

Lesson 13 Snake Curls

Snakes are a category of club swinging move in which the clubs wrap around the arm like two coiled serpents. They are intriguing to watch! There is less swing in these moves than the more usual wide circles and, therefore, hardly any momentum to carry the club around. This makes learning snakes challenging, but they are satisfying and will add a mark of class to your club swinging repertoire. The arms will have to work quite hard, so use lightweight clubs and be sure to flex the wrist and shoulders thoroughly before you start.

Snake Grip

With the knob upward, grasp the club's neck and put the ball of your hand against the handle. Place your forefinger over the knob to steady the grip. Figure 13.1.

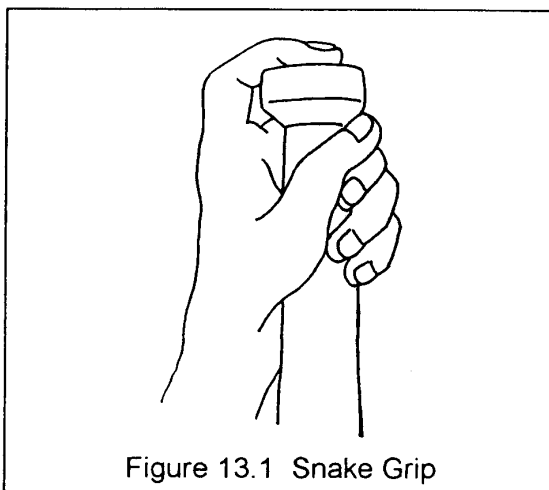


Figure 13.1 Snake Grip

A snake grip is very different from other club swinging holds because your hand attaches to the upturned club handle rather than around the knob. During a snake, the club is forced to stay close to the forearm instead of having an independent swing. The elbow is the centre point of the pattern.

Although the most popular snake is an outward (or regular) shoulder snake, I have decided to introduce this category of movements with a somewhat easier pattern called a snake curl. This trick is essentially flat and resembles the horizontal patterns of Lesson 9. A useful stationary point in which to gain concentration before attempting a snake is the cradle.

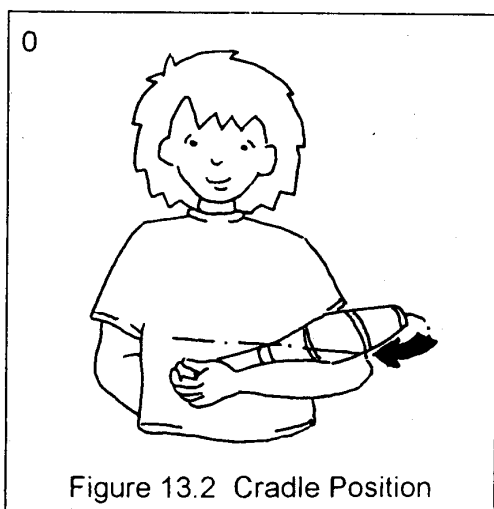


Figure 13.2 Cradle Position

Cradle Position

Hold a club in the snake grip and rest it on your forearm with your elbow bent as though you were cradling an infant. Figure 13.2.

The cradle is a restful position as your arm supports the weight of the club. Cradles are used as the starting position for the spiraling tricks on the horizontal (flat) plane taught in this lesson.

Inward Snake Curls

A curl pattern is a figure 8 performed underneath and over the top of the arms, very much like the over and under-arm hand circles of Lesson 9 (page 37). Hold only one club with a snake grip and cradle the club, resting it on your inside forearm. There are two circles in total and figures are labelled with the turns starting with the cradle 0, ½ up to 2 circles.

Curl your wrist inward until the body of the club passes close under the arm. Then bend the elbow and flick the wrist upward to direct the club's swivel over-arm and back to the cradle. Figure 13.3.

