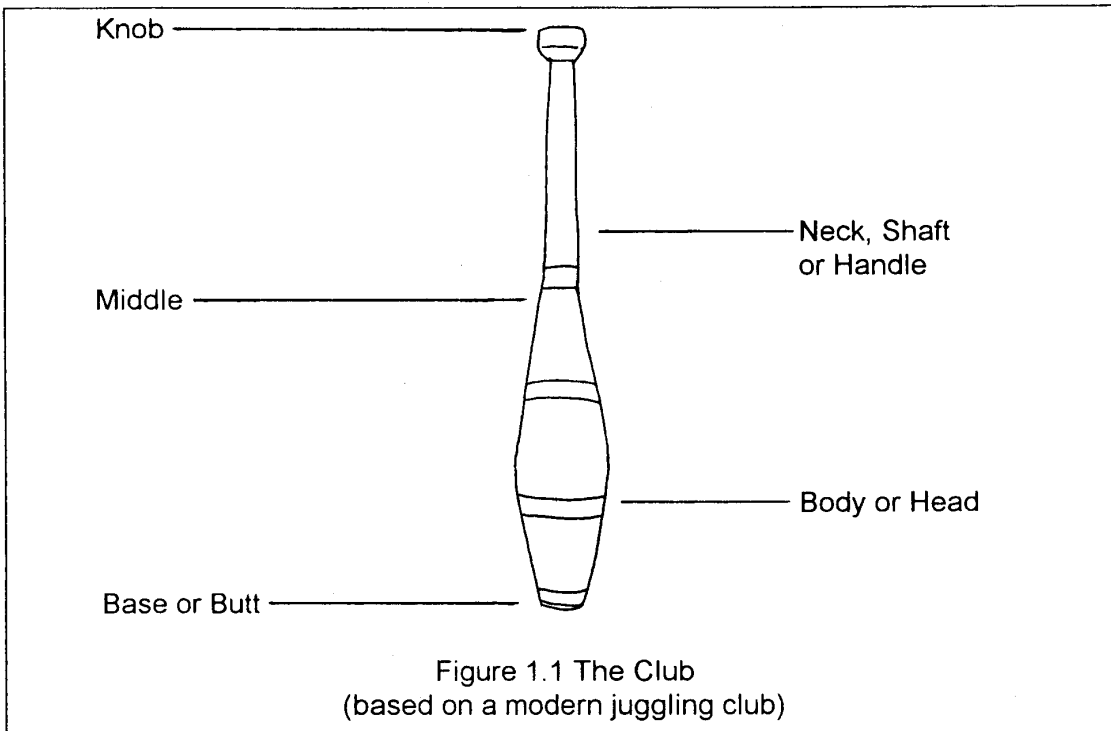


# Lesson 1

## Full-Arm Circles

By swinging from your shoulders with your arms fully stretched, you will be able to create patterns with a very wide circumference. These form the largest swinging patterns. They are extremely visual and yet are some of the easiest moves to learn.

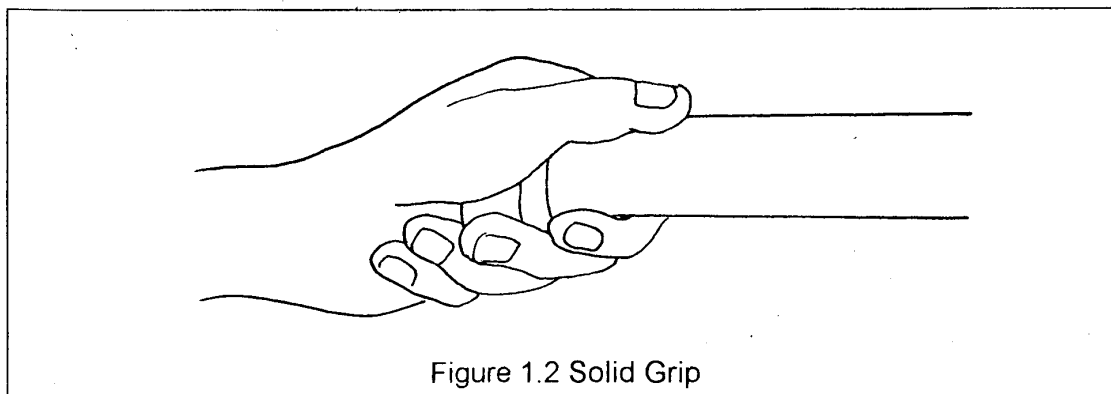


If you do not yet have two clubs, see the chapter on equipment on pages 89 - 90 for varieties of clubs. Clubs can be bought from any juggling retailer and selected sports shops.

