

A Rapper Dance

Pinewoods English Week

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The Dance

In modern rapper dances the emphasis is on presenting an exciting and varied sequence of figures. Traditional rapper dances, while somewhat less flashy, usually have a repeating chorus figure which lends structure to the dance. The short dance described here draws from both styles—there is a recognizable repeating chorus figure, interspersed with a mixture of varied moving and stepping figures.

Out-in Opening

Chorus: Nut, Split curly, face up

Granny Knot Rolls

Chorus: Nut, Split curly, face up

Maryann Five Corners

Chorus: Nut, Split curly, open ring

Crullers In & Out Line of 5

Each figure is presented in the following pages, with details of movement, stepping, timing, styling, and calling.

The Chorus

Nut, Rose

- Details
 - Make the nut on an even beat (preferably 4 or 8 but 2 or 6 if you need to)
 - Push the swords in with dispatch but not forcefully, at waist level, with left hand slightly up and right hand slightly down
 - Make the rose on the next odd beat—it should fly up effortlessly, with everyone taking a half step in and all arms going immediately up
 - It should never be difficult to hold the rose up; if it is, you need to step in and/or raise your arms higher
 - The height of the rose is determined by the shortest person, who should have just a slight bend in their arms with shoulders down
 - Break the rose on beat 1 (some prefer beat 8)
- Calling—"Split Curly" somewhere between beats 2 and 5

Split Curly

- Basic Idea—Two adjacent mirror-image moving rings
- Details
 - From nut, all start moving. #5 spins in place over right shoulder. #1 waits briefly for #5, then they head side-by-side up the middle. #2 takes a step out and back, then follows #1. #3 slides to the back and follows #2. #4 cast out and back, spinning over right shoulder and then following #5.
 - Continue around in adjacent rings (#1-2-3 in one, #4-5 in the other)
- Styling
 - Keep the two rings of the Curly very tight and close together, shoulders can touch
 - Swords arching around should swoop beautifully and not be flat.
 - #1/#5 sword makes a beautiful down and forward scoop as #5 completes initial spin.
 - Drive forward, don't let it look static
- Calling—"Face Up" as #1 and #5 meet in back for the final revolution

The Figures

Out-in Opening

- Basic Idea—Slam bang start
- Details
 - All face out of ring in inverted position (1-2-3-4-5 clockwise), sword on shoulder
 - Set is oriented so #3 faces the audience
 - Link swords quietly at agreed point in calling-on song—look at the hand you're placing your sword into, not the sword being placed into your hand!
 - Turn left and step inward onto left foot to face in on beat 1 as sword comes over your head
 - Make the (flat!) nut on beat 2
 - Feet go "step, STEP, stepity STEP, stepity stepity stepity STEP"
- Styling
 - Big surprise that the nut can be made and displayed so fast
 - All moves snappy (make nut, display it, rose, break)
 - Make the stepping shine, you're still fresh!

Granny Knot

- Basic Idea—3 snappy stages to a nut, each with 4 beats moving and 4 stepping
- Details
 - Starts in "face up" ("guard", "coach and horses") position
 - First: #1 and #5 cast to the bottom and face up (then all step 4 beats)
 - Second: #2 and #4 cast to the bottom and face up while #1 and #5 move between them and #3 (under the swords) and face down (#1/#5 sword now curves behind #3's back) (then all step 4 beats)
 - Third: all step forward, and all but #2 turn left; make nut on beat 4
 - Rose on beat 5
 - Note that nobody steps on beats 1-4, even if stationary (feet go "step, step, step, STEP, stepity stepity stepity STEP")
- Styling
 - Moving is purposeful and snappy, be there on beat 4
 - Stepping is crisp and contrasts with the moving
 - Swords make beautiful static arches while stepping, especially after second phrase
- Calling
 - "Granny" on about beat 5
 - "Nut" on about beat 6 of third phrase
 - "Rolls" from the nut

Rolls

- Basic Idea—4 dancers ring round while 5th stands out, doing a periodic "roll" spin
- Details
 - Swords go up after breaking nut, and move to right shoulder, except
 - #5 leaves swords raised while #4,3,2,1 ring clockwise underneath
 - Don't invert the set—#4,3,2,1 just start moving clockwise
 - As #1 approaches, #5 scoops right hand sword with #1 down, around, and up, while turning left half way to face out of the set
 - Then #5 immediately scoops left hand sword with #4 down, around, and up, while turning left half way to face back into the set
 - 4 revolutions; #5 doesn't roll the last time and the nut is easily re-formed
- Styling
 - Drive the ring around
 - #5 swoops swords gracefully one after the other as #1 and #4 go by
- Calling
 - "Nut" just after #5 has completed a roll

