

### 2-Step Underarm Turns: Segment 3

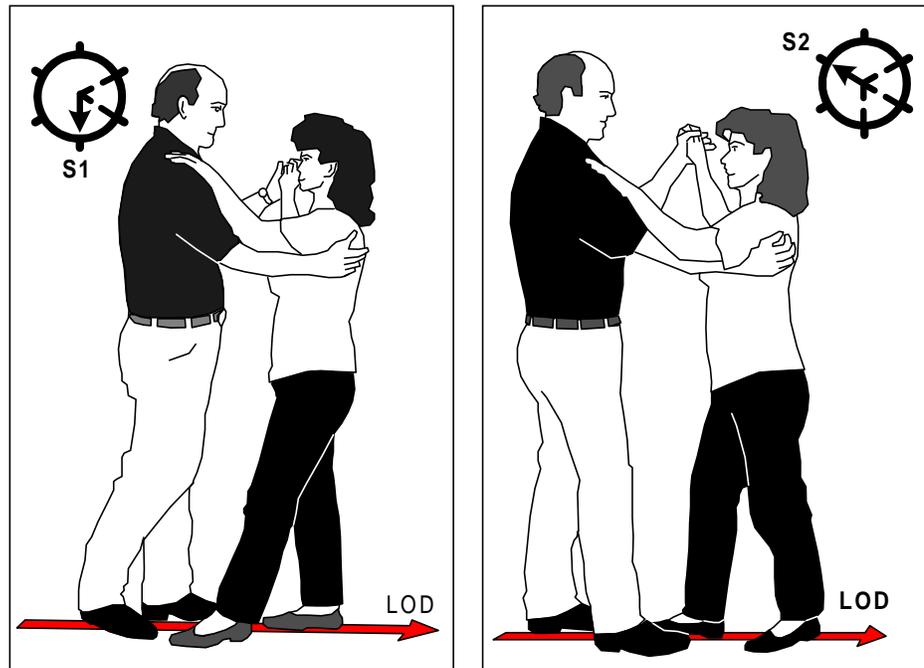
**Pre-requisite**

To complete this segment, you must be able to do basic 2 step. Ladies must be able to do pivot turns.

**Overview**

These underarm turns are executed with the gentleman forward in the line of dance and the lady backwards. There is a quick version and a slow version. In the quick version, the lady makes a 360° turn on the quick steps. In the slow version, the same turn is completed on the slow steps. (The slow underarm turn originates from the Polka.)

**Quick Underarm Turn**



**First Slow Step Forward**

You begin this pattern from closed position with the man facing forward and the lady facing back. You step two quick steps and one slow step straight forward in the line of dance (LOD).

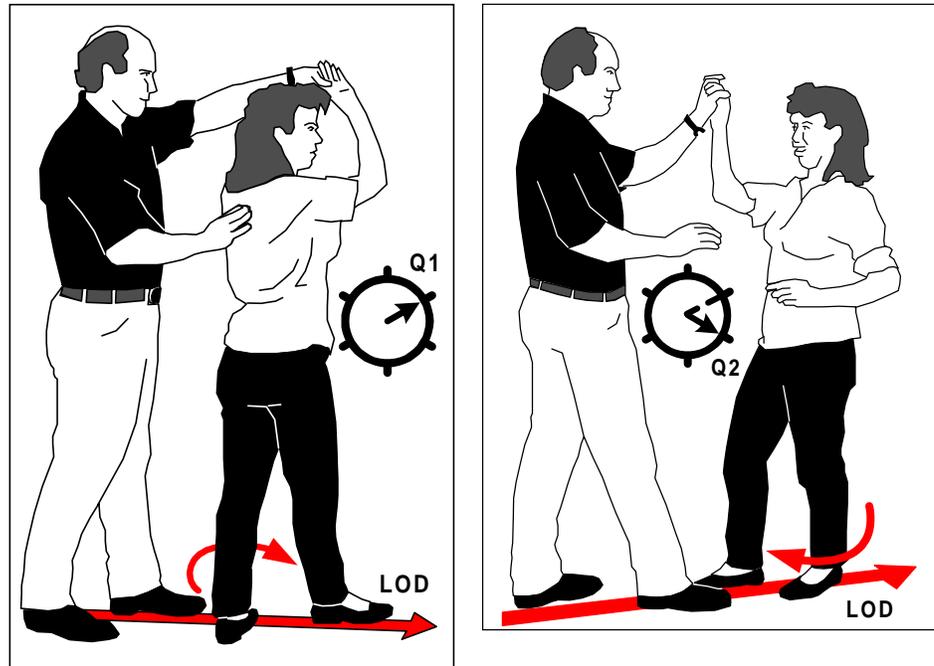
(The illustrations begin with the slow steps.)

