

# The Mimic Concept

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## 1 Introduction

The *Mimic* concept is a way of getting everyone to do a designated part of the call. For example, *Mimic Leads* means that everyone does the leads' part of the call. *Mimic Beaus* means that everyone does the beaus' part of the call. *Mimic Centers* is generally the same as Central in cases where Central is legal, but *Mimic* applies to more calls.

The definition of *Mimic*, given below, involves making an adjustment, doing the call, and then undoing the adjustment. I intend that dancers eventually learn to do most of the calls in a single smooth flowing motion, without physically making the adjustment. However, I also expect that dancers will want to make the adjustment when first learning the concept or when later encountering some new or unusual examples.

This paper goes through the *Mimic* concept in gradually increasing detail. Section 2 gives the definition and illustrates it with some examples that you can do without knowing all the details. I hope these examples will give you a good feel for the concept. Section 3 describes the final adjustment in more detail, covering cases that might at first appear to be ambiguous. Later sections describe calls of different sizes, how to split larger setups, and different designators that might be used.

## 2 Definition and Examples

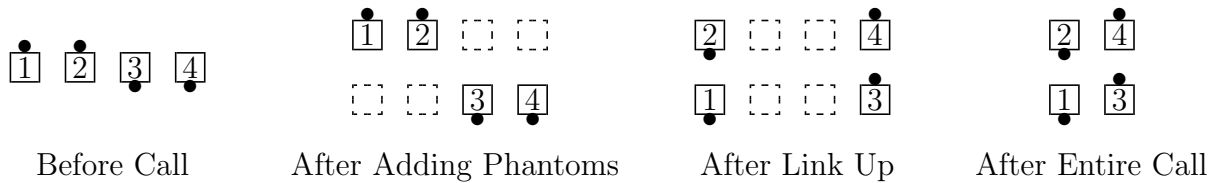
To do Mimic calls, first replace each dancer with a pair of dancers, so that the real dancer takes the position designated. For example, if the call is *Mimic Leads*, then the real dancers will become the leads in each pair and the phantoms will be behind them. (The facing direction of the phantoms is not defined; they could be either leads or trailers, as required by the call.) Second, do the call in the newly formed phantom setup. Finally, eliminate the phantoms you added, collapsing the setup back to its original size. This is often done by

merging each real dancer with a phantom, but can also be done by eliminating phantoms who came into the center or all finished on one side.

Note that the Mimic adjustment always doubles the size of the setup. Thus, Mimic calls will always require half the number of people as the base call. The Mimic version of an eight-person call will always be a four-person call.

There are some additional details to cover, particularly on how the phantoms are collapsed at the end. But before going into all the details, let's consider some example calls where those details do not matter.

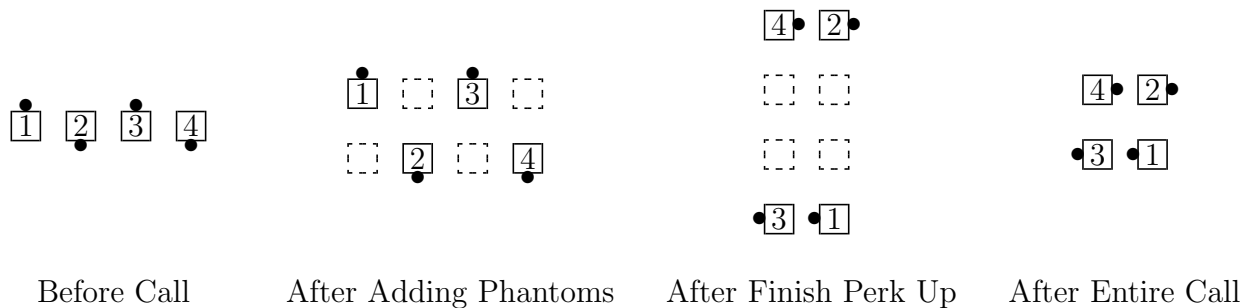
### Example 1. Mimic Leads, Link Up



First, the dancers step forward to become leads. Second, they do the Link Up. Finally, they remove the phantoms, collapsing back to a four-person setup.

When danced in a single smooth flowing motion, this call feels like cast off 1/4 and roll.

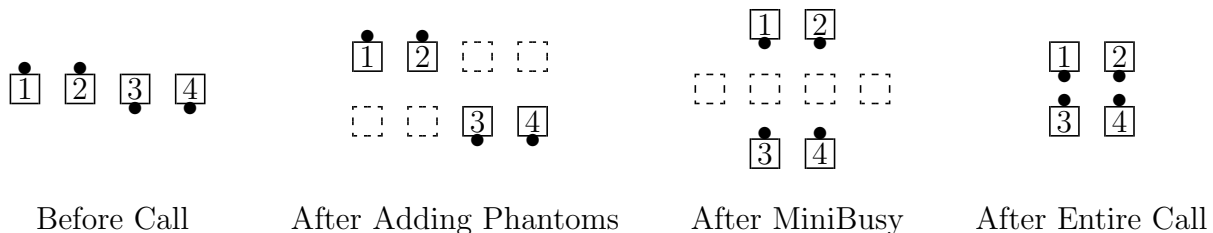
### Example 2. Mimic Leads, Finish Perk Up



First, the dancers step forward to become leads. Second, they do the Finish Perk Up. Finally, they remove the phantoms, collapsing back to a four-person setup.

When danced in a single smooth flowing motion, this call feels like Hinge and Box Circulate twice (or 3/4 Contour the Line).

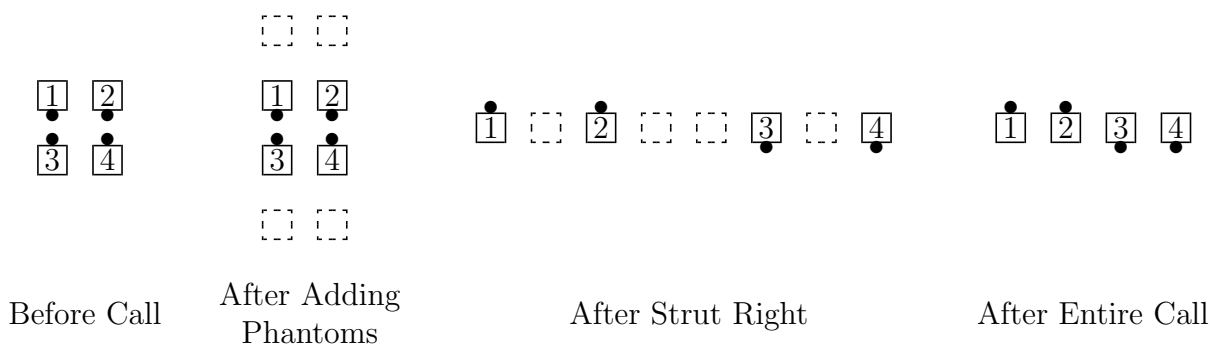
### Example 3. Mimic Leads, Mini Busy



When danced in a single smooth flowing motion, this call feels like Turn and Deal.

