

# Brazil: CAPOEIRA



Courtesy: Ricardo André Frantz (CC)

– an **AFRO-BRAZILIAN** form of dance/sport/exercise/ self-defense technique/music/art

– A capoeira “bateria” traditionally consists of

**3 berimbaus, 2 pandeiros, 1 atabaque, 1 agogô and 1 ganzá.**

-- Songs are often **CALL/RESPONSE**.

-- Capoeira is acrobatic, graceful and GREAT

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## HOW WE PLAY/DANCE/DO CAPOEIRA IN CLASS

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-- **GINGA** (*[zheenga]*, the basic move). Start standing forward with legs on same plane. Keep knees bent, arms raised and parallel to ground. 4 counts:

- (1) Right leg goes back, Right arm up to defend face
- (2) Left leg goes back, Left arm up to defend face
- (3) Right leg goes back, Right arm up to defend face
- (4) Left leg goes back, Left arm up to defend face

***Easier to do than explain . . . TRY IT!*** (Okay, it's hard to do. But still, **TRY IT!**)

# Brazil: CAPOEIRA for teachers



## **Introducing Capoeira:**

Capoeira is a thrilling traditional Afro-Brazilian sport that features its own pulsating call-and-response folk music. Capoeira arose during the time of Brazilian slavery, when African slaves in the Brazilian interior likely learned the acrobatic form of fighting to defend themselves but presented it to their masters as a dance, a sport and a form of entertainment.

Learn more at <http://www.allaroundthisworld.com/Capoeira>

## **How to do/play capoeira in class**

In class we get everyone up and dancing by trying a few simple capoeira moves. The game/sport/dance is acrobatic and graceful but we don't feel any pressure to be either. We also make sure to let students know that they needn't knock into anyone else to play capoeira in the classroom.

### *Step 1:*

Introduce your students to capoeira and the instruments that comprise a capoeira “bateria” (use links to find instruments on the All Around This World website) before inviting them to stand up and play. Tell them they're going to be moving back and forth and remind them to avoid physical contact. If there's enough room in your space for everyone to safely move you can have all your students play at once, but if not you can direct students in taking turns.

### *Step 2:*

Introduce the most basic capoeira move, the “ginga” [*zheenga*], and also the concept that there are offensive moves such as kicks and defensive moves that involve a player bending low to the ground so the attacker has less surface area to hit. Learn how to do the ginga. ✨

Essentially, start the ginga by standing forward with both legs on same plane. Keep knees bent, arms raised and parallel to ground. 4 counts:

- (1) Right leg goes back, Right arm up to defend face
- (2) Left leg goes back, Left arm up to defend face
- (3) Right leg goes back, Right arm up to defend face
- (4) Left leg goes back, Left arm up to defend face

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## *Step 3:*

Have everyone stand up and move! Either first learn from Jay's training video teach the motions yourself and then play along with capoeira videos online.

## *Step 4:*

Your basic move is the ginga which you can either can do with the leg and arm motions suggested above or just step side to side. From the ginga, direct students to

- 1) KICK: a move known as the quixada, which we do in class without actually kicking anyone. Learn how to do the quixada ✿
- 2) DEFEND: a move known as the negativa, which we do in class by bending down. Learn how to do the negativa. ✿

### **Suggested videos:**

(These links lead online. Watch first to confirm suitability for your classroom)

- “Best Capoeira Brazil” ✿
- “Best Capoeira Brazil (Extended)” ✿
- “Capoeira Golpes” ✿
- “Gregor Salto/Para Voce” ✿
- “The Best Capoeira Video Ever” ✿
- “This is Capoeira” ✿

### **Follow-up for classrooms:**

Capoeira is a multifaceted sport with a nuanced history. Your classroom discussion of capoeira could touch upon that history: Portugal's colonization of Brazil, the struggles of African slaves in “the New World,” the concept of slaves creating a technique for conducting strength and agility training and portraying it as a cultural dance.

#### **Project idea:**

– Capoeira was the invention of resourceful Afro-Brazilians who created it using only materials they had at their disposal. Have students break into small groups and task each group with creating its own simple sport or game, using only objects you already possess in the classroom. Game rules should be simple enough for the rest of the class to follow, and include throwing of objects or physical contact.) Have each group teach their game to the others and play a round. Enjoy!