

# Popular art: B-boying (breakdance)



**B-boying** or **breaking** is a style of street dance that originated among African American and Latino American youths in New York City during the early 1970s. Fast to gain popularity in the media, the dance spread worldwide especially in South Korea, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Russia, and Japan. While diverse in the amount of variation available in the dance, b-boying consists of four primary elements: *toprock*, *downrock*, *power moves*, and *freezes*. B-boying is typically danced to hip-hop and especially breakbeats, although modern trends allow for much wider varieties of music along certain ranges of tempo and beat patterns



# Worldwide expansion



- **Brazil**

- Ismael Toledo was one of the first b-boys in Brazil. <sup>[28]</sup> In 1984, he moved to the United States to study dance. <sup>[28]</sup> While in the U.S. he discovered breaking and ended up meeting b-boy Crazy Legs who personally mentored him for the four years that followed. <sup>[28]</sup> After becoming proficient in breaking, he moved back to São Paulo and started to organize b-boys crews and enter international competitions. <sup>[28]</sup> He eventually opened a hip-hop dance studio called the Hip-Hop Street College. <sup>[28]</sup>



- **South Korea**

- B-boying was first introduced to South Korea by American soldiers shortly after its surge of popularity in the U.S. during the 1980s, but it was not until the late 1990s that the culture and dance really took hold. 1997 is known as the "Year Zero of Korean breaking". A Korean-American hip hop promoter named John Jay Chon was visiting his family in Seoul and while he was there, he met a crew named Expression Crew in a club. He gave them a VHS of a Los Angeles b-boying competition called Radiotron. A year later when he returned, Chon found that his video and others like his had been copied and dubbed numerous times, and were feeding an ever-growing b-boy community.
- In 2002, Korea's Expression Crew won the prestigious international b-boying competition Battle of the Year, exposing the skill of the country's b-boys to the rest of the world. Since then, the Korean government has capitalized on the popularity of the dance and has promoted it alongside Korean culture. R-16 Korea is the most well-known government-sponsored b-boy event, and is hosted by the Korean Tourism Organization and supported by the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism.

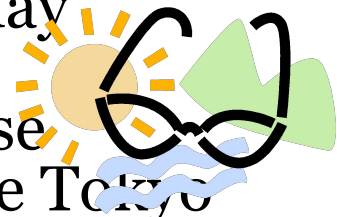


- **Japan**

- Shortly after the Rock Steady Crew came to Japan, b-boying within Japan began to thrive. Each Sunday b-boys would perform breaking in Tokyo's Yoyogi Park. One of the first and most influential Japanese breakers was Crazy-A, who is now the leader of the Tokyo chapter of Rock Steady Crew. He also organizes the yearly B-Boy Park which draws upwards of 10,000 fans a year and attempts to expose a wider audience to the culture.

- **Cambodia**

- Born in Thailand and raised in the United States, Tuy "KK" Sobil started a community center called Tiny Toones in Phnom Penh in 2005 where he uses b-boying, hip-hop music, and art to teach Cambodian youth language skills, computer skills, and life skills (hygiene, sex education, counseling). His organization helps roughly 5,000 youth a year. One of these youth include Diamond, who is regarded as Cambodia's first b-girl.



# B-boy styles



- B-boys can therefore be categorized into a broad style which generally showcases the same types of techniques.
- Power: This style of b-boying is what most members of the general public associate with the term "breakdancing". Power moves comprise full-body spins and rotations that give the illusion of defying gravity. Examples of power moves include headspins, backspins, windmills, flares, airtracks/airflares, 1990s, 2000s, jackhammers, crickets, turtles, hand glide, halos, and elbow spins. Those b-boys who use "power moves" almost exclusively in their sets are referred to as "power heads" or power movers.
- Abstract: A very broad style of b-boying which may include the incorporation of "threading" footwork, freestyle movement to hit beats, house dance, and "circus" styles (tricks, contortion, etc.).





- **Blowup:** A style of b-boying which focuses on the "wow factor" of certain power moves, freezes, and circus styles. Blowups consist of performing a sequence of as many difficult trick combinations in as quick succession as possible in order to "smack" or exceed the virtuosity of the other b-boy's performance. This is usually attempted only after becoming proficient in other styles due to the degree of control and practice required in this type of dancing. The names of some of the moves are: airbaby, airchair, hollow backs, solar eclipse, reverse airbaby, among others. The main goal in blowup-style is the rapid transition through a sequence of power moves ending in a skillful freeze.
- **Flavor:** A style that is based more on elaborate toprock, downrock, and/or freezes. This style is focused more on the beat and musicality of the song than having to rely on "power" moves only. B-boys who base their dance on "flavor" or style are known as "style heads".

