

Nanba Tipsheet for Video on Nanba Walking

SEVEN SECRETS OF NANBA WALKING

The demonstration video shows how to practice Nanba Walking in its most basic form, walking in place, walking short distances, and turning to change direction. The models are dressed in Japanese traditional clothing, because this highlights the beauty of the movements, and Nanba is the only way you can move gracefully in Japanese Kimono or traditional wear.

The vertical movements of the arm are exaggerated for the purpose of practice, and to help you get the proper rhythm. In daily life walking the arm movements become more subtle, but maintain the vertical rhythm, with the arms close to the body, and moving together with the leg on the same side, not swung across from the opposite leg as in a military march.

Nanba walking in daily life creates a calm and natural presence that puts people at ease, and helps you accomplish more with less effort.

1) Turn without twisting

Picture your shoulders aligned over your pelvic base forming a box. When you turn your body to change direction, turn as a unit maintaining this alignment. The feeling is easy, like turning a key in a lock.

2) Step with hands and feet together

When you step with the right foot, the right palm moves with it facing the floor. As the right foot comes off the ground, the palm turns up and moves up with the leg. Do the same on the left as you alternate feet.

3) Connect your upper and lower body

Although the upper and lower body are already connected, many people move as if they are not. Movements that are connected are more graceful and more powerful. Keep the parts connected to the whole.

4) Step softly and swiftly

Be soft and supple, like a cat. Movement which is calm can also be swift. Walk without making noise, and keep your feet relaxed and ready to move. This can protect you from danger, and give you more energy.

5) Keep your feet in rhythm

Rhythm is a great source of energy. Our bodies live in rhythm, from our breathing to our heartbeat, and in the way we walk. Rhythms can be small and subtle, or large and dynamic, but always there in your feet.

6) Take small steps with good alignment

A Japanese proverb says that a Master never takes large strides. Running with small steps and good alignment is the most graceful way to move over short distances when you need to move quickly.

7) Practice walking to music

Jazz and classical music contain many rhythmic energies that can improve your walking in Nanba style. Enjoy feeling the music move in your body, and walk gracefully like a dancer or martial artist.



Art of Physical Finesse

What if you could achieve a quantum leap in physical performance, simply by correctly integrating your body movements?

Imagine being able to release tension and move with physical finesse? Stand without fatigue. Make a better impression. This is the promise of Nanba Movement.

Originating in traditional Japanese culture, it is found in the distinctive movements of the Samurai and martial arts, Japanese folk dancing which is based on the movements of farmers working the land, the graceful and rhythmic movements of traditional craftsmen and artists, and even in the polite and efficient movements of merchants selling their wares.

Nanba movement has somewhat faded from daily life in modern Japan, bent on efforts to imitate everything Western. However, Nanba is undergoing a revival in Japan as people discover its inherent grace and power, with applications ranging from improved performance to better health.

William Reed is a Nanba Instructor working with the Nanba Research Center (Shinshin Gijutsu Kenkyujo) at the Toho Gakuen College of Music in Tokyo, Japan, where he is collaborating on DVD products, books, and training to apply Nanba movement in business, sports, music, and daily life.

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