devant while continuing to turn in the same direction to the front. Land in passé demi-plié.

Fig. IV-42a: saut de basque. Lunge effacé.

Fig. IV-42b. Brushing the leg through first position in a saut de basque.

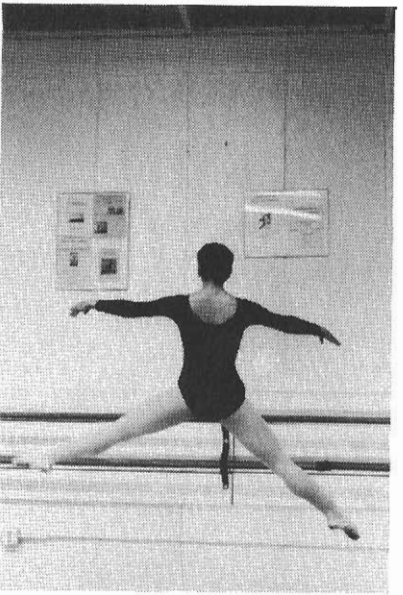

Fig. IV-42c. Position en l'air for a saut de basque.

Fig. IV-42d. Position at the end of a saut de basque.

IV-43: **saut de flèche.** Arrow step. Also known as a hitch kick. Take a step forward, push off of the leg thrusting it en arrière in arabesque or attitude while bringing the back leg forward to demi-plié in front. Ideally, the legs should pass each other in the air before one lands on the ground. Saut de fléche may be reversed.

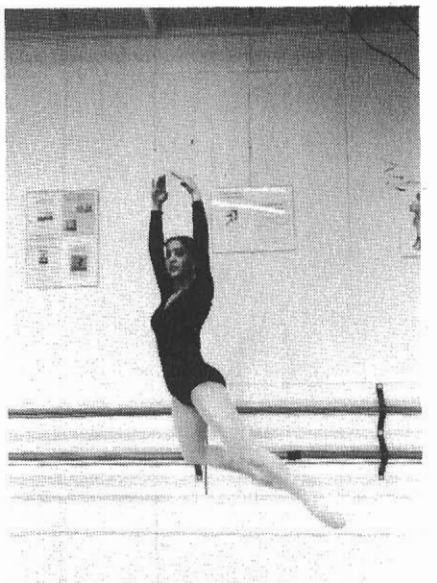

Fig. IV-43: saut de flèche. Position en l'air in a saut de flèche.

IV-44: **changement de pied.** Changing of the feet. Jump from fifth position, changing feet in the air and landing back in fifth position with the opposite foot in front.

IV-45: **changement italien.** A changement where both feet tuck under the body before landing.

Fig. IV-45: changement italien.

IV-46: **royal.** Royal step. Execute a changement, but beat the legs together once before changing legs in the air.

Below, the **number** following the word "entrechat" does not refer to the number of beats executed during the jump. It refers to the number of positions taken by the legs during the course of the movement. Fifth position is counted as one position for both the beginning and end of the "entrechat."

IV-47: **entrechat trois.** Three positions. Jump in fifth position, cross the front leg to the back, back to the front again, and land on it with the back leg in coupé derrière.

Fig. IV-47: entrechat trois. Ending position of an entrechat trois.

IV-48: **entrechat quatre.** Four positions. Jump in fifth position, cross the front leg to the back, back to the front again, and land in fifth position demi-plié.

IV-49: **entrechat cinq.** Five positions. From fifth position, brush the back leg out, jump off the supporting leg, cross the lifted leg in front, back, and front again before landing in fifth position demi-plié.

IV-50: **entrechat six.** Six positions. Jump from fifth position, cross the front leg to the back, front, and back again before landing in fifth position.

IV-51: **entrechat sept.** Seven positions. Jump from fifth position, cross the front leg to the back, front, back, bring front again landing on it with the back leg lifted in coupé.

IV-52: **entrechat huit.** Eight positions. Jump from fifth position, cross the front leg to the back, front, back, and front again before landing on it in fifth position.

IV-53: **assemblé battu.** Assemblé with a beat. Execute an assemblé and, before landing, cross the lifted leg in back of the working leg and in front in fifth position en l'air. The working leg in assemblé battu always lands opposite to where it began.

IV-54: **brisé.** A broken step. Brush the working leg à la seconde en l'air, spring off the floor, beat the working leg, in front of the other leg and land on both feet with the working leg landing where it began in back. The working leg in brisé always lands back where it began.

Fig. IV-54: brisé. Position en l'air for a brisé.

IV-55: **brisé volé.** A flying brisé. A brisé landing on the initial working leg with the other leg extended en l'air in front. Jump, and at the same time carry the front leg back beating it in back of the other leg in fifth position en l'air, and land on it in front of the other leg.

Fig. IV-55a: brisé volé. First landing.

Fig. IV-55b. The second landing in a brisé volé.

IV-56: **brisés télémaques.** A series of brisés and beats consisting of brisé voilé devant, entrechat trois, brisé voilé derrière, and entrechat trois.

IV-57: **grand allegro.** Large, fast movements. Steps that are executed with a large jump and travel in large motions are considered "grand allegro."

IV-58a: **grand jeté.** Big jump. Brush one leg high in front, and push off the supporting leg so that a split is formed in the air with the back leg in arabesque or attitude. Sustain the body in the air before landing on the front leg.

IV-58b: **grand jeté développé.** Often referred to as a grand pas de cheval or sauté chat. This is achieved when the forward working knee is thrust up at the beginning of the jump and then straightened at the height of the jump to form a split in the air.

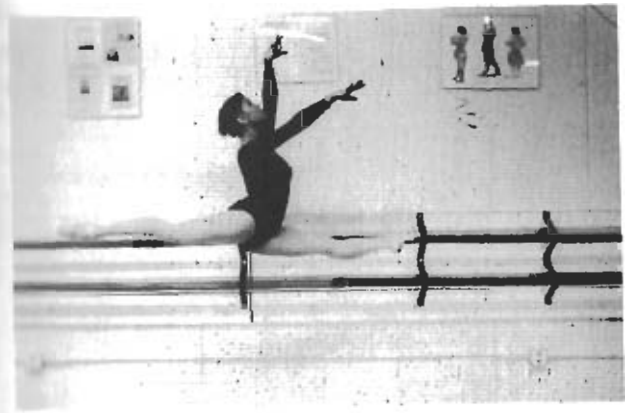

Fig. IV-58a: grand jeté.

Fig. IV-58b. A grand jeté being done facing croisé with the back leg in attitude.

