

SØRLANDSSPRINGAR
(Norway)

Springars belong to the oldest dances known in Norway, having arrived from Europe in the 1600s. Each area has its own springar, and it is usually not possible to dance the springar from one area to the music from another. Each dance is a rich, improvisational form resembling the more modern swing in many ways.

Sorlandsspringar, found along the southern coast, does not appear to be related to older springar traditions from the same area. Rather, it appears to be a relative of Vestlandsspringar that became established in Sorlandet early in this century. Rhythmically, it is quite easy to grasp and that is the main reason I have chosen to present this particular springar.

I have presented in the notes the style I originally learned. Lately, however, I have seen the dance done much faster. It also often has the more bouncy style associated with Vestlandsspringar. Whether the dance is changing, or whether I learned an unusual variant, I do not know.

Pronunciation:

Source: Edvard Lauen from Birkeland in Øst-Agder. Learned at a course in Oslo in 1978.

Music: EMI 038-1374731 (LP) or 238-137434 (cassette) Aage Grundstad's Norwegian Folk and Figure Dances III, Side B/8. 3/4 meter
The Vestlandsspringars on Heilo HO7012 may also be used (Side A/8 "Lystig og kåt", and Side B/6 "Bjønnheimen"). 3/4 meter

Formation: Cpls facing ptr, M back to ctr. It is not necessary to be in a circle. M L and W R hands joined at about waist level.

Steps: Basic Step: Take 3 steps (cts 1,2,3) beg on R or L ft. The wt dips slightly on ct 1; otherwise, the step is quite smooth. The raising of the wt before ct 2 may be quite sharp, resulting in a "hiccup". Usually, the toe contacts the ground first, and the wt of the body is held quite far back. On ct 1, the whole ft eventually takes the wt, but on cts 2,3 it may be just the ball of the ft. The relative length of the steps is long-short-medium. The quality is very smooth, and is definitely walking rather than running. It may be done in any direction. It alternates ft in consecutive meas.

Turning Step: Step (ct 1); step (ct 2); hop (ct 3). The hop is very flat, somewhat like a chug, and so little energy is used that the supporting ft often does not leave the ground. The free ft is extended fwd (even when dancing bkwd) at ankle level; it assumes this position quite

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quickly during the hop. The step has the same qualities and level changes as the basic. It is used for turning; always hop on the inside ft. If you find yourself on the wrong ft to begin the turning step, do an extra basic step before starting it.

Basic Dance Pattern: One time through the dance consists of three parts: Figure, Turn W under arm, and Lausdans (solo dance). The length of each part is optional, but changes normally occur at the beg of a musical phrase (meas 1 or 5 of an 8 meas phrase). The Figure may vary each time through the dance; several Figures are described below. Figures may also be repeated; different individuals have different Figure repertoires so feel free to limit yourself to those Figures you like and/or can remember. Free hands usually hang at sides. All transitions should be very smooth; there are no sudden movements.

Figure: Danced more or less in place. It is normally not important to face a particular direction in any part of the Figures. Parts of the Figures have optional lengths, but transitions should occur at the beg of a musical phrase.

Turn Woman under arm: Hold R hands with ptr over W head. She turns to her own R with the basic step, 1 1/2 turns per meas, progressing CCW around the room. (Note: She may also use this step: step R (ct 1); step L (ct 2); touch R beside L (ct 3). Using this step, she does only 1 turn per meas.) M dances fwd with the basic, behind his ptr and a little to her L.

When the M wishes to beg the Lausdans, he leads the joined R hands down to a low position as the W turns to face him. At the same time, he dances by her on the inside and turns to face her. Release hands and move several ft apart. End facing ptr, M facing RLOD and W facing LOD.

Lausdans: The cpl continues to progress around the room CCW, M dancing bkwd, W fwd. The W simply does the basic step. The M may show off, embellishing the basic step with hops, slaps of the ft, squats and turns. He may clap, snap his fingers and use his arms freely. These embellishments are improvised and optional. When the M wishes to beg the dance again, he slows down and uses his arm and body position to lead the W into the desired Figure.

Figures: Close-open and Varsouvienne: This figure is always first. Close-open: Facing ptr with M back to ctr, join M L and W R hands at about waist level. Do basic steps, M beg L and W R, first face to face (meas 1), then fwd CCW around the room (meas 2). The joined hands move back and fwd quite unobtrusively, usually at or below waist level. Repeat as desired.

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Transition into Varsouvienne turn - approximately 2 meas of basic step. M leads W across in front of him, changes hands to hold her L in his L, and leads her around behind him. She dances all the way around to his R side and they join R hands. End with L hands joined above M L shldr, W L arm extended behind M back; hold R hands approximately to R of W R shldr, M R arm extended in front of W.