Mimic can also be used from a box by applying the same rules.

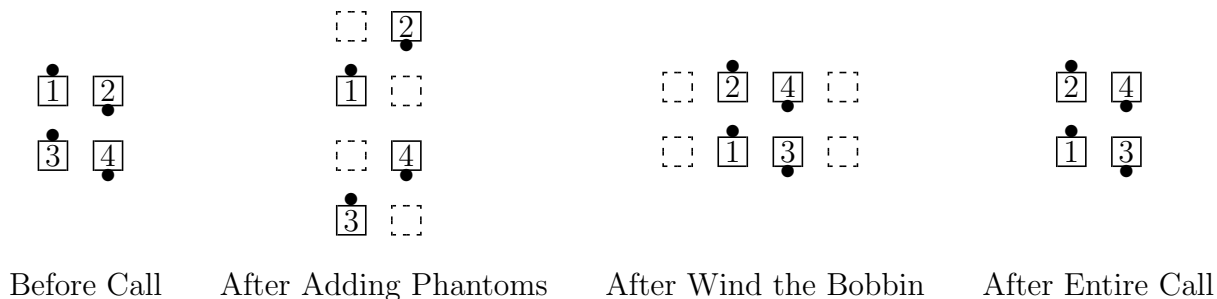
### Example 4. Mimic Leads, Strut Right



First, put phantoms behind the real people, creating a 2x4 column. In this case, the dancers' adjustment is only mental; they do not need to physically move to form the new setup. Note also that in this case, the final adjustment collapses a 1x8 to a 1x4.

When done in a single smooth flowing motion, *Mimic Leads, Strut Right* is Pass Thru and Turn to a Line. *Mimic Trailers, Strut Right* would be Veer Right. *Mimic Leads, Strut Right* could also be called *Mimic Centers, Strut Right*, and *Mimic Trailers, Strut Right* could also be called *Mimic Ends, Strut Right*.

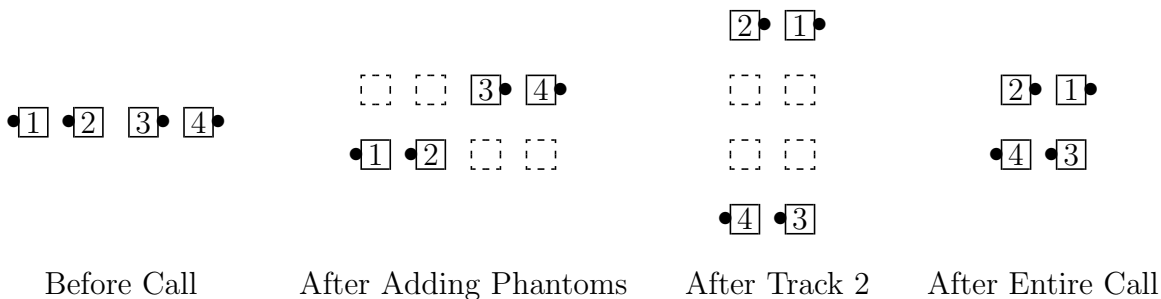
### Example 5. Mimic Trailers, Wind the Bobbin



First, the dancers step backward slightly to become trailers, putting a phantom in front of them, and creating a momentary 2x4. Second, they do the Wind the Bobbin. Finally, they remove the phantoms, which is simple here because the phantoms are already on the outside.

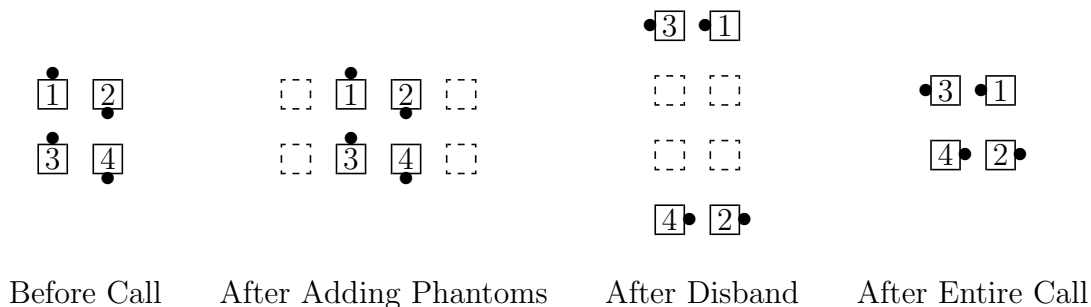
We can also use Mimic with designators other than leads and trailers.

### Example 6. Mimic Beaus, Track 2



In this example, the dancers must expand their setup to a 2x4 by adding phantoms on their right hand, making the real people beaus. Then they do the call in their 2x4 and collapse the setup, as before.

### Example 7. Mimic Centers, Disband



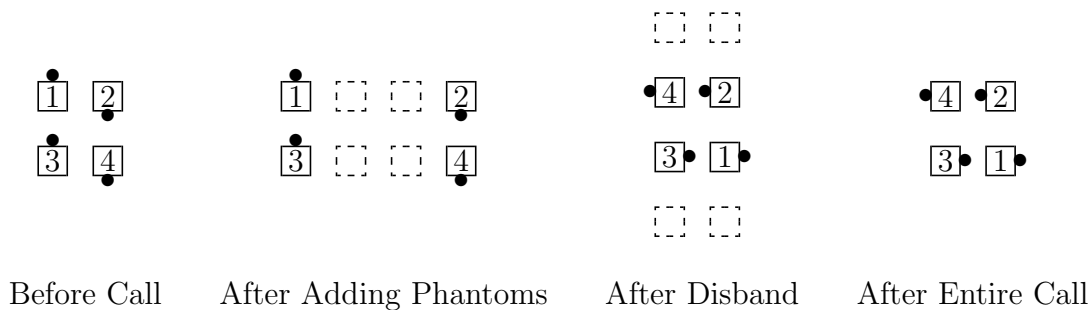
In this example, the dancers must expand their box to a 2x4 by adding phantoms on the outside. The diagrams above illustrate adding phantoms to make lines, but in fact, if the dancers assume columns, they get the same result.