Fig. IV-55b. The second landing in a brisé volé.

IV-56: **brisés télémaques.** A series of brisés and beats consisting of brisé voilé devant, entrechat trois, brisé voilé derrière, and entrechat trois.

IV-57: **grand allegro.** Large, fast movements. Steps that are executed with a large jump and travel in large motions are considered "grand allegro."

IV-58a: **grand jeté.** Big jump. Brush one leg high in front, and push off the supporting leg so that a split is formed in the air with the back leg in arabesque or attitude. Sustain the body in the air before landing on the front leg.

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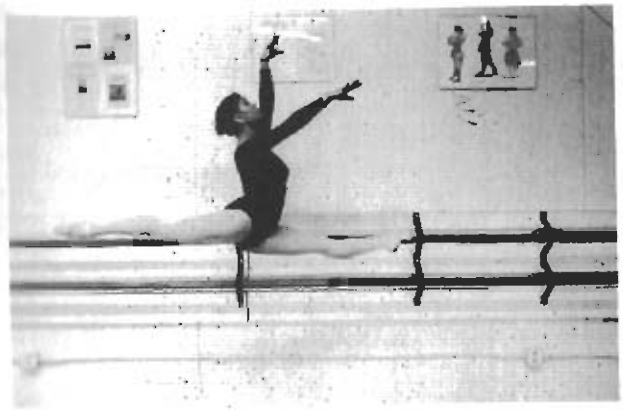


Fig. IV-58a: grand jeté.

Fig. IV-58b. A grand jeté being done facing croisé with the back leg in attitude.

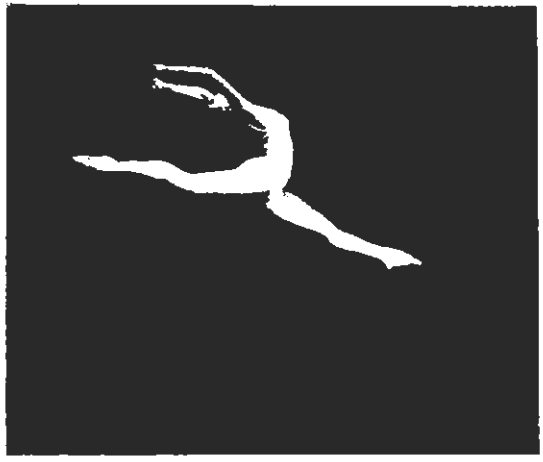


Fig. IV-58c. A grand jeté from "The Stone Flower" ballet.

IV-59 **tour jeté.** Turning jump. Also known as grand jeté en tournant. Brush one leg straight in front, demi-plié on the supporting leg, spring off the floor completing a half turn in the air away from the lifted leg, and land with the supporting leg in arabesque. Both legs should kick very high, the jump should be high, and a high arabesque should be maintained in the air before and after landing.

IV-60 **fouetté en l'air.** Whip in the air. Brush one leg straight in front, demi-plié on the standing leg. Jump high and complete a half turn in the air landing on the same standing leg with the lifted leg in back en l'air.

IV-61 **assemblé en tournant.** Jump as for an assemblé, but bring the legs to fifth in the air while turning away from the working leg. May be done with beats or two tours before landing.

IV-62 **tour en l'air.** Turn in the air. Start from fifth position, and jump straight up, completing one or more turns in the air. Land back in fifth position in demi-plié.

Fig. IV-62: tour en l'air. Position in the air during tour en l'air.

IV-63: **tour de reins.** Turning back. Start with coupé with the back leg, and the standing leg in demi-plié. Push off from the coupé into a grand jeté, turning en l'air away from the coupé leg with the back leg in attitude. Land in croisé attitude derrière.

IV-64: **tier bouchant.** Corkscrew. Execute like an en dedans pirouette en passé, but jump high in the air for one or two turns.

IV-65: **cabriole.** Goat. Push off of one leg brushing the other front or back, and bring the standing leg to meet the lifted leg in the air and bring down the standing leg to land in demi-plié. For a double cabriole, tense the legs as they hit together, beat twice in the air, and land.

IV-66: **renversé.** Overturned. Basically it is a backward turn with the upper body bending and arching away from the direction of the turn. There are several different types of renversé. From a fifth position, perform an en dehors rond de jambe à terre, moving the corresponding arm parallel to the leg, and leaning the upper body away from the working leg. As the leg and arm reach the back, pull the leg into fifth position on demi-pointe and the arm into fifth en haut, and complete a full en dehors turn on demi-pointe.

IV-67: **gargouillade.** Gurgle. Jump from two feet and extend one leg à la seconde. Complete a quick double rond de jame en l'air à la seconde, bring the toe in to meet the knee of the supporting leg, and unfold the supporting leg out to à la seconde before landing on the working leg.

IV-68: **pirouette.** Turn.

IV-69: **pirouette en dehors.** A turn on one leg to the outside. Turn away from the standing leg with the lifted leg en passé, attitude, à la seconde, or arabesque.

Fig. IV-69a: pirouette en dehors. Preparation for pirouette en dehors.

Fig. IV-69b. The correct position of the passé and the arms for a pirouette en dehors.

IV-70: **pirouette en dedans.** A turn on one leg to the inside. Turn towards the standing leg with the lifted leg en passé, attitude, à la seconde, or arabesque.

Fig. IV-70a: pirouette en dedans. Preparation for pirouette en dedans.

Fig. IV-70b. Starting the pirouette en dedans.

IV-71 **chainé.** Turns in a chain. Consecutive half turns en relevé with the feet alternating in first position.

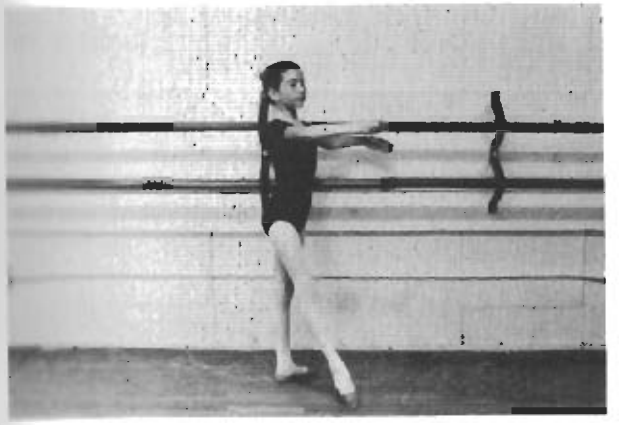


Fig. IV-71a: chainé. Preparation for chainé turns.

