

Bachata Caribbean Style

This page contains the "Script" (that is the spoken part) of the DVDs "Bachata Caribbean Style" Volume 1 and Volume 3. This may help non English speaking students to follow the video, as well as all students to practise the figures when you are not in front of the TV. Translations into French, Italian and Spanish are available at <http://www.salsaisgood.com/scripts.htm>

Volume 1

Introduction

So you've discovered Bachata?! You love the music! You enjoy the sensuality of the dance! You want to learn more and you want it to look different from salsa and lambada! You've been searching for ideas from authentic Caribbean dancers! Well look no further!!!

This DVD offers you a different way of dancing Bachata which is closer to its origins. You CAN dance Bachata without just recycling ideas from another type of music or dance.

To film this DVD we travelled to our favourite Caribbean spot, Curacao, and filmed our favourite dancers; we also used sophisticated 'ground intelligence' to discover a top secret master, who listens to, dances and breathes only Bachata and wins every competition in the region; here we unravel his secrets for you.

What comes out of this adventure is a new method to learn Bachata, based on challenging footwork for the guy, elegant body work for the lady, interpreting all the facets and syncopation of the music and on coordinating the two dancers while they both improvise, with no need to memorise any routine. You have never seen bachata danced this way – you have never seen it look so good!

You will find everything you need in 3 volumes with over 4 hours of material including detailed instruction, musical timing, mens' styling, ladies styling, improvisation; solo and couple demos and Bachata shines which look nothing like any salsa shines you have seen.

Finally, Volume 3 contains a series of exercises in which the basic elements of the previous DVDs are isolated and packaged for your solo Bachata practice. This is unlike other dancing DVDs; it is interactive and organised in increasing levels of complexity and speed, with rhythm tracks designed purposely for the exercises. A training DVD for your own practice: just play the DVD and be ready to exercise with us.

So try the SalsaisGood method and discover a new Bachata: replace memory with creativity, imitation with originality. Be ready to learn a different way to interact with your partner on the dance floor, and a new way to listen to Bachata, so that each song is a different song and each dance a different dance.

Try, if you dare, and your Bachata will never be the same..

Basic Steps

The basic steps for Bachata are very simple, and very similar to Salsa danced On 1. If you have danced any Latin dance before, you will find them straightforward. As you will see, in our method to learn Bachata we place very little emphasis on the basic steps. Here we describe them very briefly to allow us to introduce the synchronisation to the music, but we consider them nothing more than a building block from which we can take off freely.

Starting with the left for the man, we step 3 times on the spot and we mark the beats 4 and 8 with a gentle tap with the point. Unlike with Salsa, we do not concern ourselves too much whether we step forward and back or side to side. We are free to execute the steps as we like, as long as we keep the steps very small and the point tap fairly sharp.

The Music

80% of our method of learning Bachata is based on the free interpretation of the music, so we need to make sure we learn how to listen to the music properly and how to pick the nuances of the syncopations and the breaks. You are now listening to a very typical contemporary Bachata.

The first thing which hits our ears when we listen to Bachata is the very peculiar way in which the guitar plays. The player wears a pick only in his thumb and hits the strings quite decisively to create a sort of staccato which gives a sharp sense of rhythm. While the singer sings, the guitar usually performs fast arpeggios, and then frees itself in very rhythmic solos, which are usually also based on variations of the arpeggios. All this is what reaches our ears most noticeably.

However, the core of the rhythm lies in two percussion instruments: the guiro and the bongo. It is on this that our dancing should focus, because the rhythm they play is very rich, full of syncopations, decorations and variations. Unlike in Salsa, in which percussion instruments usually follow a quite well determined pattern leaving to other instruments the duty of the arrangement, in Bachata most variations are left to the percussion.

We start easy... from the bongo. Here we have isolated the bongo from the rest of the song. The most basic pattern follows exactly the basic steps: 3 high notes for the 3 steps, and one low note for the tap. Nothing could be easier...

