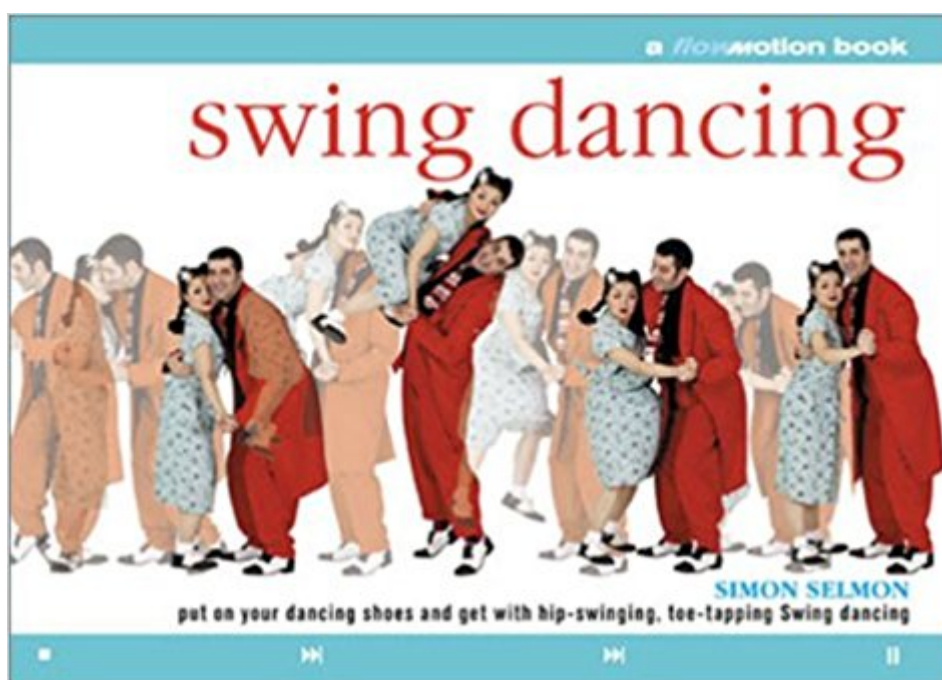


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# Swing Dancing: Put On Your Dancing Shoes And Get With Hip-Swinging, Toe-Tapping Swing Dancing



## Synopsis

How do you want to get in the swing of things? Perhaps with the East Coast version, with its cool turns? How about the syncopated Hollywood style, filled with footwork? Or maybe you want the jumping and jiving, kick-it-lively, acrobatic lindy hop. Whichever you choose, these dances are loads of fun, not to mention great exercise. And, when you're guided by these show-it-all sequences, that teach you the movement in full, you won't have to worry about having two left feet when you step onto the floor! So--all you have to do is swing, swing, swing!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is not a bad book and nicely summarizes all the basic moves of east coast swing/lindy hop. For a 128 page book, it does cover a wide breath of moves and I was quite impressed that it even has room for Hollywood Swing dance moves. However, it is a summary and only that because you can't really learn swing dancing from pictures in a book. Beginners would be better off taking an actual lesson (which is more fun) and use this book only to complement what they have learned. But for intermediates and advanced dancers, this book is a real treat. I mean, how many swing books are actually out there with full-color illustrations on actual dance moves? This book also provide a nice short introduction on history of the dance and music. More importantly, it also provides a nice guide for beginners on music selection - a list with song name and artist! Music selection can be quite daunting for any beginner, but with this list, you really can't go wrong. Almost all veteran dancers will

recognize all the songs on the list with some being their favorites.

Dance is, arguably, complicated to teach in text. I wanted to like this book, give it a break; it has a campy feel and the dancers are wearing cute vintage clothes. It gives names to moves you might have learned outside of a structured classroom environment or forgotten the name of. Sadly, "Swing Dancing- Put Your Dancing Shoes on and Get With Hip-swinging, Toe-tapping Swing" is confusing to any level of dancer because of lackluster information and appalling information design. This book, however eye catching, makes even the simplest swing dance moves utterly confusing. The "flow motion" selling point, while at times adds a touch of clarity, for instance, about which direction to turn, often does not and usually serves as a barrier to understanding even the simplest moves. Turning, in almost every case, could be better represented with a simple, curved, directional arrow. More confusion caused by "flow motion" is the miscommunication of traveling motion. In swing dance, we do move back and forth and spin but the faded in between pictures don't help readers understand when they are moving in place and when they are stepping. Instead, it makes it look as if swing dance is some kind of traveling line dance that moves dancers to the opposite side of the floor in a single move. This is seldom the case. Also is it seldom that dancers float in thin air. It looks better visually but learners could benefit from knowing how high to step and better see the difference of a step, a heel raise, and a toe touch. For that a bit of reference to flooring is necessary. Chapter text is overlaid with dance move text and chapter introductions are no more clear than the introductions of new moves making the information about the different forms and where they apply, again, confusing. The only real way to tell that the dancers have moved on to teaching a new form is that their outfits have changed. And for many of the moves they should have, apparently, put on an additional outfit! Within the Lindy Hop section, Charleston, a historically classic dance that predates Lindy Hop, is shown as a couple of moves called Charleston but set up as a move tucked inside Lindy Hop while, Hollywood Swing, which is considered, by most, to simply be a more slotted/elegant stylization of Lindy developed to make dancing look more divine in Hollywood films, has its own chapter! Needless to say, the history chapter is also a bit mixed up doing little to describe the actual variation between different swing forms. Simply reading the descriptions of the moves does give some useful information and if you can look past the confusion of the graphic design, you can see clean stop action poses by the dancer models, but on second thought the writing is sexist (man/woman instead of lead/follow) and requires trying to match up the visuals with the misaligned text blocks in order for much of it to make any sense. The starting point too, does not necessarily seem to line up with the photo action and bounces around from page to

page. I could say more but I think I've said enough.

This book gives more usable detail on steps for Savoy- and Hollywood-style lindy hop, as well as for East Coast (6-count) swing, than any other I've seen, and it's a nice reference for intermediate-level dancers. It covers a good range of the steps frequently encountered in social dancing (examples: tuck turn, back Charleston, sugar push, catapult, Texas Tommy), plus a couple of basic air steps \*not\* suitable for a crowded floor. You'll never learn to dance from this or any book, but you might use it as a supplement to instruction or experience. The layout is unique. (, how about putting up a couple of sample pages?) Each step gets a two-page spread of photos like those on the cover, with the kind of "stro-motion" series of photographs of its progress that TV sportscasts sometimes use to detail figure-skating moves or football plays. There are text explanations below each part of the step, and a running count of the musical beat at the bottom of the page. Some complicated but crucial steps -- notably whips and swing-outs -- get three two-page spreads, with leaders (= men, usually), followers (= women), and both-together each shown separately. So what's not to like? Several things, all of which spring from the lack of space on the two-page layouts: \* The overlapping photos are presented so densely in places that it's hard to see crucial details, and the text often isn't quite below the appropriate photo. If you've never seen the step before, you'll have a hard time understanding what's going on. \* The follower's footwork gets short shrift in too many of the descriptions -- particularly annoying on moves in which she's turning. (In this regard the book is no better and no worse than many dance instructors.) \* The descriptions pretty much always tell the leader what to do with his hands during the step, but frequently don't explain what the actual \*lead\* is that signals the start of the step. That's the kind of information somebody who's learned the step in a class needs to be able to dance it afterwards. These beefs aside, I like the book, I'd recommend it for dancers trying to remember which foot you start the kick-around on, and paging through it makes me want to grab my dancing shoes and head for the floor.

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