Varsouvienne turn - turning step.
M dances bkwd, W fwd. M starts with L and W with R ft. Cpl rotates CCW.

Transition to other side - 1 meas of basic step.
M lifts L hands, W turns to her L across in front of him. They end in exactly the same pos they started in except M and W roles are reversed. Keep rotating CCW during the transition.

Reverse Varsouvienne turn - turning step.
M dances fwd, W bkwd. M starts with R and W with L ft. Cpl rotates CCW.

Transition to other side - 1 meas of basic step.
Do exactly the same as the previous transition, except that the roles of the M and W are reversed.

Varsouvienne turn - turning step.
Repeat the Varsouvienne turn, M dancing bkwd and W fwd for a very few measures.

Transition: Release L hands, lift R hands, and start W turning under arm.

Waist-upper arm turning Transition into:
M faces W and puts hands in the pos they will be in when they join: extend R arm to side at waist level, put L hand in front of L shldr. Then join in waist-upper arm pos. Stand R hip to R hip, R arm around ptr waist. L hand holding ptr R upper arm.
First turn - turning step
Both dance fwd, beg L ft. Cpl rotates CW.
Transition to other side - 1 meas of basic step.
Release the hold, move W to other side (L hip to L hip) and take the same hold on the other side.
Second turn - turning step
Both dance fwd, beg R ft. Cpl rotates CCW.
Transition:
M reaches over and takes W R hand in his R, and starts W turning under arm.

Elbow turn - Transition into:
M puts out his R elbow, which W takes with her R elbow. He then pulls her around so that both face the outside of the circle, M on the inside, R elbows joined.

SORLANDSSPRINGAR (Continued)Turn - basic step

Release R elbows, and M takes W L elbow with his L elbow. Each make 1/2 turn, W to L, M to R, so they are facing the ctr of the circle. M is still on inside. Release L elbows, and W takes M R elbow with her R elbow. Each make 1/2 turn continuing in the same direction as before. Repeat as desired. M stays on inside of circle relative to W. It usually takes about 2 meas to complete a full turn. This figure progresses CCW around the room.

Transition:

When they come around to face the ctr, M puts his R hand up high. W, seeing that she cannot take his elbow, takes his R hand in her R and starts turning under arm.

Skaters and Pancake - Transition into:

M takes W L hand, while she dances up on his R and he turns to face the same direction as she is facing. Join R hands under L in a skaters' pos.

First turning - turning step

M dances bkwd, W fwd. M beg with L, W with R ft. Cpl rotates CCW.

Transition to other side - 1 meas of basic step

Ptrs turn twd each other 1/2 turn (M to R, W to L) to reverse the pos. Keep rotating CCW during the transition.

Second turning - turning step.

M dances fwd, W bkwd. M beg with R, W with L ft. Cpl rotates CCW. End this turn by turning face to face, M back to ctr, and bringing the joined hands to about shldr level.

Pancake turn - basic step

Both turn under the joined hands, M to R, W to L. Keep all 4 hands near each other, moving them out to M R and W L to beg. It normally takes about 2 meas for a full turn. This progresses CCW around the room.

Transition:

Drop L hands and start W turning under arm.

Back skaters

This is used by some dancers only at the end of the dance. In that case, dance the first turn and, instead of doing the transition to the other side, end the dance. Release joined R hands, and M turns a little faster around to his L. Stop facing ptr, M back to ctr ordinarily, L hands still joined, and bow/curtsy.

Transition into:

M slows down and, as W dances up to him, he turns to face the same direction as she is, putting his R arm around her waist. She takes his R hand in her R. Join L hands behind M back.

SØRLANDSSPRINGAR (Continued)First turning - turning step

M dances bkwd, W fwd. M beg on L, W on R ft. Cpl rotates CCW.

Transition - 1 meas of basic to get to the other side

Keeping hands joined, do 1/2 turn away from ptr (M to L, W to R). It may be necessary to lean fwd a little. Keep rotating CCW.

Second turn - turning step

M dances fwd, W bkwd. M beg on R, W on L ft. Cpl rotates CCW.

Transition out of - basic step

There are several ways to get out of this turn:

- a) Drop L hands when M facing CCW. He dances in place while leading W around behind him, and leads W up in front of him, raising the joined R hands. She starts turning under arm.
- b) Drop L hands when M almost facing CCW. He makes a full turn to his own R, dropping behind W, and starts her turning under arm.
- c) Drop R hands when M facing CCW. M turns W out to her own L, leads her around behind him, changes to R hands as she comes up beside him and starts her turning under arm.

Presented by Alix Cordray