

Klapok

(Poland)

I first learned this dance in 1989 during the World Festival of Polish Folklore in Poland in which Sławomir Mazurkiewicz, well-known Lowicz expert from Lodz, used it in his choreography for the finale number involving many dance groups from around the world. He explained to me that like many other regions of the country this clapping (klapać means to clap in Polish and hence the name) dance is meant to be done for fun by people of all ages from young children to the very old. There are many variations of the dance and I have included one that, although quite simple, is very enjoyable to do.

Pronunciation: KLAH-pohk

Music: *Folk Dances from Poland, Vol. 1, Band 8* 2/4 meter
Excerpt from the "Lowicz i Opoczno Suite" recorded by the folk band of the Folk Dance Company Podhale of Montreal, Canada. Edited by Richard Schmidt.

Formation: Circle of cpls in the closed-social pos facing each other with the M facing the LOD.

Styling: The dance is quite simple and made for all ages so there is no particular style or posture expected.

Steps: Side Step: M always starts with L and W always starts with R. As the name indicates couples move sideways in a designated pattern.

M: Take a step on L to L (cts 1,&); bring R ft next to the L (cts 2, &). Holding in Closed-Social pos with ptr's R hand in his L, he extends his L arm out to the L parallel to the floor on ct 1 and holds it there for ct &. On ct 2 he brings his L arm back to his L side but continues the swinging motion by bending his arm at the elbow and bringing the hand in between himself and his ptr just below the chest and holds it there on ct &.

W: Follows with her ptr, beginning with R to R allowing her partner to control her arm movement

Clapping Variation 1: Cpls stand facing each other approx 1 to 2 feet apart and follow the precise sequence below:

Meas 1: Bending knees slightly, clap both hands on the front of your own thighs (L hand on L thigh/R hand on R thigh) (ct 1); straightening knees, clap own hands together at chest level (ct 2); hands are held slightly apart after clapping (ct &).

Meas 2: Clap R hand with ptr's R hand (ct 1); make a small jump with both ft kept together and put your fists on your hips (ct 2).

Meas 3: Repeat meas 1.

Meas 4: Same as meas 2 but use L hand and make a small jump on cts 2&.

Meas 5: Repeat meas 1.

Meas 6: Clap R hand with ptr's R hand (ct 1); clap L hand with ptr's L hand (ct 2). There is no jump this meas.

Meas 7: Repeat meas 1.

Meas 8: Clap both hands with ptr (R to L and L to R) (ct 1); make a small jump and place fists on hips (ct 2).

Klapok—continued

Clapping Variation 2: Clapping cpls stand facing each other approx 1 to 2 feet apart and follow the precise sequence below:

Meas 1: Bending knees slightly, clap both hands on the front of own thighs (L hand on L thigh/R hand on R thigh) (ct 1); straightening knees clap own hands together at chest level (ct 2); hands are held slightly apart after clapping (ct &).

Meas 2: Clap R hand with ptr's R hand (ct 1); small jump with both ft kept together and do a 1/2 turn so that you end with your back to your partner while putting your fists on your hips (cts 2,&). Turns are made facing the ctr of the circle (M turn CCW—L shldr back, while W turn CW—R shldr back).

Meas 3: Repeat meas 1.

Meas 4: Clap L hand with new ptr's L hand (M or W of the cpl next to you in the circle) (ct 1); small jump with both ft kept together and do a 1/2 turn so that you end facing your ptr while putting your fists on your hips (cts 2,&). Turns are made facing the ctr of the circle (M turn CW—R shldr back, while W turn CCW—L shldr back).

Meas 5: Repeat meas 1.

Meas 6: Clap R hand with ptr's R hand (ct 1); clap L hand with ptr's L hand (ct 2). There is no jump this meas.

Meas 7: Repeat meas 1.

Meas 8: Clap both hands with ptr (R to L and L to R) (ct 1); small jump and place fists on hips (cts 2,&).

Hand formations: Closed-Social: Partners stand facing each other as in social dancing pos, M places his R arm around W's waist and extends L arm out to his L with palm facing down, W places her L hand on M's R shldr and places her R hand in M's L hand also palm down.

Individual: When dancing without a ptr, hands should be made into fists and kept on the dancer's hips.

MeasPattern

4 meas

INTRODUCTION

Couples wait in a large circle in the Closed-Social pos with M holding his ptr's R hand in his L with the arms kept parallel to the body. M face LOD while W have their backs to the LOD.

FIGURE 1

1 -16

Cpls take a total of 16 Side Steps forming a Figure 8 lying on its side. Couple begin and end where the arrow is placed, starting by going twd the ctr of the circle. All couples should be moving at the same pace—2 meas to the ctr, 4 meas out and across, 2 meas back into the diameter line of the circle to equal 8 meas, and then the same proportions to return to original place in the circle.



Klapok—continued

FIGURE 2

1-8 Clapping -Variation 1

9-16 Clapping -Variation 2—Note: the music is slowed down for the first 4 meas and then speeded up for the last 4 meas, in this variation to add variety to the dance,

Sequence: The dance begins with an intro of four meas in which the couples prepare themselves for the dance by standing in the opening pos.

Intro, Fig 1, Fig 2, Fig 1, Fig 2, Fig 1, Fig 2, Fig 1, Fig 2.

Dance notes by Richard Schmidt

Presented by Richard Schmidt