

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A CDF PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION (CDF Technical Committee)

DEMONSTRATION SECTION

The first part of the examination includes the demonstration to music.

In the International Style there are five (5) dances in the Ballroom (Standard) Division; i.e. Waltz, Foxtrot, Quickstep, Tango and Viennese Waltz (**this last one is not required for the Student Teacher Exam**); also five (5) dances in the Latin American Division; i.e. Cha Cha, Rumba, Samba, Paso Doble and Jive.

In the American Style (DVIDA syllabus) there are four (4) dances in the Smooth Division; i.e. Waltz, Foxtrot, Tango and Viennese Waltz; and eight (8) dances in the Rhythm Division for Bronze and Silver; i.e. Rumba, Cha Cha, East Coast Swing, Bolero, Mambo, Merengue, West Coast Swing and Samba; and six (6) dances in Gold; i.e. Rumba, Chacha, East Coast Swing, Bolero, Mambo and West Coast Swing.

In the American Style (DVIDA syllabus) a <ONE DANCE Examination > is offered in some of the popular dances that are not part of the standardized test dances; i.e. Salsa, Disco Hustle (Bronze only) and Argentine Tango (Bronze, Silver and Gold).

The candidate (man or lady) will be required to demonstrate, **as leader**, all the dances with a partner to music and demonstrate, **as follower**, all the dances **either solo or with a partner** to music.

For a professional examination we should see quality rather than performance.

Before the Theory Section of the Examination, the examiner may ask a candidate to dance solo to music (either as leader or follower) a short amalgamation in one (1) or two (2) dances to verify if the candidate is able to dance on time to the music without the aid of a partner.

THEORY SECTION

The second part of the examination is the Theory Section. There is no set method for the questions to be asked in this section. The candidate should make sure to master all the items covered by the chart headings as they are the fundamental principles of the Ballroom (Standard) and Latin American Techniques. Questions will be asked on the following subject:

- Foot Position
- Alignment and/or Direction
- Amount of Turn
- Footwork
- Rise and Fall
- Sway
- Precedes and Follows
- Side Lead and CBM

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- Time Signature, Tempo and Musical Accents
- Beat Value - Counting in Beats and Bars
- Poise - Balance and Hold
- Description of Forward and Backward Walks
- The Character of each dance
- Teaching methods
- Use of arms (whenever applicable)

A good solo demonstration is an extremely important requirement during the Examination. The candidate **must** make sure that the demonstration is accurate.

TEACHING

As part of the Examination, the candidate will be asked questions to evaluate his/her teaching ability (this will vary according to the level of examination).

OVERALL PRESENTATION

The candidate's manners and bearing in the examination room are extremely important. His/her attitude towards the examiner can, quite rightly, outweigh a few technical errors.

DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO PREPARE FOR A CDF PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION **(Inspired by Alex Moore's Monthly Letter Service)**

Preparing for an examination must be approached in a systematic manner.

- To start your training you may wish to dance with a partner (as leader and follower) groups of basic figures before worrying about the technical side of the examination.
- Limit your demonstration to the figures included in the syllabus being examined.
- Make sure that the figures are danced in the proper <exam> style with correct technique and accurate rhythmical interpretation. The demonstration part of the exam is most important since the examiner, in addition to assessing the dancing ability of the candidate, will note all the technical errors showing up during the demonstration and will use these during the examination.
- A correct solo demonstration is an **extremely** important requirement for the theoretical portion of the examination. So learn to dance accurately all the figures in your syllabus in both roles (leader and follower) in every dance **before** attempting to give all the technical information which should come next in the study of each of the syllabus figures.
- Practice each figure while checking that the foot position, alignment and footwork are correct. **Practice repeatedly** until you are sure you can dance each figure accurately

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(without looking down at your feet) as your body will memorize each movement and take over if your memory fails you during the examination.

