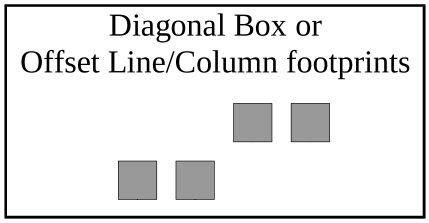
Keith's Klass

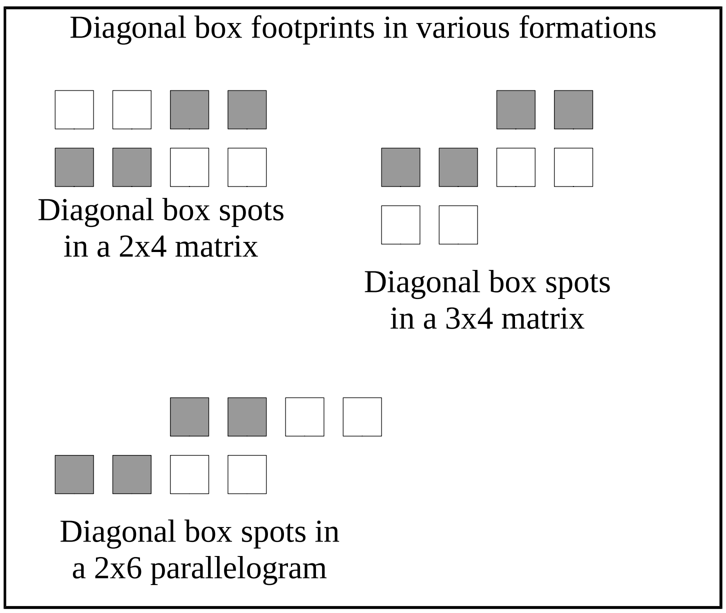
by Keith Rubow

This paper will discuss the offset triple boxes/lines/columns concepts. I will discuss how to identify the offset direction, how to find the footprints for each triple box/line/column, how to execute calls with and without taking the offset out, and what happens with shape changing calls.

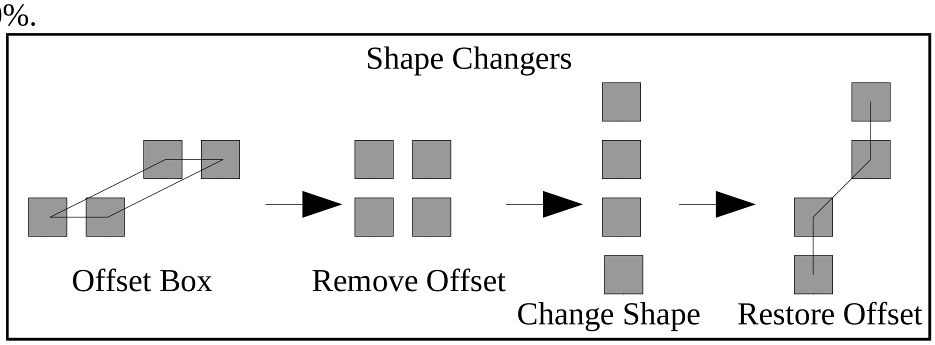
All offset triple box/line/column concepts are based of diagonal box or offset line/column footprints. These spots look like the following:



These footprints can exist in many different formations. For example, in a 2x4 matrix we have diagonal boxes In a 3x4 matrix we have offset lines/columns. In a 2x6 50% offset parallelogram the split boxes are in diagonal box footprints. These are illustrated below.



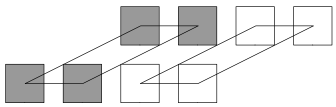
It is important to note that the footprints are identical for either a diagonal box or an offset line/column. However, the shear plane is different depending on whether you think of the formation as a diagonal (or offset) box, or an offset line/column. Of course, when shape changing calls are done (changing a box into a line/column, or changing a line/column into a box), the shear plane and offset direction must be preserved. The offset is always 100%.



