

# RUSSIAN PEASANT DANCE

(Russia)

This dance was arranged by Sergei Temoff, and taught to Changs International Folk Dancers in 1945. It was presented as an exhibition at a War Bond Rally in the San Francisco Civic Auditorium in the summer of that year. The music used is a popular Russian Folk Song, "The Moon Shines".

**MUSIC:** Record: National 4001 - Russian Peasant Dance  
Victor 25-0030A "Shining Moon"  
Piano: Svietit Miesiets (The Moon Shines)  
M. E. Shambaugh, A. S. Barnes & Co. 1932

**FORMATION:** Cpls in a circle, ptrs facing, M back to ctr.  
Free fists on hips unless otherwise stated. W, hands on hips, may carry handkerchief to use during W solo.

**STEPS AND STYLING:** Russian Polka\*, Pas de Bas\*, Walk\*, Three Step Turn\*, Push step\*, Slide\*, Pivot\*, Hop\*, Run\*, Hungarian Turn Pos, Varsouvienne pos\*.

Prysiadkas: Squat on heels with hands down between knees (cts 1, 2); rise to astride pos with wt on heels, toes pointing up, open arms sdwd about waist level (cts 1, 2).

Prysiadkas with Pivot Turn: Squat on heels with hands down between knees (cts 1, 2). Rise to astride pos, wt on R ft, L heel extended diag fwd, toe up, R arm arched high, L hand extended sdwd (cts 1, 2). Step on L (ct 1), pivot turn CCW (ct 2); step R (ct 1), hold (ct 2). Repeat step reversing ftwork and pivot turn.

Russian Skip (2 to a meas): Step R directly behind L, displacing L (cts 1, &); hop R (ct ah), step L behind R, displacing R (cts 2, &), hop L (ct ah) (same timing as regular skip). Keep knees turned out.

Hop-Tap (CW turn): Hop R and at the same time tap L ft on floor (ct 1), hop R and at the same time raise L ft off floor, knee bent, ft under body (ct 2). Reverse ftwork for CCW turn.

Toe-Toe-Kick Step: Hop L, touch R toe to R side, toe turned down, heel up, knee turned in (ct 1); hop L, touch R toe in same spot, heel up, knee turned out (ct 2). Hop L, kick R ft diag fwd, leg straight (ct 1), step R to L (ct 2). Repeat step reversing ftwork.

Jump-Tap: Handkerchief may be held in R hand. Jump on L making 1/4 turn CCW, at the same time tap R toe on floor in front of L toe (both arms come down in front of body) (ct 1); hop L, raise R knee, knee out, toe down, and make 1/4 CW turn (R arm swings high to R side) (ct 2). Repeat step, reversing ftwork, direction of turn and arm.

Step-Slap: Step fwd on R heel, toe pointed up (ct 1), lower toe to floor with a slap, take wt on R (ct 2). Repeat step reversing ftwork.

MUSIC 2/4

PATTERN

## Measures

16 meas INTRODUCTION Watch ptr with interest

I. AWAY AND TOGETHER

- 1-4 Both bend fwd from hips; on ct 1 of each meas clap own hands in front and at the same time stamp R ft on floor slightly fwd (4 times in all).
- 5-8 Dance 8 Russian Skip steps bkwd away from ptr; M fists on hips. W start with hands on hips, gradually extend hands twd ptr, palms up, arms rounded.
- 9-12 Repeat action of meas 1-4.
- 13-16 Both begin R. With 2 Russian polka steps and 3 stamps, R-L-R, move twd ptr. Place R arm around ptrs waist, L arm arched high, R hips adjacent (Hungarian Turn Pos).

II. HOP-TAP

- 1-8 Dance 8 Hop-tap steps turning CW in place.
- 9-16 Reverse ftwork and direction and repeat action of meas 1-8 (Fig II). Finish sequence ptrs facing, M back to ctr.