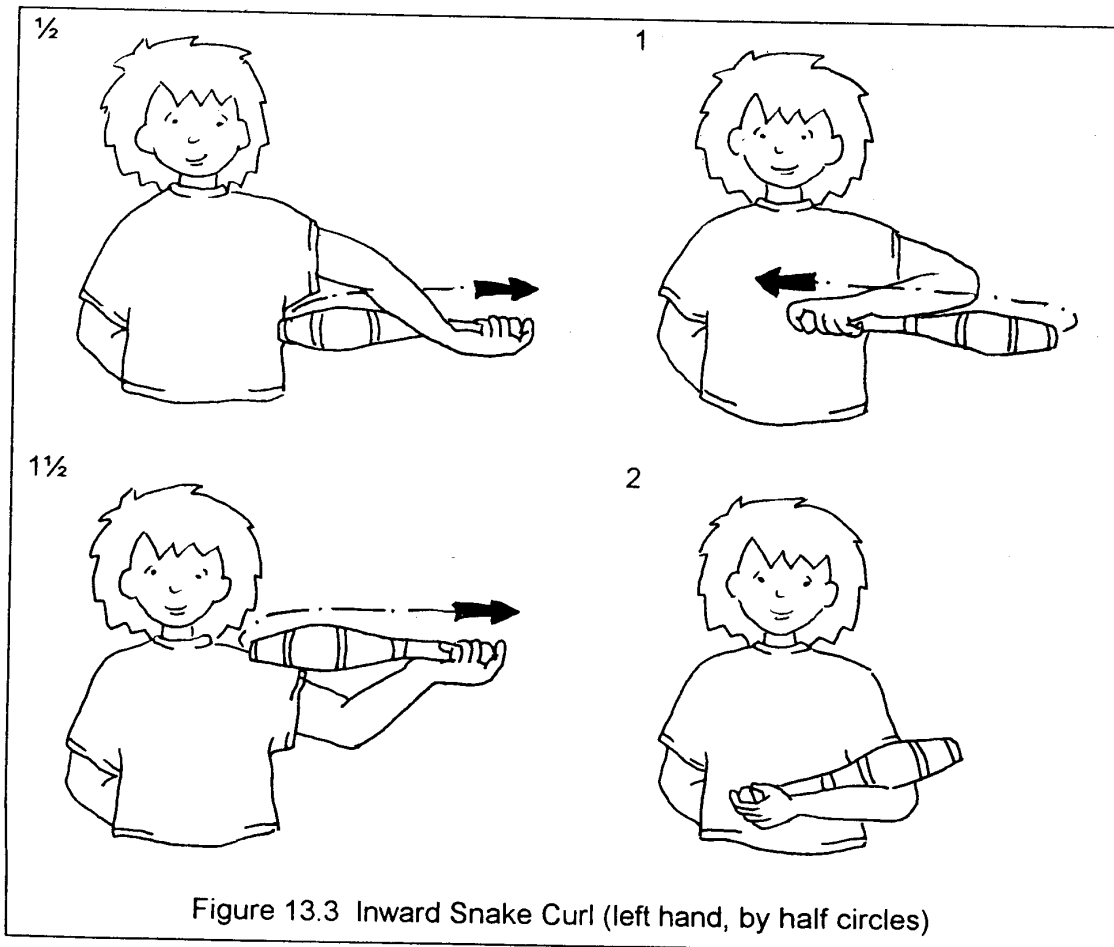


Figure 13.3 Inward Snake Curl (left hand, by half circles)

For an inward snake curl, first trace a circle under the arm with the club in a snake grip. The second part is a flat snake circle over the arm. Don't worry if this spiral movement feels weird at first. The club stays in the horizontal plane, flat and parallel with the floor and remains next to the forearm.

Synchronous time inward snake curls.

Alternating time inward snake curls.

Learn the pattern in alternating time by making continuous snake curl with your weaker hand and then introduce your stronger side on the off-beat.

Outward Snake Curls

This pattern is the same figure 8 curl pattern, but in the opposite direction to the previous move. Try the previous figures in backwards order. From a cradle with one hand:

Open your arm to allow the club to travel forward and outward, performing an over-arm circle to finish resting behind the forearm. Then turn the wrist down and outward so that the club moves under-arm and back in to a cradle. Swap hands.

In the first half of the move the arm stretches out straight, allowing the club to slip over to the back of the forearm. Then, once the club is behind the arm, curl your wrist under and bend your elbow to direct the club back underneath the arm. Try these patterns with two clubs:

Synchronous outward snake curls.

Alternating time outward snake curls.

Parallel left and right.

Parallel snake curls are very tricky movements. One club rotates in the inward direction and the other outwards. In order to start parallels, one hand must be half way through its figure 8 when the other side begins with a normal cradle. The two clubs should have their bases pointing in the same direction, flat and in parallel, throughout this movement.

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.