

Lesson 9

Horizontal Plane Hand Circles

The horizontal plane is flat and parallel to the floor. This dimension is not as frequently used as the vertical planes in club swinging and this may be because it is difficult for an audience ever to see a fully rounded pattern. Nevertheless, the extra plane in your vocabulary of moves will add interest to routines and give you greater flexibility. The horizontal planes to aim for are high - under or over shoulder level as shown in Figure 9.1.

Horizontal planes are often used in pole and baton manipulation. This lesson contains some stick twirls and I suggest that you try them with a relatively short pole, such as a devil stick, so that it can swing underneath your arms.

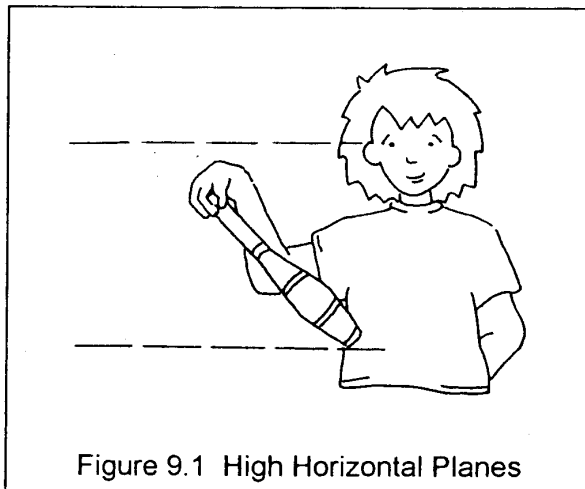


Figure 9.1 High Horizontal Planes

Under-Arm Hand Circles

The club is held in the ball-and-socket grip (Lesson 7, page 28). Outward circles are made when clubs move from the mid line of the body outward to the front and then circle back toward the body on the sides. Inward circles are the exact opposite, i.e., movements are reversed.

With the club facing downward at the front, rotate a single club in the horizontal plane underneath the arm, outward - Figure 9.2. Change direction and then swap hands. Synchronous time under-arm hand circles with both hands, in both directions.

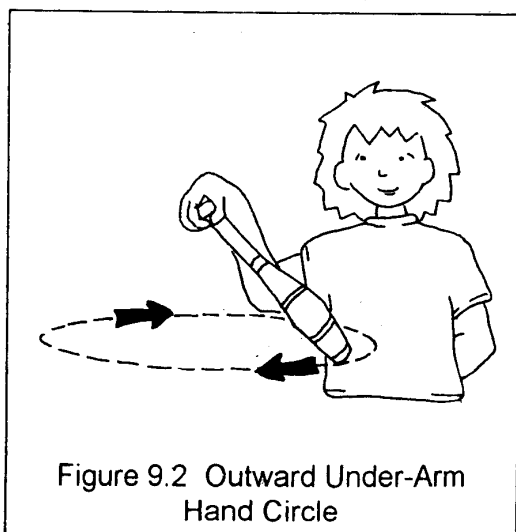


Figure 9.2 Outward Under-Arm Hand Circle

Keep your arms slightly apart so that the clubs cannot collide. Check that the clubs are as close to your arms as possible and stay horizontal. Pirouettes are easily performed with under-arm hand circles since the clubs never restrict the movement of your legs.

Alternating time outward, then inward under-arm hand circles. Finally, swing parallel left and right under-arm hand circles.

Over-Arm Hand Circles

This is the complement to the last move. The differences are that circles are made over-arm and use the ring grip (Lesson 3, page 15) instead of the ball-and-socket grip.

Rotate a single club horizontally above the arm. Change direction and then swap hands.

Swing synchronised outward, then inward over-arm circles. Figure 9.3. Also try over-arm circles in the alternating and parallel timings.

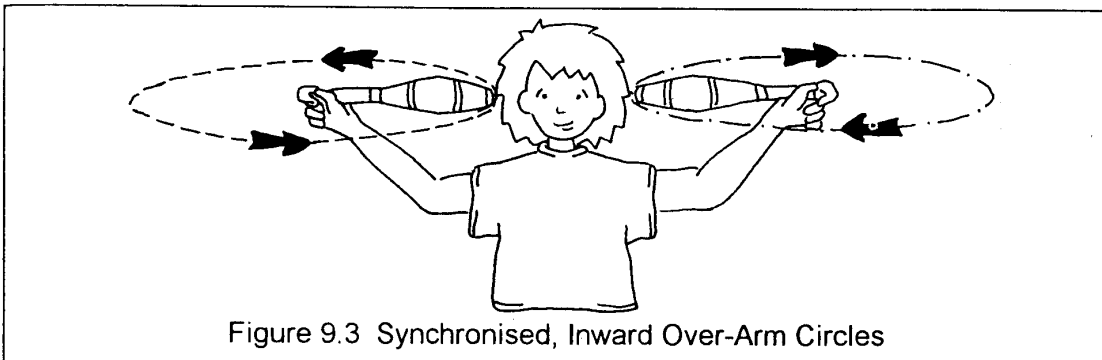


Figure 9.3 Synchronised, Inward Over-Arm Circles

I find over-arm circles more testing than circles swung under-arm. The wrist has to make a quick flicking motion to give the circle its impetus. It's a bit like swinging an old-fashioned football rattle. Be careful to distance the clubs from possibly hitting your chin by keeping your arms outstretched. Do not spend long perfecting over-arm circles as the next trick incorporating both over-and under-arm circles is easier than continuous over-arm movements.

Over and Under-Arm Circles (Figure 8's Horizontally)

Figure 8 movements seem more natural club swings than performing repeated circles either over or under-arm. You will mainly use the ball-and-socket grip, with the club momentarily entering the ring grip for the over-arm spin.

