

In brief

- Choose a clip to exercise to; the clip will loop endlessly
- Use the **Audio** button on your remote control to add a voice-over counting the music beat. Keep pressing the Audio button to toggle between different counting options (1-5, 2-3-6-7, etc)
- Use the **Angle** button on your remote control to toggle between On1, On2 Modern mambo (or New York style) or On2 Classic Mambo (or Puerto Rican style also called Contratiempo in Cuba)
- Use the **Menu** button on your Remote Control to stop the clip and to back to the main menu, where you can choose the next footwork exercise.

More details

This DVD series is organized very differently from other dance DVDs. So it is very important you spend a few minutes reading these instructions carefully to make the most of it.

What is in the DVD? What is in the DVD? This DVD is not for passive entertainment. This DVD is a timing program with exercises for you to do and exams along the way. Doing the exercises involves performing basic salsa footwork in time to the music with different instruments, different speeds and increasing levels of difficulty! You can work your way through the program by selecting each of the different footwork exercises, one by one, and then performing in time with your selection of instrument/song, timing and counting options. You can test your progress by checking your footwork against what you see and hear in the DVD and by selecting the “test yourself” clips when you are ready. At all stages, you need to actively participate to get the most out of the DVDs.

What do I need to know? To use this DVD series you need no knowledge of salsa dancing because you are only performing basic salsa footwork in order to learn how to synchronise it to the music timing. Of course it helps if you are already familiar with the basic salsa steps. If you have never seen them before, you will be able to pick them up quickly by watching the clips. It may also help to have some knowledge of musical timing, some of which is explained in our DVD ‘Salsa on the Spur of the Music’. Knowledge of musical timing will help you to make more sense of some footwork exercises, but it is not necessary in order to perform them. Some people learn better with some theoretical knowledge, if you are one such person, have a look at the DVD ‘Salsa on the Spur of the Music’; if you learn better ‘by doing’ just proceed to the footwork exercises.

How do I use the DVDs? These DVDs are for active learning and take commitment. They include a choice of more than 90 individual clips and each clip is a separate footwork exercise. Each clip loops forever, that is, it repeats continuously without stopping so that you never need to rewind. It is designed this way so that you can do each exercise for as long as you need. When you are happy with your progress and you want to change exercise, press the **Menu** button on your Remote Control. This will stop the clip and bring you to the DVD menu, where you can choose the next footwork exercise.

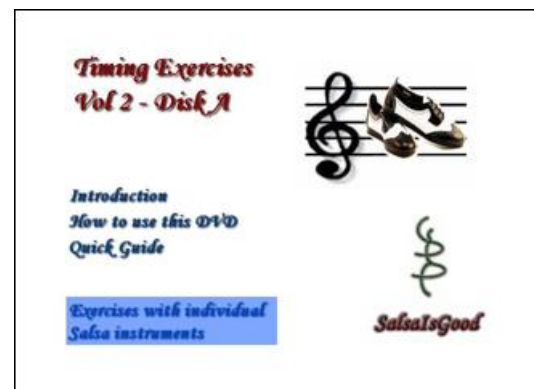


Figure 1

How should I proceed through the DVDs? Now, let's see how the DVD series is organised.

Disk A. When you first start Disk A you will see a menu like the one in Figure 1.

- 1) Select the title **Exercises with individual Salsa Instruments**, with your remote control and press **Play**. Once you choose this chapter you will see a menu as in Figure 2. This section contains different examples of the rhythms that salsa instruments play in common salsa. Once again, explanation of the role of these instruments in salsa music can be found in our DVD '*Salsa on the Spur of the Music*'. Choose any instrument by highlighting its icon and pressing **Play** on the remote control. For example, choose the **Conga**, as in Figure 2.

- 2) You will see a set of footwork exercises: the exercises allow you to practise basic salsa footwork to the different rhythms played by the conga. Each of the footwork exercises comes at two speeds, slow and fast. Let's see how it works.

- 3) You will find three kinds of clips. The first kind of clip is called **Conga 1 – Standard basics**. As an example select the title **Conga 1 – Standard basics – slow** (as in Figure 3) and press **Play** on the remote control. A clip will start to play showing a tutor dancing the basic salsa steps (forward and backward) to a common conga rhythm as in Figure 4. Try to follow the tutor and synchronise your basic steps to the rhythm. Notice also the beat counter on the bottom left: it shows all the 8 beats of a typical music phrase, so you can further visualise the relationship between the footwork and the music.



Figure 2



Figure 3

(or Puerto Rican style also called Contratiempo in Cuba). The difference between the basic steps in these styles is explained in our DVD '*Salsa on the Spur of the Music*'.