- You are now ready to move to the next stage <**the technical side of your training**>. The questions in the theoretical portion of the Examination will cover all the dances of the syllabus being examined.
- Consequently we have given you herewith definitions of the chart headings and descriptions of the fundamentals of the technique used in the Ballroom (Standard) and Latin American Divisions.
- The words given in the ISTD Technique Books are clear and sufficient but **do not use the abbreviations**: Say: < Promenade Position> not P.P. / - < Outside Partner> not O.P. - one exception: you must use **CBMP**. - **When giving an alignment**: do not use abbreviations such as <DW – DC> say: Diagonally Wall - Diagonally Center -/- < LOD> may be used but some examiners prefer to hear < Line of Dance >.
- Once you have mastered the Column Headings in the appropriate ISTD Technique Books and acquired a sound knowledge of the fundamental principles of the technique you may want to get the <Questions and Answers> books published by ISTD in International Style for both Ballroom (Standard) and Latin American. These books will prepare you for various questions and develop a deeper understanding of the material covered in your examination. It would be wise, however, to use it later in your training.

We are listing, hereafter, a résumé of important points to remember during your solo demonstration of figures in the Theory portion of the Examination. Please refer to them again and again during your period of training.

- During a solo demonstration raise the arms to a normal dance position as this will assist your balance and improve your appearance.
- **Avoid** moving and speaking at the same time. **Speak first and then move the foot as you finish speaking.**
- **Give the step number first** for: - Foot Position / Alignment / Footwork
Foot Position - For example: - 1st step of Natural Turn in Waltz / you should say: <**1 - Right Foot forward**> (you do not have to say <on Step 1>) Be brief and accurate.
- **Give the step number last** for: - Amount of Turn / Rise and Fall / CBM
Amount of Turn - For example: - Natural Turn in Waltz - (as man) - Commence to turn Right **on 1** / $\frac{1}{4}$ **between 1 and 2** / $\frac{1}{8}$ **between 2 and 3** / Commence to turn right **on 4** / $\frac{3}{8}$ **between 4 and 5 body turns less** / body completes the turn **on 6**
Rise and Fall - For example: - L.F. Closed Change in Waltz (as lady) - Commence to rise **at the end of 1, NFR** / Continue to rise **on 2 and 3** / Lower **at the end of 3**
CBM - For example: - L.F. Closed Change - Slight CBM **on 1**
- **Synchronize the < sway > with the step** as you are demonstrating: -
For example: Natural Turn in Waltz (as man) - Dance it and say simultaneously: **Straight. Right, Right / Straight, Left, Left**

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- **Do not turn (or swivel) on a leading step to get to a side position.** For example: Natural Turn in Waltz - take the first step (R.F.) normally, then move the L.F. **forward** (without turning on the R.F.) allowing the left side of the body to move forward with it. The L.F. will end in a <diagonally forward> position. **Now allow both feet to swivel casually** to the right until the body is backing D.C. - the left foot will then be in the correct position (side) with no obvious effort. **Turns are made on the supporting foot only in <pivots or similar movements>.** Remember the leg should swing forward to get to a <side> position.
- **Do not turn your head or body out of position** to look at the examiner during your solo demonstration as it would affect the figure and cause you to use a bad foot position and alignment.
- If you are giving a Foot Position, or any other chart heading, you should be able to show correctly at the same time footwork, alignment, amount of turn and sway.
- **Pause for a moment** on the final step of the figure you are demonstrating. The examiner may wish to ask you a question (very often it will be..... <what may follow>).
- One of the worst faults is to say it perfectly and dance it badly (that happens very often when showing Rise and Fall). **A correct and accurate demonstration will speak louder and more clearly than words.** So make it a habit of demonstrating exactly what you are saying.
- Be prepared to describe <Forward and Backward Walks> as it becomes a compulsory question if the examiner notices any errors during the demonstration to music.
- The examiner may ask you to **only** dance a figure - **remember: always give the rhythm or timing.**
- **<Precedes and follows>** play an important part in the examination. Do not be satisfied with the minimum required at your level. Learn as many precedes and follows as you can; you will find them useful when you teach or choreograph.
- If you think you have answered a question incorrectly and the examiner passes on to **another question without any comments, do not allow this to upset your concentration.**
- Your solo demonstrations, your manners, your diction and your attitude towards your examiner are of paramount importance.
- **A well groomed appearance will impress the examiner favourably.**

MOST EXAMINERS DISLIKE HAVING TO FAIL A CANDIDATE. Remember this. It will give you confidence.

CANADIAN DANCESPORT FEDERATION

FÉDÉRATION CANADIENNE EN DANSE SPORTIVE