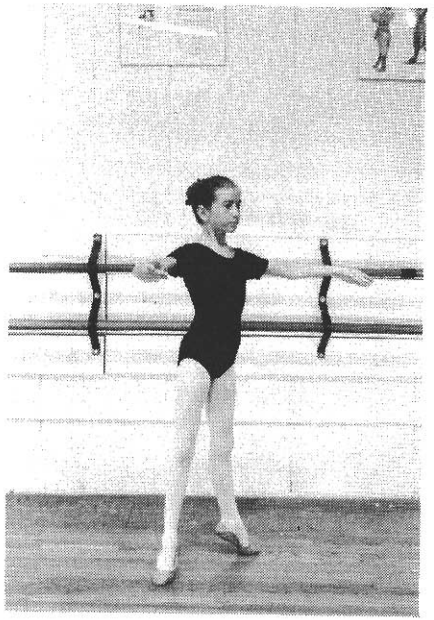


Fig. IV-71b. Arms and feet placement going into the first chainé.

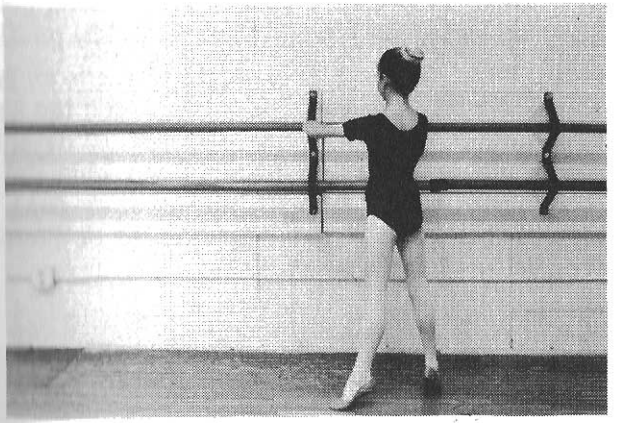


Fig. IV-71c. Arms and feet placement at the end of the first chainé.

IV-72: **piqué turns.** Step onto a straight leg on demi-pointe, and turn en dehors or en dedans with the lifted leg in any position.

IV-73: **fouetté.** Whip. Execute an en dehor pirouette en passé. At the completion of a full turn come down in plié on the supporting leg. At the same time fully extend the working leg devant at a 90 degree angle to the supporting leg. Relevé and whip the working leg à la seconde and into passé as the turn is being done. Repeat for each turn. Fouettés are also done en dedans or alternating en dehors and en dedans for every turn.

Fig. IV-72. Position of arms and legs during a piqué passé turn.

Fig. IV-73a: fouetté. Preparation for fouetté.

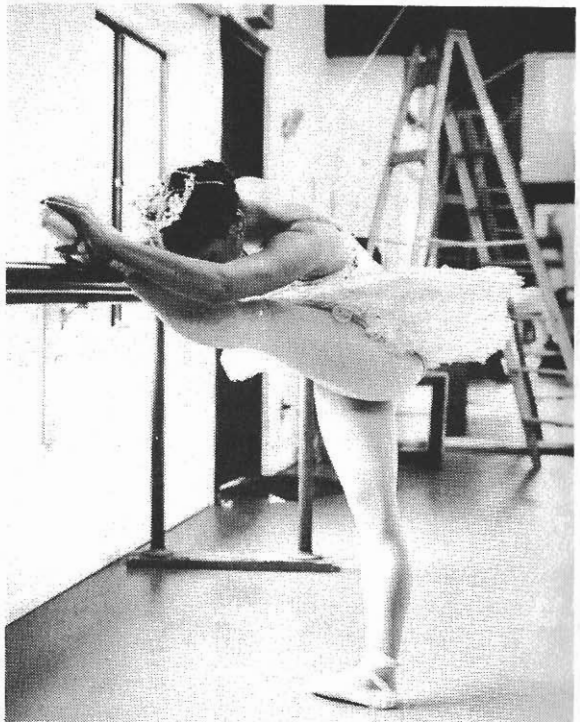
Fig. IV-73b. After the preparatory turn into a fouetté.

Fig. IV-73c. Whipping the leg for the fouetté.

IV-74: **révérence.** A bow or curtsey. There are many different styles of révérence. It is usually done at the completion of the ballet class and after a dance has been performed.

Fig. IV-74a: révérence. A curtsey, and two types of révérence.

Fig. IV-74b. A bow after a solo variation.



V. STRETCHES

Extensive stretching should be practiced only after the dancer is fully warmed up. Injuries to muscles and ligaments caused by careless stretching can disable a dancer for many months. Many dancers like to do mild stretches as a way to warm-up before class. These are always done slowly and carefully in order to let the muscles stretch out gradually. Supervision by a qualified instructor is recommended for stretches that are unfamiliar to the student.

A. Stretches On The Barre

VA-1. The first stretch is a basic all around stretch that is good for beginners to use. It emphasizes stretching hamstrings, back muscles, and feeling correct placement of the legs held en l'air.

VA-1a. Hold onto the barre with your left hand, and place the right leg on the barre. Stand so that the arm on the barre is comfortably bent, and face your shoulders and hips exactly to the lifted leg. The lifted leg should be completely turned out with the heel or ankle resting on top of the barre.

VA-1b. Lift your right arm over your head and reach the upper body over the lifted leg. Bend from the hip, and reach as though you are reaching past your toes. Pull the body up straight and bend straight back from the waist as far back as you can without disturbing the placement of the hips.

Fig. VA-1a. A good beginner stretch.

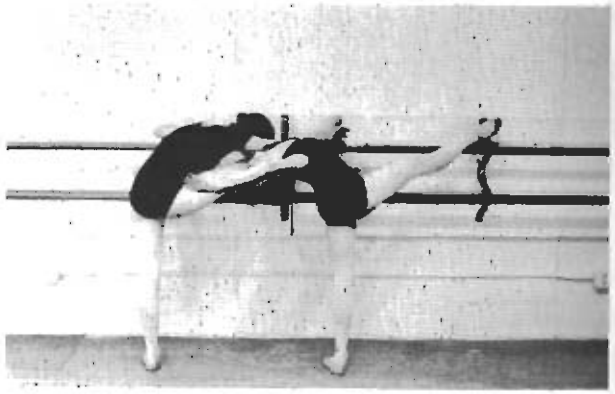


Fig. VA-1b. Port de bras forward and back.