- 5) By pressing the **Audio** button on your remote control you can add a voice-over counting the music beat. This can help to synchronise your basic steps to the music. You have five (!) options: no voice over at all, which is currently playing, or a voice over counting beats 1-5, 2-3-6-7, 2-6, or all beats. Which voice-over you choose may depend on whether you dance On1 or On2, but we recommend you familiarise yourself with all of them.

Remember, the clip loops forever, that is, it never stops so you can practise your footwork until you are satisfied with your progress. To stop the clip, press the **Menu** button on your remote control.

- 4) As you can see, the basics steps are executed On1 and there is no voice-over counting the music beat. These are both features you can control. By pressing the **Angle** button on your remote control you can choose which style you want to dance. You have three options: On1, which is currently playing, On2 Modern mambo (or New York style) or On2 Classic Mambo



Figure 4

basic steps steady when the conga changes rhythm so that you understand the difference between rhythm changes and speed (the speed remains constant in this clip). In order to help train your brain to pay attention to a rhythm change, a visual warning appears on the screen a few beats before the actual rhythm change as in Figure 6. Pay attention to it; and try to train your brain to be receptive to various messages: the music, the counting and the rhythm changes. There is so much richness in music and your dancing will improve when you can tune into it.

- 7) The second difference is that the tutor does not only execute the standard forward and back basic steps, but scrolls through a set of basic footwork, which also includes side basics, back basics, forward basics, cross basics and Suzie Q. As for the rhythm change, a visual warning as in Figure 7 appears on the screen a few beats before the footwork changes so that you are not taken by surprise.
- 8) Here also you can add a voice over counting the music beat as we explained before. Simply press the **Audio** button on your remote control to choose which voice-over you wish to use.
- 9) Similarly, you can choose which style you want to dance (On1, On2 Modern Mambo or On2 Classic Mambo) by pressing the **Angle** button on your remote control.
- 10) Now you are ready to test if you have learnt to dance in time with the conga.

6) Let's now use the kind of clips called **All Conga Rhythms**. As an example select the title **All Conga Rhythms – slow** (as in Figure 5 and press **Play**. A clip will start to play showing a tutor dancing. There are two differences compared to the clip described above. First, you will not hear just one conga rhythm, but 4 of them one after the other. This shows the variety of rhythms this instrument can play in salsa. It is crucial that you are able to recognise the beat and dance to any of these rhythms.

It is also crucial that you are able to keep your



Figure 5



Figure 6

Select the title **Test yourself on the Conga Rhythm** (as in Figure 8) and press **Play**. The tutor starts dancing to the sequence of different conga rhythms. Follow him, making use of the beat counter on the bottom left if you need. At a certain point both the tutor and the beat counter disappear; keep on dancing to the music following your internal clock. Once the tutor and the beat counter appear again, check that you are in synch with them. If you consistently find yourself in synch, then you can progress to the next chapter; if not, keep doing the exercises.



Figure 7

- 11) Once you have mastered the Conga rhythm, try the other salsa instruments: **Bongo**, Clave, **Guiro & Maracas**, **Cowbell**, **Cascara**, **Timbales**, **Piano** and **Bass**.

Instructions for Disc B (Volume 2)



Figure 8

basic steps accordingly.

- 13) As before, you can choose which clip to exercise with and which speed, either slow or fast. Once you chose a clip, remember to use the **Audio** button on the remote control to choose the voice-over counting, the **Angle** button to choose the salsa style and the **Menu** button to stop the clip and return to the previous menu. Also, remember to use the **Test yourself** clips to check your learning.
- 14) Now choose the chapter **Transitions**, as in Figure 11. You will reach a menu like Figure 12. This is a very important one, so let's see what each clip offers.

- 12) Let's now go to **Disk B**. Once you have learnt to dance to each individual instrument you can progress to Disk B. Choose the chapter **Salsa Rhythms**, as in Figure 9 and you will reach a menu like Figure 10. Here, you can choose among 3 different salsa songs. You can check how to bring your understanding of the salsa rhythm to a full song with basic instrumentation, including a piano and a bass. You will also find a Rumba Guaguanco rhythm, which is often used as a variation in salsa and timba. This is a challenging rhythm but since you will encounter it on the dance floor you need to be able to recognise it and adapt your



Figure 9

15) Choose the title **Speed change**. In these clips a basic salsa rhythm will change speed (slow to fast and back) every few bars of music. Follow the tutor and listen carefully to the music. Learn to recognise the speed change and to adapt your basic steps to the new speed very quickly, ideally within the first bar of music. These changes occur in real salsa music and you need to be able to handle them. Once you are confident with this, test your progress with the **Test yourself** clip.

