

GLOSSARY of TERMS

Back: One foot is brought back from its present position, to rest on the floor, either in line with, or behind the other. See **Down**.

Back¹: The indicated foot swings from its present position, backwards and upwards. This occurs in the first step of the Slip Jig.

Brush: While the body weight is all on the passive foot, the active leg swings, either forwards, backwards, or across in front of the other, brushing the floor as it passes. A symbol on the bottom line of the staff indicates a brush backwards, on the top line of the staff, a brush forward, while one on the top line with a **Cut** following, indicates a diagonal brush in front of the other leg, finishing in the position of the normal **Cut**.

Click: With both heels on the floor, and toes raised up, the toes are separated and then quickly tapped together, making a sharp sound, and may or may not be brought apart again depending on the following sequence. Likewise, with both toes on the floor, and heels raised up, the heels are separated and then quickly tapped together, making a sharp sound, and may or may not be brought apart again depending on the following sequence.

Cross, Cross-over, Cross-back: One leg is brought across in front of the other, in a circular motion, and placed on the floor a little distance from the other. Or, as in the case of “An Gabhairín Buí”, one foot is brought diagonally across the cruciform sticks on the floor.

Cut: One foot is raised about nine inches off the floor, while being brought across in front of the other, and then back again. It is usually accompanied by a **Hop**, i.e., **Hop on one foot** while performing the **Cut** with the other.

Down: The body weight is transferred to that foot. Very often a **Down** is preceded by a **Tip**, viz. **Tip Down**. **Down** is similar in meaning to, and may often be replaced by **Back, Left, Right, Toe, Out, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7**.

Drum: A sequence of four rapid floor contacts with the feet, in the present case the sequence is either: Left Toe, Right Toe, Right Heel, Left Heel, or, Right Toe, Left Toe, Left Heel, Right Heel. The toes remain on the floor while the heels are brought into contact with it. A slur, and the number 3, are placed above the four symbols involved, meaning that the sequence of four movements has to be performed in the time that it normally takes for three.

Heel: The foot is moved forward and the heel placed on the floor, with the toe slanted upwards. The body weight may be placed momentarily on the heel while in this position.

Heel¹: The heel is tapped lightly on the floor, while the body weight remains firmly on the other foot. It is similar to the **Tip**, except that it is performed with the heel rather than the foot.

Heel²: While the body weight is carried on one or both feet, the heel is brought firmly down on the floor, making a sharp sound. This is one of the individual movements in the **Drum**.

Hop: On one foot: While the body weight is all carried on one foot, the dancer jumps a little off the floor, and lands again on the same foot, and in the same place.

Hop: On both feet: In this case one foot may be in front of, behind, or beside the other, the body weight being carried by both feet, and the little jump brings both feet back on the floor simultaneously. The position of the feet is indicated by the symbols. If one foot is in front of, or behind the other, that foot normally only rests lightly on the floor, and is described as a **Point**, while most of the body weight remains on the other foot.

Jump: A light spring off the floor, to the left or right, coming down again with both feet together. This occurs in the finishing step of the “Job of Journeywork”.

Kick: The side of the toe of the active foot kicks the side of the heel of the other foot. Since both feet are contributing to the movement, two symbols are shown close together on the staff lines, to indicate which foot is which.

Left: This means that the left foot is placed on the floor. See **Down**.

Out: As it occurs in the rhyme: The active foot is moved out in front of the other, and has the body weight transferred to it. See **Down**.

As it occurs above the staff lines: The active foot is swung out in front of the other, with the toe pointing forward, or it may be swung out to the side, away from the other foot.

Point: This describes the placing of one foot lightly on the floor, either in front of, or behind the other, while the body weight remains firmly on the other. The location is indicated on the staff lines. It is a movement which is often used at the end of a dance, on the very last beat, by way of ending the dance with a little embellishment, and may even be accompanied with a bow of the body.

Point¹: In this case one foot is placed diagonally out from the other, and twisted in such a way that it is the inside of the ball of the foot which rests on the floor. This occurs in the fourth and sixth steps of the “Easy Reel”.

Right: This means that the right foot is placed on the floor. See **Down**.

Rock: One foot is taken across the other, and both feet are locked tightly together at the ankles, with both resting on the floor taking the body weight, so that the right foot is on the left hand side and vice versa. Initially, the foot which has been taken across the other carries most of the body weight, but then by rocking from side to side in time with the music, the weight is transferred from one foot to the other. The foot which is taken across is indicated by a little arrow either above or below the symbol, depending on whether it is a “front rock” or a “back rock”. In the rhyme, one could quite easily say either “Right Left Right”, or “Left Right Left”, because, since the feet are crossed, while the body weight may be on the left hand side, it is supported by the right foot, and vice versa.

Seven¹: In “Jockey to the Fair”, First Step, the superscript signifies that the weight is not transferred to that foot, same as in **Heel¹**.

Shuffle: The active foot is moved forward, and the ball of the foot is made to hit the floor twice, without transferring any weight on to it, usually going slightly forward for the first contact, and back for the second, but sometimes it may be moving forward for both contacts with the floor. When saying the rhyme, in jig time the word shuffle is pronounced in the normal way, whereas in hornpipe time, ideally it should be pronounced like “shuff - le” or “shuff L”, to fit in all the better with the beat, which always occurs on the “-le”. The word **Batter** is frequently used in the jig rhythms instead of **Shuffle**, but the basic movement is essentially the same in both.

Sidestep: This is the same sidestep as used in *céilí* and set dancing, where the dancer dances to the right or left while still facing forward.

Skip: The active foot is brought straight forward, up, and back, in a very quick circular motion.

Spread: With both heels on the floor, the toes are moved apart.

Spring: With the body weight on one foot, the dancer jumps a little off the floor, and lands again on the other foot. This occurs in the first step of the “Slip Jig”.

Stamp: The full area of the foot hits the floor, making a somewhat louder sound than the step, to emphasise the beat, but does not carry body weight.

Stamp¹: This is the same as the **Stamp**, but in this case the foot does take the body weight.

Step: In the rhyme: Here it means literally stepping forward, and placing the full area of the foot on the floor, but without emphasising the beat, as would be done in the Stamp.

Step: In a title: It signifies each complete unit of successive movements of a dance. It normally consists of 16 bars, i.e. 8 bars danced “on the right foot” and then repeated “on the left foot”. This means in effect that each individual movement which is performed on one foot in the first 8 bars is performed on the other foot in the repeated step. Occasionally, a step may consist of 4 or 16 bars repeated, or an irregular number of bars as in the set dances.

Swivel: With the heel on the floor, the toe is rotated – from left to right for the right foot, and right to left for the left foot.

Tip: With the body weight firmly on one foot, the other foot taps the floor once, and is taken up again immediately.

Toe: The body weight is transferred to that foot. See **Down**.

Treble: The **Treble** is the same as the **Shuffle** but performed much faster. Taken in combination with the preceding **Hop**, or **Down**, the three individual movements have to be performed in the same time that it normally takes for two. A slur, and the number 2, are placed above the three symbols involved.

Turn: In the fourth step of “The Priest and His Boots”, this word is used to indicate where the dancer turns around, while dancing, ending up after two bars facing in the opposite direction to the starting position.

1 2, 1 2 3, 1 2 3 4, etc: Numbers are frequently used as an alternative to **Down**, **Left**, **Right**, etc., or they may be used as a way of describing the number of times a certain movement is repeated, such as in the **Sidestep**.

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