

Lesson 12

Exploring Parallel Moves

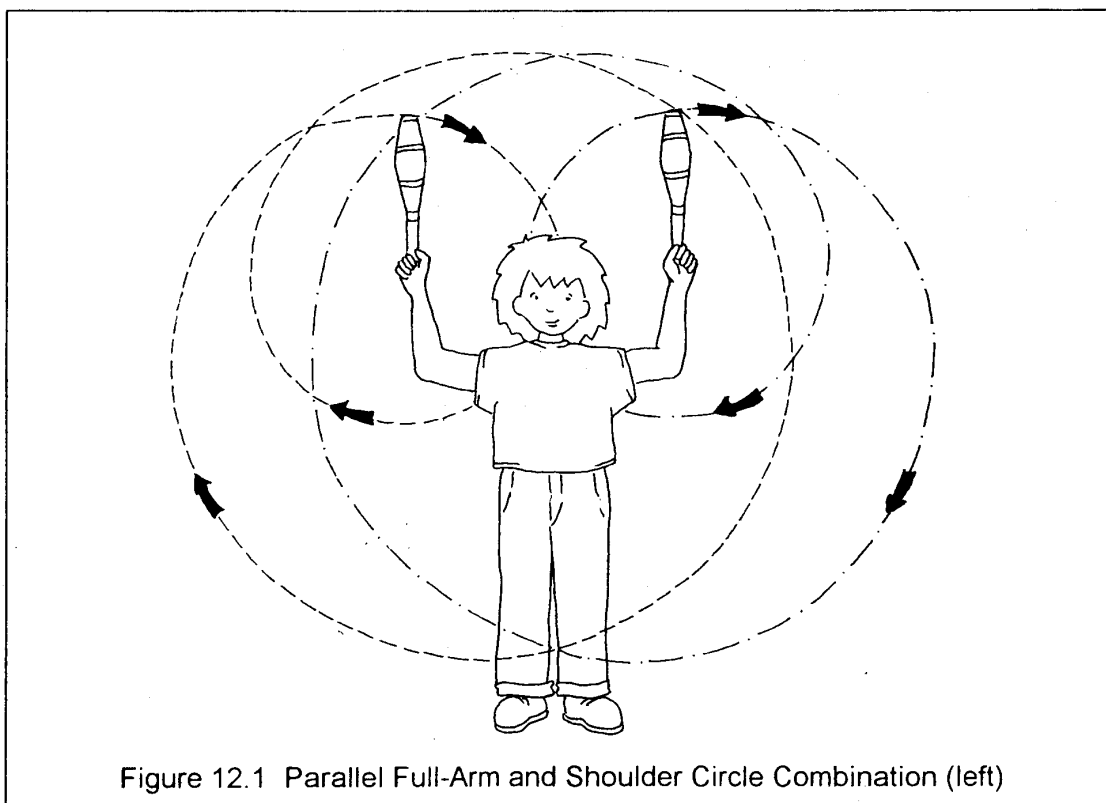
Parallel movements are worth examining in further detail as they offer the most adaptable timing from which to make smooth transitions between tricks. Strong parallels are also the key to learning follow time patterns. However, it is quite demanding of the swinger to gain a perfect parallel time as both sides, in both directions, must be equally capable.

Before studying this lesson it will help to review the material in Lesson 7, particularly upper-front and shoulder circles (page 30) and lower-front and back hand circles (page 31).

Parallel Full-Arm and Shoulder Circle Combination

Begin swinging full-arm circles in parallel. Add shoulder (upper-back) circles. Notice that one side describes outward, full-arm and shoulder circles while the other swings inward circles. Initially choose your stronger hand to perform the direction of circles that you find most difficult, probably the inward.

From start position, swing parallel, full-arm circles left. Bend your elbow to add a shoulder circle each side of your head, in parallel - Figure 12.1. Repeat 4 cycles. Stop neatly and swing these parallel movements to the right.



Remember to keep your hands shoulder-width apart. If one side is lagging behind the other, then stop and perform the move with the weaker side in isolation to help that particular wrist's motion.

The Windmill, Full-Arm and Shoulder Circles in Follow Time.

This move builds upon the previous combination of parallel full-arm and shoulder circles. In a windmill the hand circles are made directly in the centre at the top of the pattern.