III. REACHING AND W AROUND M

Arms extended sdwd, palms down, leading arm slightly above shoulder level, trailing arm slightly below shoulder level:

- 1-2 Beginning ML-WR place heel sdwd twd LOD, knees straight (ct 1), bend knees slightly (ct 2); straighten knees (ct 1); lower toe to floor taking wt and turn 1/2 (M CCW, W CW) to finish back to back (ct 2).
- 3-4 Repeat action of meas 1-2 (Fig III) reversing ftwork and turns. Finish face to face.
- NOTE: Arms are lowered as ptrs turn on ct 2 of meas 2 and 4.
- 5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig III). Join inside hands, (WR-ML).
- 9-16 M L fist on hip, kneel on L knee and remain in this pos as he leads W twice around him CCW. On ct 2, meas 16, M rise and take ptr in Varsouvienne pos, both facing LOD (CCW).
- 9 W hold skirt with R hand, step fwd L bending knee (ct 1), sweep R ft in a half circle CCW, step R beside L (ct 2).
- 10-16 Repeat action of meas 9 (Fig III) 7 times (8 in all). Finish on outside of circle, facing LOD, in Varsouvienne pos with ptr.

IV. PAS DE BASQUE AND ELBOW HOOK

- 1-8 Both begin R. Dance 8 Pas de Basque steps fwd in LOD (CCW).
- 9-12 Hook R elbows, L arm arched high, lean away from ptr. Both begin R and walk 8 steps CW in place.
- 13-16 Repeat action of meas 9-12 (Fig IV) reversing ftwork and

direction. Finish sequence in a double circle, ptrs side by side. Both move RLOD throughout following figure.

#### V. THREE STEP TURN AND PUSH STEP

- 1-2 Both begin R. With 3 steps R-L-R, make one complete CW turn sdwd to R (cts 1, 2, 1), swing L across R (ct 2).  
 NOTE: Remain side by side on turn. Arms hang loosely at sides on turn; clap own hands out to R side on ct 2, meas 2.
- 3-4 Repeat action of meas 1-2 (Fig V) reversing ftwork and direction (3-step turn CCW).
- 5-6 Repeat action of meas 1-2 (Fig V) (3-step turn CW)
- 7-8 Repeat action of meas 3-4 (Fig V) (3-step turn CCW). Omit swing on last ct, face ptr, M back to ctr. W take wt on R.
- 9-14 M fists on hips, move sdwd (RLOD) with 12 push steps.
- 15-16 Walk R, L (RLOD) (cts 1-2), stamp R (ct 1), hold (ct 2). On the two walking steps M arms gradually extend fwd; on the stamp, open twd ptr with a strong gesture.
- 9-10 W move sdwd (RLOD) with 4 push steps, L arm across front of chest, R arched high. On ct & of 4th push step, turn 1/2 CW to face outside of circle, back to ptr; reverse arm pos.
- 11-12 With 4 push steps and 1/2 turn CW, W continue moving sdwd R (RLOD). Change arm pos on turn (face ptr).
- 13-14 Repeat action of meas 9-10 (Fig V).
- 15-16 Walk R, L, turning 1/2 CW to face ptr (cts 1-2), stamp R (ct 1), hold (ct 2). NOTE: W turn is always CW, trailing arm is always high.  
 On the 2 walking steps, arms gradually extend fwd; on the stamp open twd ptr with a strong gesture.

#### VI. AWAY, TOGETHER, SKIPPING TURN

- 1-2 Both begin R. Dance 4 Russian skip steps bkwd, away from ptr. Begin sequence with hands on hips, gradually extend them fwd twd ptr. M may keep fists on hips.
- 3-4 Both begin R. Move fwd with 2 Russian polka steps to finish with R hips adjacent. Place R arm around ptrs waist, join L hands above heads.
- 5-6 With 4 walking steps (R-L-R-L), cpl turn once CW in place.
- 7-8 M step in place R-L-R-L.  
W turn 1/2 CW under joined L hands. Finish sequence side by side, MR arm in back of W with R hands joined on her R waist, joined L hands extended fwd.
- 9-14 Both begin R. Dance 12 skip steps turning CW. M move fwd, W bkwd. Finish sequence M back to ctr.
- 15-16 M step in place R-L-R-L as he turns W CW under joined L hands to face him.

