

Spinning for men and women

General notes

- Learning to spin well takes time and practice. The more spins you do the quicker you'll become proficient. No body just spins well from day one or just by 'doing it' in the club.
- Always practice equal number of spins left and right even if one direction is better than the other. Both sides will balance out quicker.
- Initially practice small amounts of spins at a time lots of times throughout the day to improve your technique. Build your tolerance by gradually increasing quantity in each block of practice.
- Don't despair if one day you think you've got it sorted and then the next day you're all over the place. Everyone has off days, just put it down to that and give it a miss for that day. (so long as it is only the odd day!)
- Dizziness – It happens to everyone. You have to spin lots to build up a tolerance to it. If you're feeling dizzy try and work through it. Spotting may help but not completely and maybe not for everyone's cup of tea.

Basics

- **Posture**

Head

The head should be held upright with the chin parallel to the floor. All sides of the neck should stretch upward.

Imaging someone reaching down from above, placing their fingers around the base of your skull and jaw and gently pulling you upwards.

Chest

The chest/ribcage should be lifted, lengthening the spine.

Chest should be held naturally directly above the hips and not allowed to tilt forward or backward in relationship to the hips.

The chest and hips must always be in good, vertical alignment.

Stomach

The abdominal muscles should be held taut and pulled lightly towards the spine. Make sure breathing is normal.

Hips

The position of the hips must allow for a natural curve of the spine. The pelvis should therefore be held in a midway position, neither tucking excessively under, nor sticking out backward.

Legs

When the knees bend forward keep the thighs perpendicular to the floor, allowing the ankles to flex and the torso to remain upright. Knees shouldn't extend past the ball of the big toe.

Always try to feel that your lengthening your torso as you bend your knees, so that your posture does not 'deflate'. Never allow your pelvis to stick out backward, even slightly, as the knees bend, this is a very common mistake.

Feet

In a normal, standing position, the body weight should remain slightly forward of the middle of the feet, between the heel and the ball of the foot. During spinning the weight of the body should act down through the ball of the big toe of the supporting foot.

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Types of Spin

- ***Axial***

Basic Right Spin

Setup

- Push left foot forward
- 'Wind' body to the left from the top down. Shoulders, chest, hips, knees.
- 'Sit' on right leg
- There should only be a small amount of weight on the left foot.
- Keep right knee directly over ball of right big toe and hips over knee
- Hands loosely at chest height
- Arms held as though holding a 'large mixing bowl' in each arm
- As body twists into setup position keep knees and thighs tightly locked together as though holding £5 note between them
- Head and eyes pointing forward

If being spun by a partner then the following points are applicable to the connecting arm (the one the guy has hold of!)

- Upper arm as parallel to floor as possible
- Lower arm as perpendicular to floor as possible
- Imagine holding a tennis ball in your armpit – squeeze muscles of shoulder/chest to hold it in place.
- Imagine holding an ice cream cornet in the hand – don't grip or you'll crush it!

Spin

- 'Unwind' from the top down. Shoulders, chest, hips, knees.
- Punch around with the left hand or Drive the left shoulder – which ever works for you!
- Smooth acceleration, don't try to go from 0 to 100 mph in a split second!
- Squeeze the thighs together
- Try NOT to push off the left foot
- As soon as possible (about ¼ rotation) lock the ankles together.

Practice Drills

¼ & ½'s

1. Setup for a right spin (Right, Left)
2. Spin, finish exactly at ¼ of a turn
3. Repeat 4 time until facing original direction

For ½'s do exactly the same except with ½ turns.

The aim of the exercise is to gain full control of the amount of power required and be able to stop exactly where and when you want.

Basic Right-Left

1. Setup for a right spin (Right, Left)
2. Spin
3. Setup for left spin (Left, Right)
4. Spin

4 corner (1 1/4 spins)

1. Step right foot over left
2. Setup for Right spin
3. Spin 1 1/4 rotations – pick spot where you aim to finish spin
4. Repeat a further 3 times to end up facing the start direction.
5. Repeat drill with left spins

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2 corner (1 1/2 spin)

1. Step right foot over left
2. Setup for right spin
3. Spin 1 1/2 rotations – pick spot where you aim to finish spin
4. Repeat to end up facing original direction
5. Repeat drill for left spin

Cross step flair

1. Step right foot over left
2. Setup for right spin
3. Spin right
4. As you approach the front, flair the left leg to the side
5. 'Fight' to maintain balance
6. Once you have stopped spinning and are in a balanced position cross left foot over right
7. Setup for left spin
8. Spin left
9. As you approach the front, flair the right leg to the side
10. Maintain balance

Lunge preparation

Left Spin

- Step onto ball of left big toe
- Left knee over toe.
- 'Press' knee down into ball of big toe
- Hold right shoulder back
- Hand/arm positions as per setup spin
- Drive right shoulder/arm around to initiate spin
- Accelerate rotation smoothly

• **Pivot**

Basic footwork

- Left Pivot
- Feet a short distance apart, about 12 inches or less
- Step onto left foot
- Pivot ½ rotation on left foot
- Drive smoothly with right arm in direction of rotation
- Landing on right foot
- Immediately pivot ½ rotation in same direction
- Driving smoothly with left elbow in direction of rotation
- Landing on left foot
- Weight alternates between pivoting feet and acts through the ball of big toe on supporting foot

Spotting

- For multiple pivots spot in direction of travel
- For normal inside and outside turns with partner first step is spotted away from partner with the remaining pivots spotted towards partner
- Spotting whilst pivoting is vital to maintain a straight line of travel