

# TWISTER

**LEVEL: 3**   **SUGGESTED TRACKS: 3 or 7** (Jigs or Reels)

**SUMMARY:** Dancers in turn change places with the dancer opposite them on the other side of the pole, creating two spiral plaits. Fun to dance and visually stunning.



This dance is the result of a student at a teacher training session saying “what if..?” We tried and this dance happened! There are many more dances out there to be discovered, often as simple as this. The unwind came from a group of Year 9 performing arts students at Bowland Academy.

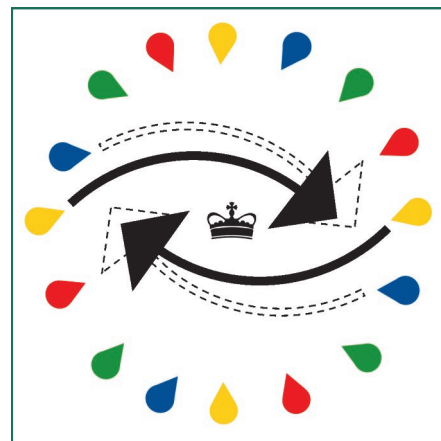
## DANCE INSTRUCTIONS

### Before you Begin:

- Each dancer needs to identify the person opposite them in circle, their ‘partner’ for this dance. If you have 24 dancers, this should be someone with the same colour ribbon.
- Choose one pair to start the dance.



*Fig 1: A blue pair swap places, passing to the left of the pole*



### Making the Pattern:

1. The first couple change places with each other, passing to the left of the pole i.e. moving clockwise. It can help to think of the pole as being a mini-roundabout or traffic bollard: dancers must always pass to the left of the pole, no matter where they start from (*Fig. 1*);
2. This movement is repeated by the next couple to their left;
3. Keep repeating this sequence as many times as you want. If dancers are alert, there is no need to wait for the previous couple to return to place before the next one begins. In fact, if dancers become really proficient, it is possible to have up to three couples moving at once. The trick here is to catch the eye of your partner before starting to move.

Fig 2: As the group circles, the plait begins to split into 2 parts from the pole



## The Unwind:

It is possible to unwind Twister by simply dancing the action in reverse, keeping to the right of the pole i.e. anti-clockwise and concentrating hard. However, there is a different and, to our minds, more elegant option.

1. All dancers turn to the right and travel anti-clockwise around the pole in single file. Continue to unwind in this way until, eventually, there are two plaits radiating outwards on opposite sides of the pole (Fig. 2);
2. At this point, the dancers separate into two groups, **working independently to unwind each plait**. Each group forms their own oval shape, dancing clockwise **without going around the pole** (Fig. 3). Make sure the ribbons are held high at this point to avoid dancing on the base of the pole. It can help to have a helper standing near the base of the pole to help establish the pathway of each group (Fig. 4).

Fig 3: Each group works separately, dancing in an oval to unwind their plait

## Dance at a Glance

1. First pair change places (keeping to the left of the pole);
2. Second pair (to their left), repeat, and so on;
3. To unwind, all parade anti-clockwise until the plaits are free from the pole;
4. Separate into two separate groups, with both plaits dancing anti-clockwise until fully unwound.



Fig 4: A traffic warden can direct dancers and prevent collisions with the pole!

## Performance Tips:

- Once dancers understand the pattern, they can begin to work on achieving even spacing within each oval. How fast does each oval travel? Can they adjust their speeds to finish the unwind at the same time?



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