**Second Slow Step Lead Only**

As the man takes his second slow step forward, he must raise his left hand package to the same height as the lady's eyes. This is a signal to her that the next step she is going to turn.

It is important to remember that this is only a signal. **DO NOT** begin turning the lady on this step. She is on the wrong foot at this point and trying to turn her on this step will only cause her confusion.

## Quick Step Turn



The key items to make note of here are:

- the man's baby step footwork,
- the man's arm arched over the lady's head,
- the man's right hand on the lady's back,
- the lady's foot work, and
- the man's hand hold messed up.

Man's Baby Step  
Footwork

An important point to remember is that opposite footwork (man starts left foot and lady starts right) only works when the partners are facing each other. In this turn the partners are momentarily facing the same direction. If the man takes a big left step here, he could kick the lady in the heel of her left foot.

Gentlemen – Take a baby step here.

## Man's Arm Arched

A second important point is for the man to clear the lady's hair. **DO NOT** touch her hair.

Gentlemen – Arch your left hand over the lady's head. Let the lady's fingers rotate inside your hand as she turns. Bring the hand package below the level of the lady's eyes as soon as possible to prevent her turning a second time.

Ladies – **DO NOT** pull down on the hand package.

Man's hand on  
Lady's Back

A third important point here is for the man to use his right hand on the lady's back to gently compel her to turn. DO NOT be overly forceful. Lady's do not like to be pushed around.

Lady's Footwork

A fourth important point here is the lady's footwork. There are at least two ways to do this turn – pivot turns and a pencil spin. The pivot turns are shown in the illustration. Note that the lady's right foot is pointing forward to her body on the first quick (called the buckle foot). On the second quick, the right foot is point backward in the line of dance but still forward to her body (still the buckle foot). She does not pass her feet.

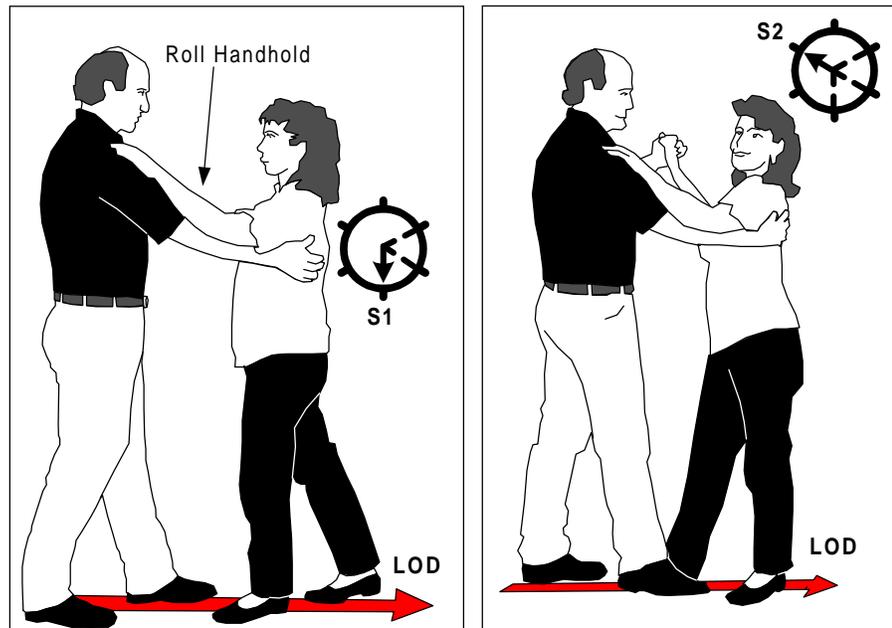
In the pencil spin (not shown here), the lady's left foot is backward on the second slow step lead. She transfers her weight to that foot and when the gentleman compels a turn, she spins on the left foot 360° during the course of the quick step count and puts her right foot backward on the following slow step.

