



Edinburgh University Swing Dance
Society notes on:

The Shim Sham/Goofers



Please note: you free to copy and distribute these notes intact, but please do not remove the header or contact address (this way, people can get back to me with any suggestions and corrections and everyone can benefit) jamie@swingdoctors.org.uk.

You are unlikely to be able to learn a new routine from notes alone; rather, these notes are meant as a reminder for people who have learned the routine in our 'live' classes (or someone else's classes).

Background:

The roots of this dance go back to a Vaudeville solo tap dancer's routine, dating from about 1900. The solo routine was re-choreographed in 1926 by Leonard Reed and Willie Bryant for use by larger groups in the Whitman Sisters' show in Chicago. Here, the routine was called 'Goofers'. Its first New York outing was performed by the group *The Three Little Words*, and they performed in the *Shim Sham Club*, hence the name New Yorkers gave to the dance. Lindy hoppers removed the tap steps but kept the general structure, different versions being used in different places. Frankie Manning, who danced frequently at the Savoy Ballroom, started to teach one easy version of this dance in the swing revival of the 1980s and committed it to video tape, and this has now become the 'standard' version of the Shim Sham. Please note that the way we dance at Edinburgh differs slightly from Frankie's version, for reasons to do with the history of swing dance here, and we do a full break that is close to the complicated original rather than Frankie's simplified one. The simple one is explained here too, for people from elsewhere.

This website also contains instructions for one of Dean Collins' versions of the Shim Sham, which is significantly more complicated and danced only by about half a dozen of us here. The version in the pages you have in your hands is the simple one (however it may feel right now!).

Music: *Stomping at the Savoy / Ain't what you do (I I Wanna do the Shim Sham*, for those with no taste...)

Overview: (breakdown of steps follows)

Block one:

- Shim sham foot drags -> full break
- Hip pushes
- Tack Annies -> full break
- Half & Full Breaks

Block two:

- Shim sham foot drags -> freeze
- Hip pushes
- Tack Annies -> freeze
- Half & freezes

Block three:

- Boogie back and boogie forwards (x2)
- Boogie back and Shorty George (x2)

BLOCK ONE VERSE 1

Shim sham foot drags: (you need bent legs)

- 8 – ‘sitting’, put your R foot slightly diag fwd on the floor, flat, but no weight
- 1 – pull the R foot back under you and transfer weight to it
- 2 – put your L foot slightly diag fws on the floor, flat, no weight
- 3 – pull the L foot back under you and transfer weight
- 4 – put your R foot slightly diag fwd on floor, flat, no weight
- 5 – drag R foot back but do *not* transfer weight
- 6 – put your R foot forward again
- 7 – pull it back and transfer weight

- 8 – ‘sitting’, put your L foot slightly diag fwd on the floor, flat, but no weight
- 1 – pull the L foot back under you and transfer weight to it
- 2 – put your R foot slightly diag fws on the floor, flat, no weight
- 3 – pull the R foot back under you and transfer weight
- 4 – put your L foot slightly diag fwd on floor, flat, no weight
- 5 – drag L foot back but do *not* transfer weight
- 6 – put your L foot forward again
- 7 – pull it back and transfer weight

- 8 – ‘sitting’, put your R foot slightly diag fwd on the floor, flat, but no weight
- 1 – pull the R foot back under you and transfer weight to it
- 2 – put your L foot slightly diag fws on the floor, flat, no weight
- 3 – pull the L foot back under you and transfer weight
- 4 – put your R foot slightly diag fwd on floor, flat, no weight
- 5 – drag R foot back but do *not* transfer weight
- 6 – put your R foot forward again
- 7 – pull it back and transfer weight

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Full Break: *(the lines of text have got gappy to fit in steps on the & beats)*

8 – drop your weight fwd on R

.

1 – tap (no weight transfer) your L behind you

.

2 – step back on L (with weight transfer now)

.

3

& - raise your R knee in a back-peddalling motion

4 - step down on to R

& - raise your L knee ditto

5 – step down on to L

.

6 – step on your R

.

7 – step fwd on L

(alternative: slide legs apart into small sideways splits on 6 and together, weight on L only, on 7).

