Multiple Formations Working Everywhichway

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Edited by Stephen Gildea

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Introduction

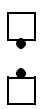
In this article we present the family of concepts "*Multiple Formations* Working *Direction.*" These concepts generalize the existing concept Triple Boxes Working Together and also expand and clarify the Grand and Triple Lines concepts.

We will consider different formations separately, starting with Quadruple Pairs Working *Direction* (which can also be called Grand Working *Direction*), moving to *Multiple* Boxes Working *Direction* (e.g., Triple Boxes Working Together), and finally discussing *Multiple* Lines/Columns Working *Direction. Direction* has a number of possibilities including Right/Left/Forward/Back/Together/Apart.

There is nothing radically new in any of these concepts. They just describe various ways to put small formations together to make a larger formation required to do a call. All are straightforward—though in some cases difficult—variations of concepts and terminology that have been used before. Our aim is to standardize the terminology so that these variations can be used unambiguously.

Quadruple Pairs Working

For our first example consider a "pair" of people facing each other:



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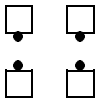
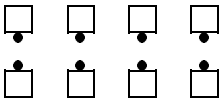
We will use the term "pair" to refer to any two people standing on adjacent spots, whether as a couple, a miniwave, in tandem, facing, or T-boned. You can't do Cross and Turn from a single pair—there aren't enough people. But if a second pair were standing nearby:



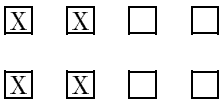
you would have a box of four and you could do the call.

Normally, dancers know almost without thinking about it how to divide up their actual setup into the groups they need in order to do the call. Suppose you are in lines of four facing when Cross and Turn is called.

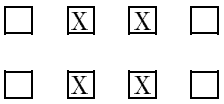


Cross and Turn

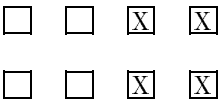
Since Cross and Turn is done by a box of four dancers, you must identify a box in which to work. There are actually *three* boxes in the setup pictured above: one on the left, one on the right, and one in the center.



the left box



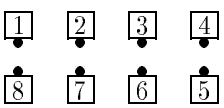
the center box



the right box

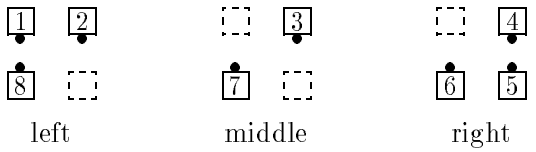
Dancers know as soon as they hear a call like Cross and Turn that they must work on their own split side, not in the center box.

The Quadruple Pairs Working concept modifies this. End dancers do the call normally (they have no alternative) but center dancers must decide whether to work split or in the center box. If you are in a center pair when Quadruple Pairs Working Right or Grand Working Right is called, the word *right* directs you to do the call in the box consisting of your own pair and the pair to your right, *not necessarily* on your own split side of the set. Each center dancer makes this decision independently; the other dancer in your pair may work in a different box from you.



1, 2, and 8 work in the box on the left.
4, 5, and 6 work in the box on the right.

Here when dancers 2 and 6 look to their right they find their split box and do the call normally. Dancers 3 and 7 do something different. The pair to their right is the other center pair, so these dancers work in the center box. Dancers 1, 4, 5, and 8 are end dancers, so they must work split. Notice that these three formations overlap each other.



Each dancer works in one of three boxes

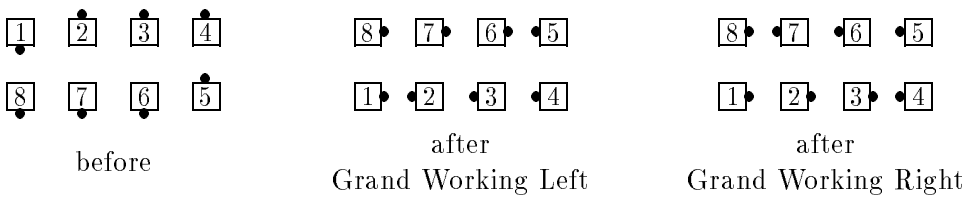
Dancers 3 and 7 are beaus in the center box, so they pull by (with each other!) Putting the three boxes above together we get the following:

Quadruple Pairs Working Right Cross and Turn or
Grand Working Right Cross and Turn

Grand Working

The action shown above has been used before, under the name Grand Cross and Turn. When a caller just says *Grand* you must determine for yourself whether to work in the box to your left or the one to your right. Since this is not always obvious, we propose the use of the terms *Grand Working Left* and *Grand Working Right* or, equivalently, *Quadruple Pairs Working Left/Right* to make this explicit.