VA-1c. Turn and face the barre so that the leg is in à la seconde position. Lift the left arm over your head and reach sideways to the right. Return to an upright position and lift the right arm over your head. Keeping the hips under and the lifted leg turned out, reach away from the leg, and return to an upright position.

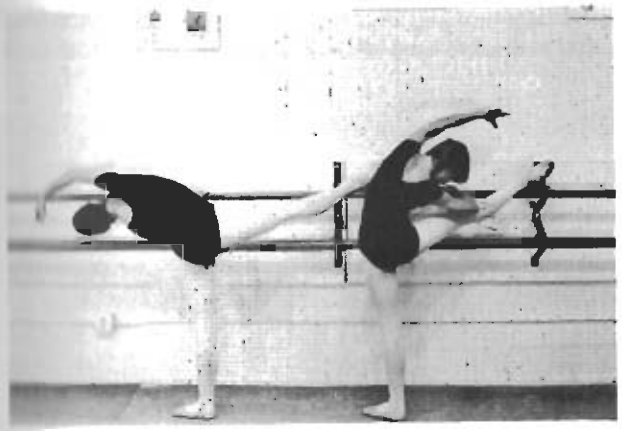


Fig. VA-1c. Port de bras over the lifted leg, then away from it.

VA-1d. Hold on to the barre with the right hand and turn the body and standing foot so that the lifted leg is in arabesque on the barre. Make sure your waistline is straight and the line across your hips is perpendicular to the lifted leg. Bend forward from the hips as far as you can reach, and put your left arm over your head. Bring the body, head, and arm up straight, and bend back over the lifted leg. Return to an upright position and repeat the side stretch again.

Fig. VA-1d. Port de bras down, over the standing leg, then back, over the lifted leg.

VA-2. The next stretch presents some difficulty in maintain balance, particularly in arabesque position. It is excellent for developing control, balance, and a feeling for correct hip placement.

VA-2a. Place your right leg on the barre so that it is perpendicular to the barre. Keep your standing leg at a 90 degree angle to the lifted leg and to the floor. Place your arms in fifth position en haut, and reach over the lifted leg keeping the spine straight. Pull the body up straight again, then port de bras straight back.

VA-2b. Turn to à la seconde. If you can't achieve a 180 degree line with the lifted leg and your body, place the lifted leg a little in front of the body while maintaining complete turn-out. Lift your left arm over your head and reach straight over the lifted leg. Change arms and reach away from the lifted leg.

Fig. VA-2a. With the leg directly in front of you, port de bras forward, then port de bras back.

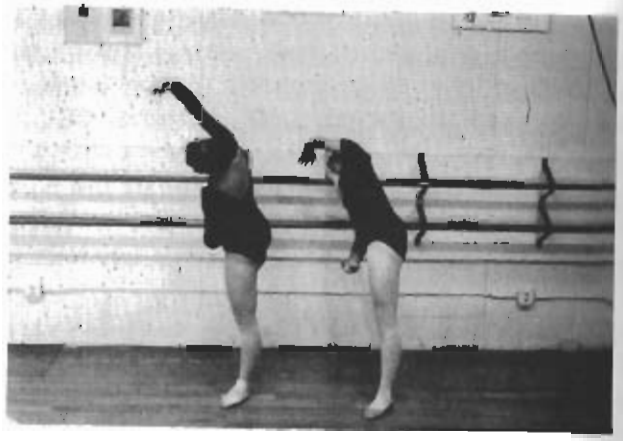


Fig. VA-2b. Turn to à la seconde, and port de bras over and away from the lifted leg.

VA-2c. Slowly rotate your entire body so that the lifted leg is in arabesque position, and your entire upper body is facing away from the barre. Bend down as far as possible, then come up straight. Repeat the exercise à la seconde.

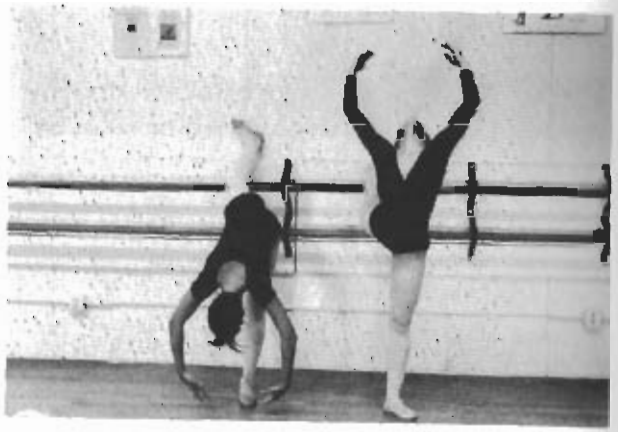


Fig. VA-2c. Turn slowly to arabesque, and port de bras forward, and back.

VA-3. This stretch develops flexibility and strength in the hip joint, inside thigh, abdominals, and back muscles. Lifting the leg and body together in plié helps to feel the leg turned out from the hip socket. It is difficult at first to lift the leg. The plié and lift must come at the same time. If the leg feels heavy, then it is probably not turned out enough from the hip. The more turn-out that is achieved, the easier it will be to lift the leg. Make sure you grab the ankle from the outside, not the heel on the inside. It should feel as though you are hugging your leg.

VA-3a. Place your right leg on the barre as in exercise VA-1. After reaching over the leg as far as possible, grab the outside of the ankle with your right hand. Lift the leg while simultaneously doing a demi-plié on the standing leg, and bring the leg up with the body. When your body is straight up, release the leg and hold it extended in demi-plié.

Fig. VA-3a. Demi-plié while simultaneously lifting the leg, and body.

VA-3b. Turn à la seconde. Reach over your right leg with your left arm overhead. Grab the barre with your left hand, and lift the outside of your leg with your right hand. Plié and lift the leg, straightening the body at the same time. Release your hold on the leg and hold it extended.

Fig. VA-3b. Port de bras over the lifted leg, then change arms to lift the leg off the barre.

VA-3c. Turn to arabesque. Lift your left arm over head and port de bras back. Come up straight and penché, placing your arm in first arabesque. Come up leaving your leg as high en l'air as possible as you straighten. Place it back on the barre, and turn to à la seconde again.

Fig. VA-3c. Port de bras back first, then lift the leg off the barre, and penché.

VA-4. This stretch is sliding the leg on the barre in all directions. It stretches both the lifted leg and the supporting leg in a split position.