VII. MAN'S SOLO

- 1-8 M perform 2 Prysiadkas with Pivot turn, alternating ftwork, hand movements and turn.
- 9-12 M perform 2 Prysiadkas.
- 13-15 Fold arms in front of chest; begin R and dance 6 Russian skip steps bkwd in a small CW circle. Finish sequence back to ctr.
- 16 Stamp R, open arms twd ptr (ct 1), hold (ct 2).
- 1-16 W place R elbow in L palm, R hand near chin, R forefinger on cheek as she watches ptr SOLO. On ct 1 of each meas, W tap toe on floor and tap cheek with R forefinger.

VIII. WOMAN'S SOLO

- 1-8 M clap hands and stamp R on ct 1 of each meas while watching W SOLO.
- 1-8 W dance 8 jump-tap steps moving bkwd away from ptr.
- 9-10 Both begin R. Move fwd with 2 Russian polka steps. If handkerchief is used, W hold each end in both hands and twist it in front about eye level.
- 11-12 M with 2 Russian polka steps, turn CCW to follow W twd ctr.  
W dance 2 Russian polka steps continuing twd ctr as she passes M on his R.
- 13-14 Both continue twd ctr with 2 Russian polka steps.
- 15-16 Both walk fwd R, L (cts 1, 2), stamp R (ct 1), hold (ct 2).  
W tuck handkerchief in belt, form circle of W by joining hands. M join hands to form an outside circle of M.

IX. CIRCLE

- 1-4 With 4 Russian polka steps, M begin L and circle CW while W begin R and circle CCW. M face RLOD, W LOD.
- 5-8 All face ctr, continue with 7 sliding steps and stamp (ML-WR) on meas 8 (ct 2).
- 9-16 Repeat action of meas 1-8 (Fig IX), reversing ftwork and direction. Finish sequence with W in front of M and slightly to his R, join R hands above W head, L on own hip. both facing ctr.

X. ENLARGING CIRCLE

- 1-2 Both begin R and move fwd with 3 small walking steps (R-L-R), tap L with a slight bend of knees.
- 3-4 Both begin L and move bkwd with 3 longer walking steps (R-L-R) to enlarge circle; tap R with slight bend of knees.
- 5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig X).
- 9-10 M step in place and assist W to turn once CW under joined R hands. W step R-L-R (cts 1, 2, 1); both stamp L (ct 2), W no wt.

- 11-12 Repeat action of meas 9-10 (Fig X), W reversing ftwork and direction.
- 13-16 Repeat action of meas 9-12 (Fig X). On last turn CW, W finish facing ptr, back to ctr.

#### XI. STAMP, PIVOT AND AROUND PARTNER

- 1-2 Both stamp R diag fwd across L (in semi crouched pos) and clap own hands in front (cts 1, 2), stamp R to R side, opening both arms sdwd (cts 1, 2).
- 3-4 Both pivot CCW (cts 1, 2), step R in place facing ptr (cts 1, 2)
- 5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig XI).
- 9-12 M fold arms in front of chest, W place hands on hips. With 4 Step slap steps move fwd passing R shoulders.
- 13-15 With 4 Jump-hop steps, move around ptr, passing L shoulders, and return to place.
- 16 Step L to R (ct 1), hold (ct 2). Ptrs face, W inside with back to ctr.

#### XII. STEP-SWING, STEP-HOP

- Ptrs move together in LOD.
- 1-2 M step fwd R (begin CW turn on ct 1), hop R and swing L ft across R (ct 2); step-hop L, swing R across L, completing turn (cts 1, 2). Arms follow swinging ft.
- 3-4 Beginning R, move fwd in LOD with 3 walking steps (R-L-R) (cts 1, 2, 1), turn 1/2 CCW, stamp L twd RLOD (ct 2). Open arms in strong gesture on stamp.
- 1-4 W dance same sequence with opp ftwork and turn.
- 5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Fig XII) moving RLOD, reversing ftwork and turn. M begin L, W R.
- 9-12 M dance 2 Prysiaiskas.  
W dance 2 Toe-toe-Kick steps.
- 13-16 Hook R elbows, L arm arched high; with 8 quick walking steps (1 step to a ct) turn CW in place. Finish sequence with W on MR, both facing ctr.

#### XIII. SINGLE CIRCLE AND COUPLE TURN

- 1-16 All join hands in single circle, and without backing out, move in LOD with 32 running steps.
- 17-31 Ptrs assume Hungarian turn pos, turn CW in place with small running steps. Finish sequence M on inside of circle, back to ctr; release ptr.
- 32 Join inside hands (MR-WL). M turn W CW under joined hands to end in pose, outside hands arched high.

