

A Rapper Dance

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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 dance described here draws from both styles—there is a recognizable repeating chorus figure, interspersed with a mixture of varied moving and stepping figures.

Walk On

Chorus: Moving ring, **Slide**, pivot, face up

Granny Knot

Rolls

Chorus: Nut, break to moving ring, **Slide**, pivot, face up

Curly

Five Corners

Chorus: Nut, break to moving ring, **Slide**, pivot, open ring

Scoops

Prince of Wales

Chorus: Nut, break to moving ring, **Slide**, pivot, open ring

Jumps and Flips

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—"Ring Round" somewhere between beats 2 and 5

Break to Moving Ring

- Details
 - #1 cast over right shoulder, head clockwise; #5 stay put
 - #2 (then #3 then #4) go under #1/#5 sword, turn right to follow #1
 - All are now driving clockwise
- Styling
 - #1's cast grows smoothly out of breaking the rose
- Calling—"Slide" on beat 5 or so of the moving ring

Slide

- Basic Idea—Dancers slide around moving ring every two (or if you prefer, four) beats
- Details
 - On beat 8, #1 raises swords, steps slightly out and back to face the set and slides counter-clockwise around the ring, returning to place behind #5 as the ring continues rotating
 - #2, #3, #4, #5 follow on beats 3, 5, 7, 1
 - All are once again driving clockwise, but now with swords crossed
 - With #1 and #5 at the top, take 4 beats to turn left $\frac{3}{4}$ to either face up or form an open ring. Swords raised high on beat 5 (or 1), lowered decisively on beat 8 (or 4).
- Styling
 - Slide around the ring briskly with arms raised and chest practically grazing the set
 - People in the ring quickly close space vacated by sliding dancer
 - Make the ending crisp—3 beats for the turn, then land strongly in the next formation on the fourth beat.
 - If forming an open ring make it big and round; dancers' arms are almost fully extended; swords are bowed
- Calling—"Face Up" (or "Open Ring") when #1 is at about the bottom of the set

The Figures

Walk On

- Basic Idea—We're HERE
- Details
 - Walk on single file in order (1-2-3-4-5)
 - Swords unlinked, held mostly vertically against right shoulder
 - #1 bend right to lead into a ring
 - Slide sword back on your shoulder, left hand takes fixed handle of sword in front of you
- Styling
 - This is where the energy and drive begins!
 - Walk purposefully and all together, left foot on beat 1
- Calling
 - "Swords, Present" around beat 6

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

Curly

- Basic Idea—Two adjacent mirror-image moving rings
- Details
 - From coach and horses, #1 casts left followed by #2 and #3, while #5 casts right followed by #4
 - 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
 - Drive forward, don't let it look static
- Calling—"Five Corners" as #1 and #5 come up the middle for the final revolution

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

Scoops

- Basic Idea—Invert the big ring three times using double scoops
- Details
 - #4 scoops #1 and #2 to invert the set
 - #4 heads for the gap between #1 and #2 while they head toward him/her
 - #4 scoops both swords on beat 1 as #1 and #2 leap over, landing on beat 2
 - All continue forward to face out in a big ring on beat 4
 - Feet go "step, SCOOP, step, STEP, stepity stepity stepity STEP"
 - #5 back-scoops #2 and #3 to re-form the open ring
 - #4 scoops #1 and #2 to invert the set again
 - All turn left and step inward onto left foot to face in on beat 1 as sword comes over your head; make the nut on beat 2
- Styling
 - Before scooping, #4 arcs both swords quietly up and back on beat 8 and then moves them smoothly around and down for the scoop
 - Scrape the swords on the ground for dramatic effect (sparks on some surfaces!)
 - Move smartly across the set and re-form a big round open ring crisply on beat 4
- Calling—"Nut" on beat 5 of the final ring

Prince of Wales

- Basic Idea—A zippy 5-person basket swing
- Details
 - #1 displays the lock (like you mean it—arm held high), then lowers it upside-down on beat 8
 - To get the correct swords, cross your hands at your waist with the right wrist across the left; right hand gets the swivel handle and left hand gets the fixed handle
 - Raise swords over and around the back of your neighbor
 - Move to your left to spin the basket; left foot moves left on odd beats, right foot crosses over on even beats. Use the correct feet!!
 - Stop spinning on beat 8, raise swords back over and remake the lock on beat 4
 - #1 displays the lock (make 'em cheer!), then lowers it back in "normal" orientation
 - To get the correct swords, right hand first grabs swivel handle then left hand reaches left to grab fixed handle
 - End with a rose
- Styling
 - The ring can really fly
 - Don't consciously lean out or in; focus instead on really MOVING sideways—centrifugal force will ease your weight back into the swords
- Calling
 - "Nut" when you want to end the ring
 - "In and Out" from the rose

Single Jump Rope

- Basic Idea—Jumps and scoops
- Details
 - #2/#3 scoop under #5, who jumps on beat 3
 - #1/#4 do a slow "windmill spin" out (#1 left, #4 right)
 - #4/#5/#1 back scoop under #2/#3, who jump on beat 7
 - Repeat, double time
 - Timing:

#2&3:	1-2-scoop-4,	5-6-jump-8;	1-2-scoop-4,	jump-6-scoop-8
#1&4:	1-2-scoop-4,	5-6-7-8;	1-2-scoop-4,	5-6-scoop-8
#5:	1-2-jump-4,	5-6-scoop-8;	1-2-jump-4,	scoop-6-jump-8
- Styling
 - Swords make big smooth rotary motions, not jerky
 - Swords are beautifully curved throughout

Single Flip

- Basic Idea—A death-defying back flip
- Details
 - Set is a staggered (wavy) line (4-3-5-2-1); #2/#3 sword is behind #5
 - #5 puts hands on #2/#3 shoulders and back flips over #2/#3 sword
 - All go forward, #5 scoops #2 and #3, all but #4 turn left; make nut on beat 8
- Styling—Looks best if #5 lands on feet rather than head

Line of Five

- Basic Idea—We're hot and we're outta here
- Details
 - #1 displays the lock and steps forward
 - Others join in line (2-3-1-4-5) 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!