VA-4a. Place your right leg on the barre as in stretch VA-1, and your right arm overhead. Keep your hips and shoulders square to the lifted leg and slowly slide the leg as far as possible along the barre. When you can no longer keep your shoulders and hips squarely facing the lifted leg, pull back to the beginning position. This may be followed by a port de bras back as in exercise VA-1a.

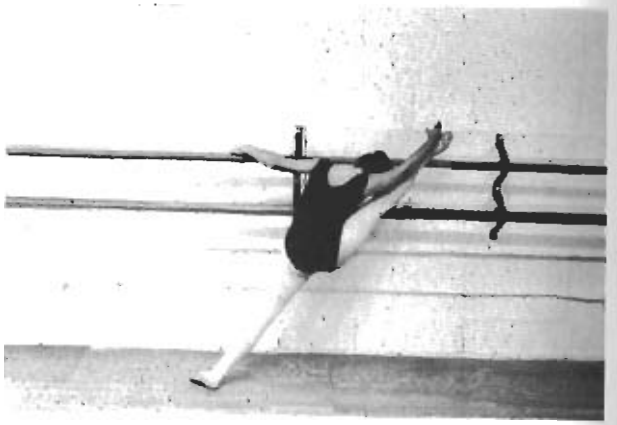


Fig. VA-4a. Slide on the barre as far down as possible, without twisting the hips.

VA-4b. Turn to à la seconde position. Hold the barre with both hands and slide the leg in second position along the barre. Keep your hips under and your upper body parallel to the barre. The knee on the standing leg must not "roll" forward. After sliding as far as possible, return to the beginning position. You may follow the slide with a port de bras away form the lifted leg as in stretch VA-1b.

Fig. VA-4b. Slide in á la seconde position keeping the hips tucked under.

VA-4c. Turn to arabesque position. Square the shoulders to the hip. If you allow the inside shoulder to be behind the outside shoulder, your leg will fall off the barre during the slide. Keep your left arm in à la seconde position, and slide the lifted leg backwards along the barre as far as possible. Pull up straight after you have gone as far as you can. You may follow the slide with a port de bras back with your left arm over your head. Repeat à la seconde again.

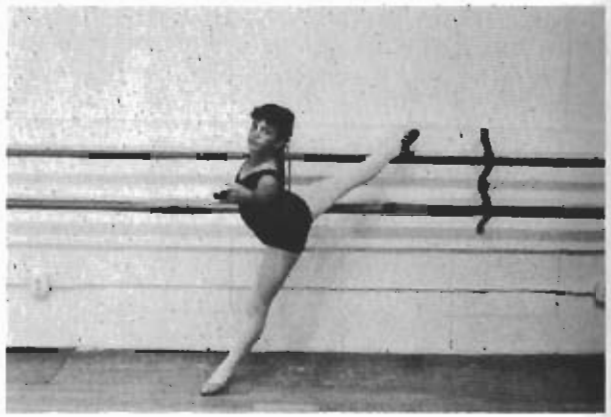


Fig. VA-4c. Keep the inside shoulder forward in arabesque, or the leg will fall off the barre when you slide.

VA-5. This stretch will improve turn-out in "attitude devant," and "attitude derrière." On a ballet barre at normal height, this is a difficult stretch to execute if you are not very limber. If the barre is not against the wall, a partner can help to hold the leg on the barre.

VA-5a. Place your leg in "attitude devant" on the barre. Hold on to the barre with both hands. The hollow of your heel should be on the barre with your foot on the outside of the barre. Place your leg directly in front of you, and try to have the knee on the barre. The optimum position is to have the heel and knee in a straight line on the barre. This may take some experience to achieve. Bend your upper body over the barre, lift up and bend back and up again. Repeat.

VA-5b. Turn around so that you are now in "attitude derrière" on the barre. Hold on the barre with both hands on either side of the lifted leg. Bend back over the leg. Straighten up and lift the leg a few inches off the barre in attitude. Place the leg on the barre again, and repeat.

Fig. VA-5a. Try to place the knee, and heel on the barre.

Fig. VA-5b. Hold on the barre with both hands on either side of the leg.

VA-6. This stretch is good for increasing general flexibility of the inner thigh, hip joint and upper body. If you cannot achieve maximum extension when you first try this, it is not because your arms are too short! Be patient and practice this stretch slowly and carefully for best results.

VA-6a. Execute a passe ouvert. Grasp the heel of the working foot from underneath while doing a demi plié on the standing leg. Slowly try to straighten the working leg in front of you. Carry the leg to à la seconde while straightening the standing leg. Carry the leg front again while doing a demi-plié on the standing leg. Carry to à la seconde again while straightening the standing leg. Turn the working leg in by dropping your upper body forward slightly and letting your hips rotate out. Bring the leg back to a turned out position, let go and hold it there for as long as possible.

Fig. VA-6a. Grasp your heel from underneath and stretch the leg out straight in front.

Fig. VA-6b. Carry the leg to à la seconde.

VA-6b. Execute an attitude derrière with the same working leg. Grasp your knee from the outside and lift the attitude up as far as possible. Stretch to arabesque while still holding your knee. Let go and hold the arabesque up.

Fig. VA-6c. Lift attitude as high as possible.

Fig. VA-6d. Stretch to arabesque.

VA-6c. Bend the working leg and grab your toe, bringing your leg overhead from the back as much as possible while arching your back and dropping your head back.

Fig. VA-6e. Grab your foot and arch back.

B. Stretches With a Partner

Pick a partner who is close your same height and physical build. In order to avoid injury, the partner must pay careful attention to your needs and commands while lifting your leg.

VB-1. The first stretch will develop and strengthen the leg extensions devant, à la seconde, and en arabesque.

VB-1a. Stand in fifth position with your back to the barre. Lift your front leg up to your hip level. Keep your hips square to your leg, your upper body slightly forward, and your standing foot flat on the floor. Your partner will hold your foot underneath the heel so that he/she may lift it in a turned out position. It is difficult to lift someone's leg by using arm strength only. He/she places both hands, palms facing straight up, under your heel with his/her elbows down. He/she pushes your leg up using his/her whole body to lift the leg. He/she should keep an eye on your hip and body placement and correct any flaws. He/she should only lift as high as you can keep your hips and standing leg in a correct position. He/she lets go of the leg at this highest point.

Fig. VB-1a. Have your partner push from underneath your heel with his/her whole body.

VB-1b. Carry the leg to à la seconde position. He/she lifts it in second while you keep your hips tucked under and the opposite side of your upper body in a straight line with the standing leg. He/she lets go and you hold the leg in à la seconde.

Fig. VB-1b. Your partner should make sure that your hips and body are placed correctly.

