

## Lesson 4

### Two Front Facing Hand Circles with the Ring Grip

Two further positions for hand circles made with the ring grip are lower-front and shoulder (or upper-back hand) circles. Like the full-arm circles in Lesson 1, these patterns are most clearly seen from a front view.

#### Lower-Front Hand Circles

Let your right arm hang straight down with the hand at hip level. Make outward lower-front hand circles using a ring grip. Figure 4.1.

Watch that the rotation of the club makes a full circle rather than an oval and try to keep the arm straight and still, allowing the wrist alone to swing the club. Remember to hold the club loosely.

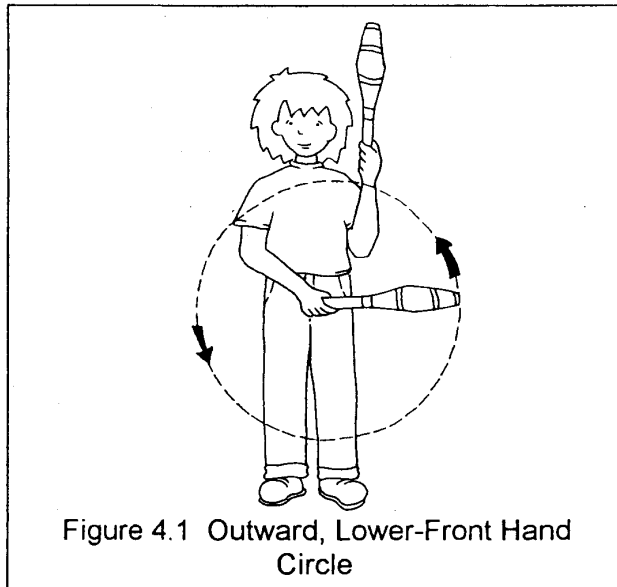


Figure 4.1 Outward, Lower-Front Hand Circle

Having begun a circle, a ring grip should provide flexibility so that the club turns with the aid of gravity and so you need just put in enough energy to keep it going and direct its curved path. Although this will feel awkward at first, a limber wrist will develop in time. Swap hands and repeat the outward movement.

**Both hands with clubs in the ring grip. Swing synchronous, outward lower-front hand circles with the hands kept far enough apart to avoid knocking the clubs.**

Practise these synchronous circles until they feel comfortable. Watch yourself in a mirror checking that both circles are flat to the front vertical wall plane.

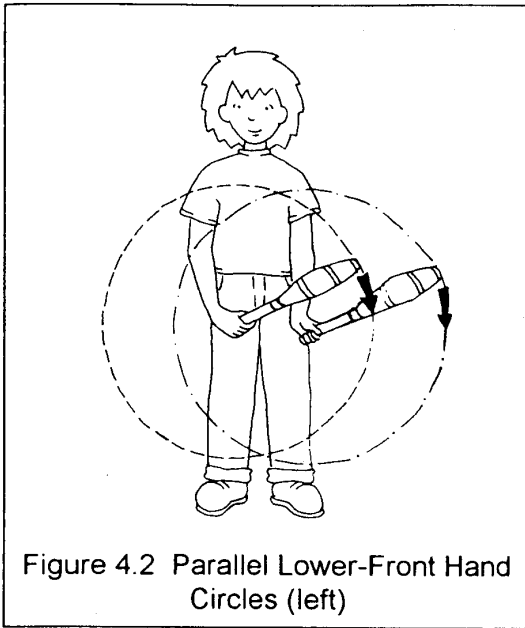
**Outward, lower-front hand circles in alternating time.**

Aim to keep alternating circles exactly half a revolution apart. Now for these circles inward.

**Try the lower-front circle in the inward direction with one hand only and then with two clubs synchronously and in alternating time.**

It is important to recognise that every club swinging spin can be made in **at least two directions**. *Every circle has its opposite number or twin*. Throughout this guide, I usually teach the outward direction first as it has the most natural feel. However, spend at least as much time, if not more, learning inward circles. The effort will be worthwhile since you will be better balanced, particularly when performing moves in parallel and when building up routines.

**Parallel lower-fronts, both to the right and left (clockwise and anti-clockwise as seen from the swinger's viewpoint). Figure 4.2.**



Try all the above lower-front circle moves with your **elbow** as the central pivot joint instead of your wrist, i.e., synchronous, alternating and parallel elbow circles.