With one hand, begin swinging repeated under-arm circles. Flick your wrist over to make an over-arm circle and then continue making figure 8's. Synchronised over and under-arm hand circles both in the outward and inward directions - Figure 9.4. Alternating time over-and under-arm circles in both directions, then parallel left and right.

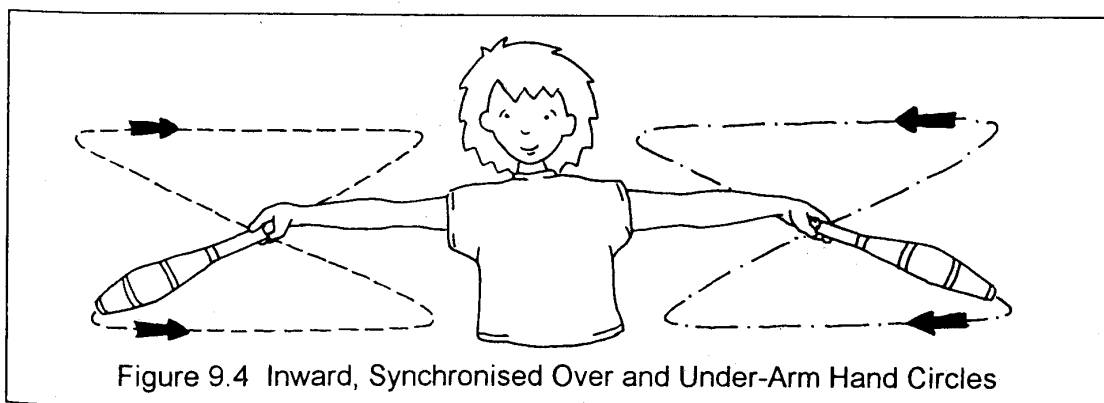


Figure 9.4 Inward, Synchronised Over and Under-Arm Hand Circles

Different positions for these over and under-arm moves include holding the arms out directly in front of the swinger or with the arms stretched to the sides. You are likely to find horizontal hand circles tiring as the arms and clubs must be raised up.

It is possible to move around your space in very attractive pirouettes while swinging circles on the flat plane. Try turning with horizontal full-arm circles in the same direction as your parallel left or right over and under-arm circles.

Follow time is explained in Lesson 11 using a forward cross-follow. A follow time pattern can also be swung on the horizontal plane. It is established by starting a figure 8 pattern in parallel time and speeding up with one hand until it is half a circle in front. Once you have learnt the vertical cross-follow (pages 42-43), try the move on the horizontal plane at first allowing the over-arm circles to rise above your head. Later, decrease the size of the pattern to just flat circles directly over and under your arms, which are held outstretched and stationary. This horizontal cross-follow can be done in two directions, either with the left or the right hand leading.

Over and Under-Arm Helicopters with a Short Pole

Use a medium to short pole such as a baton or devil stick. It must not be longer than twice the length of your arm, or else it will not pass under-arm.

Hold the pole's centre between thumb and first finger in a light pinch. Decide on one end X and rotate this end in a helicopter motion so that it traces out a flat circle, parallel to the floor, over-arm. The opposite end will be doing the same, except under-arm. Figure 9.5.

A flat circle is accomplished with a rolling, circular wrist action. The elbow bends slightly and then straightens as though making an exaggerated stirring motion. Keep the arm high and the body straight.

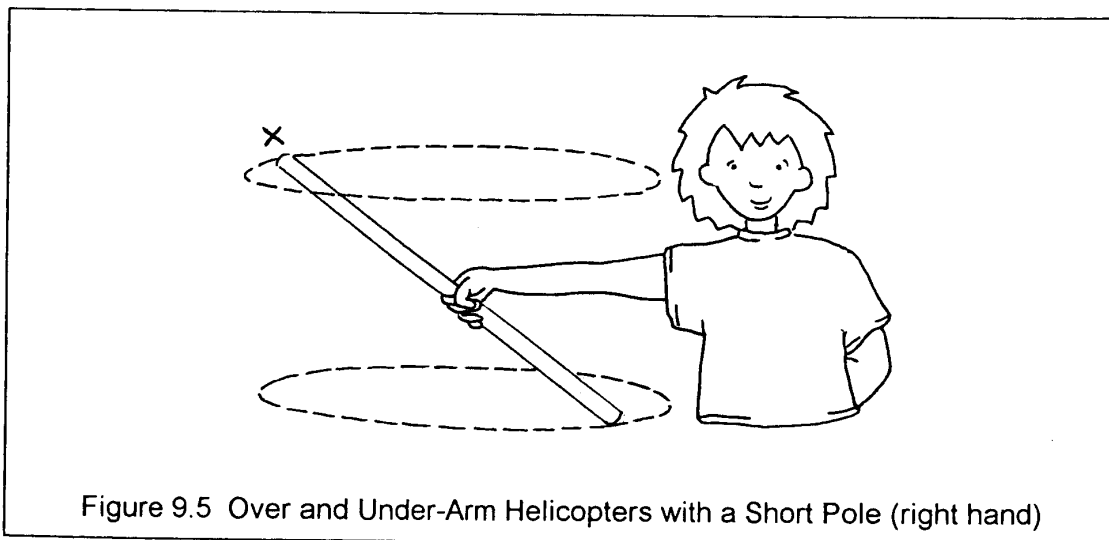


Figure 9.5 Over and Under-Arm Helicopters with a Short Pole (right hand)

Flat spins on the horizontal plane can be used to build up speed for additionally twirling the stick between the fingers when over-arm. The basic flat helicopter move can be done with either hand, outwards, inwards and with two poles in any of synchronous, alternating or parallel time.

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.