

DENGOZO MAXIXE

(Brazil -France-United States)

Richard Powers

Maxixe (Mah-SHEESH) is Africanized polka, meaning it was an Afro-Brazilian styling of the polka brought to Brazil by European immigrants. The Maxixe as done in the U.S. was not the original Brazilian form since it was modified by Parisian dancers when it was first introduced there in 1906 (it didn't catch on) and was modified again when it was successfully re-introduced in Paris by Brazilian expatriate Monsieur Duque (1912), with further revisions by English and American dancers. The Maxixe soon evolved into the Samba.

Richard has introduced two different Maxixes at Stockton and elsewhere: Maxixe 1 in 1989 and Maxixe 2 in 2001. Some dancers found them to be a little difficult, so Dengozo Maxixe combines the easier first half of Maxixe 1 with the easier second half of Maxixe 2. It fits within the floor pattern of other couples doing either of the originals. Doing an easier version matches the easygoing party feel of both Maxixe and Samba.

MUSIC: "Dengozo" by Ernesto Nazareth. There are many recorded versions. Other tunes also work.

RHYTHM: 2/4 Brazilian Maxixe compositions have a fast Habanera rhythm. U.S. versions usually don't.

TEMPO: Maxixe recordings from the era vary widely in tempo, from very slow to a normal polka / samba tempo. Vernon and Irene Castle preferred a lively, sunny interpretation of the Maxixe, about 110-116 bpm.

FORMATION: Cpls, in Ballroom pos.

STEPS: Ftwk described for M; W use opp ftwk.

Maxixe Two-Step (turning): While starting to rotate CW (as a cpl), step L to L side, starting to bend body to R, starting to raise clasped hands (ct 1); close R to L (or cross R slightly behind L) continuing to turn and bend (ct &); step L to L side, completing 180° turn and ending with body leaning to R side, M L (and W R) hands arched overhead (ct 2). Repeat to R side, continuing CW rotation, but leaning to L side, clasped hands coming down in a smooth sweep (cts 3 & 4).

Heel-and-toe figure: M steps on L heel (toe raised) diagonally across the line of LOD as W points R toe with wt to the right of that line (ct 1); both close rear foot up to first foot with wt (ct &); M points L toe to the left of the line of LOD as W steps on R heel diagonally across the line of LOD (ct 2); both close rear foot up to first foot with wt (ct &). Repeat.

Step-Kick: Step L fwd (ct 1); briefly bend R knee then kick R straight fwd into the air, matching ptrs elevation (ct 2); step R slightly behind L, beginning to turn CW as a cpl (ct 3); close L to R (ct &); step R in place, continuing to turn CW (ct 4).

STYLING: The body should be very flexible, with graceful bends and arm-sweeps, and smooth turns of the Two-Step without bouncing.

PATTERN

Measures

1-4 Introduction, no action.

I. Turning two-steps, Heel-and-Toe Figure

- 1-4 Maxixe Two-Steps turning, traveling LOD
- 5-6 Heel-and-Toe Figure three times, traveling LOD, bodies facing somewhat fwd toward LOD.
- 7 Side step toward LOD, facing partner and raising arm into Scorpion Position
- 8 Hold, looking down at the rear foot and raising that toe.

II. Turning two-steps and Sunburst in RLOD

- 1-4 Two-Step turning, traveling RLOD, beg M R ft, W L ft. On meas 1 and 3, lower clasped hands, raising them on meas 2 and 4.
- 5-7 6 Sliding Steps to M's R side, traveling RLOD. After the first 2 slides, release Ballroom pos to touch fingertips of opened hands together, palm-to-palm with ptrs palms, about eye level. Then open arms up (on count 5) and out to both sides in a "sunburst" arc, while continuing the sliding steps.
- 8 M steps R foot to R side without closing L to R, leaning body and tilting outstretched arms toward his L side and raising L toe, L heel to the floor. W mirrors this pose.

III. Face-to-face, back-to-back

- 1 Single Two-Step to the side without turning, beg M L (toward LOD) releasing M L (W R) hand but keeping the other hand. Optional styling: Take the 1st step of each Two-Step with a strong heel-lead.
- 2 Two-Step, turning individually away from ptr, swinging held hands fwd toward LOD.
- 3 Two-Step oscillating back to face ptr, swinging held hands back toward RLOD again.
- 4 Two-Step turning away from ptr again, but release hands and turn a full 360° with this Two-Step (M turning CCW, W to CW) to face ptr again. Note: Take all 3 steps of this Two-Step, not 2 pivot steps.
- 5-8 Two-Steps turning, in Ballroom pos, as in Part I.

IV. Step-kicks

- 1-2 Step-Kick toward LOD, then turn as a cpl 120° (1/3 turn) CW.
 - 3-8 Repeat 3 more times. The 4th Step-Kick is again toward LOD.
- Final 7-8 If the music is ending, hold the kick of the last Step-Kick for 2 full counts (counts 2 and 3), then drop fwd onto the kicking foot and the supporting knee.

SEQUENCE: Repeat from Part I until music ends.