When done in a smooth flowing motion, this call is Box Counter Rotate and U-Turn Back away from your partner. Note that *Mimic Centers* is different from Central on this call. Some people believe that Central Disband is illegal, while others think it is legal but includes flipping away from the other dancers and creating space in the middle. *Mimic Centers*, *Disband* is clearly legal and does not create extra space.

This particular example could also be called *Mimic Belles*, since all the dancers added phantoms to their left, making the real people belles in each pair. This alternative name may be less intuitive for some people, since they think of Disband as a centers and ends call, but it would fit the definition.

Here is another example, using ends rather than centers:

### Example 8. Mimic Ends, Disband



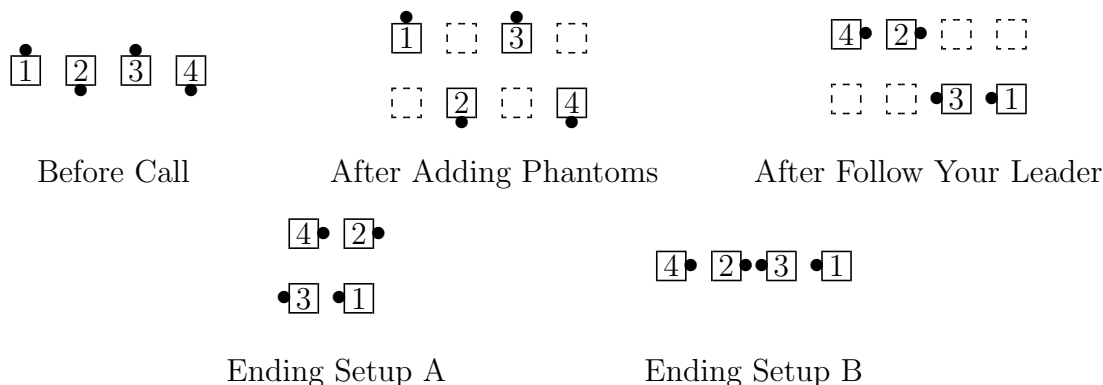
Again, the example illustrates placing the phantoms so that the overall setup becomes lines, but you would get the same result if you created columns. Later, I will show other examples where the choice of lines or columns makes a difference.

When done in a smooth flowing motion, this call feels like Reset 1/4 and 2/3 Recycle.

## 3 Collapsing the Setup

In the examples shown so far, there was only one way to collapse the setup back to its original size. However, with some ending positions, there may be multiple possibilities. Consider the following call:

### Example 9. Mimic Leads, Follow Your Leader

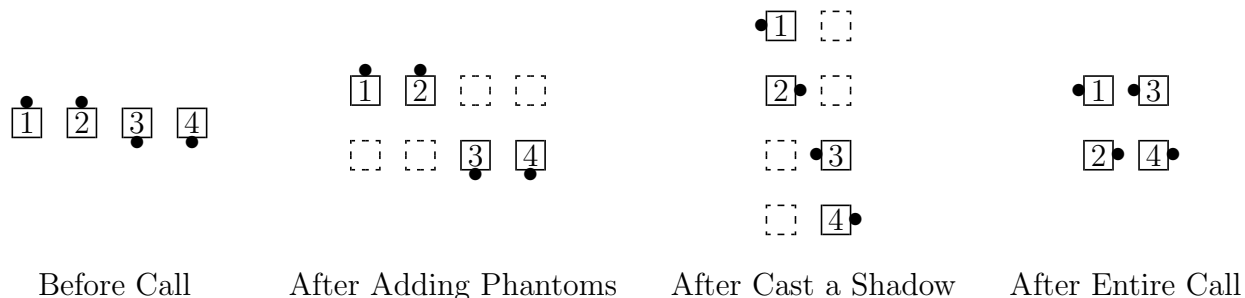


After stepping forward and doing Follow Your Leader, there are two possible ending setups. Dancers can adjust forward to a box (Ending Setup A) or sideways to a 1x4 (Ending Setup B). The rule is that when the ending setup is otherwise ambiguous, go back to your original spots if possible (making the Mimic call a non-shape changer). Since this example started in a 1x4, it ends in a 1x4 (Ending Setup B).

You might also think that Ending Setup B is preferable because it seems like a smaller adjustment: every dancer moves 1/2 spot sideways rather than a full spot forward. However, the alternative of moving forward to make a box would be chosen if the original call had started in a box. I present examples of this type in a later section.

Occasionally, more than one method of collapsing the setup is possible, but neither method makes the call a non-shape-changer. Usually when this happens, the starting setup was a 1x4, and the ending setup can be either a box or a 1x4 on the opposite orientation. In this situation, prefer the box ending.

### Example 10. Mimic Leads, Cast a Shadow

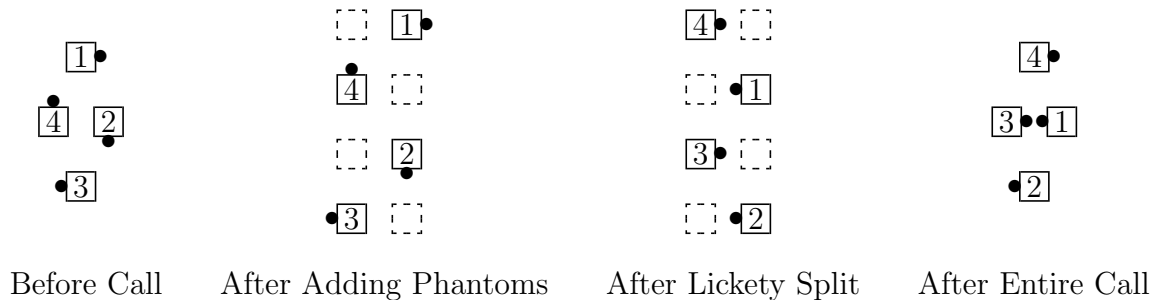


My reason for generally preferring non-shape-changers is that then the calls can be done in various distorted setups that do not permit shape-changers (such as Z's). There are other concepts, such as Checkerboard/Checkbox and some cases of Offset/Parallelogram

setups, which permit shape changing between 1x4s and boxes but not between horizontal and vertical 1x4s. Thus, a rule that prefers boxes over rotating 1x4s allows us to use Mimic more often.

