

Intermediate Aerial Fabric Instructional Manual Part 2

~PREVIEW~

A random sampling of pages from this
step-by-step guide for teachers
and students of the aerial arts

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This book may be purchased in bulk with discount rates. For information, e-mail books@aerialdancing.com. When practicing aerial fabric, always perform warm up exercises before attempting any individual exercises. Also, when practicing aerial fabric, always do so in the presence of a trained professional, with load-tested fabric hanging from load-tested rigging, which has been set-up and inspected frequently by rigging professionals, along with crash pads underneath the fabric. It is recommended that you check with your doctor or healthcare provider before commencing any exercise program, especially one as rigorous as aerial fabric.

Whilst every care has been taken in the preparation of this material, there is a real chance of injury in execution of the movements described in this book. The Publishers and all persons involved in the making of this manual will not accept responsibility for injury to any degree, including death, to any person as a result of participation in the activities described in this manual. Purchase or use of this document constitutes agreement to this effect.

Furthermore, rigging of aerial equipment is not discussed in this manual. Consult a professional rigger when it comes to using any hanging equipment.

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PREFACE

This manual is highly technical, and I have enjoyed writing it for that reason. To better understand why I like the technical side of fabric, I will let you in on a little secret: I am a math teacher. That sentence might just make this entire manual make more sense. The more complicated and technical, the more likely I am to love it! In studying the connections between all the various wrappings during the making of this manual, I had moments where I felt that I was proving a mathematical theorem. My husband enjoyed hearing my squeals of delight in those “a-ha” moments, when the light bulb turns on, when something suddenly makes complete sense. It is this problem solving joy that I love to share with students, whether I am teaching mathematics, aerial dance, or anything else.

The hardest part about writing this manual was deciding when to stop. In fact, this book was originally supposed to be simply one book, but once I finished it, I discovered that it costs a ridiculous amount to get a 300 page color book printed; to bring the cost of the book to a reasonable price, I had to break this manual into two parts, which is why you will notice the table of contents is broken into Part 1 (i.e. BOOK 1) and Part 2 (i.e. BOOK 2); the pages of this book contain BOOK 2.

There are an infinite number of ways to wrap the fabric around your body, as well as variations of everything. What I want to stress to the reader, whether you are a teacher or student, is to not let a list confine your creativity. I love helping dancers discover their own movements; while it is nice and necessary to create and learn an exhaustive list of movements, it is for the purpose that those can be cleared and we can move on to creative movement. The learning process may take years, but the vision should not be lost in the learning process. The vision is to use the movements to create art that goes far beyond a string of movements pieced together.

I hope that you enjoy this manual as much as I enjoyed making it. I certainly do not expect you to like every movement, and I would probably recommend leaving some movements clear alone when they don't suit your body for whatever reason. That's okay! But at the same time, make sure to give certain movements time to grow on you. ☺

Please be safe, and have fun,

Rebekah Leach



Crochet (with) Thigh Wrap(s)

Crochet Thigh Wrap

Prerequisites: cross back with crocheted legs

In this variation, you basically add a wrapping around your thighs from the crossback. This adds more friction so that you can hang in this position comfortably without the use of your hand grip.

There are two main entry methods to the crochet thigh wrap. The first method is the most straight-forward method: you add the wrap to your thighs from the double crochet. The second method can be a short cut, but is slightly more challenging.