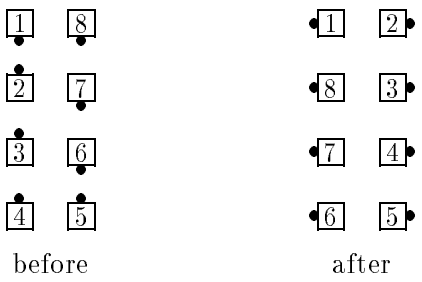
Left and *right* direct different dancers to work in the center, and even when both are possible, the ending positions may differ:



Grand Working Left or Right Zing

Quadruple Pairs Working from columns

In a column-type setup each pair is a couple or miniwave. Here the center dancers must decide whether to work with the pair in front of them or behind them. The caller may say Grand Working Forward/Back or, equivalently, Quadruple Pairs Working Forward/Back to indicate in which box the center dancers should work. On Grand Working Forward each center dancer works with the pair in front, while on Grand Working Back each center works with the pair behind them.



Grand Working Forward Wheel Thru

It is important to remember that the direction given tells you what other pair you should work with, *not* what direction you should move. Look back at the diagrams for Grand Working Left or Right Zing. On a Grand Working Left Zing, the center dancers move to their right; on a Grand Working Right Zing, the center dancers move to their left. This happens because the direction given tells you in what direction the center of your box will lie, and in the call Zing, the leads always move *away* from the center of their box.

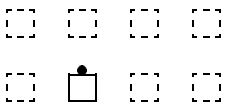
Grand Working from a 1×8 formation

Quadruple Pairs Working Right/Left or Grand Working Right/Left can also be called from a generalized line of eight. Quadruple Pairs Working Forward/Back or Grand Working Forward/ Back can be called from any column of eight.

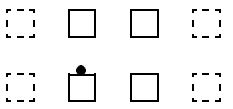
Quadruple Pairs Working Forward Single File Dixie Style to a Wave

Summary of Quadruple Pairs Working or Grand Working

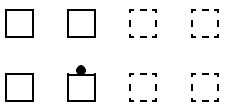
The concept Quadruple Pairs Working Left/Right/Forward/Back or, equivalently, Grand Working Left/Right/Forward/Back may be used when the dancers are in a 2×4 formation. The ends always work with the near centers to make a box of four and do the call on their own split side. The centers work either with the other centers (in the center box of four) or with the near ends (in their split box) depending on the direction given. From generalized lines the caller may say Grand Working Left or Grand Working Right; from generalized columns, Grand Working Forward or Grand Working Back.



this dancer



works in this box on
Grand Working Right



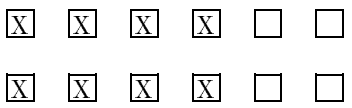
and in this box on
Grand Working Left

In each case you should remember that dancers who appear to be in the setup you are working in may not actually be working with you. They may be working in a different setup. Each dancer makes this decision independently. Also remember that the ends *always* do the call normally, on their own split side. This concept *never* affects the action of the ends.

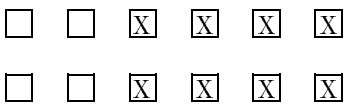
Multiple Boxes Working

Next we will look at the concept Triple/Quadruple Boxes Working Left/Right/Forward/Back/ Together/Apart. This concept is always applied to an eight-person call. First you identify your Triple/Quadruple Box. Next you select *another* box using the direction given. The two boxes form a 2×4 setup in which you do an eight-person call.

For the concept Triple Boxes Working there are two 2×4 formations from which to choose, each containing the center box and one of the adjacent end boxes.