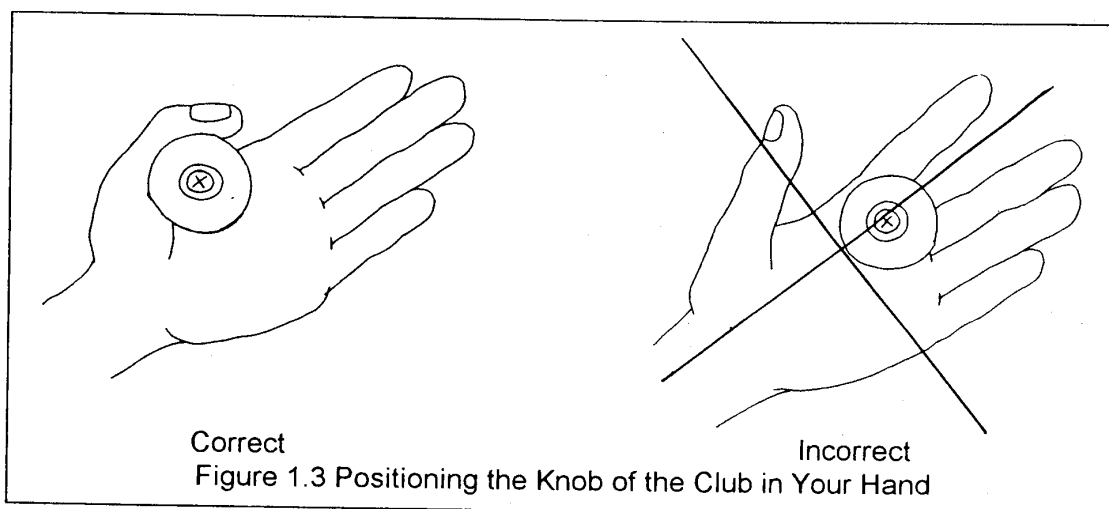
Different kinds of grip are used on the club and these are introduced as needed. Full-arm circle movements use a solid grip.

### Solid Grip

**Hold the knob of the club with your thumb and first two fingers.**



It is as though you were shaking hands with the very top of the thinnest part of the club. Do not place the knob of the club in between your first two fingers because it is difficult to change grip and, eventually, the misplacement will cause the knob to rub against your skin with possible blistering. Figure 1.3 shows the correct placement of the knob.

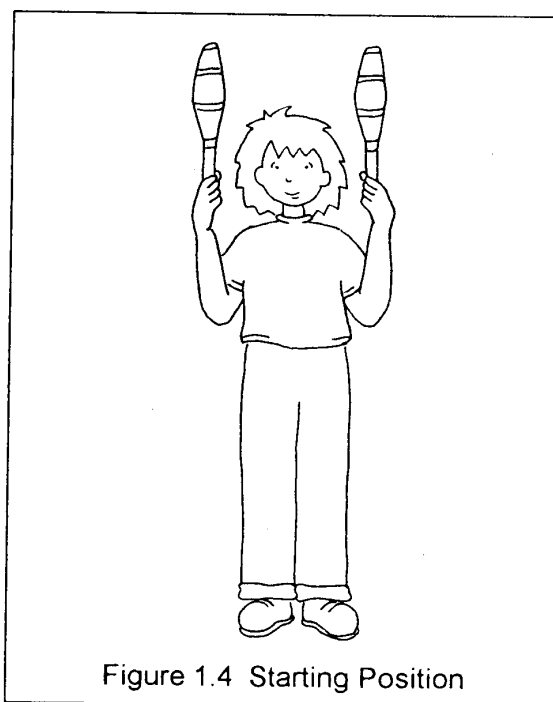


### Starting Position

Take up a fairly closed stance with the clubs held straight upright in front of you and with arms slightly bent. It is from this motionless position that the swinger has maximum control.

**Stand tall and arch the chest to enhance breathing. Hold the clubs upright as shown in Figure 1.4.**

Whenever you try a new pattern just do one round at first and then return to the starting position. Once you have the feel of the movement, build up to performing several cycles in succession ending with a neat stop at the same starting position.