Easy alternative *(but not danced in Edinburgh)*

8 – step fwd on R

1

2 – step back on L

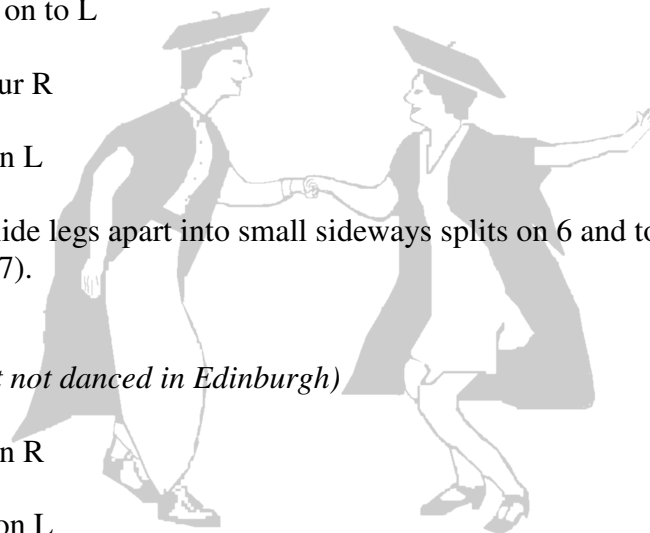
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4 – step back on R

5 – step back on L

6 – step back on R next to L

7 – step fwd on L



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BLOCK ONE VERSE 2

Hip pushes

- 8 – turn 45 deg right and step on your R, pushing your hips forward over it
- 1 – bring hips back over your L foot
- 2 – step on your R, pushing your hips forward over it
- 3 – bring hips back over your L foot
- 4 – step on your R, pushing your hips forward over it
- 5 – kick your L across your R
- 6 – step on L and turn 90 deg left (so face 45 deg left)
- 7 – rock back on R

- 8 – step on your L, pushing your hips forward over it
- 1 – bring hips back over your R foot
- 2 – step on your L, pushing your hips forward over it
- 3 – bring hips back over your R foot
- 4 – step on your L, pushing your hips forward over it
- 5 – kick your R across your L
- 6 – step on R and turn 90 deg right (so face 45 deg right)
- 7 – rock back on L

- 8 – turn 45 deg right and step on your R, pushing your hips forward over it
- 1 – bring hips back over your L foot
- 2 – step on your R, pushing your hips forward over it
- 3 – bring hips back over your L foot
- 4 – step on your R, pushing your hips forward over it
- 5 – kick your L across your R
- 6 – step on L and turn 90 deg left (so face 45 deg left)
- 7 – rock back on R

- 8 – step on your L, pushing your hips forward over it
- 1 – kick your R across your L
- 2 – step on R and turn 90 deg right (so face 45 deg right)
- 3 – rock back on L
- 4 – step on your R, pushing your hips forward over it
- 5 – kick your L across your R
- 6 – step on L but do not turn
- 7 – step on R

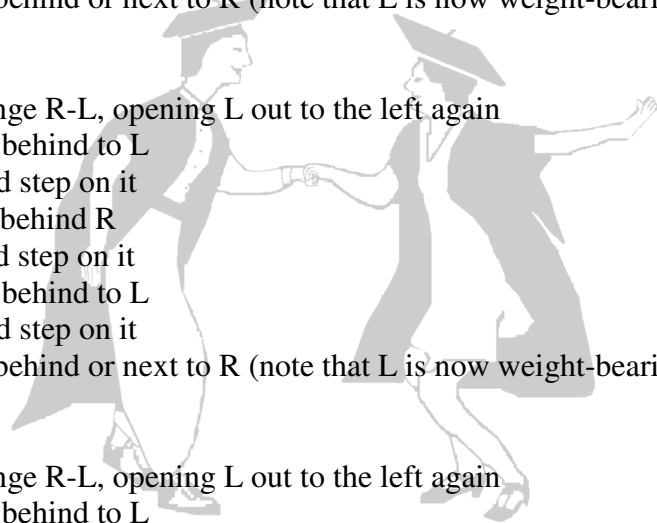
BLOCK ONE VERSE 3

Tack Annies

- 8 – open out on L next to R
- 1 – tap R toes behind to L
- 2 – open R and step on it
- 3 – tap L toes behind R
- 4 – open L and step on it
- 5 – tap R toes behind to L
- 6 – open R and step on it
- 7 – step on L behind or next to R (note that L is now weight-bearing)

- &8 – ball change R-L, opening L out to the left again
- 1 – tap R toes behind to L
- 2 – open R and step on it
- 3 – tap L toes behind R
- 4 – open L and step on it
- 5 – tap R toes behind to L
- 6 – open R and step on it
- 7 – step on L behind or next to R (note that L is now weight-bearing)

- &8 – ball change R-L, opening L out to the left again
- 1 – tap R toes behind to L
- 2 – open R and step on it
- 3 – tap L toes behind R
- 4 – open L and step on it
- 5 – tap R toes behind to L
- 6 – open R and step on it
- 7 – Cross L over R so you still travel a little right



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Full Break: (*the lines of text have got gappy to fit in steps on the & beats*)

8 – drop your weight fwd on R

.