While the starting setups I have shown so far have been lines or boxes, this concept can also be used from diamonds, although there are not many useful examples. Here is a possibility.

**Example 11. Mimic Leads, Lickety Split**

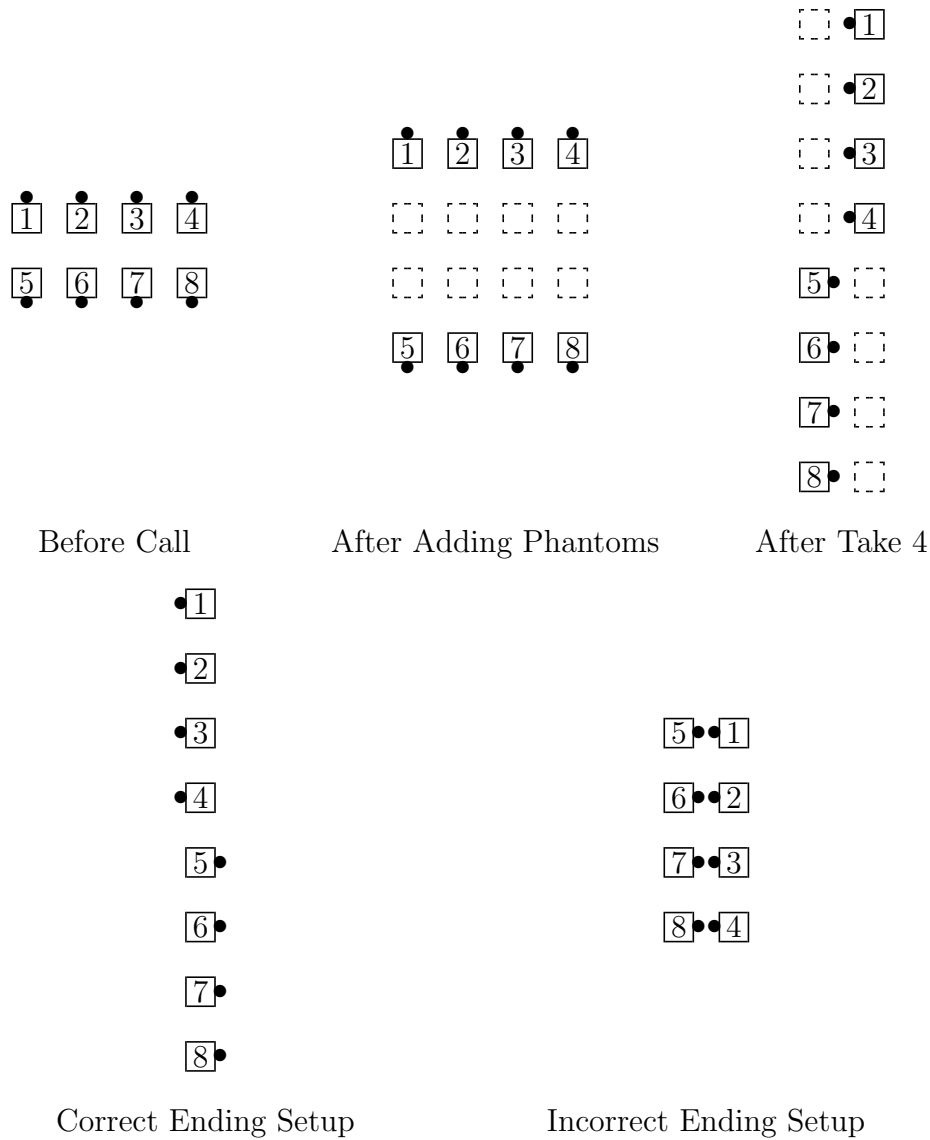


First, the dancers stepped forward to make space for a phantom behind them, creating a 2x4. While not all dancers look like leads of the 2x4, they are all leads of the pair they form with their phantoms. After doing the Lickety Split, the dancers go back to diamond spots, since that makes the call a non-shape-changer.

When danced in a single smooth flowing motion, this call is diamond circulate and new centers roll.

When applying any of the rules for collapsing the setup, you must be careful to collapse your own setup individually and not merge with other setups also doing the call. It may help you to think of Mimic calls as four-person calls, forcing you to stay on your side of the square; this will be discussed in more detail later. For now, consider the following example.

### Example 12. Mimic Leads, Take 4



In this example, the correct ending is found by having all dancers merge with the phantoms they were working with when doing the Take 4, thus creating a 1x8 overall. It would not be correct to slide over to the other side of the square, merging with the phantoms from the other group.

To summarize, here are the specific rules for determining how setups are collapsed:

1. Consider only the phantoms from the setup you were working with when doing the call. This will normally be a set of four phantoms when doing eight-person calls.
2. If the setup can be collapsed to the size of the original setup unambiguously (perhaps by

merging every dancer with an adjacent phantom, or perhaps because all the phantoms finished near each other), then do so.

3. If the setup can be collapsed in multiple ways and one of those ways would make the call a non-shape-changer, then use that selection. If neither method makes the call a non-shape-changer, then collapse each setup to a box.
4. If it is not obvious how to collapse the setup and none of the rules above apply, then the call is not legal.

## 4 Smaller Calls

Since the adjustment required for a Mimic call doubles the number of positions in the setup, the number of real people required to do a call is half the number of people required to do the call normally. All the examples given so far illustrate four-person setups doing eight-person calls. However, we could also have one-person setups doing two-person calls, two-person setups doing four-person calls, or, for that matter, three-person setups doing six-person calls. In all these cases, the same rules apply: add a phantom to put yourself in the designated position, do the call, and remove the phantoms, going back to the original spots if possible.

### Example 13. Mimic Leads, Wheel the Ocean



Note that *Mimic Leads, Wheel the Ocean* and *Mimic Leads, Wheel the Sea* are identical. The couple just wheels around and puts the belle in front of the beau.