VB-1c. Turn and face the barre with your leg in arabesque. Hold on lightly to the barre with both hands. He/she lifts your leg in arabesque while you keep your upper body erect (not leaning over the barre) and your back arched. He/she lets go and you continue to hold your leg up.

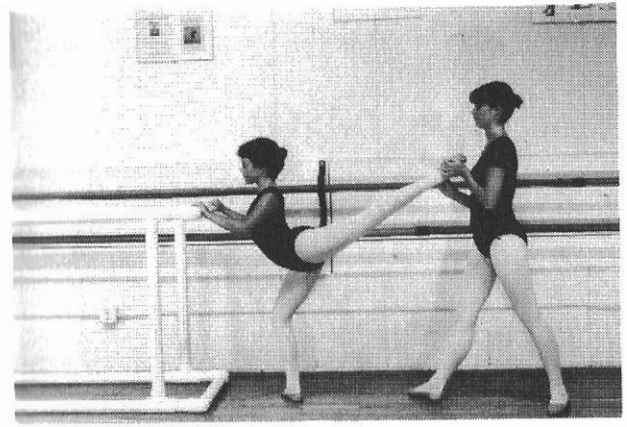


Fig. VB-1c. Keep your body upright in arabesque position.

The same stretch can be done with one hand holding the barre. It is more difficult to hold the body in correct placement this way. The stretch can also be done on the floor to the front and side only. Having the body on the floor forces the hips and body to remain straight during the stretch.

Fig. VB-1d. The same stretch, but with one hand on the barre.

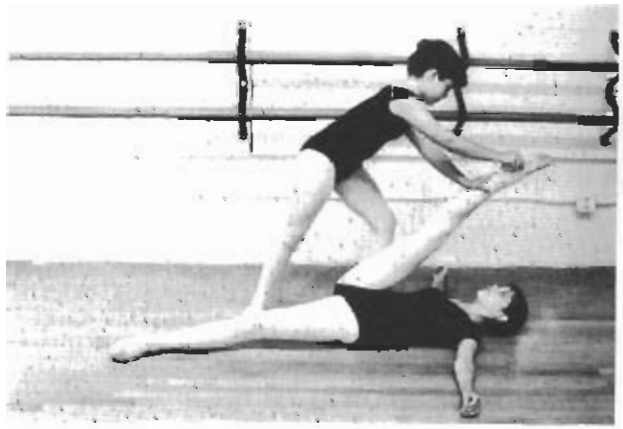


Fig. VB-1e. The same stretch, but on the floor.

VB-2. The next stretch will help you to feel how the leg should rotate in the hip socket as it passes from devant, to à la seconde, to arabesque and back again. Start with your leg at a comfortable level to enable you to maintain correct placement, then gradually increase the height as you feel stronger and more flexible.

VB-2a. Hold onto the barre with one hand and stand in fifth position. Lift the outside leg devant in a turned out position and keep the hips straight. Your partner will hold your leg such that he/she can continue to turn it out while carrying it in a grand rond de jambe to arabesque. Your leg is carried to to à la seconde at the same height as far to the side as possible without twisting the body. He/she lets the leg turn over as it passes to arabesque. He/she lifts it higher in arabesque, lets go, and you hold your leg in the last position. Reverse the rond de jambe, rotating the leg as soon as possible so that it will be turned out in à la seconde.

Fig. VB-2a. Your leg should be turned out as much as possible.

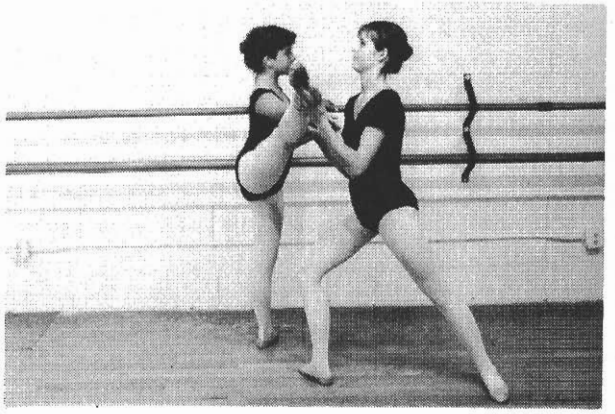


Fig. VB-2b. Your partner carries your leg to á la seconde.

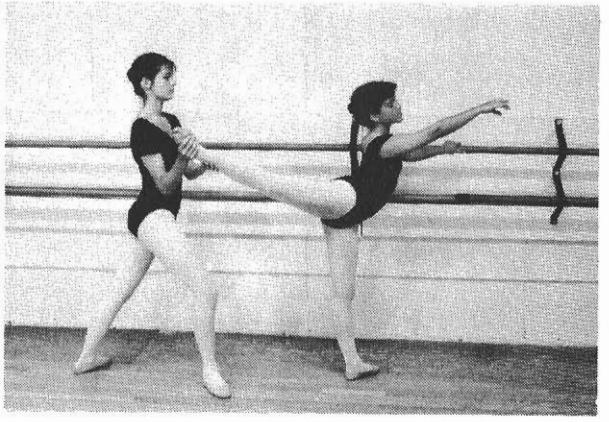


Fig. VB-2c. Your partner carries your leg to arabesque.

C. Stretches On The Floor

Keep the spine straight whenever stretching or sitting on the floor. Don't hunch the shoulders forward.

VC-1. Sit with the legs stretched out in front. Place the arms in fifth position en haut and reach over the legs as if trying to grab the bottom of the feet with the arms. Pull back straight again. Alternate with feet pointed and flexed.

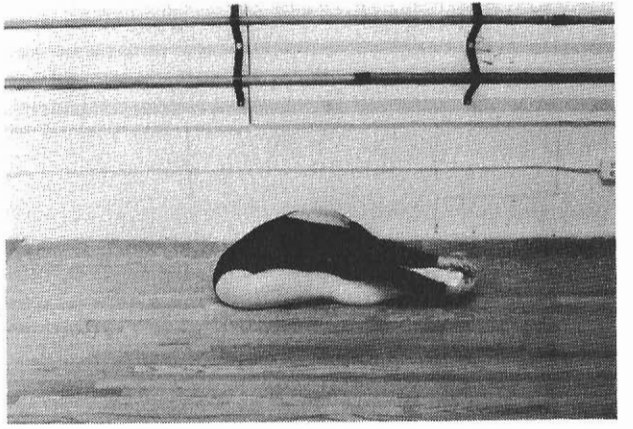


Fig. VC-1. Sit with the legs stretched out in front, and then reach over the legs.

