

High Kick Technique

HEAD

- the head remains level and the focus steady
- the head and shoulders are aligned with the tri-fold joints of the hips, knees, and ankles
- the head may turn to a profile (chin over shoulder) or tilt (ear to shoulder)
- the placement of the head should be precise because this will be emphasized by the dancers wearing a field hat
- the field hat should be placed at the same angle among all dancers for a unified look

CORE ALIGNMENT

- the ribcage is engaged and the sternum lifted; release of it may cause hyperextension of the spine
- the abdominals actively support the spine for solid core strength
- the entire spine is elongated from the top of the head to the base of the sacrum
- the weight is shifted forward over the toes versus backward in the heels

ARMS AND HANDS

- the fingers remain closed and thumbs may remain tucked in order to prevent gripping or pressing on your partners' shoulders
- the entire arm remains stretched with the elbow and wrist in alignment with the shoulder in the hook-up
- a proper hook-up requires the dancer to remain in line with the team versus pulling forward or sinking backward

HIPS

- the hips remain level without lifting up or pulling forward in the hook (retiré) or kick (battement)
- the turn-out in the hips initiate the circling of the fan kick (rond de jambe) with a full range of motion reaching both the right and left diagonal

- shoulders and hips should face the same direction unless the choreography requires this to be different

LEGS

- the flexibility of the dancer often determines the height of the kick
- the dancer may perform kicks with placement at the waist, shoulder, eye, or hat-level
- the kick is directed towards the nose versus the shoulder
- the kick may be turned-out or parallel depending on the choreography; clearly distinguish between the two
- the supporting and working leg remain stretched during the kick
- the leg is lifted/lowered with control

FEET

- the kick begins and ends with the feet placed in parallel first in a demi plié
- the heel of the supporting leg remains on the floor during the kick
- the entire foot is stretched with the toes pointed and aligned with the ankle
- the toe is connected at the knee in hooks (retiré) and at the ankle in cuts (coupé)
- the feet should remain connected to the same spot for the beginning/ending of the kick
- the dancer leads with the toes during transitions between kicks

For more kick terminology visit the Backstage Dance Library: Sawyer, Gina. The Performance Dictionary. Dallas: Backstage Coach Productions