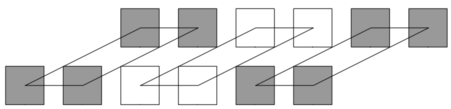
Of course shape changers from a line/column to a box are just the reverse of the above. For relatively simple calls it is NOT necessary to actually remove the offset and restore it again after the call. When a shape changer is done in diagonal box or offset line/column footprints, all that happens is that each pair of dancers changes their long axis (as if they did a hinge, for example), while the two pairs of dancers stay 100% offset in the same offset direction they started in.

Now let's take a closer look at offset triple boxes. There is a close relationship between offset triple boxes and parallelogram split boxes. I illustrate this relationship below.

Parallelogram vs. Offset Triple Boxes



Split boxes in a parallelogram exist in a 2x6 matrix (assuming a 50% offset parallelogram) (This could be called offset double boxes)

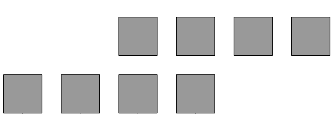


Offset triple boxes exist is a 2x8 matrix. (Shaded dancers work together on outside, white dancers work together on inside)

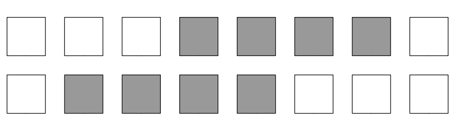
While offset triple boxes are closely related to split boxes in a parallelogram, there are a number of important differences. The most obvious difference is that there are three offset boxes in offset triple boxes, instead of only two boxes in a parallelogram. The second difference is that in a parallelogram all eight spots are occupied by real dancers. But since there are 12 spots in offset triple boxes, four of those spots must be occupied by phantoms. This is a very important difference, and depending on where the phantoms are, it can make the offset triple box spots much harder to find. The third difference is that in a parallelogram, eight dancer calls can be used freely. In the Offset Triple Box concept, only four dancer calls starting in a box can be used, unless the Offset Triple Boxes Working <direction> concept is used. This is the same as in the Triple Box concept.

Identifying the offset triple box spots is the most difficult part of the offset triple boxes concept. If the real dancers are already in a 2x8 matrix, the offset triple box spots are relatively easy to find. But since there will be some phantoms involved, the real dancers might be in a 2x6 matrix (real dancers cannot be in a 2x4 matrix because there would be no offset). If real dancers are in a 2x6 matrix, it is necessary to add additional phantom spots to the outside to create a 2x8 matrix (this is analogous to adding phantoms to the outside of a 2x4 matrix to create triple boxes). Then look at the outside quadruple boxes. One side of that outside quadruple box will be empty (there will be two phantoms in that 1x2), while the other side of the box will have at least one real dancer. The side of the box with at least one real dancer is part of the outside offset box, and determines the offset direction. Here are some examples of identifying the offset triple box spots with real dancers in different places in the matrix (real dancers are shaded squares, phantoms are white square).