VC-2. Sit on the floor with the legs spread in second position. With one arm over the head and the other down in front, reach sideways over one leg as far as possible. Repeat on the other side.

VC-3. Sit in second position, grab one ankle and pull the body down to the leg. Keep both knees straight and try to touch the leg with the whole upper body. Repeat on the other side.

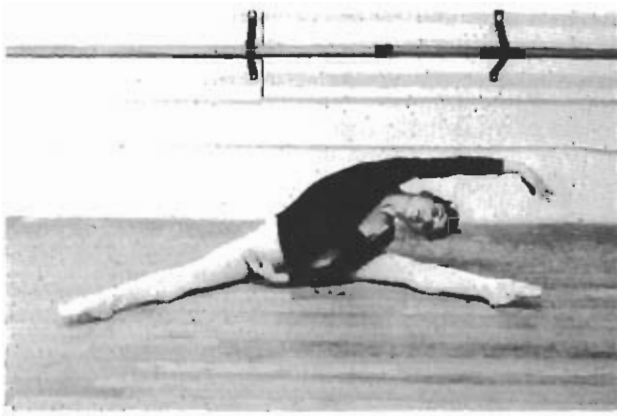


Fig. VC-2. Reach over each leg with your arm over your head.

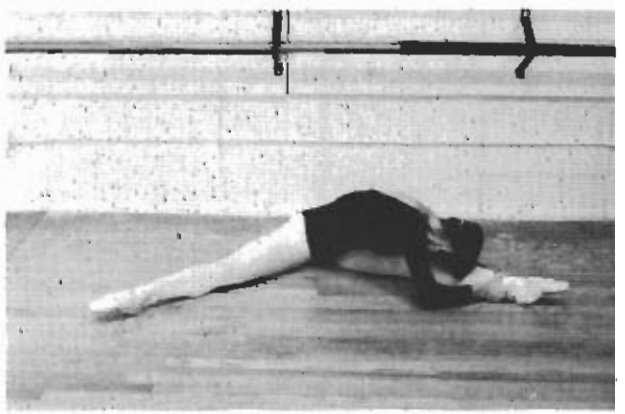


Fig. VC-3. Grab one ankle and pull your body down over your leg.

VC-4. Sit with the legs in second position. Stretch the arms straight out in front. Incline the body forward as far as possible. Touch the hands to the ground trying to get the stomach and chest flat on the floor.

Fig. VC-4. Reach your upper body forward as far as possible.

VC-5a. Sit on the floor and pull the feet together up close to the body on the ground. Turn the knees out. Place your hands, palms facing up, between your legs and pull up the heels by grabbing them underneath. Toes should be touching the ground, and each other. Press the knees as far down to the ground as possible, release the tension, and press again. Repeat several times.

Fig. VC-5a. Keep your heels up off the floor.

VC-5b. Extend the leg straight up in front of you, alternating legs each time.

VC-5c. Extend the leg to the side as close to the body as possible. Alternate legs each time.

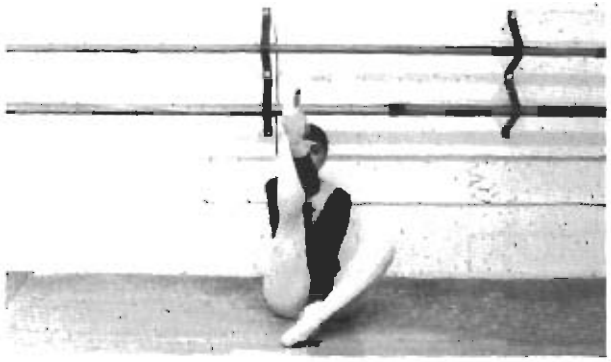


Fig. VC-5b. Lift one leg at a time to the front.

Fig. VC-5c. Lift one leg at a time to the side.

VC-6a. Lie on your back with your legs stretched out straight in front. Bend one knee and bring it up to your chest trying to get the thigh flat against the body. Grab your ankle and slowly straighten the leg as far as possible.

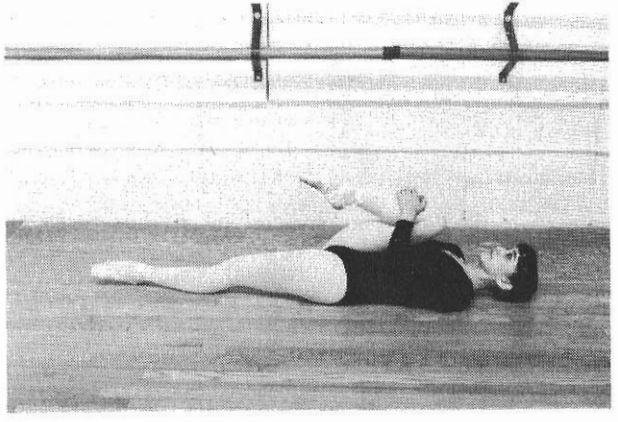


Fig. VC-6a. Lift the knee close to your body, then straighten the leg.

VC-6b. Lift one knee to the side of the body trying to get the thigh as close the body as possible. Grab your ankle and slowly straighten the leg as far as possible.

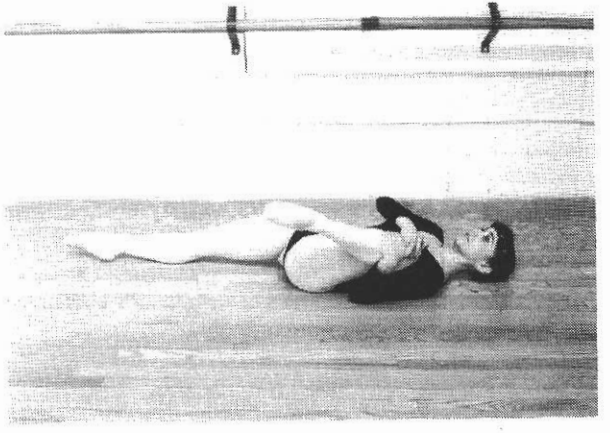


Fig. VC-6b. Lift the knee to the side, then straighten the leg.

VI. BEGINNING ADULT BALLET CLASS FOR EXERCISE

Many students, especially adults, study ballet for the exercise and flexibility it provides for their bodies. Ballet and other dance forms can be an enjoyable mental and physical discipline for people not particularly interested in becoming professional dancers. There is no substitute for studying with a qualified instructor if you expect to achieve correct technique and muscle development. If you are already studying dance, the following class may be a helpful supplement. If you are planning on starting a dance class, it may give you some criteria to look for in choosing a school and help you to decide whether this is a discipline worth investing time and money into.

