

Shiro Bhedas



Shiro Bheda

Shiro Bheda refers to the different head movements used in Bharatanatyam and other classical Indian dance forms. The word shiro means “head,” and bheda means “movement” or “variation.” These movements are vital for expressing emotions (bhava), enhancing storytelling, and adding grace to the dancer’s performance.

According to the Natya Shastra, there are 9 types of Shiro Bhedas

“Samam Udhvahitam Adhomukham
Alolitham Dhutam Kampithamcha
Paravrutham Utkshiptham Parivahitham

Navatham kathitham sheersham Natyashasthra visharadaihi”

Shiro Bheda - Head Movements

| Bhedas | Movements | Uses |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Sama | Head held straight and steady | used to show calmness or neutrality. |
| Udvahita | Head lifted upward | expresses pride, looking at something above, or prayer. |
| Adhomukha | Head bent downward | shows shyness, humility, or sorrow. |
| Alolitha | Head moved in a circular motion | used to depict dizziness, laughter, or playfulness. |
| Dhuta | Head turned side to side | expresses denial, rejection, or disagreement. |
| Kampita | Head moved up and down | shows approval, curiosity, or calling someone. |
| Paravritha | Head turned to one side | used to indicate looking back or turning away |
| Utkhsiptha | Head tilted to one side and upward | expresses pride or listening attentively. |
| Parivahitha | Head moved gently from side to side | used to show affection, grace, or modesty. |