Ladies – Be sure to tuck your left hand near your body to prevent striking the gentleman with your elbow as you turn.

Messed up Hand  
Hold

When the lady completes her turn, the gentleman may notice that his left hand hold is unusual. While normally the lady's hand clasps over the top of the man's hand, when this turn is complete, the man's hand will be over the top of the lady's hand. This will be fixed on the slow steps.

Slow Steps



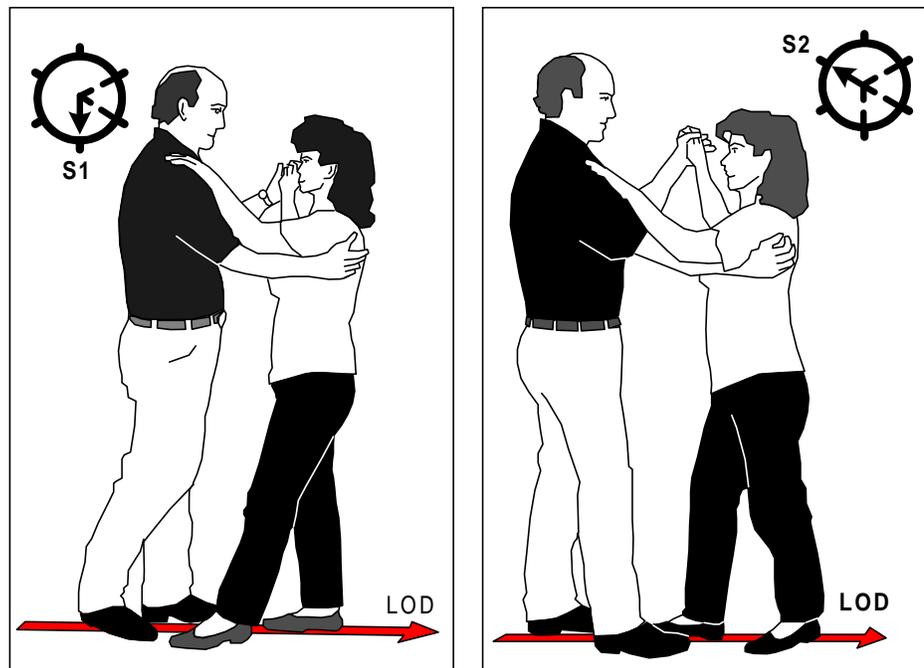
Now that the partners are facing the same direction, it is important to close up. The gentleman's first slow step is a little larger than normal to close the distance lost on the quick steps. He swoops his right hand under the lady's arm to stabilize her.

Remember that the man's left hand hold is messed up. As he steps forward to close, he can fix the hand hold by pressing the finger tips of his left hand down into her palm and rolling the handhold to the outside to return it to normal position. (Not Shown.)

Ladies – replace your left hand on the gentleman's shoulder.

By the second slow, the partners are back in standard closed dance position.

**Slow Underarm Turn**



**First Slow Step Forward**

You begin the slow underarm turn from closed position with the man facing forward and the lady facing back. You step two quick steps and one slow step straight forward in the line of dance (LOD).