All the exercises are completed on both sides. Steps at the barre are usually done with the right foot first. All the exercises here are done with both hands on the barre to aid in balance and placement.

VI-1. **pliés.** Demi-plié, straighten (2 cts), relevé (2 cts). Twice. One grand plié. (4 cts down, 4 cts up). Complete the exercise in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd position. Be conscious of pressing the knees over the toes on each plié and locking the knees on each relevé. Pliés are done at a slow tempo.

VI-2. **tendus.** From first position, complete eight tendus with straight legs, landing each time in first position. (1 ct out and 1 ct in). Complete the exercise en croix. Extend each tendu so that the foot points out fully, and the knee is straight. Keep the knee locked as you pull back to first position. Do not allow the toes to leave the floor. These tendus should be done slowly. After completing the exercise on both legs, you may repeat it at a faster tempo.

VI-3. **petit battements.** Take a first position. Complete eight petit battements in each direction en croix. (1 ct out and 1 ct in). Brush the foot as if you are pushing the floor away each time. Do not move the body or standing leg. Do the petit battements at a moderate tempo.

VI-4. **relevés.** Complete three relevés in first position. Stay in plié after the third relevé and relevé from first position plié to second position. Complete three relevés in second position and relevé to fourth position. Complete three relevés in fourth position and relevé to fifth. Complete three relevés in fifth position and return to first position. (1 ct for each relevé). Plié on "and," and relevé on the count. Start each relevé from a deep demi-plié, snap to relevé with the knees locked, and return to a deep demi-plié each time. Be careful not to "roll" the knees on demi-plié. This exercise should be done moderately slow.

VI-5. **rond de jambe à terre.** From first position, complete eight rond de jambe en dehor, and eight rond de jambe en dedans. Do each rond de jambe slowly and stop in first position each time. (1-2-3 ct for each). Make sure you keep the hips and upper body still. These rond de jambes should be done to a slow 3/4 time.

VI-6. **développé.** Stand in first position with your back to the barre. Keep the elbows off the barre, and the arms slightly bent. Complete two développés devant, and two à la seconde with the same leg. Face the barre and repeat en arrière and à la seconde. (4 cts each). Take one slow count for each part of the développé. Concentrate on keeping the legs turned out and the hips straight. In à la seconde, the sole of the foot should be facing front and the knee back. For arabesque, keep the back upright to develop strength and flexibility. Hold the leg out fully extended for a second each time before closing back to first position.

VI-7. **grand battement.** Face away from the barre in first position. Complete eight grand battement devant and eight à la seconde with the same leg. After completing both sides, face the barre and complete sixteen en arrière on each leg in arabesque. (2 cts each). Keep the body still on each grand battement. Do not let either knee bend, or the standing heel to lift off of the floor. The leg should feel like it is on a hinge in the hip socket. Do these at a moderate tempo.

VI-8. **floor stretches.** Sit on the floor with your back straight and your legs straight out in front. Pointe and flex your feet with the knees straight sixteen times at a moderate tempo.

VI-9. **floor stretches.** Complete floor stretch VC-l four times with pointed feet, and four times with flexed feet. Reach over and stay for three counts, and come up straight on four.

VI-10. **floor stretches.** Complete floor stretch VC-2 four times on each side.

VI-11. **floor stretches.** Complete floor stretch VC-3. Alternate right and left sides four times.

VI-12. **floor stretches.** Complete floor stretch VC-4. Reach down as far as you can. Relax in that position and stay there as long as possible.

VI-13. **floor stretches.** Complete stretches VC-5a,b,c. Stretch each leg four times in each position.

VI-14. **floor stretches.** Complete floor stretch VC-6a,b,c. After straightening the leg, hold it there for the slow count of ten, and then slowly release it.

VI-15. **center relevés.** Execute three relevés in each position, relevé to the next position on the fourth relevé. This is the same exercise as V-4, but without the support of the barre.

VI-16. **sautés.** Use the same combination as VI-15, but with a sauté instead of a relevé. Your heels must touch the floor whenever you land from a sauté or relevé.

VI-17. **glissades and changements.** Execute three glissades to the right without changing feet, and one changement. Alternate sides four times. Do this exercise moderately slow.

VI-18. **changements.** Sixteen changements from fifth to fifth at a fast tempo.

VI-19. **révérence.**

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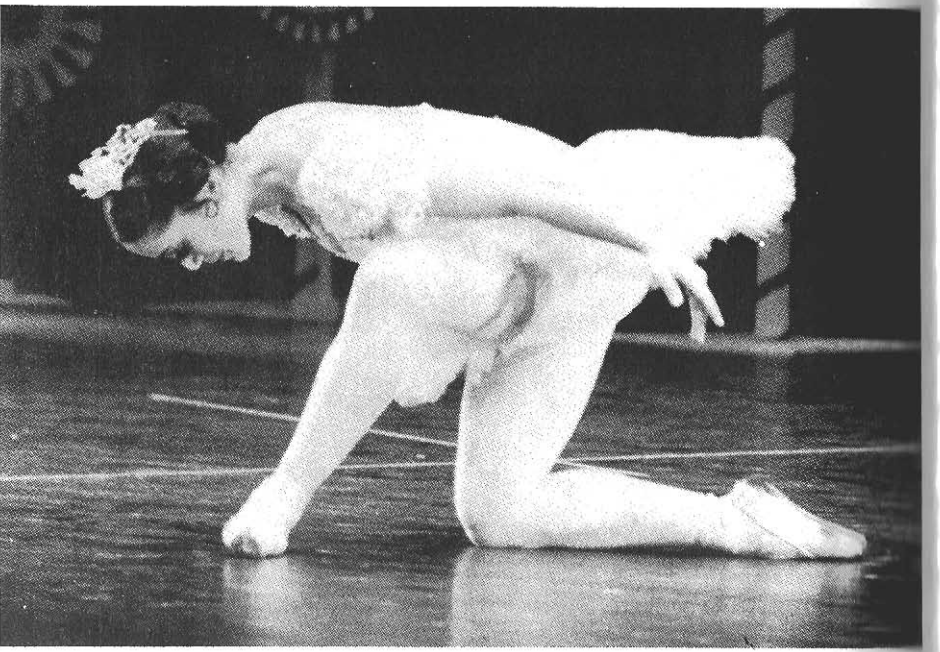
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