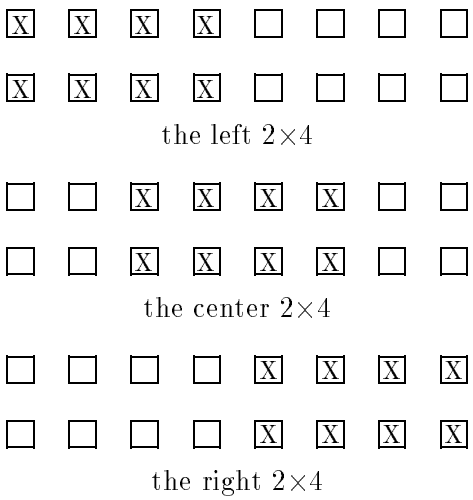
the left 2×4



the right 2×4

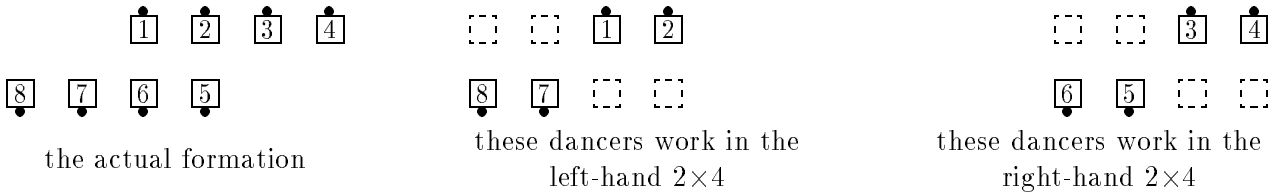
Triple Boxes Working

For the concept Quadruple Boxes Working there are three 2×4 formations from which to choose, each containing two adjacent quadruple boxes.



Quadruple Boxes Working

If you are in an outer box you always work with the adjacent center box (for Triple Boxes, there is only one center box). If you are in a center box you work with one of the two adjacent boxes. For Triple Boxes this will be one end box or the other, while for Quadruple Boxes it will be either the adjacent end box or the other center box. As before, each dancer decides independently which other box to work with—the box to the left or right, or in front or in back, as the caller directs. Since there are either 12 or 16 spots, some of the spots will be occupied by phantoms.



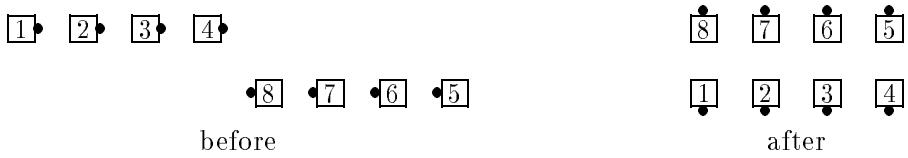
Triple Boxes Working Left

In this case, the end dancers work in the 2×4 which includes their own triple box and the center triple box, while the dancers in the center triple box work in the 2×4 composed of their own triple box and the triple box to their left. Note that while dancers 1 and 2 appear to be in the same box as 5 and 6, they are not working with each other. Each pair is working in a different, overlapping 2×4.

Triple Boxes Working Left Link Up

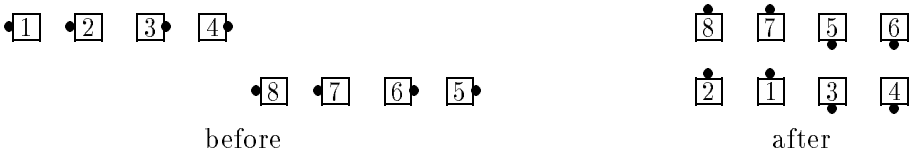
Each dancer looks left to find another triple box and then (because Link Up has the leaders turn away from the center) turns to the right to dance the call. As before, the direction left/right/ forward/back tells you which way to look to find the other spots you are working with, not which way to move.

In the next example you work in your own quadruple box and the quadruple box in front of you (every dancer does the part of either #3 or #4 in a column):



Quadruple Boxes Working Forward Checkmate

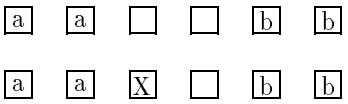
In the following example those in an end quadruple box work in that box and the box behind them, despite the direction *Forward* (if you are in an end box you *always* work with the adjacent center box, regardless of the direction given):



Quadruple Boxes Working Forward Checkmate

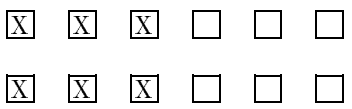
Working Together/Apart

The direction given with the Multiple Boxes Working concept indicates which of the two adjacent boxes you should work with if you are in a center box. Since the formations being combined are 2×2 boxes, there is another way for the caller to tell the dancers which other box to work with: Multiple Boxes Working Together/Apart. You cannot be in the very center of a box, so one of the adjacent boxes must be closer than the other. The phrase *Working Together* directs you to work with the adjacent box which is nearer to you *as an individual,* while *Working Apart* selects the farther one. Each dancer makes this decision independently. As before, if you are in an outer triple or quadruple box you ignore the direction and work with the adjacent center box.