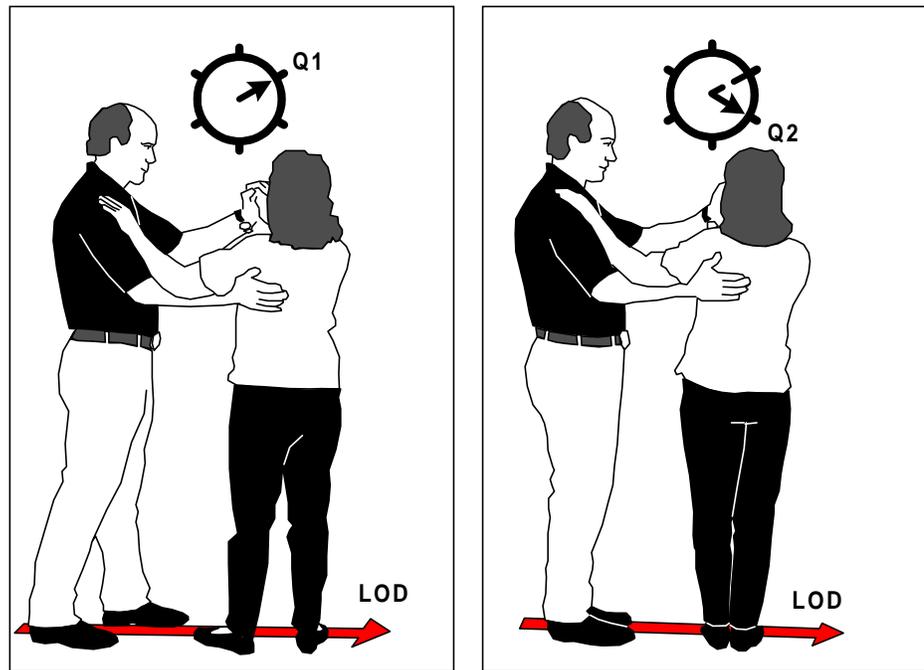
(The illustration begins with the slow steps.)

Second Slow Step  
Lead Only

As the man takes his second slow step forward, he must raise his left hand package to the same height as the lady's eyes. This is a signal to her that the next step she is going to turn.

It is important to remember that this is only a signal. DO NOT begin turning the lady on this step. She is on the wrong foot at this point and trying to turn her on this step will only cause her confusion.