1 – tap (no weight transfer) your L behind you

.

2 – step back on L (with weight transfer now)

.

3

& - raise your R knee in a back-peddalling motion

4 - step down on to R

& - raise your L knee ditto

5 – step down on to L

.

6 – step on your R

.

7 – step fwd on L

(alternative: slide legs apart into small sideways splits on 6 and together, weight on L only, on 7).

Easy alternative (*but not danced in Edinburgh*)

8 – step fwd on R

1

2 – step back on L

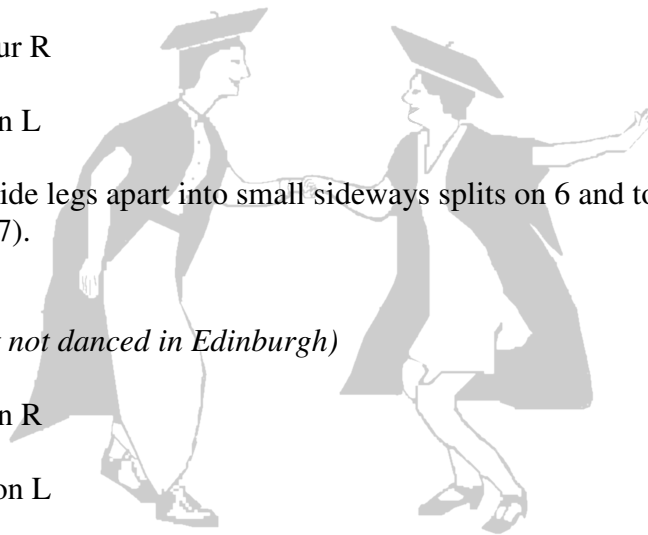
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4 – step back on R

5 – step back on L

6 – step back on R next to L

7 – step fwd on L



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BLOCK ONE VERSE 4

Half breaks

8 – step fwd on R (weight over it)

.

1 – step back on L

.

2 – kick R fwd

& - Rdown

3 – L

.

4 – step fwd on R (weight over it)

.

5 – step back on L

.

6 – kick R fwd

& - Rdown

7 – L

Full Break:

8 – drop your weight fwd on R

.

1 – tap (no weight transfer) your L behind you

.

2 – step back on L (with weight transfer now)

.

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& - raise your R knee in a back-peddalling motion

4 - step down on to R

& - raise your L knee ditto

5 – step down on to L

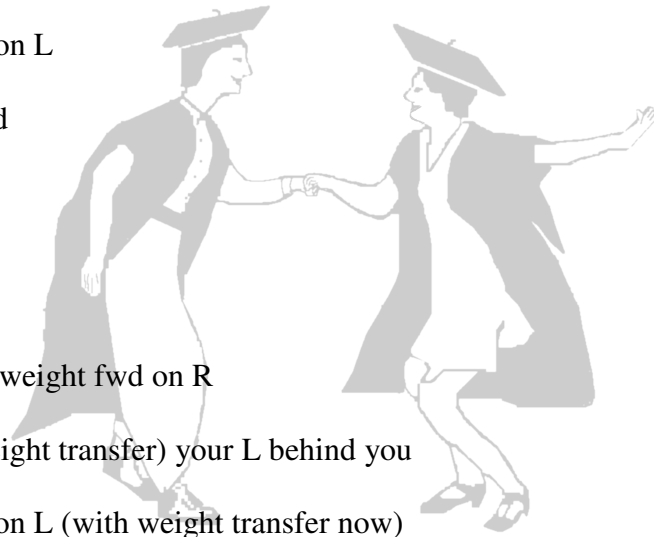
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6 – step on your R

.

7 – step fwd on L

(alternative: slide legs apart into small sideways splits on 6 and together, weight on L only, on 7).



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Half breaks

8 – step fwd on R (weight over it)

.

1 – step back on L

.

2 – kick R fwd

& - Rdown

3 – L

.

4 – step fwd on R (weight over it)

.

5 – step back on L

.

6 – kick R fwd

& - Rdown

7 – L

Full Break:

8 – drop your weight fwd on R

.

1 – tap (no weight transfer) your L behind you

.

2 – step back on L (with weight transfer now)

.

3

& - raise your R knee in a back-peddalling motion

4 - step down on to R

& - raise your L knee ditto

5 – step down on to L

.

6 – step on your R

.

7 – step fwd on L

(alternative: slide legs apart into small sideways splits on 6 and together, weight on L only, on 7).

