

Lesson 10

Forward and Backward Hand Circles for Limber Wrists

Lesson 3 concentrated on forward and backward hand circles. This lesson develops the wrist action in the forward vertical plane, building up the flexibility to learn the popular cross-follow.

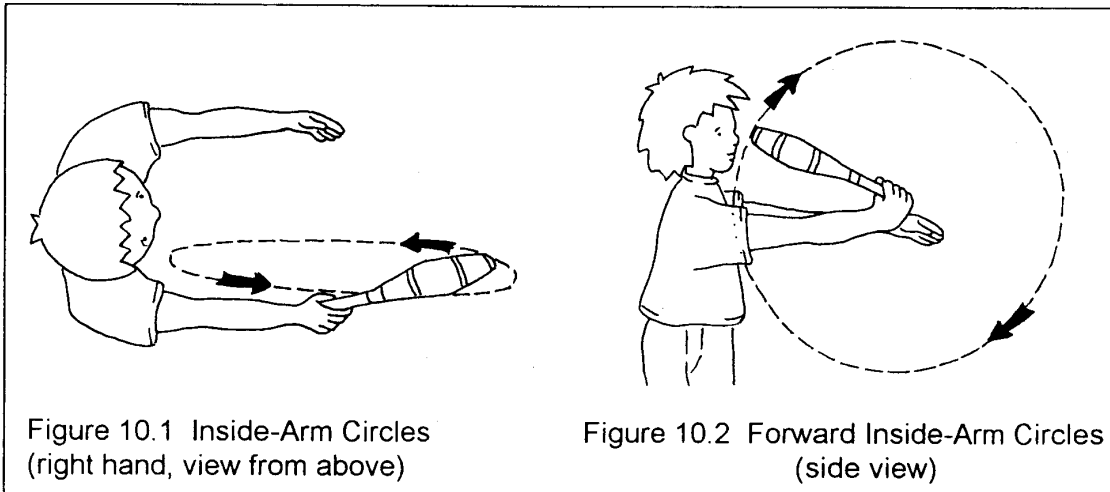
Hand Circles Inside the Arms

During this movement the clubs swing in the gap between your arms. It makes sense to keep your arms at least shoulder width apart and always out straight. This is to allow the pattern sufficient space so that the clubs do not touch. Clubs are held in the ball-and-socket grip (Lesson 7, page 28).

With a single club, make forward circles on the inside of the arm - Figures 10.1 and 10.2. Swap hands.

Both hands, synchronous forward hand circles inside the arms.

Forward movements are made by starting with the clubs straight out in front. Drop the clubs away, then bring them back towards the body as they rise. Inside-arm patterns are much more difficult than outside-arm patterns because the clubs are swinging in the restricted space between your arms and are likely to collide. Go slowly and work on keeping the spins as near to your arms as possible.



Follow the above sequence of moves, now in the backward direction.

The backward pattern is similar to the motion of beckoning someone.

Spend only a short amount of time practising inside-arm circles and progress next to the somewhat more natural figure 8 pattern.

Figure 8 Inside and Outside Hand Circles

This move can be done very fast and is worth learning both with clubs and with a pole. The ends of the clubs draw out a figure 8. It is much easier to swap between inside and outside hand circles than to form repeated circles between the arms.

A single hand swings alternating inside then outside forward hand circles with the wrist sweeping a forward figure 8 pattern. Swap hands and repeat. Next try synchronous, forward inside and outside hand circles. Lastly swing parallel figure 8's, Figure 10.3 (plan view).

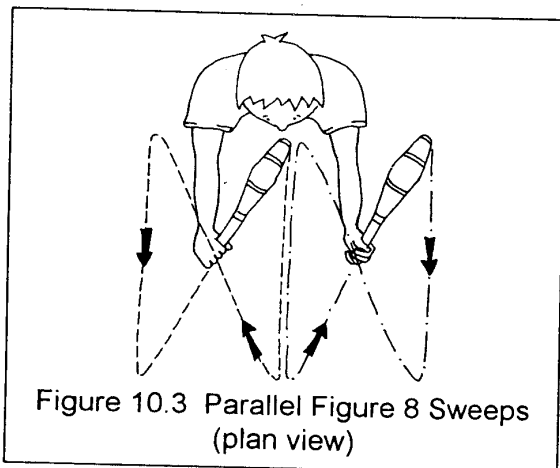


Figure 10.3 Parallel Figure 8 Sweeps (plan view)

Your elbow bends, with a flexible wrist principally turning the swinging motion. The clubs continually change between the two sides of your arm. Keep circles flat to the vertical plane and adjust so that the clubs trace full circles when seen from the side.