### Example 14. Mimic Leads, Stack the Line



Note that the ending setup is chosen to make the call a non-shape-changer. Without the non-shape-changing rule, it would have been possible to collapse to either a horizontal 1x2 or a vertical 1x2.

### Example 15. Mimic Beaus, Single Wheel



This is a U-Turn Back to the right. Now consider *Mimic Belles, Single Wheel*. You might initially think this call is ambiguous, because Mimic does not specify the facing directions of phantoms. So, the real person does not know whether to go in front of the phantom or behind. However, the call is not ambiguous, since that phantom will be eliminated anyway. *Mimic Belles, Single Wheel* is just a U-Turn back to the left.

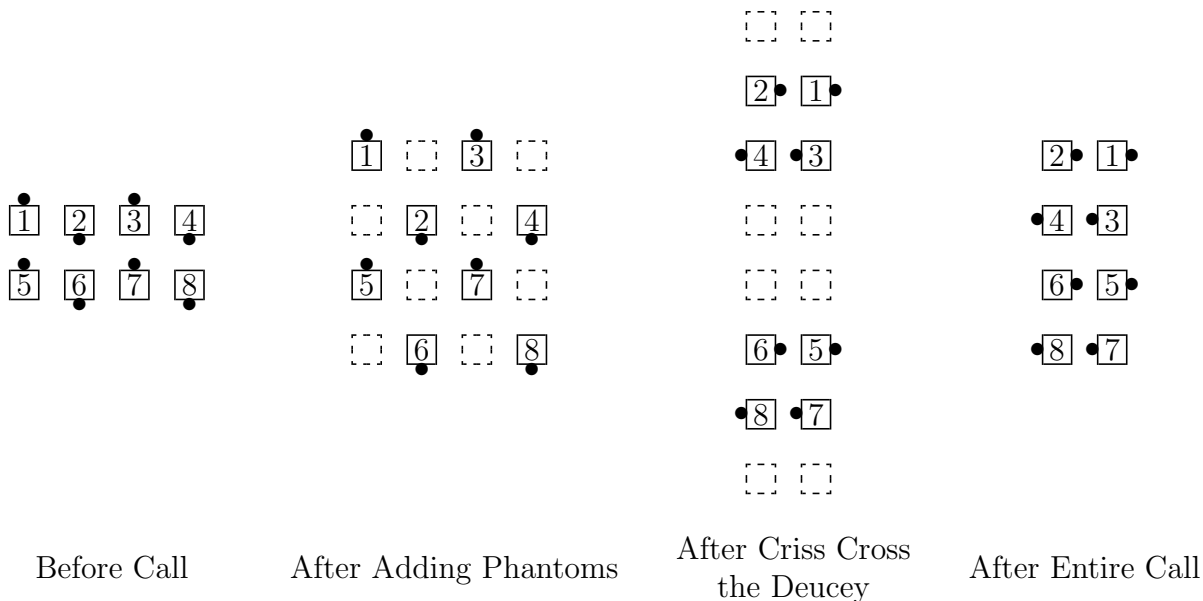
## 5 Splitting Setups

All of the examples illustrated so far were shown with the minimum number of people required for the call (1-4 people). A square of eight people doing the call will typically have two (or four) adjacent setups doing the call separately. This is straightforward from a 1x8 or other setups that can only be split one direction. It is potentially more difficult or ambiguous from a 2x4.

In the event of ambiguity over whether to work in each box or each 1x4, I suggest we default to working in each box, making the Mimic concept consistent with Central and Crazy. The caller can also specify the setup by saying e.g. “Each Box” or “Each Wave”.

I expect that over time, dancers will tend to learn which Mimic calls require a 1x4 and which require a box, as they have done with Central calls and some Single calls. However, there is another method that can be used if you are in a 2x4 and are not certain whether to work in each box or each 1x4. That method is as follows. First, add the phantoms according to the rules, without identifying your four-person setup first. For example, if the concept is *Mimic Leads* (or Trailers), then put a phantom behind you (or in front of you), creating a 4x4 or 2x8. Similarly, if the concept is *Mimic Beaus* (or Belles), then put a phantom on your right (or left). Then, if the overall setup is a 2x8, do the call in Split Phantom Boxes. If the overall setup is a 4x4, do the call in either Split Phantom Lines or Split Phantom Columns, depending on whether it is a line call or a column call.

### Example 16. Mimic Leads, Criss Cross the Deucey



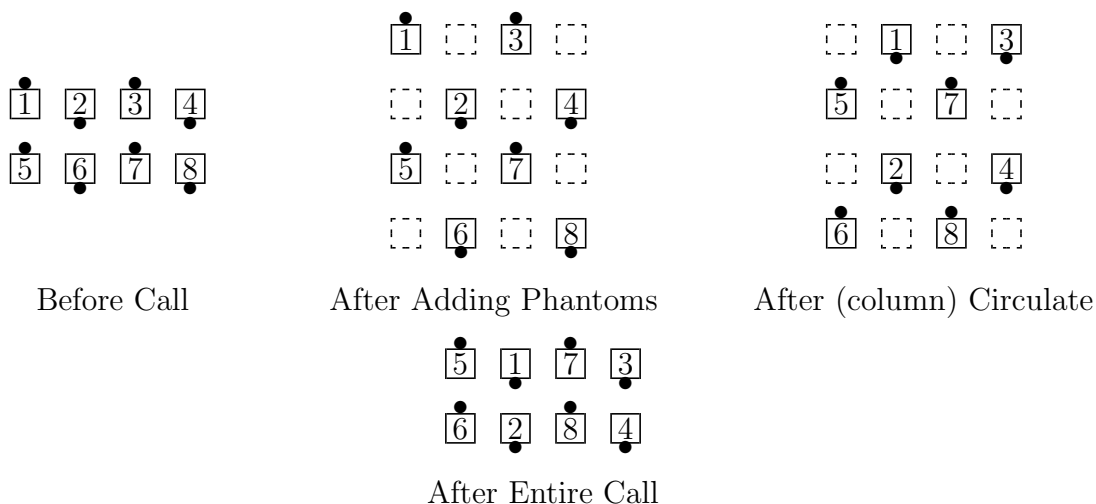
First, add phantoms to create a 4x4 matrix. Second, do the call in Split Phantom Waves (knowing that you can't do it in Split Phantom Columns). Finally, adjust each setup you were working in (Split Phantom Waves) to a box.