Start swinging parallel full-arm circles to the left. Add shoulder circles in parallel time. Then, as soon as the shoulder circles have been completed, speed up slightly with the right hand. Let this hand progressively increase its lead until it is just half a circle ahead and you can introduce circles directly behind the head - Figure 12.2. Stop, change direction to parallels right and then move into the windmill right with the left hand leading.

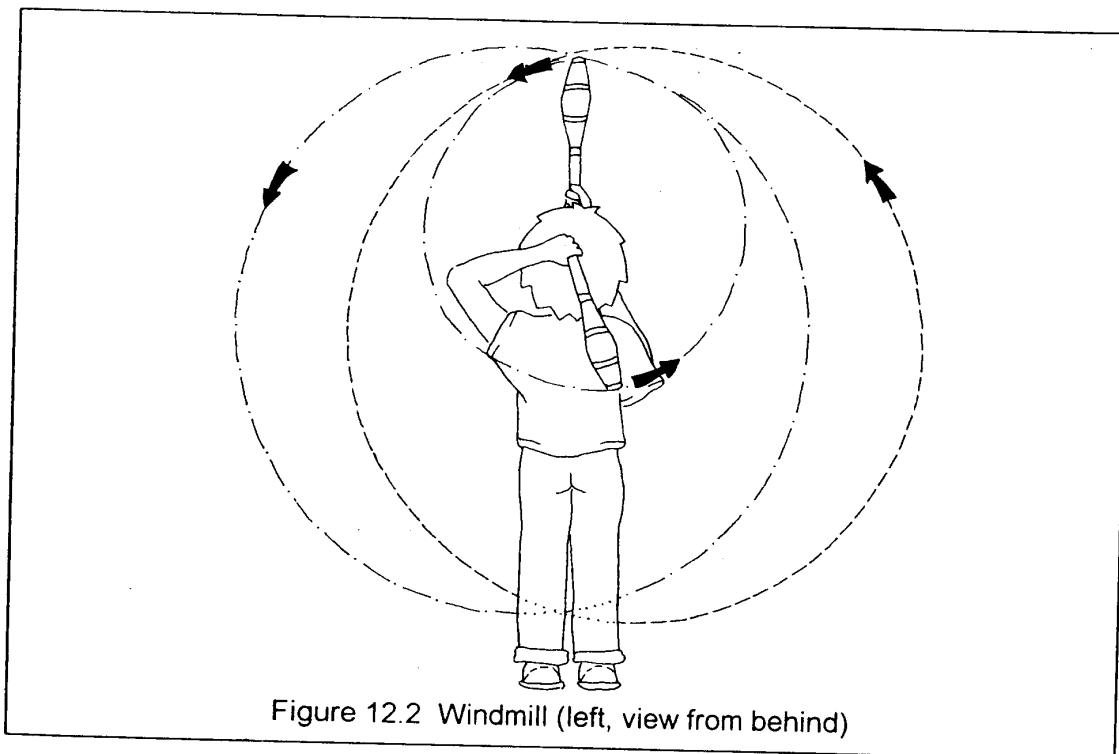


Figure 12.2 Windmill (left, view from behind)

Go slowly while learning this move, or else your clubs will bump the back of your head. Watch a mirror to check that your shoulder circles are flat to the vertical or "wall" plane. A pure windmill is performed when the upper-back position circles are directly behind the head. It is possible to extend the windmill using upper-front circles as well as upper-back (shoulder) circles in follow time. This encircling of the head is lovely to watch and very exciting with fire clubs!

Parallel Full-Arm and Lower-Back Hand Circle Combination

Here the parallel hand circles are made at hip level in the form of lower-back circles.

Swing parallel full-arm circles to the left. Still in parallel, add one lower-back circle on either side of your body at hip level. Circles will be outward with left hand and inward with the right hand. Figure 12.3. Stop and change direction.