Maryann

- Basic Idea—Swirl and grind around stationary #3
- Details
 - #3 move to front and step in place, while
 - #1 followed by #2 cast left; #5 followed by #4 cast right
 - Each pair circles #3 twice, passing right shoulders (#1 inside) twice the first time and left shoulders (#1 outside) twice the second time
 - At front, both pairs do small loops (same direction as large loops)
- Styling
 - #1 keep left sword high, right sword over shoulder; #2 push left fist into #1's back and keep it there, while right sword is high and not slicing #3's knuckles
 - Likewise, #5 keep right sword high, left sword over shoulder; #4 push right fist into #5's back and keep it there, while left sword is high and not slicing #3's knuckles
 - #3 smile and step beautifully; stay centered as hands above get pulled forward and back
 - #1 and #5 stay together (mirror image) in the small loops, likewise #2 and #4
- Calling—"5 Corners" as #1 and #5 make final crossing in front

Five Corners

- Basic Idea
 - Flatten the ring to a line of 5 in each direction, with swords displayed in front of line
 - Each dancer in turn becomes the center post of the line
 - 5 phrases, each with 4 beats of moving and then 4 beats of stepping
- Details
 - Start as if making a nut—#1 & #2 cast, #4 & #5 slide
 - #3 move forward and face up
 - Specifically:
 - #1 and #5 come over #3 (2-1-3-5-4 facing up), then
 - #5 and #4 come over #2 (1-5-2-4-3 facing left), then
 - #4 and #3 come over #1 (5-4-1-3-2 facing down), then
 - #3 and #2 come over #5 (4-3-5-2-1 facing right), then
 - #2 and #1 come over #4 (3-2-4-1-5 facing up)
 - In general:
 - Left-hand person in line becomes new post—head directly for center of line (they'll get out of your way) while spinning 3/4 to the right.
 - Center and left-center people become new ends
 - Right two people become new middles
 - Your "shadow" is always in the position you will occupy next. For example, #2 can watch #3—whatever position #3 has in the current line is the position that #2 will have in the upcoming line.
 - Feet go "step, step, step, STEP, stepity stepity stepity STEP"
 - End with a nut
- Styling
 - Swords shoot up on beat 1, come snapping down on beat 4
 - Give the swords a nice arch when up—no limp flat swords
 - Move with dispatch, hitting the lines on beat 4
- Calling—"Nut" on beat 5 of the final line

Crullers

- Basic Idea—Zip Zap Scoops Jumps Nuts Lines Rings
- Details
 - Scoop through to a brief nut
 - From open ring, #2 heads toward the gap between #4 and #5 as they head to either side of #2.
 - #2 scoops both swords as #4 and #5 leap over (take off on beat 1, land on beat 2).
 - All except #3 do a lightning pivot over left shoulder, click swords together on beat 3 and make a (flat!) nut on beat 4.
 - Break the nut to a line
 - Break the nut on beat 5
 - Swords go up on beat 6 as #3, #2, #1 turn right to face out of the set as #4 and #5 come over #2
 - Swords come down on beat 8 to form a line (1-5-2-4-3) facing right
 - Back scoop to open ring
 - #2 back scoops both swords as #1, #2, #3 back up to original places; #4 and #5 leap over (take off on beat 1, land on beat 2) and head forward, turning over right shoulder to original places.
 - All step for 4 beats in original open ring
 - Repeat everything in the opposite direction:
 - #4 scoops between #1 and #2
 - #5, #4, #3 turn right to face out of the set as #1 and #2 come over #4
 - Form a line (5-1-4-2-3) facing left
 - #4 back scoops as #3, #4, #5 back up to original places; #1 and #2 leap over and turn over right shoulder to original places.
 - Repeat just initial bit to form nut, but with #3 scooping between #1 and #5.
- Styling
 - Keep rings round, lines straight, swords arced
 - Move all together at precise times with the count
- Calling
 - "Open ring" as #1 and #5 meet in back for the final revolution of Curly
 - "Crullers" on beat 2 or 3 while stepping in open ring
 - "Nut" about beat 6 while in open ring before the final scoop

In and Out

- Basic Idea—Instant transformation back and forth between nut and facing-out ring
- Details
 - Break nut on beat 1. All turn right and step outward onto right foot on beat 2 while bringing right-hand sword over head, forming a big open ring facing out.
 - Step for the remainder of the phrase—feet go "step, STEP, stepity STEP, stepity stepity STEP"
 - All turn left and step inward onto left foot, bringing right-hand sword over your head. On beat 1, land on your left foot facing in and clicking your right sword on your left.
 - Make the nut on beat 2 and the rose on beat 3.
 - Step for the remainder of the phrase—feet go "step, STEP, stepity STEP, stepity stepity STEP"
 - Repeat all that twice more. Make the final nut flat.
- Styling
 - All moves snappy. Make the stepping good.
 - When facing out, make sure the swords are nicely bowed.
- Calling
 - "In and Out" on beat 3 or 4 from the initial nut.
 - "Flat" before final nut.

Line of Five

- Basic Idea—We're hot and we're outta here
- Details
 - #1 displays the lock and steps forward
 - Others open out to line (5-4-1-3-2) facing audience.
- Styling
 - So you're gasping for breath, elated to have made it through without much blood, you've still got to stand tall and smile and make that stepping sharp!