Finding offset triple boxes

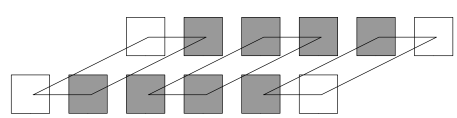


Real dancers in 2x6 matrix

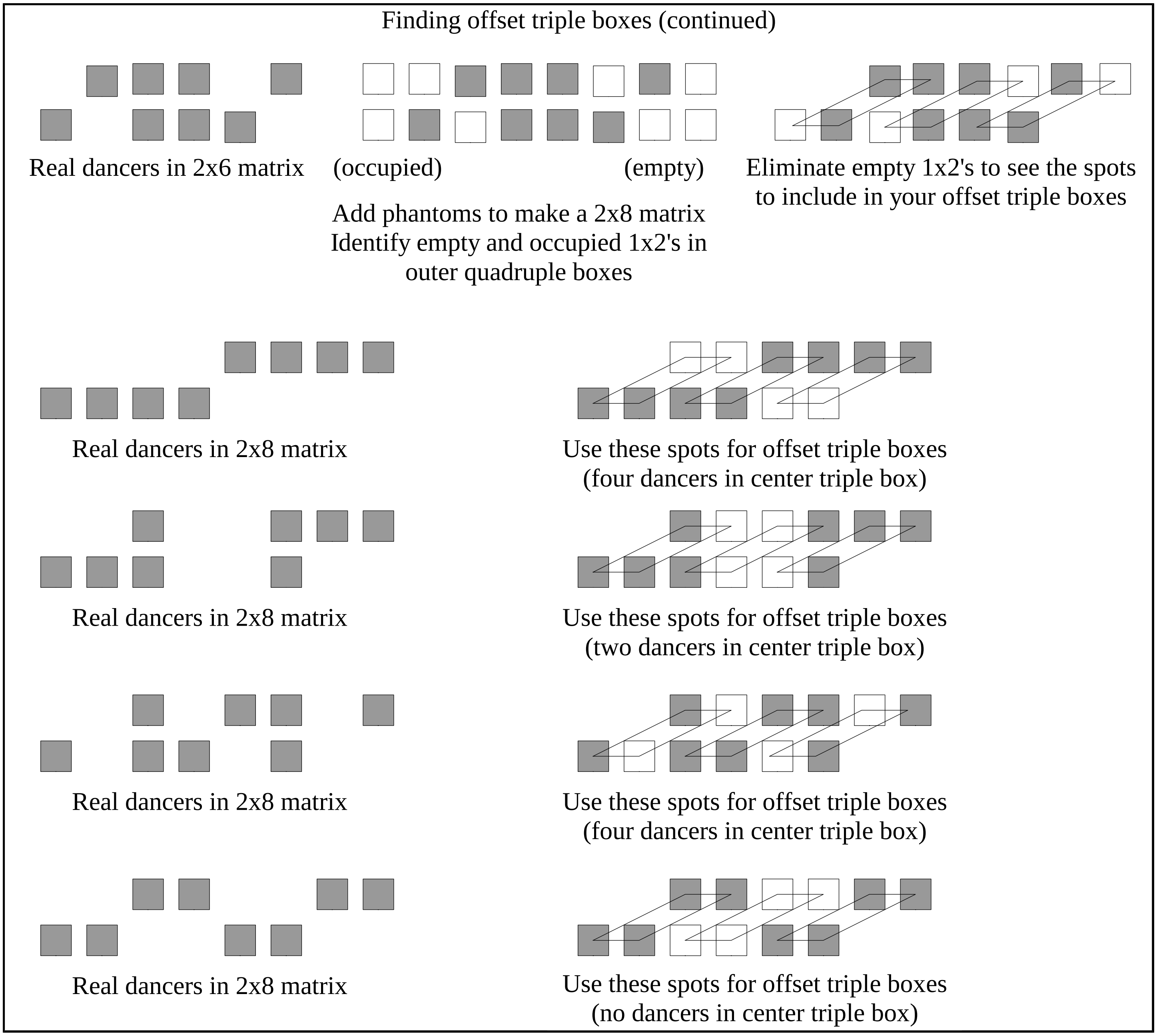


(occupied) (empty)

Add phantoms to make a 2x8 matrix
Identify empty and occupied 1x2's in outer quadruple boxes



Eliminate empty 1x2's to see the spots to include in your offset triple boxes



Once the offset triple box spots are identified, always pair up the outermost 2 spots on each end of the formation (the spots that are “hung over” in the offset direction) with the corresponding diagonal box spots. The remaining spots are the center diagonal box.

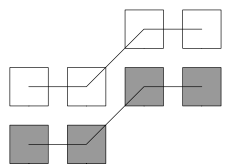
Now comes the question of whether or not to take the offset out. I would recommend not taking the offset out, and instead just work to the diagonal box footprints if at all possible. Think about how we dance diagonal box calls in a 2x4 matrix. It is not possible to take the offset out when working in diagonal boxes in a 2x4 matrix. We should strive to dance triple offset box calls the same way we dance diagonal box calls. Sometimes the diagonal offset tends to come out naturally with the flow of the call (such as Reflected Vertical Tag Back). In such a case, let the offset come out with the flow of the call, but try to flow back to the diagonal box spots (or the diagonal line/column spots for shape changers) as the call finishes. This is smoother than the jerky effect of taking the offset out, doing the triple box call, and putting the offset back.

