



Cha-Cha-Cha

Brief History

Cha-Cha-Cha originated in Cuba in the 1940s, and it is thought the name is derived from the sound of the dancers' shoes as they shuffled around the dance floor.

The Cha-Cha is a vibrant, flamboyant and playful dance, with a light and bubbly feel giving it a unique sense of fun. The Cha-Cha requires small steps with the feet remaining in contact or close to the floor as in most Latin dances, and lots of Cuban hip action!

The Cha-Cha was originally one of the Mambo moves, where two slow steps were followed by three quick steps, changing weight on each step. This figure from the Mambo became the basic step of the Cha-Cha, and this triple step is known as a 'Cha-Cha Chasse'. Given its close association with the Rumba and Mambo, it should be no surprise that the Cha-Cha is very similar in style.

Cha-Cha's continued popularity can be heard in the music of Ricky Martin, Marc Anthony and Carlos Santana.

Characteristics and Technique

Tempo:	120-140 beats per minute
Rhythm:	2,3,4&1
Time signature:	4/4

The basic components of the Cha-Cha are triple steps and rock steps. Quick, small steps must be maintained throughout the dance. The distinctive movements of the hips result from the constant bending and straightening of the knees. There is no change of height or bounce action during these hip movements.

The Cha-Cha Chasse consists of three steps which can be danced in any direction with a **staccato action**. The fourth beat of every bar is **syncopated**, giving it a unique and characteristic 2,3,4&1 rhythm. Therefore, five steps are danced to four beats, and the last beat of the triple step is the first beat of the next bar.

Guapacha Timing - Many steps in the Cha-Cha-Cha lend themselves to this variation in timing, where a step that is normally taken on the second beat of the beat is delayed for a further ½ beat in order to create a sharp and clean effect. This is pronounced WHAPPACHA!

The Cha-Cha is danced on beat 2, and so to achieve this it is necessary to take a **preparation step** with LF to side on beat 1 of the first step in order to begin on the correct timing & rhythm of the dance.

Toe Turn-Out - As a general rule, the step before a 'replacing' action will have a slight natural turn out of the toe (between 1/16th and 1/8th, depending on the dancer's own physique). This is also known as a 'checking action'. Any step which is followed by another step in the same direction, does not have this turn out action and the toe of the stepping foot should be kept straight.

Cha Cha Chasse – Due to the syncopation of the chasse action with the 4&1 timing (½ , ½, 1), there will be a slight compression of the knee of the step on the 4 and the same of both knees for the &. With both knees straightening into the beat of 1.

Begin with a proud elegant posture, all weight on RF (hip to right) feet slightly apart. Release the heel of LF in order to take a preparation step to side on 1. Arms should be held naturally by your side, elbows slightly lifted in basic Latin position.

Cuban motion is used throughout the routine.

Basic Cha-Cha Chasse Step

Foot Position	Footwork	Body Movement/ Action Amount of Turn	Rhythm	Beat value
RF back Replace weight to LF RF to side (small step) Close LF towards RF RF side LF forward Replace weight to RF LF to side (small step) Close RF towards LF LF side	Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat		Slow Slow Quick Quick Slow Slow Slow Quick Quick Slow	2 3 4 & 1 2 3 4 & 1
Notes				

Forward Check – New York

Foot Position	Footwork	Body Movement/ Action Amount of Turn	Rhythm	Beat value
Forward Check – New York RF forward Replace weight to LF RF small step to side Close LF towards RF RF side LF forward Replace weight to RF LF small step to side Close RF towards LF LF side	Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat	1/8 turn to L 3/8 turn to R is made over beats 4&1 1/8 turn to R 3/8 turn to R is made over beats 4&1	Slow Slow Quick Quick Slow Slow Slow Quick Quick Slow	2 3 4 & 1 2 3 4 & 1
Notes Although only 1/8 turn is made on each of the forward checking actions, each of the side steps will be taken facing diagonally to the wall (L or R) so that each of the Forward Checks are danced facing the wall.				