## Quick Steps

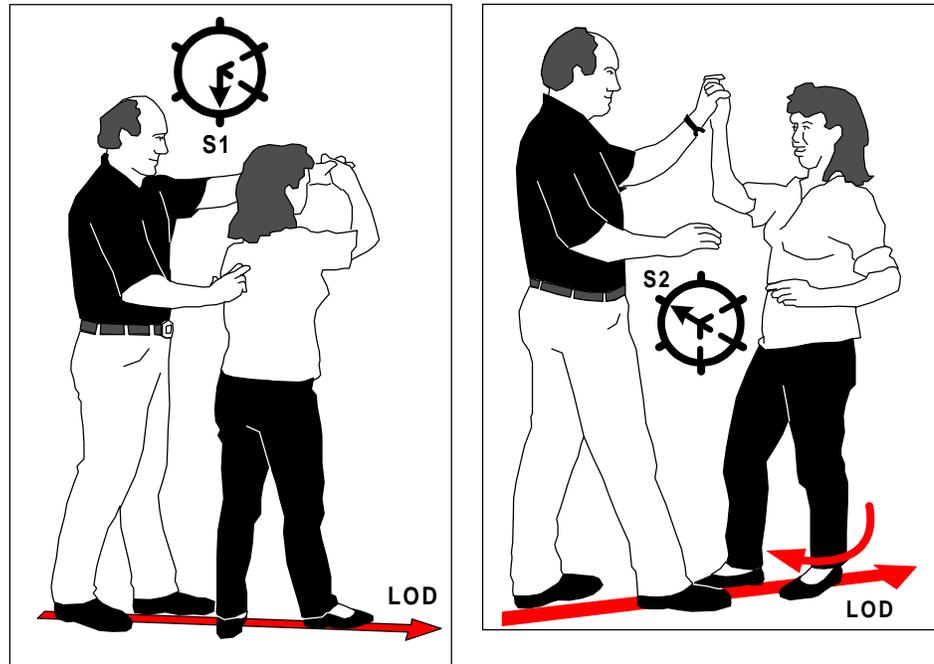


It is important that the gentleman maintain control of the lady at this point. Many ladies are used to quick turns and may find it surprising the gentleman is suppressing it.

Gentlemen – Use your right hand on her back like a rudder to keep the lady sideways to the line of dance during the quick steps. Keep the left hand package in front of her face to remind her she is going under the arm.

Ladies – Complete a simple side together. Prepare to move your left hand off the gentleman's shoulder to prevent it being trapped.

## Slow Step Turn



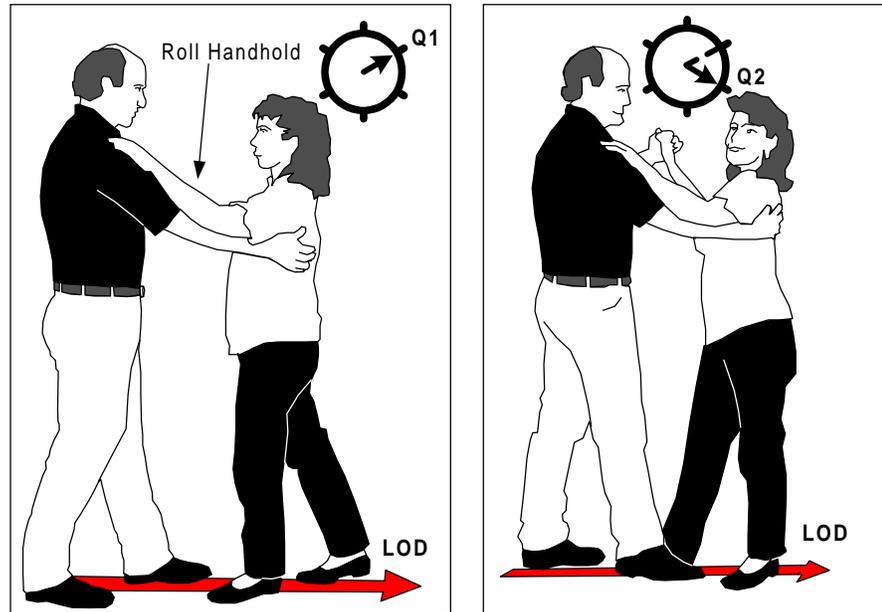
The slow turn is exactly like the quick turn except that it is completed on the slow steps. It allows the lady a little more time to execute.

The same concerns exist here like those of the quick turn. These are:

- the man's baby step footwork,
- the man's arm arched over the lady's head,
- the man's right hand on the lady's back,
- the lady's foot work, and
- the man's hand hold messed up.

Refer to the discussion of the quick turn to address these issues. However, remember the quick turn is on the quick steps and the slow turn is on the slow steps. The pivot turns for the lady are the same as for the quick turns but they are executed on the slow steps. (Note that there is no pencil spin with the slow underarm turn.)

## Quick Steps Close



Now that the partners are facing the same direction, it is important to close up. The gentleman's first quick step is a little larger than normal to close the distance lost on the slow steps. He swoops his right hand under the lady's arm to stabilize her.

Remember that the man's left hand hold is messed up. As he steps forward to close, he can fix the hand hold by pressing the finger tips of his left hand down into her palm and rolling the handhold to the outside to return it to normal position. (Not Shown.)

Ladies – replace your left hand on the gentleman's shoulder.

By the second quick, the partners are back in standard closed dance position.

**Conclusion**

This completes the segment on underarm turns.