When done in a smooth flowing motion, this call feels like 2/3 Recycle. Thus, you could think of it as working in each wave. However, you can do the entire call without having ever consciously decided to work in each wave.

If the concept is Mimic Centers or Ends, this method may not be helpful. However, your experience with the Central concept may help you, since the rules for identifying a starting setup are the same. Furthermore, Mimic Ends will almost always require each box, since any normal call done from 2x4 lines, 2x4 columns, 1/4 tag, or diamonds, has the ends in a box with respect to each other. Mimic Ends will only require a 1x4 if the base call requires the ends to be in tidal wave. *Mimic Ends, Choice* would be Each Wave, Trade and Step and Fold.

Here's an example I probably wouldn't use in practice, except to illustrate specific rules.

### Example 17. Mimic Leads, Circulate



First, add phantoms so that the real people become leads. Second, note that your box expanded to Split Phantom Columns, so you do the Circulate in that setup if possible. Finally, collapse the Split Phantom Columns back to a box.

If the call had been *Each Wave, Mimic Leads, Circulate*, then you would add the same phantoms, but do the Circulate in Split Phantom Waves. If the call had been *Each Miniwave, Mimic Leads, Circulate*, then you would add the same phantoms, but do a (Box) Circulate in each quadrant of the 4x4.

Note that the rule of defaulting to a box only specifies how to first create your phantom 2x4. It does not say anything about how to do the call while you are working in the 2x4. If the base call is an eight-person call, then you will work with all eight spots in the 2x4. If the base call is a four-person call, then you will divide the setup according to the usual dance rules for the given call (e.g. Recycle is done in each wave, and Split Counter Rotate is done in each box.)

Another issue that arises when multiple setups are doing the call is that when collapsing the setup, you must be careful to merge with phantoms from your setup only. This was discussed briefly earlier (using Take 4 as an example). Here is another example, where the incorrect solution might be a little more tempting.

### Example 18. Mimic Leads, Wheel the Ocean

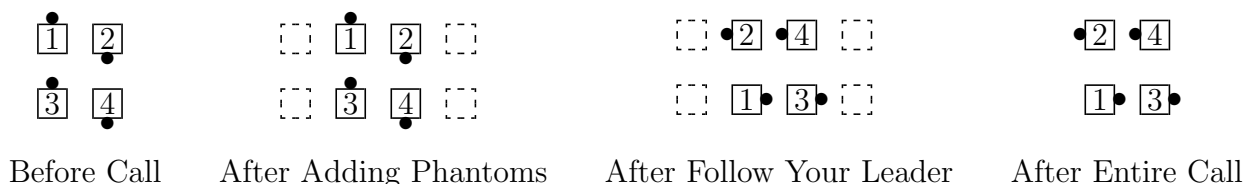


Note that at the end of the call, dancers #1 and #2 moved sideways to form a 1x4 rather than moving forward to form a box. This is correct because they needed to compress their setup with the phantoms they were working with, not with the phantoms doing the call in a separate group. Some dancers may be tempted to move forward after doing the Wheel the Ocean, thinking they are going back to a box and therefore making the call a non-shape-changer. However, this violates the principle of only merging with the phantoms from the setup in which you were working. Another way to think of this is that since Wheel the Ocean is a four-person call, the Mimic version of it is two-person call, so you must stay on your side of the square, just as you would when doing any other two-person call, such as Single Wheel.

## 6 Choice of Designators

The Mimic concept is most intuitive if the role designated matches the way people think about the call. For example, most dancers perceive Follow Your Leader as having leads' and trailers' parts. So, *Mimic Leads* or *Mimic Trailers* would be the most intuitive uses of *Mimic* with this call. However, nothing in the definition requires that the usage be intuitive or match the verbal definition of the call.

### Example 19. Mimic Belles, Follow Your Leader



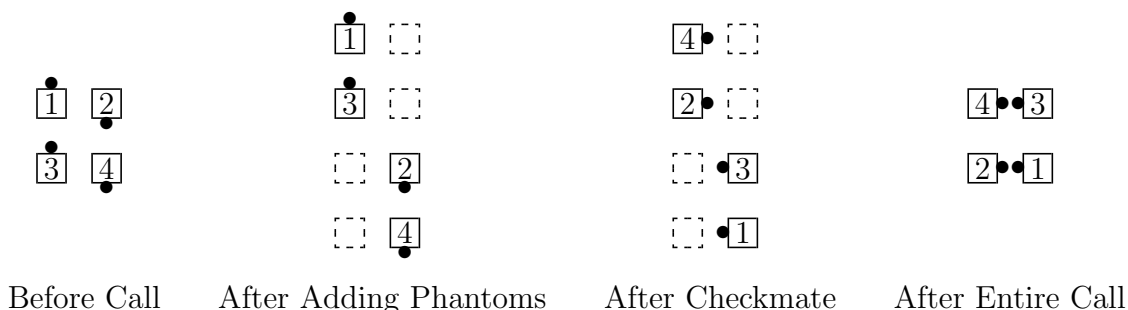
The dancers add phantoms in such a way that the real people become belles. In this case, phantoms are added to the outside. The phantoms' facing directions are not specified by the Mimic concept, but here you could assume the phantoms make waves (if you care), since

that would be required for Follow Your Leader. This example could also be called *Mimic Centers, Follow Your Leader* since all the phantoms were added to the outside. For this example, I slightly prefer *Mimic Belles* since it unambiguously places the phantoms in lines. With *Mimic Centers*, dancers would have to take an extra thinking step to decide whether the phantoms should be in lines or columns.

A similar issue comes up on Strut Right. Earlier, I gave an example of *Mimic Leads, Strut Right*. Some dancers probably think of Strut Right as having centers' and ends' parts, rather than leads' and trailers' parts. They might find it more intuitive to hear *Mimic Centers, Strut Right* instead. I used *Mimic Leads, Strut Right* earlier because *Mimic Leads* always requires putting the phantoms behind the real people. However, I consider either usage to be acceptable.