However, at times it may be harder to recognise such a simple pattern when all the instruments play together. We have chosen a few examples for you. Play them a few times and try to recognise the basic bongo rhythm in them.

Of course this pattern is not maintained for the full extent of the song, and the bongo player will take the freedom to decorate, especially by adding syncopations, very frequently.. as we hear in these examples... again, listen to them a few times and look for the bongo decorations..

The guiro is there to remind us that Bachata belongs to the same family as Merengue. In case you are not familiar with it, here is how a guiro sounds.... this is the sound you need to look for in the music

The guiro is the instrument most responsible for the change in energy and mood in the different parts of a song. For example, listen to these clips carefully and pay attention of how the guiro pattern changes and how this affects the feel of the music.

And obviously occasionally, like the bongo , it offers some variations..

Here it marks regular time.... Here it marks double time... here it changes rhythm again

With so much freedom, the sound needs a stable guide, and so do some beginner dancers. To our aid comes the bass. Finally a regular and simple pattern. The bass plays a long note on the 1, which helps us to clearly identify the beginning of the bar of music. It skips the beat 2, which it replaces with a syncopation on the 'and 2' and then it plays on beats 3 and 4. When we mark our basic steps then, we pay attention to the start of the long note, the 1, which is our first step. We step on the 2, ignoring the syncopation on the 'and 2'; we use the 3rd note for the third step, and we use the 4th note (beat 4) for the tap. Pay attention to it, you will notice that the clearly marked 2nd and 3rd notes create a strong emphasis on the beat n 4, a clear accent, giving the sensation that we need to stop for a short instant... we will soon discover how to make the most of this feeling in our dance.

We then repeat the same movements, inverting the order of the feet, in the next bar of music.

Body Movements

When we dance Salsa, most of the emphasis lies in the coordination of the couple while they execute a turn pattern. In our Bachata method there is no turn pattern. The emphasis is placed on how each dancer decorates the music, and how the dancers interact and interleave in between their decorations. In order to achieve this, before being a good couple dancer, you need to be a good solo dancer. And to be a good solo dancer it is very important to move well.. and there are not many people around better than our friend Candice who can teach us how to move well, so let's try to learn from her.

We start from the shoulders, although we suggest you skip this exercise if you have physical problems with your shoulders or with your neck. Keep the shoulders relaxed, not only you will look natural but also you will avoid over-exercising your muscles. Move the shoulders gently backward, alternating the left with the right every two beats of the music.. remember to go slowly, following the music, possibly with a slight delay which shows that you are in control... that you are cool.. with 'flavour', or 'sabor' as they say in Spanish. Don't exaggerate the movement, or you will look awkward, remember the purpose is to look as if your shoulders would move by themselves, as if the shoulders themselves were listening to the music.. not as if you had bought a DVD and spent hours learning how to move them.. At this stage try to isolate the shoulders and be sure that you are not moving the arms to help the movement. Once you are comfortable with this, start to move the chest slightly side to side, this will appear to widen the hip movement, when we add it later on.

Once you have your shoulders and their isolation under control, we can start to use our arms, not to help the motion, rather to embellish it. Look at Candice's arms, relaxed and elegant.. she does not drop them hanging.. she does not look as if she didn't know what to do with them, nor is she imposing them on you by doing something flashy which demands attention..

they are simply there to complete and decorate her entire body, and to enjoy, if you pay attention to detail.

Now let's focus on the hips.. we move them side to side during the 3 basic steps and we mark the 4 beat (the one on which we tap) by an accent, that is a wider movement of the hip upward. Here again, do not exaggerate the motion, make it natural, smooth, gentle and sensual.. if you exaggerate the movement at each beat you will not be able to emphasise the accent on beat 4 and 8, because you will not have anything to make 'bigger'.. The motion of the hips is reminiscent of Merengue, but remember to mark the accent with an upward motion of the hips, not sideways, which would look ridiculously exaggerated..