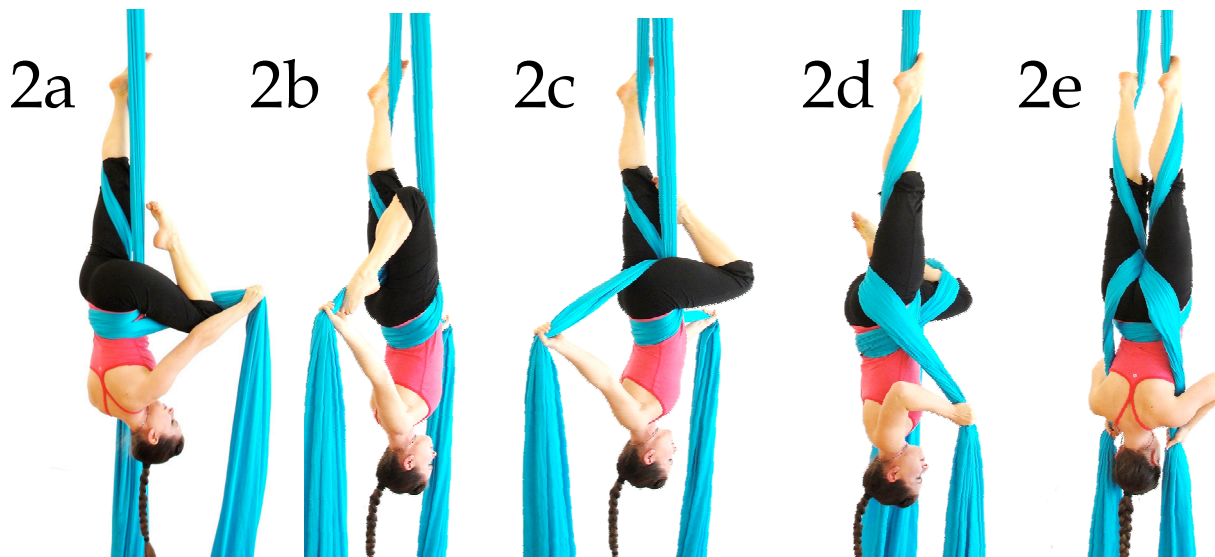
Crochet Thigh Wrap Entry Method 1

1 Begin in a crossback with crocheted legs.

Tip ▶ The full name of this movement sequence would technically be: double crochet crossback with thigh wraps. That's a mouthful! Its fun name is sometimes "diaper wrap." ◀



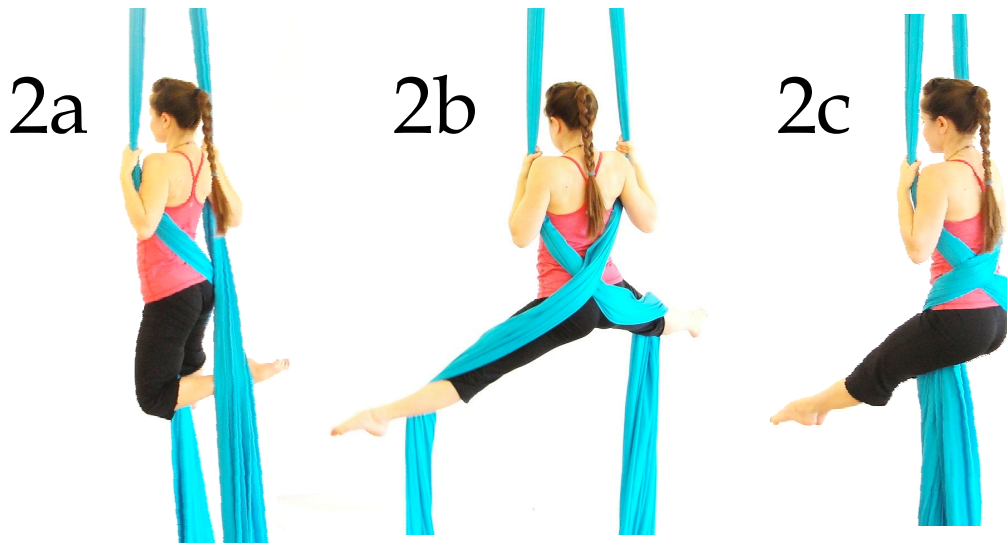
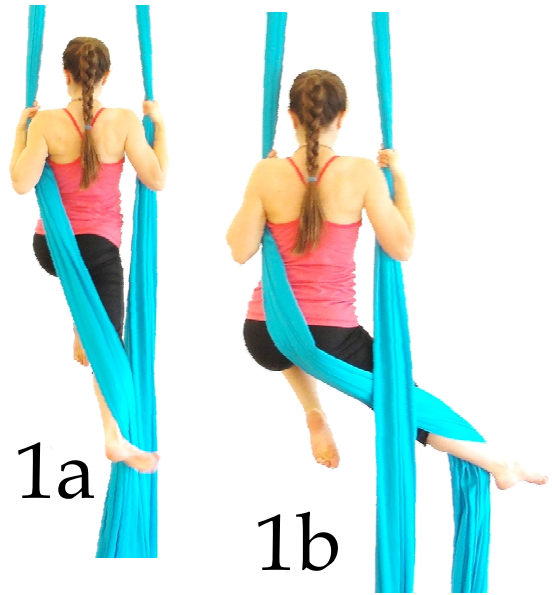
2 Remove one leg and wrap the nearest tail around the leg from inside to outside. Rotate the knee behind you and use your hand to help so that the tail falls around the inside of your thigh. Replace this leg in the crochet. Then, repeat with the second leg. This completes the crochet thigh wrap hang.



