

## Lesson 7

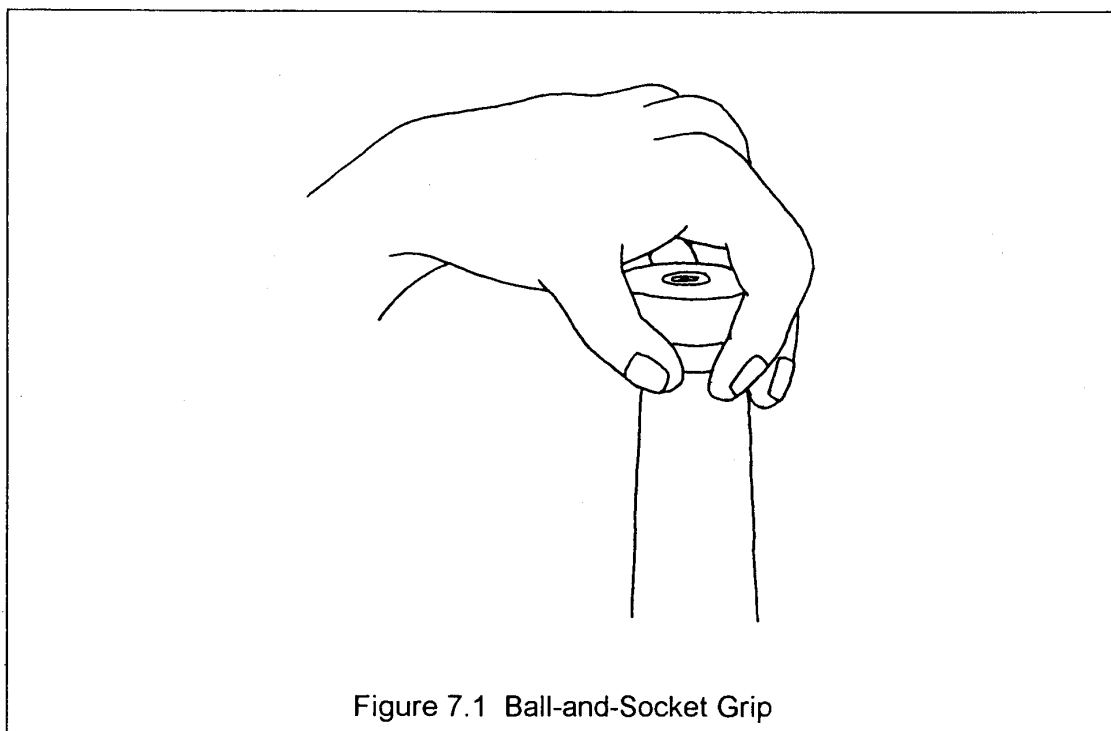
### Hand Circles with the Ball-and-Socket Grip

This lesson introduces two hand circles which are the twin moves to those previously taught in Lesson 4. Upper-front and lower-back circles are made on the vertical plane and use the ball-and-socket grip.

#### Ball-and-Socket Grip

**The knob of the club is the *ball* and the hand makes a *socket* with thumb and first two fingers. Figure 7.1.**

The joint formed is reliable, and yet the club should be able to swing freely as it rolls around within the grasp.



#### Upper-Front Hand Circles

The upper-front position is made high and with the hands held above each shoulder. These circles are twins of shoulder circles (Lesson 4, page 19), but at the front of the body instead of the back. Use the ball-and-socket grip to rotate the club.

**First swing a single outward, upper-front hand circle.**

**Both hands, synchronous, outward, upper-front hand circles.**

**Alternating time, outward, upper-front hand circles.**

Bend your elbow with these tricks and the plane to aim for is the vertical or wall plane straight in front of the body. Keep the clubs a little apart so that they do not collide.