The exception to the rule about not taking the offset out is the case of Triple Offset Boxes Working <direction>. Depending on the call, this can be really hard to do without taking out the offset. Each “offset triple boxes working” formation is effectively a parallelogram, and the two parallelograms are overlapped 50% is the center of the set. Also, taking the offset out to do the call might be a good idea for teaching the triple offset boxes concept, until the dancers get better at finding (and working in) the diagonal box spots.

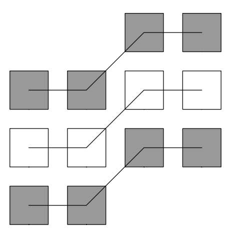
If it is necessary to take the offset out, the offset can be removed by moving one matrix spot in the direction opposite to the offset direction. This will reduce the 2x8 matrix to a 2x6 matrix, and we can now work in normal triple boxes. Restore the offset by moving one matrix spot in the offset direction if the call was not a shape changer), or 1/2 matrix spot if the call was a shape changer (i.e. changed from triple boxes to triple lines/columns).

Now let's take a closer look at offset triple lines/columns. There is a close relationship between offset triple lines/columns and offset lines/columns. I illustrate this relationship below.

Offset lines/columns vs. Offset Triple Lines/Columns



Offset lines/columns exist in a 3x4 matrix (assuming 50% offset). This could be called offset double lines/columns.

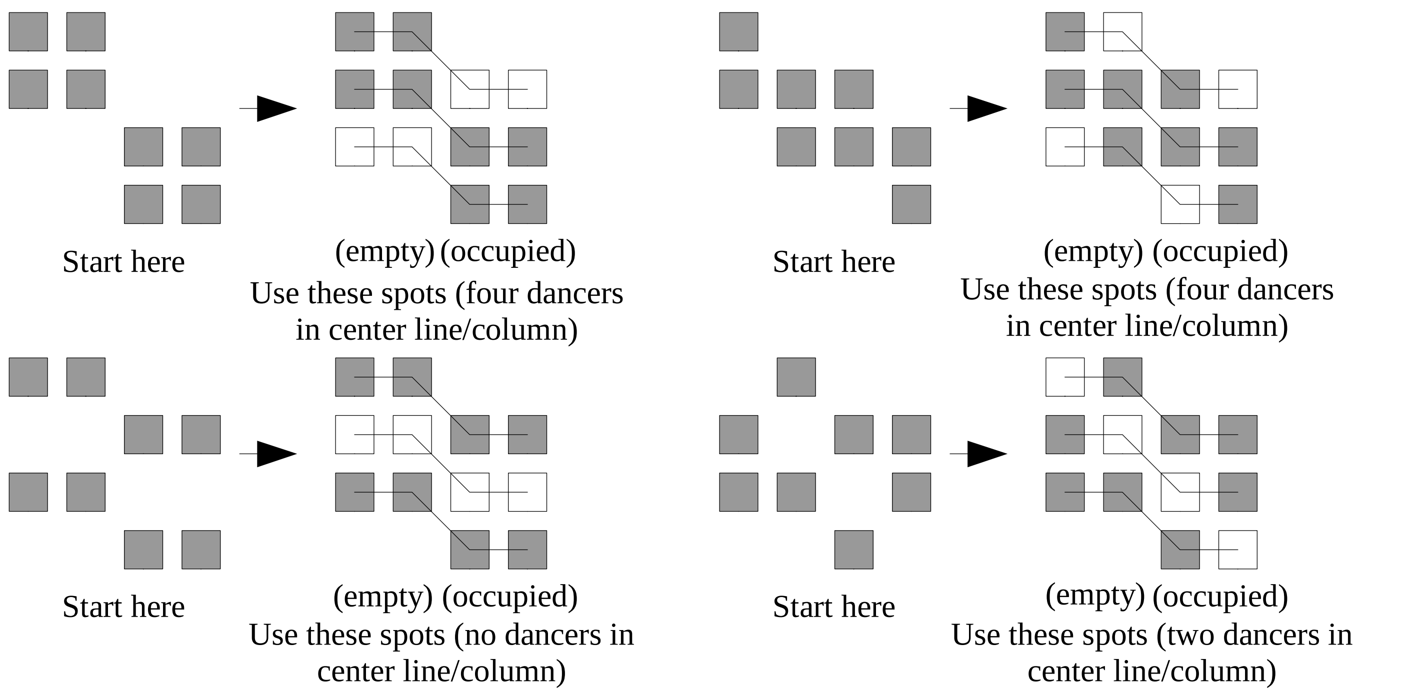


Offset triple lines/columns exist in a 4x4 matrix. (Shaded dancers work together on outside, white dancers work together on inside)