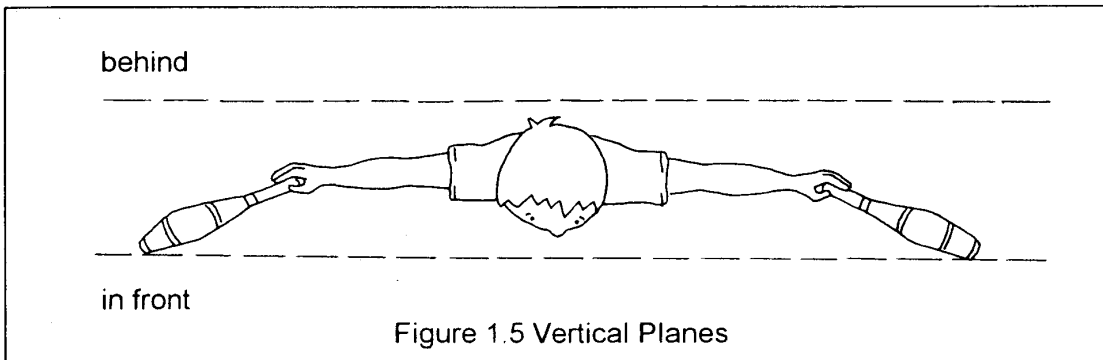


The crucial aspect of this position is that the clubs are held upright at chest level. The feet can be either slightly apart or kept together. If you discipline yourself to stand in the starting position to gather concentration before and after completing a move then it will become a natural point of orientation. The stance is very useful control position for beginning new directions or timings.

## Two Vertical Directions

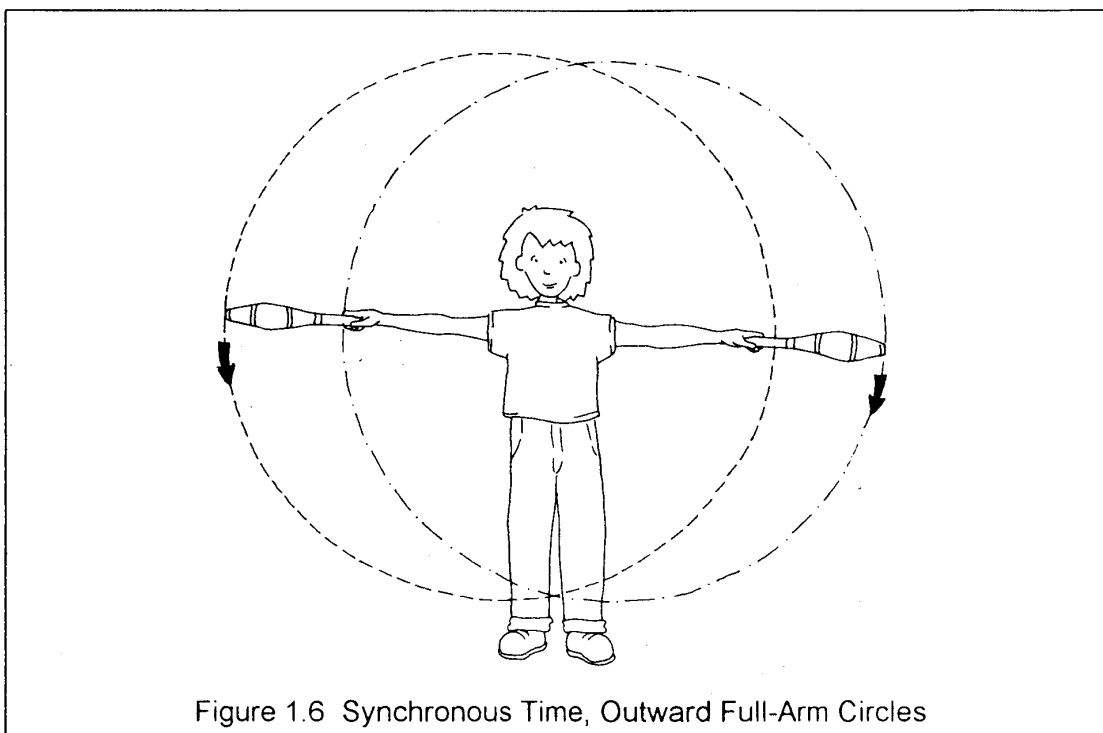
Circles can be made in a variety of sizes and directions. This lesson teaches full-arm circles in the vertical plane, sometimes known as the "wall plane" (because it is vertical like the walls of a room). The directions will be familiar from the warm up section on pages 5 - 6. If you have skipped over the proposed warm ups, at least flex your upper body and shoulders before attempting the following movements. This is particularly recommended if you are unaccustomed to club swinging, otherwise you may suffer slight muscle strain.