This is a very nice way to perform the basic steps in Bachata, but remember that the basic steps do not need to be executed continuously for the entire dance.. actually they should not be. So, occasionally we can add some variations... here are a couple of examples:

Candice occasionally adds a sharp shake with the shoulders in correspondence to the tap.. beats n 4 and 8. It is basically a way to accent those beats with the shoulders, just as we are already accenting them with the hips and the feet.

This can be done by the guys too.. in this case we can make the shake even sharper, less delicate and add masculinity too, as Jeff shows here.

Occasionally Candice likes to decorate the basic by moving the chest forward and back, rather than side to side like here..

So let's see the entire progression again.. we start with the shoulders.. nice and gentle.. we add the side motion of the chest.... the shoulder shake... now the basic steps... now the hips... decorate by moving the chest forward and back.... and finally the arms...

Here once again in different order.. the basic steps with hips motion.. the shoulder.. the shake.. the chest forward and back...

Now that we understand the sequence let's practise together with Candice, watching her from the back, so that we can follow the movement exactly...

we start again with the shoulders.. nice and smooth.. we add the side motion of the chest.... Now the shoulder shake... now the basic steps... now the hips... we move the chest forward and back.. and finally the arms.

And remember, practise long enough to feel comfortable with what your body does, and never go beyond that.. the final aim is to look natural.. maybe you won't look as natural and as nice as Candice, but your dancing will still be pleasant to look at.

Freeing the Basics

As the name says, basic steps are just 'basic' steps, just a guide to learn how to synchronise our movement with the music, and once that is under control, we can follow the music more freely.

Have a look here at the basic steps and see how they never need to be constrained to the standard pattern..

There is no clearly defined sequence in the footwork; these by no means are anything resembling Salsa shines.. they are only small decorations on the basic footwork, which originates from playing and improvising on the rhythm, almost toying with the rhythm..

In particular, you will notice a handful of simple rhythmic decorations which these Caribbean dancers use and which make their dance considerably freer and more natural

- A double quick step, which occasionally replaces the tap.. like here
- A hesitation, [like here]
- A syncopation [like here]
- The steps executed by crossing the legs.. [as here]
- Point
- Side slide steps
- Extensions
- Basics with feet touching each other
- Grapevine

We have isolated them for you, and in the next volume we have prepared a set of exercises for you to practise... finish watching this DVD, so you understand better what use you can make of these elements and then get ready to learn them and practise them.

Holding the Partner

This DVD is about free and spontaneous coordination between the dance partners, which is inspired by the music, rather than dictated by pre-designed turn patterns. The hold between the dancers used in this DVD is thus designed to allow and facilitate this spontaneous communication.

As in many other dances, we can adopt either a closed or open position. You are surely already familiar with the closed position which is used in many other Latin dances. Depending on what expressivity you want to communicate in your dance the closed position can be more or less close.. When you want to improvise some simple footwork, in closed position, you obviously need to allow for some space between the dancers, this may resemble the hold you use when you start a Salsa song. At other times, the music may suggest intimacy, in which case the dancers may be much closer and possibly very close, provided you feel comfortable and intimate with your dance partner. In this case your dance hold may resemble the one that you would use dancing Merengue. However, your legs are always free and the lady never rests or sits on the man thighs, as she would in Lambada or Zouk.

When you are in very close position you may consider following the rhythm mainly in your body, by moving the chest and the hips, possibly with very small steps, or without moving the feet at all... if the music inspires you to do so..

Unlike the closed position, the open position has a very different role than in other Latin dances. In Salsa, for example, in open position we use the hands to lead and follow turn patterns, while the coordination between the dancers is achieved by the regularity of the basic

steps. In our Bachata method, we do not use turn patterns nor fixed regular basic steps, and consequently we need something to ensure the coordination between the dancers. This is achieved by the hands, which, most of the time, mark the basic 4 beats; it is almost as if the hands took the role of the feet in Salsa. By following the movement of the hands, we know on which part of the bar of music we are, which is essential in order to improvise and get back on the right beat when we want to get close to our partner again.

