

Basic Belly Dance Movements

Belly Dance Posture

Shoulders Back
Pelvis tucked under
Knees slightly bent
Remain in this posture at all times.

Head Slides

Using thumb and little finger, put thumbs on collarbone and little fingers lightly resting on cheeks move head side to side. Trying not to “shake head like no.” or tip from side to side

Snake Arms

Having arms roughly level with shoulders but hands slightly in front of you, move your shoulder up then your elbow up then your wrist up then shoulder down, elbow down wrist down. *Remember nice hand movements.

Chest Slides

Slide rib cage to either right to middle, left to middle or all the way across from side to side. If you have difficulties rest your hip against a table so your bottom half cannot move. Eg. If your right hip is against a table you move your chest to the right.

Chest Lifts

Using your diaphragm, lift chest up. Easy way to do this is to breathe in sharply then exhale normally. *Don't use the breathing method for too long, as you will feel dizzy.

Chest Drops

The same as chest lifts except you breathe out sharply and inhale normally. *Don't use the breathing method for too long, as you will feel dizzy.

Chest Circles

Combines the Chest lift and drop with the Chest Slides. Start by doing a chest lift then slide ribcage to right then chest drop to centre then Chest slide to left. Slowly combine these movements to make it flow fluidly.

Hip Drops

With one foot on a point (or pretend high heel) in Belly Dance posture relax the hip that is on the same side as the foot on the point. The movement emphasises the down movement. *The heel of the foot pointing does not touch the ground.

Hip Lifts

With one foot on a point like in Hip Drops, put more weight on the pointed foot therefore straightening the leg slightly to lift hip up. *The heel of the foot pointing does not touch the ground.

Hip Shimmies

Relax knees so they are slightly more bent than usual. Going one at a time Belly dance straighten knees then bend them again. Start off slow then go faster. * Remember the faster a movement gets the smaller the movement gets

Washing Machine Shimmy

With this shimmy the movement is forwards and backwards with the hips (as though you are doing “the twist”) the knees stay belly dance straight and the movement comes from the hips. *Remember to keep hands out from body so you don’t get the ‘running action’ happening

Egyptian Walk

Walking Forward

Starting on right, step onto right foot then bring left foot forward and point with the left. Step onto left foot then point with the right.

Walking Backwards

Starting on right, step back onto right foot then point left, then step back on the left foot and point with the right.

Hand movements

The same hand is pointed forwards with the foot. Eg. Left foot is pointing then left hand is out in front. The other hand is either on the hip or framing the face.

Side Egyptian Walk

Instead of stepping to the front, step across and the point to the side and repeat the other side.

123 Step

A travelling step that can be done either flat foot or on the toes. Start by stepping slightly forward on the right then step left on the spot then step on the right again. Then move left foot forward and repeat.

Pelvic /Hip Circle

Using the pelvic floor muscles and knees, make small circles with your hips. Try not to move your upper body. This movement can be as small or as large as you like.

Tellietubbie/Half Circle

Basic breakdown of this move is step to the side starting on the right foot then bring left foot together with right. The pelvis swings forward like you are doing a hip circle but you only do half a circle.

Hip Thrust

Basic breakdown of this move is step to the side starting on the right foot then bring left foot together with right. Going to the right - As your weight is transferred from left foot to right foot you push your hip outward. This is reversed if moving to the left.

Hip Swivel

You want your hip to do a circle. To do this you use your hip and your foot. The foot is on a point and you lift it up then move it forward then down then to the back and then repeat. This can be done on the spot or in your own circle.

Shoulder Shimmy

A slow shoulder shimmy is down with the arms out and elbows slightly bent. Slowly bring one shoulder forward then back. Repeat on other side. Then, when fluent alternate shoulders. i.e. When one is forward the other is back.

To get faster the movement gets smaller and the arms come in closer to the body.

*Remember to keep palms facing the wall and not the floor.

Double Hip Drops

This is a basic hip drop with an extra 'slip' of the foot at the end. The count for this move is: and 1 and drop. (Can be a count of 2, 4 or 8). The hip lifts up for and, then drops for 1, then lifts for and, then on the last count (whether that be 2, 4 or 8) you kick your foot across the body slightly. * Don't kick up too high.

Camel

There are 3 breakdown movements in this move.

1 is the feet which moves right in front then left moves behind the right or vice versa as the case may be.

2 is the chest which lifts up when the leading foot steps out then down when the behind foot steps up to the leading one.

3 is the pelvis which tilts forward when the behind foot steps up to the leading foot and tilts backwards when the leading foot steps out.

Hip Slides

Using your hips, and keeping your upper body still slide your hips to one side then back to the middle. As you get more supple you can move from one side to the other without stopping in the middle. Knees will be belly dance straight and they don't bend or straighten with this movement.

Figure 8's

Inward

Incorporation the hip slide movement you slide your hip to one side then lift your heel off the ground and slide your hip to the other side and bring your heel to the ground, then start on the opposite side to which you started and continue. *visualising an 8 in the air and 'tracing' it with your hips sometimes helps to master this movement.

Outward

The opposite of the inward 8 you start with lifting your hip up then sliding your hip to the side, then doing the same movement on your other side. *this move reminds you of the 'cowboy' walk

Forward

Visualise a figure 8 on the floor with your feet in the 2 circles making up the 8 - start with your right hip move it to the back and bring it forward so that your left hip is at the back and bring it forward so that your right hip is at the back and repeat.

Backward

The opposite of a forward figure 8 this move starts at the front and traces the 8 going backwards.

Half Inward Figure 8

Start off by stepping to the side, before you put your foot to the ground your hip moves like you are going to do an inward 8. *Basic breakdown is step, hip up, hip down, feet together.

Grapevine

Starting with the right foot move it across the back of your left foot. Then with your left foot step to the side. With your right foot bring it across the front of your left foot then step to the side with your left foot and repeat. *This can be done on the flat foot or the toes and remember as you go faster the moment gets smaller.

Half Grapevine

As with the Grapevine the feet move forward and backwards but don't cross over the opposite foot they go straight ahead.

Turns

4-step turn

Going to the right – step so right foot is facing right wall then with left foot step it so it faces the back wall. Then step right foot so it faces the front, then with left foot step so it faces the left wall and point it. * good for slower turns.

Nubian Turn

With one foot on a point step on it and move body slightly around and the foot not on a point moves slightly in a part of the circle. (if your right foot is on a point you turn to your left and vice versa) *this move is meant to be a fast turn