The figure below shows a plan view looking down on a club swinger. The dashed lines indicate vertical planes that are behind and in front of the person and you should aim to trace circles with the base of the club against these imaginary vertical planes.



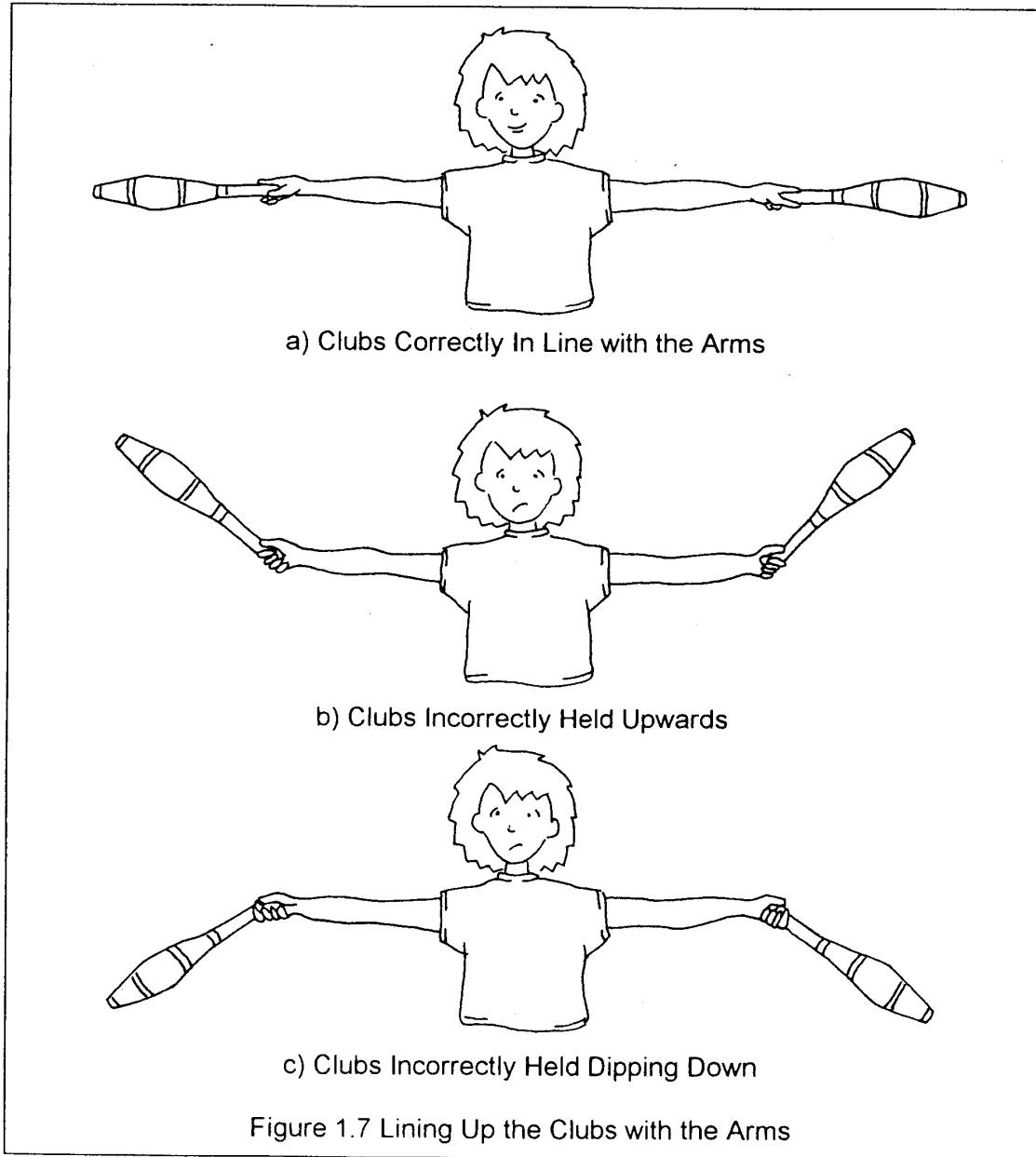
## Outward Direction

**From starting position, raise both hands up and away from the head. The right club travels right and the left club travels left. Swing down, crossing hands low and back to the start. Figure 1.6.**



Trace one full-arm circle (sometimes called large-arm), with both arms extended and your shoulder at the centre of the circle. Stop neatly at the starting position. Repeat 4 times. Once you have the feel of the outward direction, continue to swing several circles in succession.