Look at Yuno here his hands mark regularly the 4 beats... In this way, the lady always knows where in the 8 beat sequence she is which is important should he decide to improvise with his feet so that she is ready to coordinate the basics with the him, when he stops improvising.. Looks simple, right? Well.. try and get frustrated.. And after you get frustrated you will realise what diabolical coordination you need if you want to mark the basics with your hands and improvise some syncopation, doubles steps, kicks etc with your feet..

Once you have collected all the patience you have, try the exercises in the next volume of this series.. they will look trivially simple, but are maddeningly difficult...

BTW, we all know that men lead and ladies 'just' follow, but it is strongly recommended that ladies try these exercises too.. you have seen in the 'lady's style' section how much expressivity you can display if you are able to free your arms from your feet..

Finally... remember the number one rule for this DVD.. improvisation, freedom and originality.. you can surely play with unusual holds... get some inspiration from these clips and make up your own..

Where are we at?

So far we have learned

- how to listen to the music
- how to execute the basic steps
- how to move the shoulder and the hips
- how to come up with some simple variations on the basic steps
- how to hold the partner in closed and open position
- how to mark the time with the hands giving freedom for improvisation to the rest of the body
- that's not much, you may think.. this is nothing more than I would learn in a couple of group classes and my Bachata is probably as boring as it was before watching all this..

well.. sorry but you are wrong.. you actually already have what you need to dance an unlimited number of Bachatas, making them all different and all amazingly beautiful.. just look at this clip..

Here Jeff and Candice do not execute any shine or figure, nor any movement which you have not learnt so far.. all they do, really, is to decorate the basic steps while they dance together, so that the music, the leader and the follower are one item..

Before noticing the details of what they do, just notice how remarkable it is for two dancers to look 'together' while they actually do different things, as a result of improvising..

Lady's Styling

Like in so many other Latin dances, the main purpose of the lady in Bachata is to look beautiful. This is often misunderstood as requiring something special: spinning and technical abilities in NY and LA Salsa style, outrageous clothing and blinding make-up in ballroom and X-rated sexuality in Lambada and Zouk.

In this DVD we have the luxury of taking as a model three dancers who do not require much effort to look beautiful, and we try to inspire you with their naturalness and simplicity. The purpose is not to emulate them, but to get inspiration and encouragement to express your own beauty in a similarly natural way.

We are already familiar with Candice, who taught us to move our shoulders and body, here we see her in another demo.

There are several features of her dancing which are worth noticing carefully. Firstly, every part of her body is always involved in the dance, from the feet to the shoulders, and even past that, to include her explosive smile. Secondly, the dance is very relaxed, and slow.. no sudden, jerky movement, no fast action executed to impress.. it is clear that Candice is enjoying every beat of that song and she shows it to us. Thirdly, notice how despite the fact that each part of the body is always moving, Candice has the ability to attract our attention to a specific movement, by highlighting it gently and subtly... here clearly our attention is meant to be on the hips... here on the feet... here on the shoulders... the ability to express this without stopping the movement of the rest of the body, and without make it too obvious or 'in you face', is what makes the difference between nice and average dancing.

Notice how Candice's knees are always very close to one another, except when she needs to take a slightly longer step. This results in the legs often crossing. This vaguely reminds us of Tango and surely adds elegance to her movement.

While, as we will soon see, footwork is the realm of Bachata male dancing, Candice also performs some simple decorations and embellishments on the basic steps...

Finally, notice the ability to tune into the different facets of the music. If we remove the music, it is still obvious that this.... and this... are different parts of the song, right? .. Indeed....

And here we can see the break, even if we do not hear it... Look...

This is Eduarda, a professionally trained and amazing Salsa dancer who, at the sound of Bachata, becomes cheeky and playful. Eduarda does not make a secret of which part of her body the attention should fall.. :)

The arms give breath to the entire movement, the hands caressing the hair, the look sneaking out from it quickly – all these establish a relationship with the camera.. she is clearly dancing with the camera here..