BLOCK TWO

This is exactly like block 1, but you freeze instead of each full break (you still do the half breaks, though). *NB – if using ‘it ain’t what you do’, you need to waste 16 beats between blocks 1 and 2. At Edinburgh, there is a tradition of moving like a chicken...*

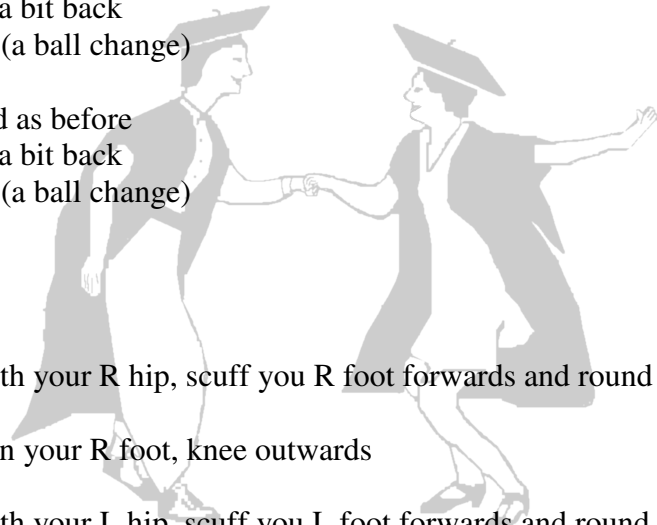
BLOCK THREE VERSE 1

Boogie Back

- 8 – kick R fwd, clap or click fingers if you like; be in a deep get-down
& - step on R a bit back
1 – step on L (this &1 is a ball change)
.
2 – kick R fwd as before
& - step on R a bit back
3 – step on L (a ball change)
.
4 – kick R fwd as before
& - step on R a bit back
5 – step on L (a ball change)
.
6 – kick R fwd as before
& - step on R a bit back
7 – step on L (a ball change)

Boogie forward

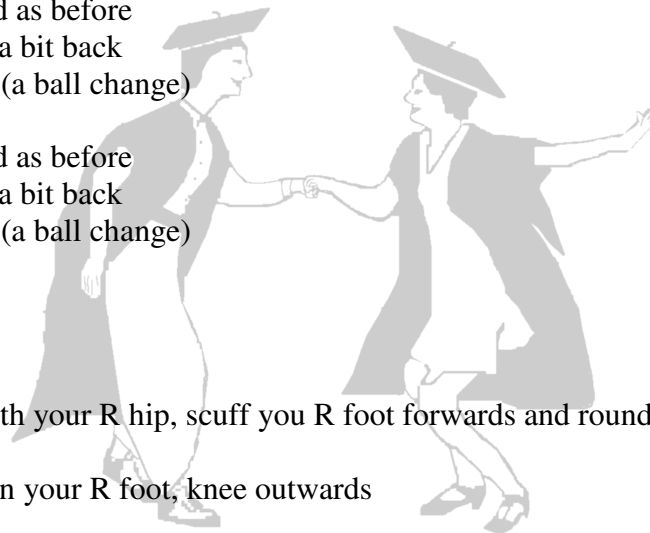
- 8 – leading with your R hip, scuff you R foot forwards and round to R
.
1 – step fwd on your R foot, knee outwards
.
2 – leading with your L hip, scuff you L foot forwards and round to L
.
3 – step fwd on your L foot, knee outwards
.
4 – leading with your R hip, scuff you R foot forwards and round to R
.
5 – step fwd on your R foot, knee outwards
.
6 – leading with your L hip, scuff you L foot forwards and round to L
.
7 – step fwd on your L foot, knee outwards
.
.



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Boogie Back

- 8 – kick R fwd, clap or click fingers if you like; be in a deep get-down
& - step on R a bit back
1 – step on L (this &1 is a ball change)
.
2 – kick R fwd as before
& - step on R a bit back
3 – step on L (a ball change)
.
4 – kick R fwd as before
& - step on R a bit back
5 – step on L (a ball change)
.
6 – kick R fwd as before
& - step on R a bit back
7 – step on L (a ball change)



Boogie forward

- 8 – leading with your R hip, scuff you R foot forwards and round to R
.
1 – step fwd on your R foot, knee outwards
.
2 – leading with your L hip, scuff you L foot forwards and round to L
.
3 – step fwd on your L foot, knee outwards
.
4 – leading with your R hip, scuff you R foot forwards and round to R
.
5 – step fwd on your R foot, knee outwards
.
6 – leading with your L hip, scuff you L foot forwards and round to L
.
7 – step fwd on your L foot, knee outwards
.
.