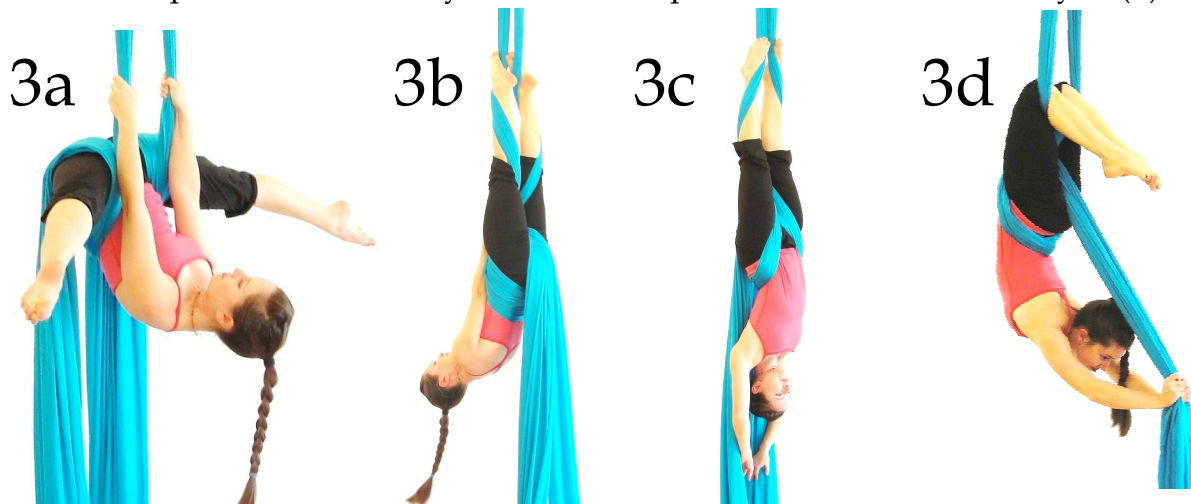
Crochet Thigh Wrap Entry Method 2

1 Begin in a bent arm hold. Bring one foot (for example, your right) around the opposite fabric from front to back. As you bring the fabric over your ankle, make sure to bring this fabric in front of the opposite fabric.

2 With your second foot, bend your leg behind you so that you pass the free fabric. Come up next to it so that the fabric passes on the outside of your ankle. Press your foot back and around to help the fabric stay on the inside of your leg as you bring your leg in front of you. Pull both legs together in front of you so that the fabrics fall between your thighs.



3 Straddle back with the fabrics between your legs. Crochet both your legs and you are in a crochet thigh wrap position. You should be able to release your hands without slipping. Keep your body firm; when done correctly, the fabric is fully supporting your weight. One variation pictured is to bend your knees and press the fabric out behind you (d).



Butterfly Wings

Prerequisites: crochet thigh wrap

1 Begin with a crochet thigh wrap using an entry of your choice. (The fabric should be crossed behind your back, passing between your legs and your leg(s) either single or double crocheted.)

2 Bring the tails around in front of your torso. Hold on to them as you remove your legs from the crocheted position.

3 Straddle your legs out to the side and then engage your deep abdominal muscles to lift up and invert. Keep the fabrics pressed in front of you and out to the side while you invert, catching the poles in front of your shoulders.



Idea ▶ This position pictured to the left can be used as a descent. Simply release some of the tension in the inner thighs and allow the fabric to slide through your hands. ◀

4 Squeeze your legs together tightly as you bring the fabric in front of you and hunt for the edges. To prevent slipping, it helps to cross your ankles.



5 Once you have an edge or something close to it, open up your arms to the sides. Continue to keep your legs squeezed together.



6 To exit this position, drop the fabrics and quickly switch your hand grip to the poles of the fabric. (Especially at this step, it is important to continue the squeezing of the inner thighs together to keep from slipping down the fabric.) Once you have your hands holding your weight, release the fabric from your legs and air walk until the fabric has fallen away from your body.



CHAPTER 7 POP QUIZ

Question:

If you see someone in the following position and they are debating which foot to remove for (A) the shoulder sling from crossback straddle and (B) the sideways middle splits from the beginning manual. What footlock should they remove for each?



Answer: You can just barely tell that the fabric this student has their hands on is passing underneath the other fabric, so this is the fabric closest to their back in the crossing. If she removes this right footlock, then she can proceed into the shoulder sling. If this student removes the other footlock, the one around her left foot, then that will create a completely free tail, and she can proceed into the sideways middle splits. In short, (A) right foot, (B) left foot.