This is an extroverted dancer, comfortable with her cheekiness.. but also spontaneous.. we asked her to dance, she jumped on the floor and danced.. nothing of this is studied in front of the mirror, nothing is taken too seriously.. just playful and genuine..

Bachata is a couple dance, so the challenge is to incorporate these body movements when dancing with the partner and maintain the same tuning with the music ..

Now for Eduarda there is no camera any more.. her attention is 100% on her partner, as if we no longer existed..

The skill of the lady here is to make the most of any opportunity to decorate the dance.. never be left there on the floor looking as if you were waiting for something to happen.. make every beat of the music happen... and if your partner busies himself doing something flashy... just keep on looking beautiful..

And if your partner gives you space.. even better.. take your time!!!!

Some ladies are shy. And if the natural confidence of Candice and Eduarda is just not you, there is nothing to be ashamed of.. From our bag of tricks, here is Nina, who you can take as a less flamboyant model. We really like her style too.. pity she did not grant us a solo.. you may recognise yourself in that choice!

We like her shoulder decorations.. very feminine and elegant, her neat footwork.. and the precision in the marking of the breaks.. we will see more of her in her couple dancing with Rudsel...

Men's Styling

In traditional Bachata the relationship between the man and the lady reminds us of Cuban Salsa: the man shows off his technical skills while the lady looks beautiful. Ladies have just seen how to look beautiful. Here we have a look at how 4 very good male dancers may show off their abilities. We will study and learn the technicality behind the complex footwork in the next volume, here we try to absorb some style influences. .

This is Rudsel; SalsaisGood aficionados are already familiar with his skill in toying and have fun with the music in our Salsa with the Stars series. In Bachata he displays this even more. To us, it looks as if he was not only having fun with the music, but actually making fun of the music; it looks as if he was attempting to bring out the underlying irony behind Latin music and display it to us. We identify with this, since we find a similar underlying irony in the lyrics of many Bachata songs.

We will learn many of Rudsel's footwork tricks in the next volume. Here notice how the footwork is very unlike what you would expect of Salsa shines. Steps are always very small and so is Rudsel's dancing in general.. he uses very little space, which surely will come handy in couple dancing in crowded spaces.

Most footwork ideas are based on syncopations, and on highlighting the music with parts of the foot, and movements you would not expect.

You may also notice that Rudsel constantly swings the upper body side to side, which gives plasticity to the overall image and further emphasises the surprise arising from certain foot movements. Sudden stops and starts accentuate the rhythmic structure of the song and further add to the surprise effect.

... and don't forget the constant big smile!!

This is Sharif, the flamboyant one.. Sharif is very tall, and he makes the most of it. His body movements are very wide, with large motions of the chest and shoulders. So is his footwork, in which his legs often stretch to full length.. as with his arm work, notice how wide the arms move as well.

And to make things even wider, Sharif makes full use of his space by moving considerably over the dance floor; you will notice this feature in his partner dancing too.

Sharif does not shy away from using some of his Salsa skills in this Bachata demo, as displayed by his footwork, which uses longer sequences and is more complex than Rudsel's, and by his frequent use of spins.

This is Jeff, another master of syncopation as you can admire from his footwork.

Jeff's dancing is very well suited to paying attention to detail. The first which comes to our attention is the very sharp and fast footwork, in which most of the syncopations are developed. What brings our attention so clearly to the footwork is that Jeff keeps both the upper body and his arms relatively still, compared to the other dancers in this DVD. Far from making him look boring and stiff, this gives elegance to his figure, thanks also to the naturally stylish posture. Also, the sparse use of the upper body makes the occasional, nicely interspersed body movements really stand out.. like here.. the attention is carefully driven to the different accentuations by properly spreading the movement in the different parts of the body. Really cool.