Figure 8 Sweeps With a Pole

Use a broom stick to learn this satisfying pattern. The pole in the figure has a spearhead which is simply used to distinguish the end with the path trail. Hold the centre of your pole in the notch between your thumb and forefinger (Figure 6.2, page 26).

Sweep the pole forward so that the ends alternate inside and outside the arm in a figure 8. Figure 10.4.

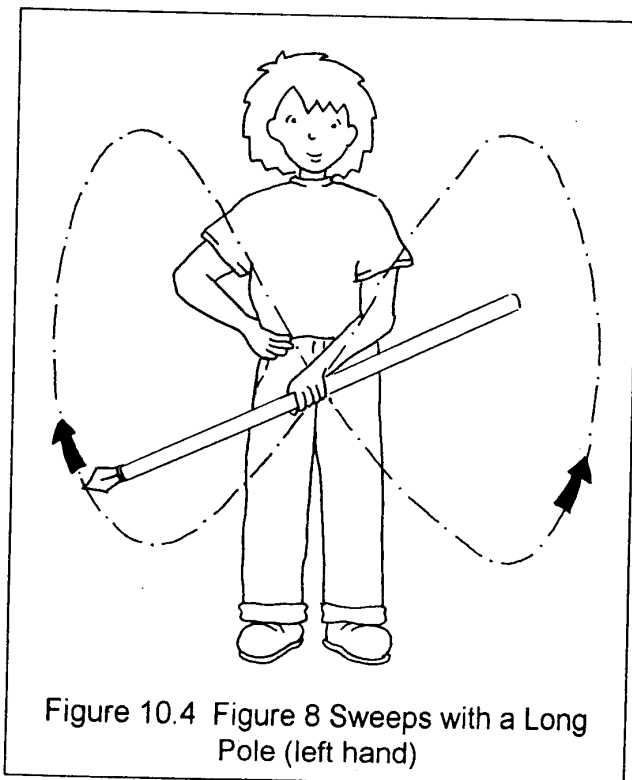


Figure 10.4 Figure 8 Sweeps with a Long Pole (left hand)

With practice, the pattern can be made at very high speed and is then an impressive trick. Mind your head when using a long pole and stand side on to the audience for full effect.

(Jugglers - this move is equivalent to a club flourish, with the club held between the thumb and first finger for the whole move).

Backward Figure 8's

The opposite of the previous trick is to make figure 8 sweeps with the wrist turning backward. First mime the motion with each wrist. Use clubs held in the ball-and-socket grip.

A single hand swings alternating inside and outside hand circles sweeping backward. Swap hands and repeat. With both hands, try synchronous figure 8 sweeps inside and outside the arm. Next, parallel backward figure 8 sweeps.

As well as practising backward figure 8 swings with clubs, try the same backward motion with a single pole.

Cross-Overs

This is a type of movement in which the wrists are crossed in front of the body. Choose to have either the left or right hand on top.

Begin from a basic pattern of synchronous forward hand circles outside the arms. Add cross-over swings where your hands cross to perform the inside hand circle of a figure 8 swing.

Figure 8 moves are very attractive and are also building blocks to what is, perhaps, the single most popular move in club swinging - the cross-follow as taught the next lesson.

Exercise Routine

From starting position (Figure 1.4, page 8), try the following short routine with each movement repeated 8 times.

1. Synchronous forward hand circles outside the arms down to touch the ground (page 16).
2. Synchronous backward hand circles outside the arms reaching up high (page 16).
3. Synchronous forward cross-overs in combination with forward hand circles outside.
4. Synchronous backward cross-overs in combination with backward hand circles outside.
5. Alternating time, backward full-arm circles (page 13).
6. Half pirouette into forward, alternating full-arm circles (page 14).
Stop with both hands held high.

These moves are repeated in Section B of the Mass Fire Routine (pages 83 - 85).

This chapter is taken from

Modern Club Swinging and Pole Spinning

Butterfingers 1994. ISBN 0 9513240 8 X. © Anna Jillings

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.