While offset triple lines/columns are closely related to offset lines/columns, there are a number of important differences. The most obvious difference is that there are three offset lines/columns in offset triple lines/columns, instead of only two lines/columns in offset lines/columns. The second difference is that in offset lines/columns all eight spots are occupied by real dancers. But since there are 12 spots in offset triple lines/columns, four of those spots must be occupied by phantoms. This is a very important difference, and depending on where the phantoms are, it can make the offset triple line/column spots much harder to find. The third difference is that in offset lines/columns, eight dancer calls can be used freely. In the Offset Triple Line/Column concept, only four dancer calls starting in a line/column can be used, unless the Offset Triple Lines/Columns Working <direction> concept is used. This is the same as in the Triple Line/Column concept.

Identifying the offset triple line/column spots is the most difficult part of the offset triple lines/column concept. However, it is easier than identifying offset triple box spots because the dancers will always be in a 4x4 matrix. Simply look at each half of the outside quadruple line/column. One side of that outside quadruple line/column will be empty (there will be two phantoms in that 1x2), while the other side of the line/column will have at least one real dancer. The side of the line/column with at least one real dancer is part of the outside offset line/column, and determines the offset direction. Here are some examples of identifying the offset triple line/column spots with real dancers in different places in the matrix (real dancers are shaded squares, phantoms are white square).

Finding offset triple lines/columns

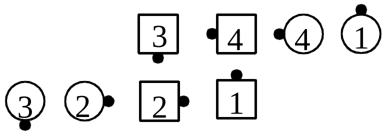


Once the offset triple line/column spots are identified, always pair up the 2 spots in each outer quadruple line/column (the spots that are “hung over” in the offset direction) with the corresponding “diagonal box footprint” spots. The remaining spots are the center diagonal line/column.

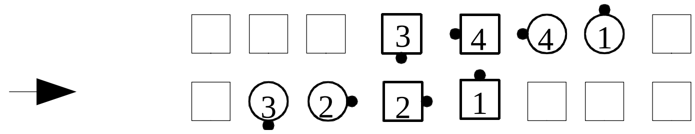
Dance directly to the diagonal line/column spots if possible (much as we do when dancing in offset lines/columns). If it is necessary to take the offset out (for difficult calls or Offset Triple Lines/Columns Working <direction>, move 1/2 matrix spot in the direction opposite the offset direction. This will reduce the matrix to a 3x4 triple line/column setup. Do the call, then restore the offset by moving 1/2 matrix spot in the offset direction (if the call was not a shape changer), or one matrix spot if the call was a shape changer (i.e. changed from triple lines/columns to triple boxes).

Now it is time for some examples with some actual calls. I will show step-by-step how to identify the offset, figure out who is working in each offset box (and where the footprints are), and where everything ends. First let's look at Offset Triple Boxes Walk and Dodge starting in a 2x6 parallelogram. This is a simple call, but starting in a 2x6 makes it harder to find the offset triple boxes. I'll throw in some T-boned dancers just to make things interesting.

Offset Triple Boxes Walk and Dodge

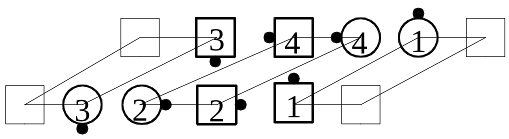


Start in this T-boned 2x6

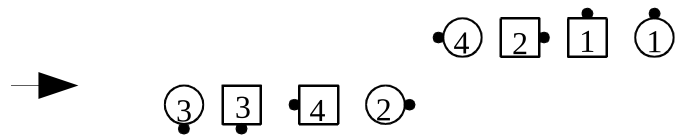


(occupied) (empty)

Add phantoms to make a 2x8 and identify offset direction by the occupied spots in the outer quadruple boxes



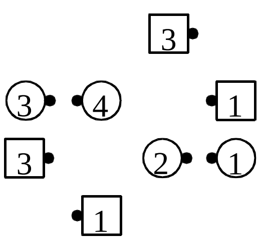
Use these spots and pair up the spots into “diagonal box” footprints based on the offset direction.