We left till the end the master of all masters. Yuno or Judu as he is sometimes known is a Bachata legend in Curacao, having won several competitions and he is considered an authority even by the other talents like Sharif, Rudsel and Jeff. His style is not influenced by Salsa at all, for the simple reason that Yuno has never danced Salsa. He is a Bachata man, who breathes, listens and lives Bachata 24-7 and who is totally self-taught having never taken a dance lesson.. so what you see is what he makes..

Several features make his dancing first class, and you may need to watch him several times before you can appreciate it fully.

First his footwork, very rich and complex, but extremely sharp and precise. Notice the elegance of the leg movement, often fully stretched, and the variety of ideas used in the footwork. We will learn several of his tricks in the next volume. There is an almost smooth use of syncopation, which in principle is a contradiction since syncopation is the opposite of smoothness.. a remarkable peculiarity..

Despite the fact that his dancing seems very fluid and regular, Yuno is actually very fast in his leg work, which results in making him almost float over the floor. Look at how he moves on the floor as if he was skating. This is also remarkable, because this effect is obtained without

sacrificing the typical 'groundedness' which characterises all Latin dances. Also he manages to maintain a very nice and wide hip movement.

And, as we said before, notice the moment of the arms, very regular, despite the foot syncopation.. a lot to learn from this talent..

Styling for Couples

If lady's styling is about looking good and men's styling is about rich footwork and playing with the music, couple dancing is about doing the 2 things at the same time... It is not easy, surely harder than executing turn patterns.

When you execute a turn pattern, both dancers know what to do; the leader has a plan, communicates the plan to the lady, and they both go through the turn pattern following, roughly, the plan. Coordination is implicit, and provided both by the guy's lead and the turn pattern itself; each of the dancer knows what the partner will probably do and both roughly know when a turn pattern starts and when it will finish.

It is not so when we dance freely, the way our Caribbean Bachata friends show in this DVD. The idea can be captured somehow this way: "interpret the music freely, within your own space, giving space to your partner, while you are both in tune with each other as well as with the music".

Easier said than done.. so let's see how we can achieve this.

First, the guy decides which hold to adopt. This may be suggested by impromptu inspiration or dictated by the music; for example the most energetic part of the songs may suggest an open hold, while the more romantic melodies may suggest a closed hold. When the hold is very close the dancers have no room for individual decorations, and most likely they do not want to do any; in this position, the main aim should indeed NOT to be an individual, rather to be a part of a whole unit; the dance couple becomes a single body. The guy needs to suggest what body movement to execute, and on which part of the body the emphasis is placed, and the lady follows this implicit lead by tuning in to such movement; the result is that the dancers move in perfect unison.

When the hold is close but with no full body contact, there may be some space for small decorations, mostly in the footwork or in the shoulders. Alternatively the dancers may enjoy marking the breaks in the music together, which always looks and feels nice and emphasises how well the dancers are tuned in to the music.

In this position the guy leads mostly with the frame of his hold; wide movements of the shoulders imply focusing on moving together as a couple, in which case the left hand of the guy has an important role in indicating how much energy should be expressed.

On the contrary, holding the lady in place tends to imply that there is an opportunity for some footwork.

The open hold is obviously the one which gives more space to individuality and more room to execute footwork and decorations and it is the hold which most differentiates the Bachata

style we teach in this DVD. It is also the most difficult, though it may not seem so, since while you execute your personal decorations you also need to keep an eye on what your partner does and accommodate it.

Here is where you can use all the material you have learnt so far. Our Caribbean friends show us how to do it. If you have a few well rehearsed tricks, you may want to execute them in sync.. it looks good though we recommend to use this sparsely or else the dance may look too choreographed. The alternative, of course, is that each of the dancers can improvise freely.. or you can make the most of all the space available and travel, or even do some simple turns.

As you may expect, the move from an open hold, to a single hand hold, to not holding each other at all is quite small and easy to make ...