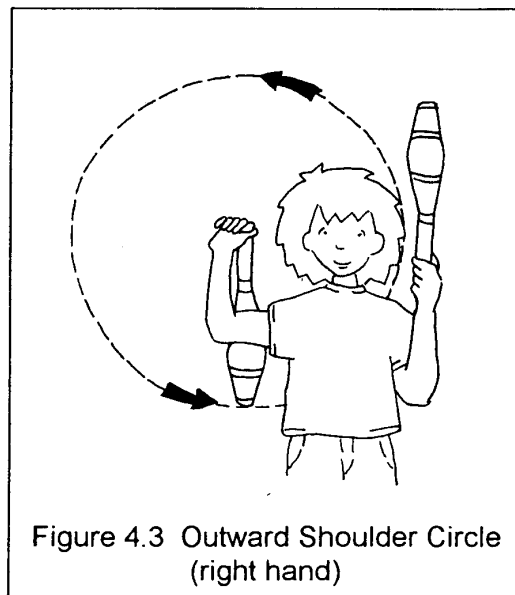
Elbow circles provide a medium sized circle but they are less commonly used than the other two sizes (full-arm and small hand circles). This is because elbows have limited flexibility and elbow circles are really only possible to the front at mid height.

### **Shoulder Circles, (or Upper-Back Hand Circles)**

In general, the names of patterns suggest their position. Shoulder circles are performed high and at the back of the body. They are sometimes called upper-back hand circles. These movements are made with the wrist as the pivotal centre point and with the club held in the ring grip.

**With one hand, begin making forward hand circles in front (Figure 3.1). Slowly move the arm out to the side of the body, with the elbow slightly bent. Let the club fall behind the arm and towards the head. Continue the motion, making one full hand circle in the upper-back position going outward. Figure 4.3.**

Try shoulder circles with each hand individually, building up to rotate for 8 counts. Do not lean backwards when you first try these patterns.



**Outward, synchronous time shoulder circles.**

Go slowly at first, being careful not to hit your head or to knock the clubs together at the back. Attempt to make these circles as flat and as close to your arm as possible. They look best in the vertical or "wall plane" that is immediately behind the body. Move on to attempting the inward direction with shoulder circles. From starting position:

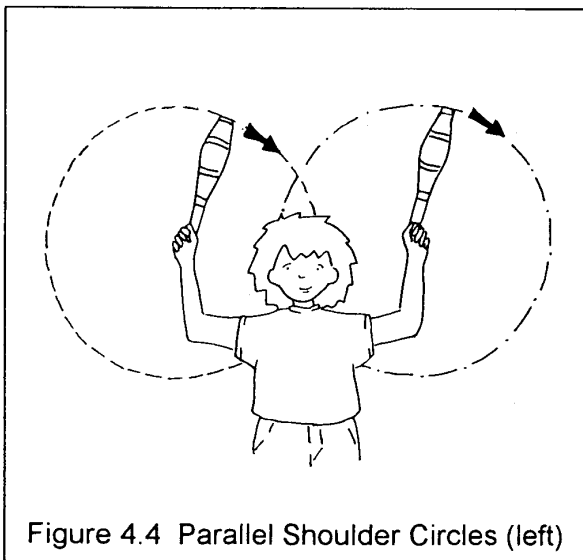
**Lift one hand to the side of the body with the elbow slightly bent, like the position of the hand in Figure 4.3. Raise the club up and towards the head by flexing the wrist using the ring grip. Allow the club to swing down and back to complete a full shoulder circle inwards, behind your body.**

This is the opposite direction to outward shoulder circles and should be attempted slowly at first. Check the planes so that the club makes a flat pattern as close to the arm as you can.

**Inward shoulder circles with one hand only and then with both hands in synchronous time.**

**Well done.** Now for the most difficult move of this lesson. First mime parallel shoulder circles by pretending to perform the move without clubs. This is useful to gain an idea of the coordinated wrist action needed. Next hold the clubs upright in a wide starting position.

**Parallel time, shoulder circles left and right. Figure 4.4.**



A tip for controlling this move is to start with hands spaced a little apart, so that the clubs are less likely to collide. Do not spend long attempting parallel shoulder circles if you are finding them problematic. However, I believe that trying the parallel every now and then is worthwhile since both inward and outward directions should be equally developed.

You have probably noticed that high patterns are more tiring to perform than moves lower down. This is due to the extra effort involved in raising the weight of both the arm and club. When your arms begin to feel heavy, switch to a more restful lower-front or full-arm pattern. Always stop if you get any cramp or pain in the hands, shake out tension and rest for a while.

Continue to check your reflection whenever you are practising. This is the best way to produce perfectly rounded patterns that have a pleasing symmetry in line with the planes of your body.

*This chapter is taken from*

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and Pole Spinning**

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