16) Now choose the title **Energy change**. Two salsa rhythms with the same speed but with



Figure 11

the **Test yourself** clip.

17) Now choose the title **Bongo to Cowbell**. You will hear a simple salsa rhythm in the background. On top of this you will notice a louder bongo rhythm; after a while the bongo rhythm stops and is replaced by a cowbell. In many salsa bands the bongo and the cowbell are played by the same musician who alternates between them. He normally plays the bongo early in the song and then switches to the cowbell when the song changes in energy and enters the most powerful session; the cowbell contributes considerably to this increase in energy. Notice that, as before, the speed does not change. The purpose of this clip is to learn to recognise this transition which occurs in many salsa songs and not confuse it with a speed change. Once again, after a while test your progress with the **Test yourself** clip.



Figure 10

different ‘energy’ (or ‘power’ or ‘intensity’) will alternate every few bars of music. Follow the tutor and listen carefully to the music. The purpose of this clip is to learn to differentiate between the speed of the music, and the energy which it communicates; in salsa these are not always related, as we explain in our DVD ‘*Salsa on the Spur of the Music*’. Learn to recognise the change of energy and intensity in the music while the speed remains the same. These changes occur in *almost every salsa song* and you need to be able to handle them. Once you are confident with this, test your progress with

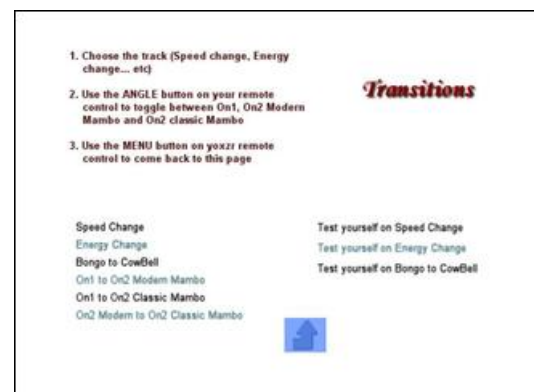


Figure 12

18) You will find three more titles, **On1 to On2 Modern Mambo**, **On1 to On2 Classic Mambo**, and **On2 Modern to On2 Classic Mambo**. For example, choose **On1 to On2 Modern Mambo**; you will hear a simple salsa rhythm and the tutor will change his salsa style, that is, he alternates the basic step going from dancing On1 to dancing On2 Modern Mambo. When you dance in a club you will never do this; normally you decide which style to dance and you follow that for the entire song. The purpose of this clip is simply to train your brain to understand the difference in footwork between different styles. This is useful because if you master the transition, then the difference between the styles will be so clear to you that you will be able to dance any style you want without thinking or counting the beat in your head. You will become salsa multi-lingual. Try to master all transitions, including **On1 to On2 Classic Mambo**, and **On2 Modern to On2 Classic Mambo**.



Figure 13

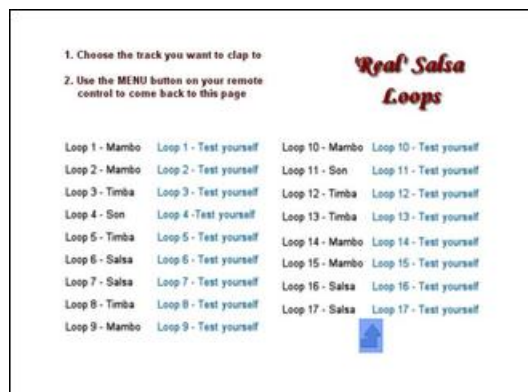


Figure 14

unconsciously settled in your brain.

19) Finally, the cherry on the cake. The final Chapter **Real Salsa Loops**, from the main Menu as in Figure 13 contains 17 (!!) loops taken from different real salsa songs, as shown in Figure 14 . You will find loops of different salsa styles, from classic salsa to mambo, to timba and son. Here, not only can you apply your musical understanding to real songs as you may encounter them on the dance floor, but also you may check your progress with the **Test yourself** tracks.. See if you find your footwork in synch with the tutor when it comes and goes. This is the ultimate way to check whether salsa rhythm is now in your hands, or even better,

Final note. These DVDs can be used both on a DVD player and a computer. If you use them on a DVD player you will notice a slight delay at the point when the exercises loop (every 40-50 seconds). This is not a defect of the DVD; it is just due to the laser point of the DVD player moving along the disk. This delay does not occur when you use the DVD on a computer.