### Sequence of Figures, Russian Peasant Dance

1. Clap and stamp, away and together.
2. Waist-turn (hop-tap).
3. Reaching; woman circles man.
4. Pas-de-basque; elbow hooks.
5. Three-step turns; push steps in circle.
6. Away and together, walking turn; skipping turn.
7. Man's solo.
8. Woman's solo; forming men's and women's circles.
9. Circling in men's and women's circles.
10. Enlarging circle.
11. Stamp and pivot; dos-a-dos.
12. Step-swing and walk; man's prysiadkas, woman's star-step; elbow hook.
13. Running in single circle.
14. Couple turn.

Each figure is 16 measures long (32 counts).

PRYSIADKAS

Ukrainian and Russian dances with their squats, spins and leaping steps contain a unique quality of execution demanding the utmost of the individual in speed, balance, agility, and precision. The Ukrainian terminology for the squatting steps, "prysiadkas" signifies the physically challenging steps performed by the man only. "Prysiadkas" allow the man to flaunt his physical strength much as the Spanish gitano amazes with his flurries of intricate footwork. Contrasted with the open exuberance of the man, the woman's part is more reserved and restrained. It is only the man who "stoops to conquer". While there are many variations of "prysiadkas" in both Russian and Ukrainian dances, those listed below are popularly used. (HG)

GENERAL ASPECTS OF PRYSIADKAS

1. A straight, erect back in squatting position.
2. A seeming ease in execution.
3. Proper styling and precision in execution.

STEPS

1. *HEEL SQUAT*

- a. From a standing position assume a squatting position - sit over heels and turn knees out. Hands cross in front of knees, palms turned in.
- b. Spring to astride position, landing on the heels with toes turned up. At the same time fling arms to an extended position at shoulder height. Continue (a) then (b).

2. *SIDE KICK*

- a. From a standing position (heels together, toes turned out, R hand in back of neck, L fist on hip) assume squat position. Assume standing position by rising on R foot and kicking L foot directly to the L simultaneously. Continue 3 times, moving to the R and end with stamp L,R,L.
- b. Repeat in opposite direction, shifting position of the hands.

3. *PIGEON TOE*

- a. From a standing position, assume a squatting position.
- b. Recover to astride position, landing on inverted toes - pigeon-toed. The hands cross in front on the squat position with palms turned in. In the astride position, the hands are extended to the side opposite the hips with palms turned out.

4. *SQUAT WITH SINGLE PIGEON TOE*

- a. From standing position, squat to heels - hands crossed between knees with palms turned in.
- b. Assume astride position, turning L toe to inverted position, while R foot remains in normal position. The R hand remains to the side with the palm turned in, while the palm of the L hand is turned out.
- c. Squat and repeat with R foot pigeon-toed and change in hand position.

5. *SQUAT AND SPIN*

- a. From standing position, assume squatting position, sitting on heels with hands crossed, palms turned in.
- b. Land in astride position on heels, hands extended sward shoulder height.
- c. Land in squatting position, L hand between knees, R hand extended in back. In this position (prepare) swing arms to the L, giving the body momentum to spin to the L and rise on the L foot. In spinning once the R foot remains close to the L slightly off the ground. Continue alternating *squat astride* and *squat spin*.

6. *SQUAT TOE HEEL*

- a. From standing position, squat over heels.
- b. Recover from squat to standing position with L toe inverted, place L heel in same place. Repeat sequence with the R foot.

7. *"SCHUPAK" HEEL THRUST*

- a. From a squatting position, knees almost together, arms folded over chest, thrust the R foot fwd at the same time sitting over the L heel. Reverse and continue alternate thrusting. A more difficult version of the above is to assume the same squatting position, body balanced over the L heel while the R foot is thrust fwd off the floor. Continue the above with alternate thrusts of R and L.

8. *LEG CIRCLING*

- a. From squatting position, hands flat on floor in front, swing R extended leg sward and fwd, cutting out R arm which is immediately replaced, then similarly the L arm and L leg, and assume original squatting position. R leg makes a complete circle.