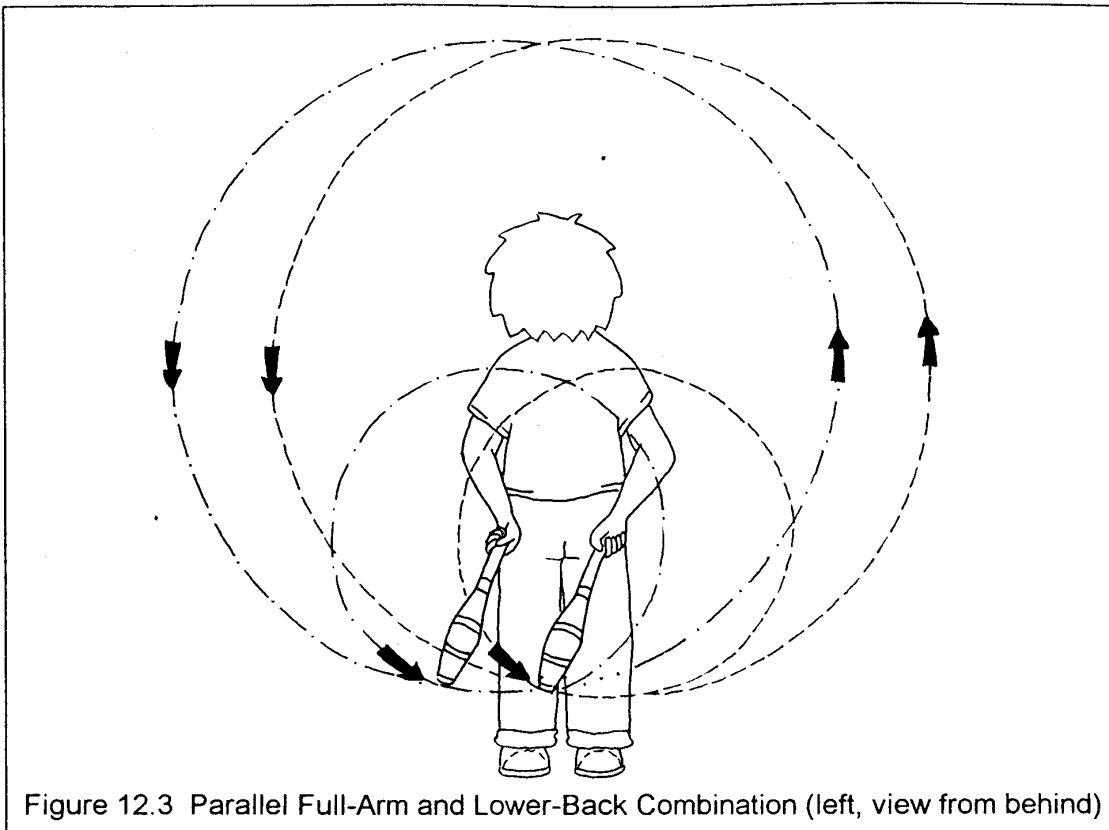


Figure 12.3 Parallel Full-Arm and Lower-Back Combination (left, view from behind)

If your lower-back hand circles are weak, then practise them individually until the movement is smoother. Look back at Lesson 7 which explains strengthening moves such as lower-front and back hand circles in parallel. During the transitions between the front and back of the body, remember to swing the wrist inward and to keep the back of your hand against your hip as shown in Figure 7.6 (page 31), rather than uncomfortably twisting the palm upwards.

Next try the more advanced combination move of both upper and lower-back circles linked by half full-arm circles.

