

Cajun Two-Step

By Jerry Duke

The Cajun Two-Step is a three step dance done to 2:4 music and is found in two rhythmic variations; Quick, Quick, Slow, and Slow, Quick, Quick. The latter is more common and is my favorite. The dances listed below are styles of that rhythmic variation. The "Basic" is so named because it is the more simple of the variations. It is common around Lafayette and the central part of Louisiana, but is not the only variation to be found there. All variations of the "Two-Step" are done in relaxed Ballroom Dance hold. The man begins with the left foot, the woman begins with the right. This alternates with each measure.

There are many good Cajun Two-Step recordings available. One easily located album is "Fais Do Do," on the Swallow label. It is an anthology of various Louisiana musicians and has "Two-Step" on one side and "Waltz" on the other.

Basic: (Rhythm is Slow, Quick, Quick).

Meas. 1

Count 1 Step in place (Man, left; Woman, right).
& Hold.
2 Step to rear (little or no turn of the body).
& Step in original place.

Turn slowly in either direction. Begin next measure on the opposite foot.

Basic with Travel: Moving as a couple, one prtnr fwd, the other bkwd.

Meas. 1

Count 1 Small forward (or backward) step.
& Hold.
2 Large step in same direction.
& Small step in opposite direction.

Begin next measure with opposite foot.

Port Arthur, (Tx): (Similar to "Basic" but with twisting feet.)

Meas. 1

Count 1 Weight on both feet, twist heels inward.
& Lift one foot (M, Right; W, Left), while twisting heels outward.
2 Step to rear while twisting heels inward. Optional kick down and forward of free foot.
& Step in original place while twistng heels outward.

Begin next measure with opposite foot.

Six-Count Waltz: There are several variations of the six-count waltz found throughout Acadiana. It is really the Texas Two-Step (a popular country Western dance done in six counts to 2:4 music, using one and one-half measures) transposed to two measures of waltz music. Man travels forward most of the time while the woman travels backward. Occasionally the dancers turn one-half while traveling and the man goes backward for a while. Ballroom position, man begins left, Woman begins right. One of my favorite variations is below.

Meas. 1

Count 1 Touch (Man slightly forward with the left, Woman backward with the right).

2 Step in that spot.

3 Touch in same direction.

Meas. 2

Count 1 Step in that spot.

2 Step in same direction.

3 Step in same direction.

Repeat from beginning.