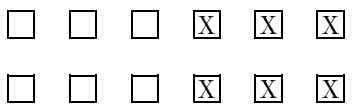


Dancer X is closer to triple box *a*
and farther from triple box *b*.

Here facing direction is not taken into consideration; only your spot on the floor matters. Note that the four people in a center box will never all work in the same formation, since two of them are closer to one box and two are closer to the other.

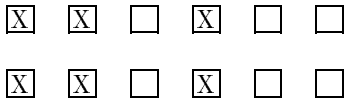


dancers on these spots work
in the left 2×4

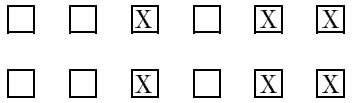


dancers on these spots work
in the right 2×4

Triple Boxes Working Together



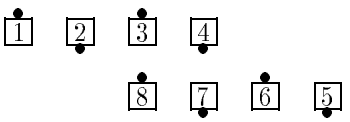
dancers on these spots work
in the left 2×4



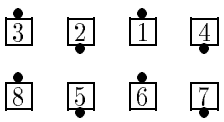
dancers on these spots work
in the right 2×4

Triple Boxes Working Apart

Again you should remember that a dancer who is standing on one of the spots of the 2×4 you are working in may not actually be working with you. Each dancer decides independently which formation to work in. It is especially dangerous to grab hold of other dancers and make them work with you when you are dancing this concept; you may deceive them into working in the wrong setup.



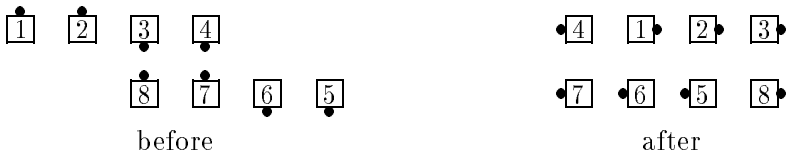
before



after

Triple Boxes Working Together Swing and Mix

Dancers 1, 2, 3 and 8 work in the left-hand 2×4 while dancers 4, 5, 6, and 7 work in the right-hand 2×4. Notice that for this call you can all work together for the Swing, but not for the rest of the call.



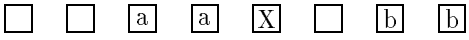
Triple Boxes Working Apart Tag the Line

Dancers 1, 2, 4 and 7 work in the left-hand 2×4 while dancers 3, 5, 6, and 8 work in the right-hand 2×4.

Quadruple Boxes Working Together Chuck-a-Luck

Quadruple Boxes Working Apart Chuck-a-Luck

One can also use the Together/Apart notation with Quadruple Pairs Working from any 1×8 formation.



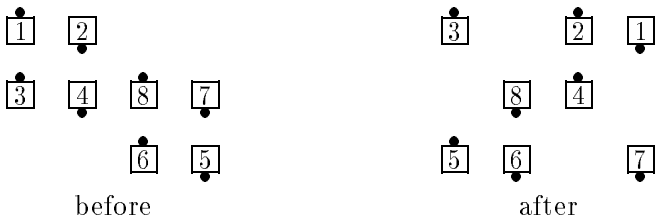
Dancer X is closer to pair *a* and farther from pair *b*.