Opening Outs

Foot Position	Footwork	Body Movement/ Action Amount of Turn	Rhythm	Beat value
RF back Replace weight to LF RF to side (small step) Close LF towards RF RF side LF back Replace weight to RF LF to side (small step) Close RF towards LF LF side	Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat	$\frac{1}{4}$ turn to R $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to L to face front $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to L $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to R to face front	Slow Slow Quick Quick Slow Slow Slow Quick Quick Slow	2 3 4 & 1 2 3 4 & 1
Notes				

Syncopated Cuban Break

Foot Position	Footwork	Body Movement/ Action Amount of Turn	Rhythm	Beat value
RF forward & across body, toe turned out Replace weight to LF RF side & slightly back Replace weight to LF RF forward & across body, toe turned out Replace weight to LF RF side This can be repeated with LF	Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat	$\frac{1}{8}$ turn to L to face LDF $\frac{1}{8}$ turn to R to face front $\frac{1}{8}$ turn to L to face LDF $\frac{1}{8}$ turn to R to face front	Quick Quick Quick Quick Quick Quick Slow	2 & 3 & 4 & 1
Notes				

Syncopated Cha-Cha Time Step

Foot Position	Footwork	Body Movement/ Action Amount of Turn	Rhythm	Beat value
Close RF to LF Replace weight to LF RF to side (small step) LF close to RF Replace weight to RF LF to side small step	Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat		Quick Quick Slow Quick Quick Slow	2 & 3 4 & 1

Notes – Due to the syncopation of beats 2& and 4& there should be a slight compression of the knees into these steps with the usual straightening action taking place on the beat of 3 and 1.

Cross Basic Chasse

Foot Position	Footwork	Body Movement/ Action Amount of Turn	Rhythm	Beat value
LF cross behind RF Replace weight to RF LF to side (small step) Close RF towards LF RF to side (small step)	Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat		Slow Slow Quick Quick Slow	2 3 4 & 1

Notes

Guapacca timing can be used on this Cross Basic Chasse. When using this timing there will be a Body sway to the L on the last step of the preceding chasse action (RF chasse). This side step will also be held with the foot extended in place for an extra ½ beat. As a result the crossing action will become a ½ beat.

The cross basic chasse can then be repeated on the other foot using a body sway to the R when using Guapacca timing.

Forward Lock Step with Change of Direction

Foot Position	Footwork	Body Movement/ Action Amount of Turn	Rhythm	Beat value
RF flick forward to LDF RF flick across body with a flexed knee RF forward, right shoulder lead LF cross behind RF RF forward, right shoulder lead LF flick forward to RDF LF flick across body with a flexed knee LF forward, left shoulder lead RF cross behind LF LF forward, left shoulder lead	Ball flat Ball Ball flat Ball flat Ball Ball flat	$\frac{1}{4}$ turn to R to face RDF Knees flexed $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to L to face LDF Both knees flexed	Slow Slow Quick Quick Slow Slow Slow Quick Quick Slow	2 3 4 & 1 2 3 4 & 1
Notes				

Forward & Backward Lock Steps

Foot Position	Footwork	Body Movement/ Action Amount of Turn	Rhythm	Beat value
RF back Replace weight to LF RF forward LF cross behind RF RF forward LF forward Replace weight to RF LF back RF cross in front of LF LF back	Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball Ball flat Ball flat	 Both knees compressed Both knees straight Both knees compressed Both knees straight	Slow Slow Quick Quick Slow Slow Slow Quick Quick Slow	2 3 4 & 1 2 3 4 & 1
Notes	<p>Footwork for Forward Lock Step (beats 4&1) is Ball flat, Ball, Ball flat Footwork for Backward Lock Step (beats 4&1) is Ball, Ball flat, Ball flat This is an exception as normally the heel would be lowered on a step requiring a $\frac{1}{2}$ beat of music.</p> <p>Strong R Side shoulder lead should be used when going forwards on beat 4 and a strong L side shoulder lead should be used when going backwards on beat 4</p>			

Turkish Towel

Foot Position	Footwork	Body Movement/ Action Amount of Turn	Rhythm	Beat value
RF forward check, pointing to RDF Replace weight to LF RF to side (small step) Close LF towards RF RF side LF forward check, pointing to LDF Replace weight to RF LF to side (small step) Close RF towards LF LF side	Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat Ball flat	Upper body twist to R Upper body twist to L	Slow Slow Quick Quick Slow Slow Slow Quick Quick Slow	2 3 4 & 1 2 3 4 & 1
Notes				