

ENKEL ENGELSKA

(ENG-kehl ENG-ehl-ska)

Skandia CD, track 2

NOMENCLATURE

Credible English Title Simple English Dance.

ETHNO-CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES

Heritage Sweden.
U.S. Source As learned in Sweden at Rättsviksdansen 1982, by Gordon E. Tracie, and taught at Skandia Folkdance Society, Seattle.
Category Progressive set dance from Sweden.
Motivation and application Recreational, non-performance-oriented.

MUSICAL ATTRIBUTES

Type Duple meter (2/4), evenly phrased 16-bar Engelska tune from Sweden.

CHOREOLOGICAL ATTRIBUTES

Function Couple mixer dance.
Character and form Legato. See Background Information.
Footwork Repetitive throughout, parallel.
Specific steps Walking. See background information.
Dance holds Ring hold. As couples, inside hands joined at shoulder height.
Formation Sets of 2 couples facing one another. Works best if all the couples are arranged in a large circle, Couples 1 facing CCW, Couples 2 facing CW.

THE DANCE ROUTINE

MEASURES	ACTION
1 - 8	<p>A. Ring L and R ("8 hands round"):</p> <p>Hands joined at shoulder level in ring of 4 persons, 8 walking steps to the L (CW), changing direction on the last step, and 8 walking steps back (CCW) to place.</p> <p>B. Advance and retire:</p>

Cont...

9 - 12	Each couple, with inside hands joined at shoulder height, advances to opposite couple with 4 walking steps, giving a <i>kompliment</i> (a slight nod of the head) to the other on the 4th step, then retires backward to place with 4 more walking steps, with a compliment to partner on the backward 4th step.
13 - 16	<p>C. Arch and under progression:</p> <p>All Couples 1 (facing CCW in big circle) move forward with 8 walking steps under an arch formed by all Couples 2 (those facing CW in big circle), who also move 8 walking steps in their direction (CW), so that each couple winds up facing a brand new couple "up ahead."</p>
	Dance resumes at A and repeats until music ends.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

When Britannia "ruled the waves" in the 18th and 19th centuries, English sailors roamed the globe and in many coastal areas left traces of their music and dance which survive unto this day. The term *engelska*, meaning "English" in Swedish, refers to such dances, which can be traced back to an English dancing master book published in 1651. Called *reel* in Denmark, *ril* in Norway and *enkeliska* in Finnish, these dances have distinctly recognizable British steps and figures, and are danced to cognates of tunes still played in the British Isles and North America, but are executed in a Nordic rather than English style.

The very simple form here described is from the southern part of Sweden, where most of the *engelska* dances are to be found. The music is somewhat slower and considerably more relaxed than today's American and Canadian counterparts. Footwork throughout is a soft, somewhat springy (but not jerky) walking step, neither a "square dance shuffle" nor a hop. Foot weight rolls from heel to sole. The cadence is steady, the measures evenly phrased on "base 8." One time through the pattern is 16 measures of 2/4 music, thus 32 steps. Most any Swedish *engelska* melody at moderate to moderately slow tempo, with consistent 16-measure phrasing, would be suitable. The most common tune is that recognized in the US as "Soldier's Joy," which was spread by British sailors to both Europe and North America in the 18th century.

An interesting and novel application of this dance was observed in Sweden in the summer of 1982. Any two couples would begin the dance with Figures A. and B., then separate on Figure C., by proceeding to a man and woman on the sidelines who were not dancing, and bringing them on the floor to initiate a new ring (Figure A.). On the next Figure C., four couples would divide to find new dancers on the sidelines, etc. In this way the number of participating couples doubles geometrically, eventually involving most everyone in the room.

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Enkel Engelska

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