Grand Working Together Cross Roll

Grand Working Apart Swing Thru
(from this formation, the same as Grand Swing Thru)

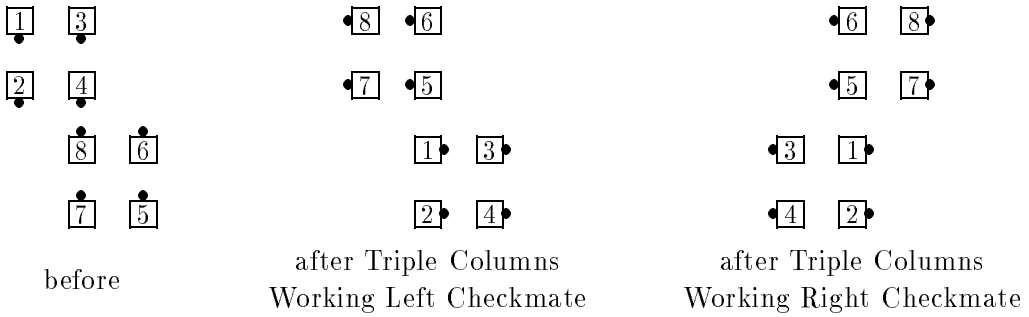
Multiple Lines and Columns Working

The Multiple Boxes Working concept described above applies to 2×6 and 2×8 formations. If you are in a 3×4 or 4×4 matrix the caller can use the concept *Multiple* Lines/Columns Working *Direction.* The outer line or column works with the adjacent center line or column to form a 2×4 formation while the dancers in the center line(s) or column(s) use the given direction to decide which adjacent line or column to work with. If the caller says Triple/Quadruple Lines Working Forward and you are in a center line, you work in the 2×4 composed of your line and the line in front of you; on Triple/Quadruple Lines Working Back you would work in the 2×4 composed of your line and the line behind you.



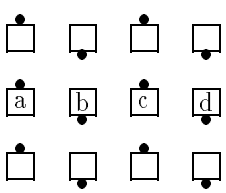
Triple Lines Working Forward Acey Deucey

You could also do Triple Lines Working Back Acey Deucey from the formation pictured above, but the traffic pattern might not be as smooth. As with any concept, effective choreography requires good judgment!



Triple Columns Working Left or Right Checkmate

The direction given with these concepts is usually forward, back, left, right, together or apart, but any term that tells the center formations which other formation to work with can be used as well. For example, one might use Triple Lines Working Clockwise.



Each dancer in the center line works with the outside line that is clockwise *with respect to the center*

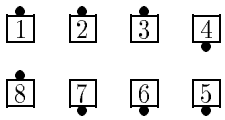
of the set from that dancer. In this case, dancers a and d work forward, while dancers b and c work back.

The concept we call *Triple Lines Working Forward* was once called just *Triple Lines.* The new concept Triple Lines Working Back allows the three lines to work with each other in a different way.

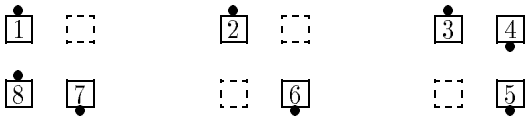
Shape changers

Any of these concepts can be used with shape-changing calls. When this happens, the effect is similar to triple box and triple line shape-changers. The formations in which people are working overlap each other by 50% after the call is completed, just as they did before the call.

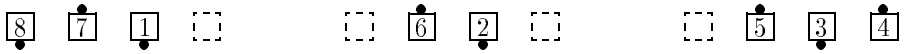
Consider Grand Working Right Turn to a Line from this setup:



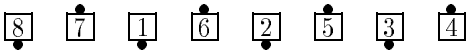
There are three virtual setups in which the call is being done:



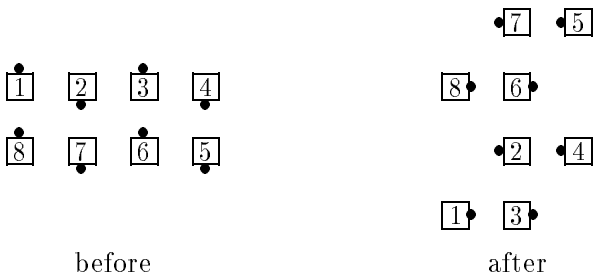
Each setup overlaps the adjacent setups by 50%. After doing the call, we have



When the setups are reassembled we have



Some cases of the 50% offset rule can be very difficult to execute. Here are two harder examples.



Triple Boxes Working Together (or Working Right) Quarter the Deucey

Triple Boxes Working Together Flip the Top

Summary

The family of concepts presented in this paper standardizes and expands some concepts already being used to identify formations. For each variation of *Multiple Formations* Working *Direction*, the concept tells you what *formation* you are in and, for the centers, in what *direction* to look to find another similar formation to work with to do the call.