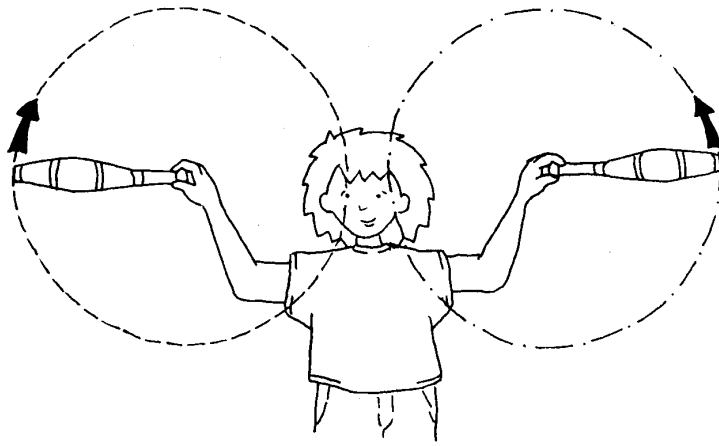


Figure 7.2 Inward, Synchronous Time, Upper-Front Hand Circles

**Inward direction, synchronous, upper-front hand circles - Figure 7.2.**  
**Inward, alternating time, upper-front hand circles.**  
**Parallel left and right, upper-front hand circles.**

Upper-front hand circles are fairly tiring to practise since the clubs are held up high. A surprisingly large amount of energy must be expended to keep lifting the weight of the arms and the clubs. If you begin to feel cramp, make a couple of club swings with the more restful full-arm circle, or just shake out your arms.

The upper-front circle can also be made with the arms held out straight to the sides - see Figure 7.3.

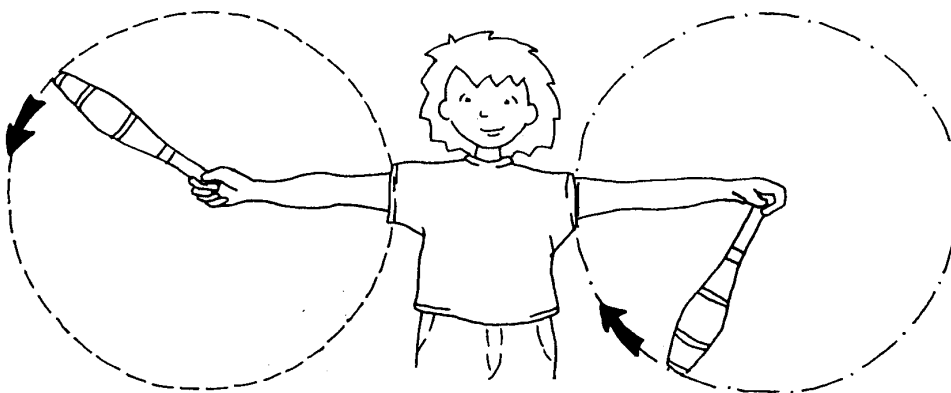


Figure 7.3 Outward, Alternating, Upper-Front Hand Circles with Horizontal Arms

### **Lower-Back Hand Circles**

Lower-back circles are twinned with lower-front circles (Lesson 4) in that they are performed low, at hip level. However, these circles are made at the back of the body and you must use the ball-and-socket grip instead of the ring grip.

**Swing a single outward, lower-back hand circle - Figure 7.4.**  
**Try swinging outward, lower-back circles with both hands in synch.**

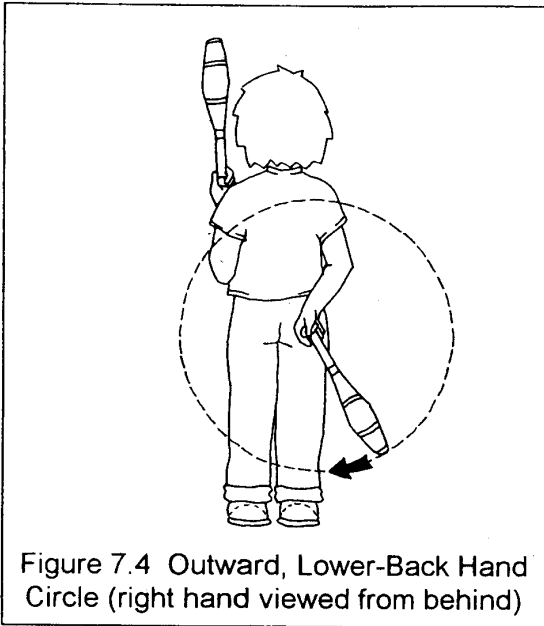


Figure 7.4 Outward, Lower-Back Hand Circle (right hand viewed from behind)