Finally, transitioning from one kind of hold to another is something you may do according to the music, or, if you are creative, you can use these transitions as decorations in themselves; and quite some nice ideas can come out of it.. as we can see here

What next?

Congratulations, you are now a proficient, advanced Bachata dancer! Just kidding... :)

You may need a little more effort, and, most importantly practice and dedication and soon you WILL be there.

We recommend you watch this DVD a few times, to absorb all the instruction and all the details of these special dancers. Also, make the most of the other two products in this series, one containing all demos, and one, very important, containing a set of exercises which will allow you to learn and practice what we have showed so far, don't miss out on that one!

Finally, here are a number of hints on how to improve your Bachata which apply equally well to all dances:

- listen to a lot of Bachata music.. you need to become familiar with the sound, the structure of the songs and the rhythmic patterns.. in particular you need to get accustomed to picking all the syncopations and the breaks
- practice as much as you can with many different partners, to get used to different lead and follow styles
- enjoy doing some simple solos in front of the mirror; let yourself go and experiment with different footwork and body movements and different ways to decorate the music; make them yours!

And of course, there are others instructional Bachata DVDs in the market.. keep your mind open, the more you see, the more you learn..

Volume 3

This DVD is organized very differently from most dance DVDs. So it is very important you spend a few minutes watching this session and you follow these instructions carefully to make the most of it..

this is not a DVD to 'watch'; this is a DVD to exercise with; this DVD will guide you through a number of Bachata footwork exercises. Consider it your Bachata personal trainer.

The footwork in the exercises is taken from the Caribbean dancers we analyzed in the 2 previous DVDs of this series "The method" and "The demos". We recommend you watch those 2 DVDs carefully in order to understand how the footwork exercises fit into the dance and into the Bachata method we teach. Once you are familiar with 'The method', then try the exercises.

Ok.. suppose you are ready to exercise. We will now guide you through one exercise so it will be clear how to use the DVD.

First, in the main Menu, you have the choice of four kinds of exercises. These are "basic elements", "rhythmic exercises", "arm coordination" and "footwork". Of course we recommend you start from the "basic elements"; but just for the sake of explanation, suppose you choose an exercise from the "footwork" set.

Highlight the "footwork" button on the DVD Menu with your remote control and press Enter. You will see a number of available exercises. Suppose you choose "Exercise 6". Once again, highlight it with your remote control and press Enter;

Now you can choose which speed you want to exercise at. You have 3 choices "very slow", which is useful to learn the sequence of steps "slow", which you can use to start to practice the sequence, and "normal speed" to get the footwork fluid and smooth for the real dance. Once you made your choice of speed press Play.

You will now listen to a piece of Bachata music to which we superimposed a "Rhythm cue"; this plays the rhythm pattern of the actual steps in the sequence, as if the feet could make a sound. This is very useful to memorize the sequence.

Now the exercise will loop forever and you can practice following the steps at your leisure and for as long as you need! The footwork is interspersed with basic steps, to learn how to get in and out of the sequence. The counter helps you time the sequence correctly and the guide on the right tells you when the basic steps occur and when to get ready for the sequence. What else could you possibly need?

Finally...

- Don't cut corners! Start from the "basic elements"
- The "arm coordination" set is crucial! to learn how to isolate the hand movements from the footwork.. We learnt how important this is in the 'Method' DVD. Practice

those exercises carefully.. The footwork part is easy, but the coordination with the hands is not... it takes time and patience.. Don't be lazy here!!

- Then, and only then, go to the “footwork” exercises
- This DVD is useful both for men and women since they both can improvise during the dance. Ladies, try the exercises as well.. just add more hip movement to make them more feminine; guys, don't be tricked by the 'Latin hips' myth.. Wide hip movement is for women, not for men, unless you want to look feminine too..
- The final piece of advice.. once you know all sequences, don't try to join them into a longer sequence; remember, as we explained in the 'method', the aim is improvisation, these exercises are ideas to make your footwork richer, and more spontaneous rather than to learn a routine to remember and execute by memory.