Modern Dance

Eight Fundamental Locomotor Steps

Certain locomotor steps are so basic to humankind’s behavior that they appear to be part of the experience of every individual. Five of these steps are known as “Simple” or “Even” locomotor steps, because they require only one action for their completion. Since these five steps are the ingredients of all other steps, it is important to understand their structure:

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| Even Locomotor Steps |
| Walk | A transfer of weight from one foot to the other with one foot always partially on the floor |
| Run | A transfer of weight from one foot to the other with a momentary loss of contact with the ground |
| Leap | A transfer of weight from one foot to the other, similar to a run, but involving greater height or distance and requiring more energy for its performance |
| Hop | A transfer of weight from one foot to the same foot |
| Jump | A transfer of weight from both feet to both feet, or from one foot to both feet |

Three combinations of these five simple steps are likewise so much a part of humankind’s behavior that they, too, are considered fundamental. They are reffered to as combination locomotor steps, distinguished from the five simple steps in that each consists of TWO actions.

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| Combination Locomotor Steps |
| Skip | A step and a hop, with the step requiring twice as much time as the hop |
| Slide | A shift of weight while the body is on the floor, involving hands pushing off the floor. |
| Gallop (Chasse) | A step and another step closing to the first step (step-close) |

*Questions for Consideration:*

1. *What is the difference between a simple and combination locomotor step?*
2. *The article suggests these steps as “fundamental to natural human movement”. Of the eight locomotor steps, which feel natural to you? Which are more difficult to master?*