

Moving Straight Lines and Crosses

1. For Adults

Wherever you move in eurythmy, you will sense space with your whole body. You will feel your whole body as it presses into space. When you move forward, your head, your chest, your belly, your legs and your feet will all press into space. When you move backwards, you will reverse that feeling. You will remember from the peace exercise how the space behind you is full of mystery and un-knowing. As you walk backwards, you will open your back, and press into space with the back of your head, the length of your back, that back of your legs.

Similarly, when you walk to the sides, you will lead with the whole of your side: the side of your cheeks, your arm, your legs.

In this way, all of space will come alive for you.

First step: walking forwards and backwards

Begin today's practice by standing straight and tall, uniting heaven and earth. As you learned when you practiced threefold walking, feel the light above your head, gold in your heart, and strength in your legs.

Use the graceful heart-centered technique of threefold walking, and always touch with the toes of the foot first. (However, you don't need to walk as slowly as you did in the beginning.)

Now walk four steps forward. Feel yourself pressing into space as you go.

Change your intention before you go backward, so you can press into the back space. Now walk four steps backwards.

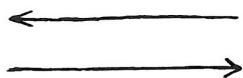
Repeat this again and again, so you can really become conscious as you move through space.



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Second step: walking sideways

Next, walk four to eight steps to the right, and then the same number of steps back to where you started. As you walk to the sides notice that you will need to figure out how to cross your legs. I prefer to not to the "grapevine" step, in which dancers cross first the right over left, then left over right. I prefer instead to always place the leg that crosses in front of the other leg. This means



that when p I walk sideways I imagine that I have two parallel tracks to walk on, one for my right and one for my left foot. When I walk to the right, the *right* foot takes an "open step." I put it on the track that is slightly behind me. The left foot makes a "cross step," crossing over the right. I put it on the track that is slightly in front of me. In this way, a can move very easily to the right or to the left without crossing my feet clumsily. The only difficulty arises when I change directions, because the last step at the end of one direction and the first step in the new direction have to cross in an unusual way. Try to discover the way to do this by practicing sideways walking for several minutes.

Third step: walking in four directions

Now imagine that you are in the center of a cross. You will use all four sides of your body to walk the four directions of the cross.

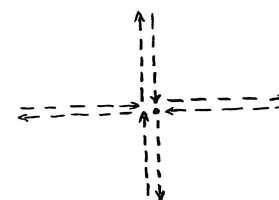
Walk four steps forward, and four back.

Walk four to the right, and four back to center.

Walk four backwards, and four forwards,

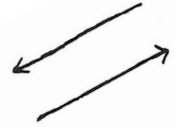
Walk four to the left and four to the right.

Please notice that as you walk your form in space, you don't want to imagine it drawn on the floor. You want to imagine it hovering in space at the level of your heart. With that in mind, try the cross once again.



Fourth step: walking diagonal lines

When you walk a simple straight line, you always feel the leading side of your body pressing into space. Now, with diagonal lines, you can learn to lead with different points of your body. It is important to learn to lead from the height of your collarbone, not imagining that a form is drawn on the floor. Thus, when you walk diagonally forwards, imagine that there is a small “eye” on a point midway between your sternum and your shoulder joint, looking towards that direction. Stay facing absolutely forwards, but let that imagined “eye” see the point it is going towards and walk easily in that direction. When you walk diagonally backwards, do just the opposite, and imagine a small “eye” on a point midway between your spine and your shoulder joint in back and “look” in that direction as you walk in that direction, still facing forwards, of course.



Practice moving diagonally in all directions, developing agility and fluidity in your movements.

As you practice all these forms, practice also varying your tempo and the size of your forms. Your ability to move *etherically* is magnified and perfected every time you practice, bringing you peace and harmony. **Add the practice of walking straight lines in all directions to your daily practice.**

2. For Children

Please re-read these words from the essay: Moving in Etheric Space—children.

The approach for moving forms with children is radically different from working with adults.

We can consider that children are born out of “another dimension,” a spiritual space which probably does not include up/down, right/left, front/back. Indeed, the first tasks the young child confronts involve coming to terms with three-dimensional space and how to move in it.

If we watch children move, we can clearly see how they are relating to space differently than us. They normally run with their hands in the air, barely touching the ground. They only gradually “grow down” into their bodies as they overcome their inborn primitive reflexes and learn to coordinate their limbs. We can watch them learn to balance as they begin to jump rope, and learn to “cross the midline” in coordinating right and left sides, learning to skip, hop and stand on one leg. These are all developmental milestones that teachers and doctors look for, and are indicators for when a child is ready to learn to read.

In the younger grades, children are not yet ready developmentally to stand alone in space and move independently. Up until the middle of third grade, we allow the children to stand in a community circle when we teach them all of their eurythmy forms. We may dissolve the forms for some exercises, but then only have them face and walk forwards, never asking them to consciously walk forwards or backwards. This is our approach when we do Mirroring Exercises with young children, practicing straight lines and curves in movement.

In the middle of third grade, however, the children go through their “nine year change.” This is always a huge developmental step for the child: they act as if they have shed a skin and are no longer as held in the dream-stage of the young. We meet this stage in the eurythmy curriculum by giving them the new challenge of being able to walk consciously in the four different directions of space (forwards, backwards, right and left) and then eventually also in a star, always facing forward. Gradually, as the children get older, we can ask even more of them by engaging them in *feeling the dynamic* of the different forms. Forwards and backwards should *feel* different, although a child probably won’t feel this until seventh grade at the earliest. Likewise, inwinding and outwinding spirals will feel different, but the young child doesn’t have the

awakened soul artistry to feel that yet. Thus, in the eurythmy curriculum, we carefully moderate the kinds of movement lessons we give the children to match the developmental stage they are passing through.

As teaching parent, your job is to *internalize* the lessons yourself *first*, not over days but over weeks, before you introduce them to your children, using stories or poems or (live) music to guide their process. For more information, contact me at info@eurythmyonline.com.

Reflect upon your experiences walking in different directions. After having learned the basic elements of threefold walking and working with rods, you may be able to feel how you can sense all the surfaces of your body at once.

How was this for your child? What did you observe?

Can you work with threefold walking, feeling your feet talk to the earth, and at the same time feel the different surfaces of your body?

How do the different directions feel---right, left, sideways, diagonally?

How was it to always face forwards? Could you get beyond feeling confined and feel yourself waking in etheric space, awake to the sphere around you?

Can you feel yourself pressing into space?