**Then, synchronous time, lower-back circles made inwards.**  
**Parallel left and right lower-back circles.**

Continuous circles performed behind the body are not easy. I expect that you will find the clubs knock together at first, so take the above exercises at a slow pace. Do not spend long on these if you are having difficulties. This is because changing between front and back circles is a more natural swing than continuous rotations behind the body.

### Upper-Front and Shoulder Circles

Combinations of upper-front and shoulder circles (upper-backs) are pretty and, for many people, easier than any of the continuous ball-and-socket grip moves. The clubs swing in turn, first to the front and then behind the body. If the clubs are correctly held between the thumb and first finger, you will be able to learn a smooth change in grip from a ball-and-socket grip at the front, to a ring grip behind the shoulder.

**Begin with just one hand swinging outward direction alternating upper-front and shoulder circles. Next make synchronous, upper-front and shoulder circles first outward and then inward. Figure 7.5 shows a plan view of the outward movements.**

There is a pleasant flow when combining front and back moves. The club should trace a figure 8 pattern with the cross-over occurring directly above your shoulder. This is shown in a view from above in Figure 7.5.

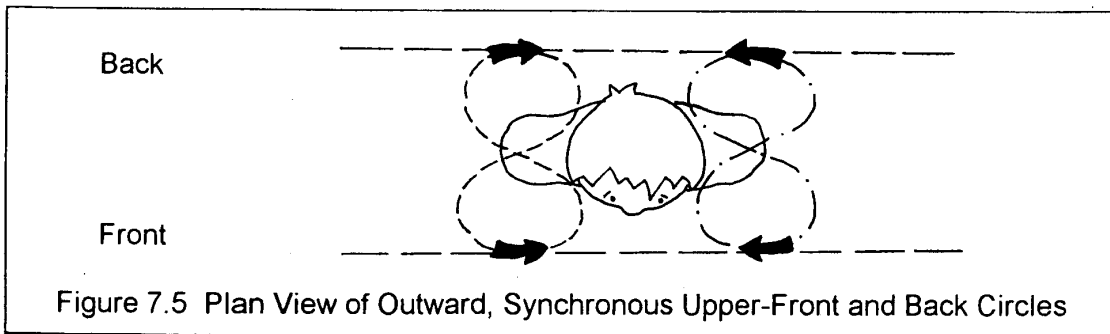


Figure 7.5 Plan View of Outward, Synchronous Upper-Front and Back Circles

**Alternating time (short reel done up high), outward and then inward upper-front and shoulder circles. Lastly, swing the combination in parallel time, left and right.**

Add variety to these high position hand circles by integrating full-arm circles or, for instance, by doubling up the timing and doing two of each circle before changing. Notice also that upper-front and shoulder circles can also be made with the clubs held out to the sides at arms length. Go back to Figure 7.2 (page 29) and add an upper-back hand circle as well as a front hand circle - although this is a tiring move to keep consistently high.