Another issue comes up when we attempt to use *Mimic Leads/Trailers* with "column" calls such as Transfer or Checkmate. The issue is that I have defined *Mimic Leads/Trailers* as starting by putting one phantom behind each dancer. However, most people think of Transfer and Checkmate as having a part for the "Lead Two" (i.e. #1 and #2 in the column), not for the true "Leads" (i.e. leads of each box). To get the intuitive use of Mimic with Checkmate or Transfer, we will need slightly different terminology, for example:

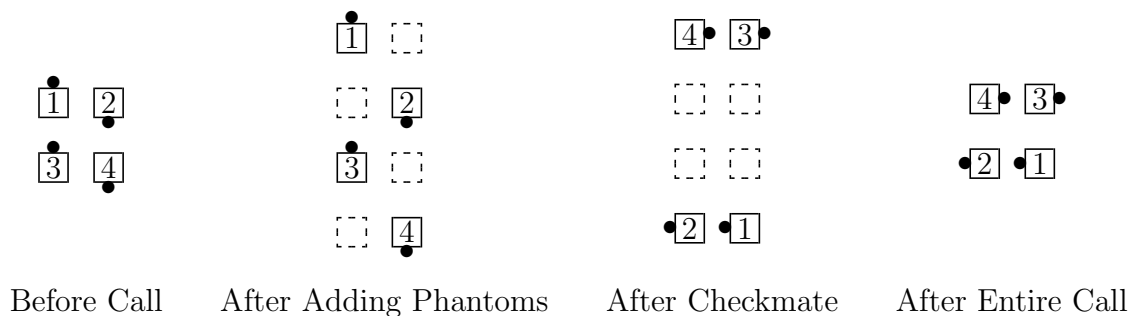
**Example 20. Mimic One and Two in the Column, Checkmate**



The dancers move forward to become #1 and #2 in the column, rather than becoming leads in each box. The rest of the call proceeds as before. Note that the dancers finish in facing couples rather than a 1x4 because they follow the non-shape-changing rule.

If the call had been *Mimic Leads*, then you should do the following (less intuitive usage):

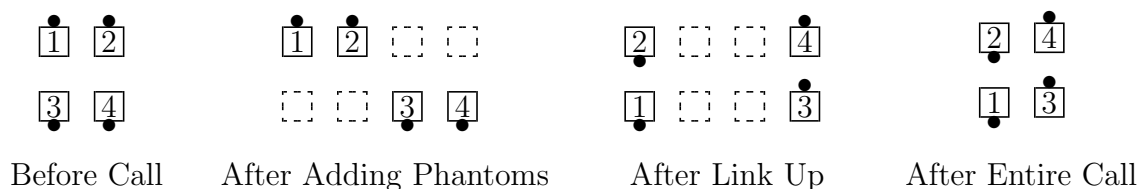
### Example 21. Mimic Leads, Checkmate



In this example, the dancers started by moving forward to become the leads in each box, rather than #1 and #2 in the column.

Similarly, it is sometimes useful to have couples become belles or beaux as a unit.

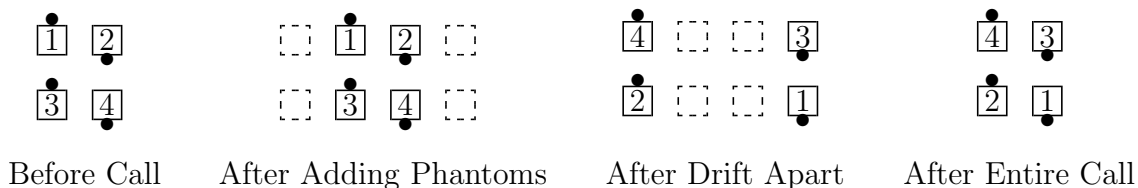
### Example 22. Mimic Beau Couples, Link Up



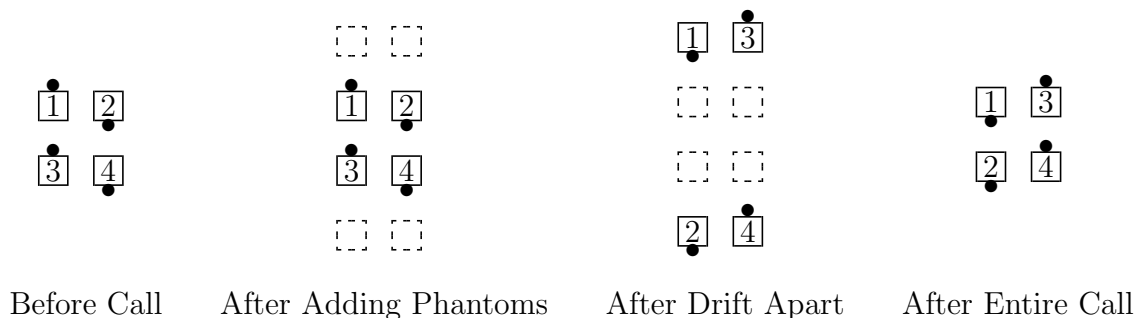
The dancers first slide to the left as a couple, so that they become beau couples. Then they do the link up and collapse the setup, as before. Conversely, if the call were *Mimic Beaus*, each dancer would individually put one phantom on his or her right hand. The setup would then look like right hand waves (or lines facing out), and (presumably) some different call would be used.

Yet another issue arises when using centers or ends as the designator. In one of the examples I gave at the beginning (Disband), it didn't matter whether the dancers added phantoms to make 2x4 lines or 2x4 columns. However, it could matter on other calls. When it makes a difference, the caller can say *Mimic Centers of Lines* or *Mimic Centers of Columns* to avoid the ambiguity.

### Example 23. Mimic Centers of Lines, Drift Apart



### Example 24. Mimic Centers of Columns, Drift Apart



The set of designators shown in this paper is not intended to be exhaustive but rather to illustrate the issues that might arise. Callers are welcome to modify the designators if necessary to make the calls more clear. I expect that for some of the examples in this section, we will think of better names over time.

## 7 Conclusions

My original motivation for this concept was to provide a way of doing the leads' part of the call even if you were not a lead, or doing the beaus' part of the call even if you were not a beau. The Mimic concept provides many examples of this type, allowing, for example, everyone to do only the leads' part or only the trailers' part of calls such as Link Up, Keep Busy, or Wind the Bobbin. Mimic also allows everyone to do only the beaus' part or only the belles' part of calls such as Track 2.