Look down one arm at a time and hold the equipment as though the clubs were an extension of your arms. Even in advanced swinging forms when the clubs are thrown, they should always remain at the same angle as the arms. Clubs are badly positioned if they break with the line of the arms either upward or by dipping downward.

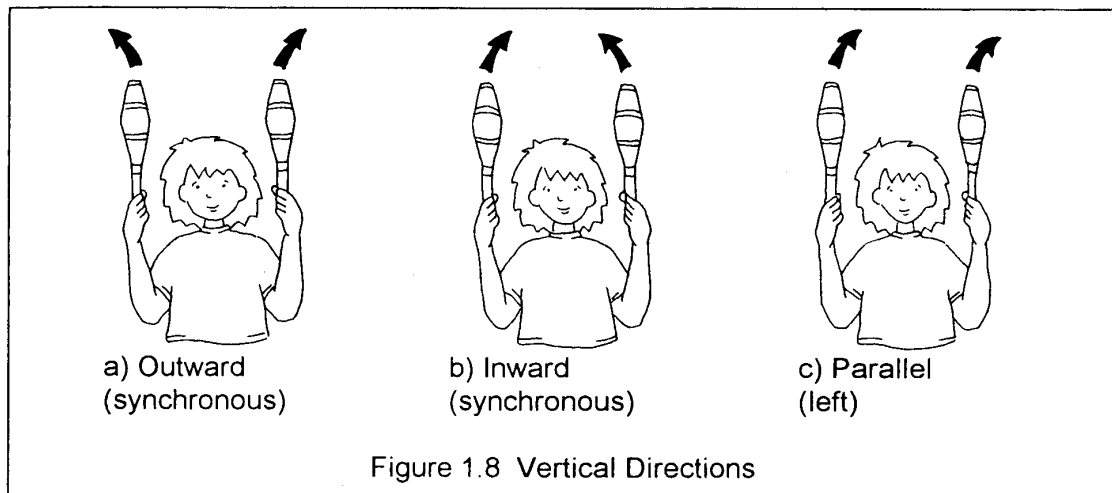


### Inward Direction

Raise both hands up and toward the head. The right club arcs left and the left club arcs right. Swing down, crossing one hand over the other above the head. Figure 1.8b (middle picture opposite).

With the right hand crossing over the left (or vice versa), trace out a circle in front of the body inward which is the opposite direction to outward. Try to prevent the clubs from knocking, but do not worry if this direction seems awkward at first. Many people find inward circles more difficult than outward, so repeat the inward movement until it begins to feel increasingly comfortable.

Club swinging patterns are created by combining various timings and directions. The most popular class of movements is to draw out the same circle with both hands. This is called synchronous time and is what you have used in the section above. Other basic patterns for full-arm circles are alternating time and moves in parallel.



**Synchronous Time** (or same time): Both hands move at the same time, simultaneously, in a single direction (e.g., both inward).

**Alternating Time:** The circular movements made by your clubs succeed each other in turns. This is an off-synch timing in which the clubs swing precisely half a revolution apart, usually in a single direction (e.g., outward, alternating circles).

**Parallel:** Hands move together, continually side by side. One hand takes one direction, and the other follows its path so that the clubs remain the same distance apart (often shoulder width) at all points. Clubs can travel either in parallel to the left or to the right and true parallel time requires the swinger to have equally good control over both outward and inward directions.

**Use a mirror to check the symmetry of your patterns.** Practise the above timings and directions and you will have learnt a total of six, full-arm club swinging patterns on the vertical front plane. Using the starting position to begin and end all movements, swing a short routine with 4 each of:

1. Synchronous outward full-arm circles;
2. Synchronous inward full-arm circles;
3. Alternating outward full-arm circles;
4. Alternating inward full-arm circles;
5. Parallel right full-arm circles;
6. Parallel left full-arm circles.

*This chapter is taken from*

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**[www.cosmosjugglers.co.uk](http://www.cosmosjugglers.co.uk)** - see the *Holidays* pages for Anna's annual May and August UK events for club swingers, poi & pole spinners, jugglers, fire enthusiasts and glow-in-the dark/UV performers.