### **Lower-Front and Back Hand Circles**

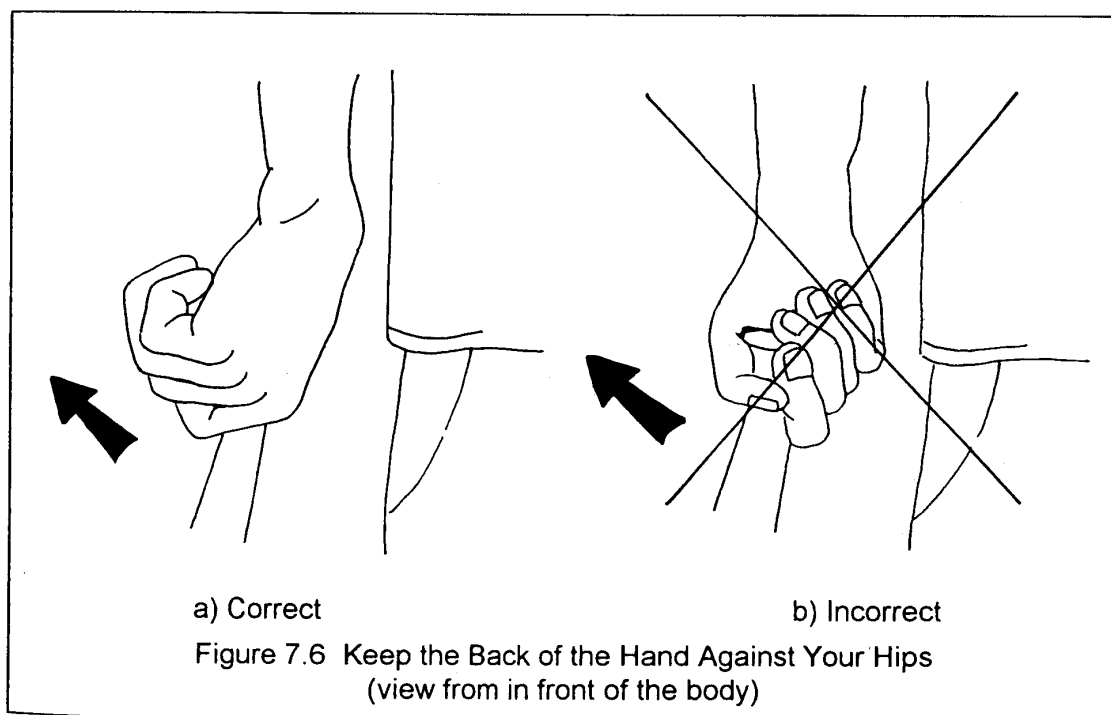
This movement is more relaxing than the upper-front and shoulder circle pattern because the arms are allowed to swing low.

**One hand only, try combining outward lower-front and back circles.**

**Synchronous time, outward, lower-front and back circles.**

**Alternating time, outward, lower-front and back circles (a 'low reel').**

It is important to twist your wrist inward, **keeping the back of the hand against your hips** when changing between front and back positions. This inward twist of the wrist from the lower-front moving into lower-back circles is shown in Figure 7.6.



Alternating lower-front and back circles is a fairly well known move called a 'low reel.' Start with just the weaker hand and introduce the stronger hand in the off beat. Once the rhythm is learnt, it is possible to swing this pattern at high speed and it is a useful trick with which to alter your timings (see Lesson 8 for tips on smooth transitions). Lower-front and back circles can also be performed with a short to medium length pole.

**Reverse the low pattern's direction by swinging the lower-front circle inward. When a momentum is gained, try inward, lower-front and back circles in synchronous and then alternating time.  
Parallel lower-front and back circles first left and then to the right.**

Experiment with your club swinging by adding combinations of full-arm circles and upper-front or back circles to the stable lower-front and back swinging pattern.

### **Throwing a Club From a Low Reel Swinging Pattern**

Try gently throwing a single club on its swing up and outwards from a lower-front circle.

**Begin a low reel, i.e. alternating lower-front and back circles. Give a gentle lift as you let go of a club at the release point near your navel on the rise of the circle. The club will spin once. Catch it with the same hand, on the outside of the pattern. Reach for the club handle as near to the knob as possible. Let the club slide down into the ring grip made by the thumb and first finger.**

The throw is released from the inside of the pattern and caught again on the outside of the pattern. It is likely that the flight of the club will be slow in comparison with the swing made with the other hand. Re-adjust back into the rhythm of alternating low reels before repeating the throw and then trying the trick using your other hand. **Good.**

*This chapter is taken from*

### **Modern Club Swinging and Pole Spinning**

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