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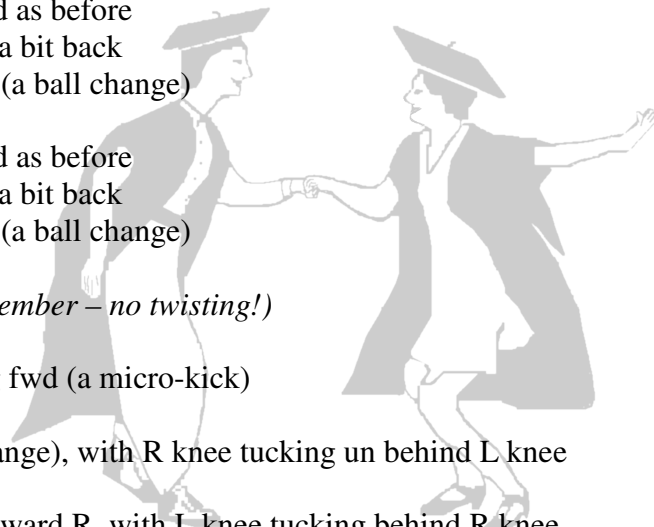
BLOCK THREE VERSE 2

Boogie Back

- 8 – kick R fwd, clap or click fingers if you like; be in a deep get-down
& - step on R a bit back
1 – step on L (this &1 is a ball change)
.
2 – kick R fwd as before
& - step on R a bit back
3 – step on L (a ball change)
.
4 – kick R fwd as before
& - step on R a bit back
5 – step on L (a ball change)
.
6 – kick R fwd as before
& - step on R a bit back
7 – step on L (a ball change)

Shorty George (*Remember – no twisting!*)

- 8 – flick R leg fwd (a micro-kick)
& - R down
1 – L (ball change), with R knee tucking un behind L knee
.
2 – shuffle forward R, with L knee tucking behind R knee
.
3 – shuffle forward L, with R knee tucking behind L knee
.
4 – shuffle forward R, with L knee tucking behind R knee
.
5 – shuffle forward L, with R knee tucking behind L knee
.
6 – shuffle forward R, with L knee tucking behind R knee
.
7 – shuffle forward L, with R knee tucking behind L knee



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Boogie Back

8 – kick R fwd, clap or click fingers if you like; be in a deep get-down

& - step on R a bit back

1 – step on L (this &1 is a ball change)

.

2 – kick R fwd as before

& - step on R a bit back

3 – step on L (a ball change)

.

4 – kick R fwd as before

& - step on R a bit back

5 – step on L (a ball change)

.

6 – kick R fwd as before

& - step on R a bit back

7 – step on L (a ball change)

Shorty George *(make this one move so you meet a partner)*

8 – flick R leg fwd (a micro-kick)

& - R down

1 – L (ball change), with R knee tucking un behind L knee

.

2 – shuffle forward R, with L knee tucking behind R knee

.

3 – shuffle forward L, with R knee tucking behind L knee

.

4 – shuffle forward R, with L knee tucking behind R knee

.

5 – shuffle forward L, with R knee tucking behind L knee

.

6 – shuffle forward R, with L knee tucking behind R knee

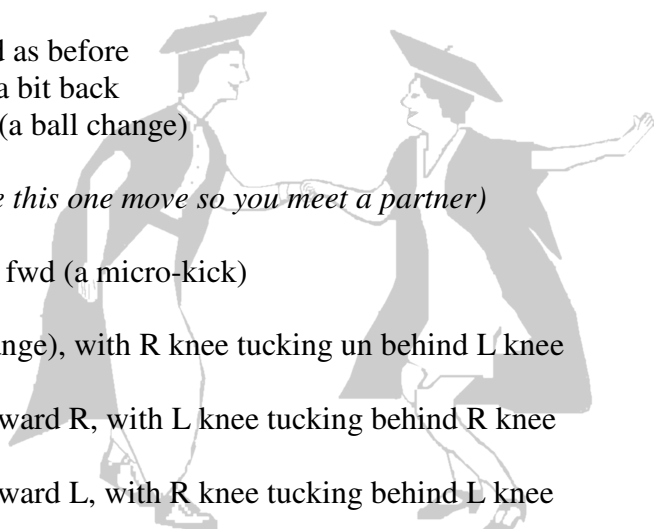
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7 – shuffle forward L, with R knee tucking behind L knee

.

8 – step on R (man) or do nothing (lady) – so you are ready to Lindy hop

Now start dancing social Lindy hop!



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