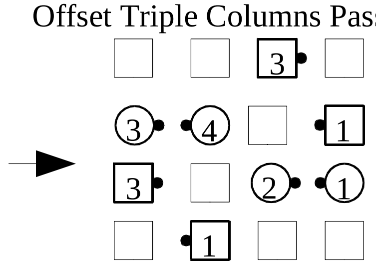
Walk and Dodge in those “diagonal box” footprints

Now how about an Offset Triple Columns Pass and Roll. This is a shape changer, so it will end in offset triple boxes. The starting formation will have three dancers in each outer triple column.

Offset Triple Columns Pass and Roll

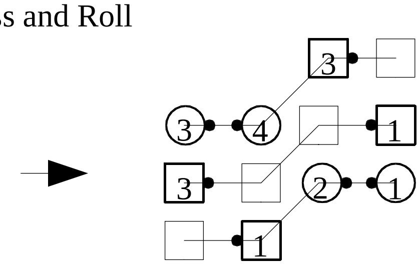


Start here is a 4x4 matrix

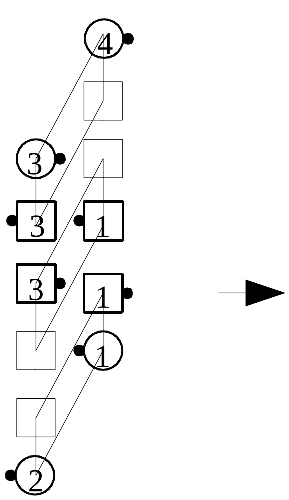


(occupied) (empty)

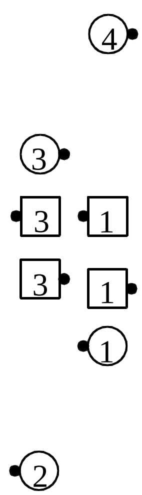
Identify offset direction by the occupied spots in the outer quadruple columns



Use these spots and pair up the spots into “diagonal box” footprints, treating the spots as columns



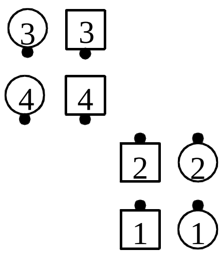
Do the call in the offset column, ending on the offset box footprints



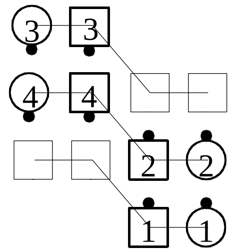
Ending in a 2x8 like this

Finally we'll look at Offset Triple Lines Working Forward Relay the Shadow. This could be hard, so we'll look at how to take the offset out and put it back when we are done.

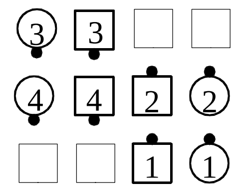
Offset Triple Lines Working Forward Relay the Shadow



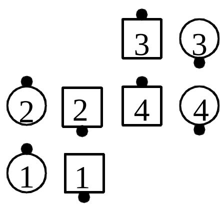
Start here in clumps



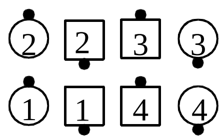
These are the offset triple lines



Take the offset out so it's easier to see the Triple Working Forward



Do a Triple Lines Working Forward Relay the Shadow



Put the offset back (½ matrix spot in direction of original offset)

Oh my gosh, it ends in a normal 2x4!

It is easy to recognize when an offset triple boxes/lines/columns call will result in a “click” (bringing all dancers back into a 2x4 matrix). This can only happen when there are four dancers in the center offset triple box/line/column (which means there will be two dancers in each outer triple box/line/column). If the call moves both dancers in the outer triple formation into the inner two spots (i.e. the non-hung-over spots), the offset will disappear and the matrix will be reduced to a 2x4 matrix.