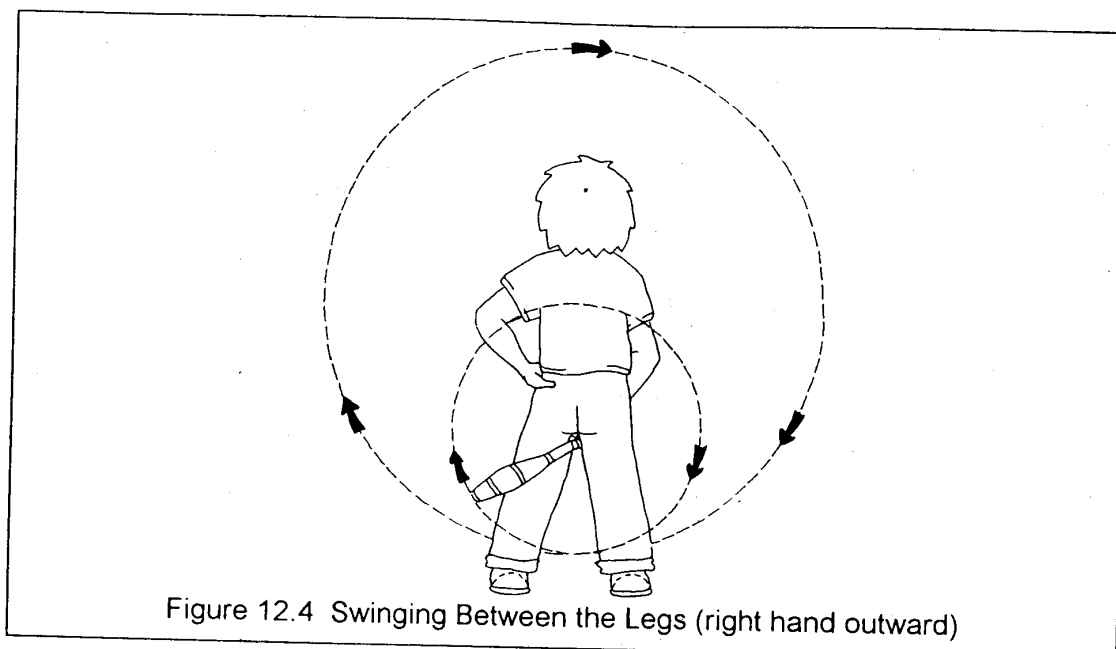
Swinging Between the Legs

Stand with your feet more than shoulder width apart, but at a distance that is easy to balance.

Begin swinging slow, outward full-arm circles with your right hand. Then, passing your mid line and coming in from the right side, flex your wrist to loop back a single lower-back circle between your legs and out on the left side at the front. Continue the full-arm circle upwards. Figure 12.4, following page.

The swing between the legs makes a small loop back on itself at the bottom of a full-arm circle. It helps to keep your knees straight.

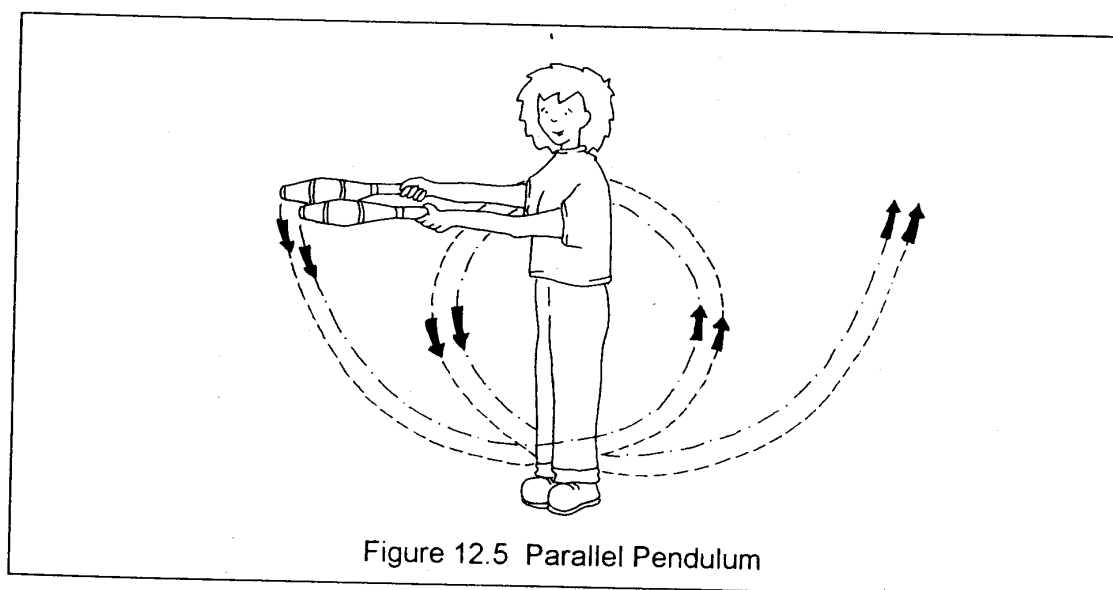
Repeat the looped swing several times and swap hands and direction. Then try parallel movements with one or both clubs swinging between your legs.



Parallel Pendulums

A pendulum swing does not complete a full circle rotation. Instead, there is half a swing from side to side, like the motion of a see-saw or pendulum. Twist your body for these movements.

Facing sideways, swing downward into parallel lower-back circles either side of your hips and up on the other side of your body. Stop at shoulder level - Figure 12.5. Change to swing forward arm circles down again and repeat the move, twisting with the half turn.



This class of pendulum can also be done up high, with shoulder circles inserted in the place of lower-back circles. The pendulum is a very useful move for turning around, but will look controlled only if you use precise stops. The clubs can be thrown from a rising pendulum swing where both clubs are released together and spun to the same height.

This chapter is taken from

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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.