The definition of the concept is much broader than the above mission would suggest, however. It is often possible to use *Mimic Leads* with calls that you normally think of as having centers' and ends' parts, or *Mimic Beaus* with calls you normally think of as having leads' and trailers' parts. You can also use Mimic with calls such as Cast a Shadow, which might be considered to have a lead centers' part, a trailing centers' part, and two other parts. Mimic simply defines an adjustment; you do the call normally after making the adjustment. Nothing in the definition depends on the verbal definition of the call (except for defining the setups from which the call can be done).

The impact of Mimic is to create many more two- and four-person calls than we currently have. Mimic calls always require half the number of people as the original call. So, by using Mimic, we can create one or more four-person calls for many of the eight-person calls we already have, and one or more two-person calls for many of the four-person calls we already have. The only other similar concepts I can think of are Single and Central. However, these concepts are much more restrictive and only apply to certain types of calls. Mimic is more general and presumably generates many more new calls.

## 8 Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Andy Latto, Eric Brosius, and Will and Mary Leland for helpful suggestions and comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

# Practice Sequences

## Sequence 1. Leads of 2-Faced lines

HEADS: pass the ocean  
extend  
TANDEM TWOSOME, spin the top  
MIMIC LEADS, link up  
peel and trail  
grand swing thru  
switch  
MIMIC LEADS, keep busy  
1/4 thru  
follow thru  
COUPLES TWOSOME, peel and trail  
MIMIC LEADS, mini busy  
left square thru 2  
left allemande (7/8 promenade)

## Sequence 2. Leads of Waves

SIDES: turn thru  
wave the boys  
tag the top  
MIMIC LEADS, finish perk up  
wind the bobbin  
spin the top  
grand swing and mix  
MIMIC LEADS, criss cross the deucey

7 4 5 2

6 1 8 3

stimulate the column  
step and fold  
peel the top  
MIMIC TRAILERS, follow your neighbor  
walk out to a wave  
1/4 the deucey  
criss cross the deucey  
follow your neighbor  
right and left grand (3/8 promenade)

### Sequence 3. Trailers

HEADS: split swap  
circle to a wave  
trail off  
COUPLES TWOSOME, slip  
MIMIC TRAILERS, mini busy  
CROSS CONCENTRIC, recycle  
double pass thru  
right roll to a wave  
fan the top  
counter rotate  
MIMIC TRAILERS, finish perk up  
circulate  
TANDEM TWOSOME, follow thru  
MIMIC LEADS, shakedown  
CENTERS: right roll to a wave; ENDS:  
rally  
2/3 line to line  
right and left grand (5/8 promenade)

### Sequence 4. Boxes

HEADS: wheel thru  
(note starting in each box)  
MIMIC LEADS, strut right  
scatter circulate  
recycle  
MIMIC TRAILERS, strut left

2 3

8 5

1 4

7 6

link up  
left 1/4 mix  
MIMIC LEADS, wind the bobbin

7 2 1 8  
4 5 6 3

trade the deucey  
1/4 thru  
MIMIC TRAILERS, wind the bobbin  
out roll circulate; acey deucey  
right and left grand (7/8 promenade)

## Sequence 5. Beaus/Belles

HEADS: swap the top  
extend the tag  
reflected flip the line  
MIMIC BEAUS, track 2  
walk out to a wave  
fan the top  
switch the wave and roll  
MIMIC BEAUS, fancy  
square chain thru  
COUPLES TWOSOME, left roll to a wave  
left tag the line  
MIMIC BELLES, track 2  
peel off  
wheel and deal  
left allemande (1/4 promenade)

## Sequence 6. Centers/Ends

HEADS: touch 1/4  
quick step  
walk out to a wave  
counter rotate  
MIMIC CENTERS, disband  
circulate  
MIMIC ENDS, disband  
tally ho  
MIMIC CENTERS, sets in motion  
plan ahead  
double pass thru  
MIMIC CENTERS, expand the column  
touch by 1/4 and 1/4  
scatter circulate  
MIMIC CENTERS, the gamut  
counter rotate  
left allemande (3/4 promenade)

## Sequence 7. More Centers and Ends

HEADS: turn thru  
wave the beaus  
2/3 recycle  
MIMIC ENDS, strip the diamonds  
along  
MIMIC ENDS, acey deucey  
step and fold  
MIMIC CENTERS OF LINES, drift apart  
circulate  
invert the column 1/2  
MIMIC ENDS, detour  
peel and trail  
flip the line; boomerang  
right and left grand (7/8 promenade)

## Sequence 8. Collapsing Rules

HEADS: pass the ocean  
extend the tag  
lock it  
(note collapsing rules)  
MIMIC LEADS, follow your leader

7 • 2 • 8 • 5 1 • 4 • 6 • 3

single file recycle  
the gamut  
AS COUPLES, 1/4 thru  
MIMIC LEADS, acey deucey

6 5 3 4 8 7 1 2

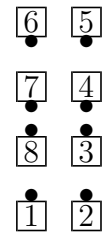
COUPLES TWOSOME, slip  
cross roll  
MIMIC LEADS, swing o late  
1/4 wheel the ocean  
bingo  
right and left grand (3/8 promenade)

### Sequence 9. More 1x4 endings

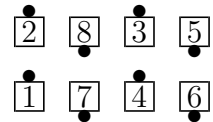
HEADS: wheel thru  
pass the ocean  
MIMIC LEADS, chuck a luck  
pass and roll  
circulate  
grand 1/4 thru  
MIMIC LEADS, trade circulate  
grand left swing thru  
MIMIC TRAILERS, scoot chain thru  
along  
trade circulate  
reflected flip the line  
MIMIC BEAUS, invert the column 1/2  
open up the column  
left allemande (1/4 promenade)

### Sequence 10. More Collapsing

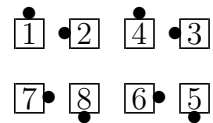
SIDES: split grand chain 8 with the flow  
cross lock it  
switch the wave  
(note box ending)  
MIMIC LEADS, gee whiz  
counter rotate  
explode the wave  
(note: collapse only with group doing call)  
MIMIC LEADS, wheel the ocean



double pass thru  
MIMIC ENDS OF LINES, cast a shadow  
CENTERS: pass thru  
team up  
circulate  
split counter rotate



MIMIC LEADS, finish wave the beaus



follow to a diamond  
swing along  
trade circulate  
criss cross your neighbor  
left allemande (1/2 promenade)