

SVENSK MAZURKA (Swedish Mazurka)
(Sweden)

Svensk mazurka (svensk ma-SOOR-ka), Swedish Mazurka, is one of the several "folk-type" couple dances still found in living tradition in Sweden, which go under the designation of "gammaldans" (oldtime dance). It is, however, the least common of these dances, the other, more popular rhythms being: Vals (usually Viennese-type), Hambo, Schottis, and Polka (often called Polkett). At Swedish oldtime dance gatherings it is the common practice for the orchestra to play two selections for each tip of dances, e.g., a pair of waltzes, a pair of hambos, etc. In the case of the Polka and Mazurka, Stockholm dancers will often do two versions of the dance, a simple one during the first selection, a more complex one during the second. Both forms of Swedish Mazurka are given below; they may be used interchangeably to the same music. American dancers will soon discover that simplicity in figure pattern (Mazurka I) in no way implies simplicity in step execution, for in this instance the "simple" version surely demands more agility and skill than the more spectacular "fancy" version (Mazurka II). It is heartily recommended that dancers learn "the first one first", so as to really get the feel of the Swedish Mazurka in their bones!

Source: As learned and danced in Sweden by Gordon E. Tracie, and taught at Skandia Folkdance Club, Seattle.

Described (partially) in "Samkväms & Gillesdanser", published by Svenska Ungdomsringen för Bygdekultur, Stockholm.

Music: Record: Aqua VIKING 813.

Formation: For any number of cpls, progressing fwd in LOD (CCW). Open shoulder-waist pos with free hands on hips Swedish style (fingers fwd, thumb back); closed Baltic dance hold (M's R arm around W's waist; W's R hand's fingers in M's L hand which he holds ticktly against his own L hip, not too far fwd).

Steps: Swedish polka-mazurka (described below); step-swing; kick-mazurka (described below).

Character: Very light and "bouncy".

Svensk mazurka I

This little dance is in character very much like the Polkett, a Swedish form of polka virtually identical to Suomalainen polkka (Finnish Polka, described elsewhere). The dance pos is the same, and in fact the step is essentially the same except for the fact it is in 3/4 rather than 2/4 time! At Stockholm's folklore park, Skansen, it is simply called Mazurka (properly referring to the music rather than the step); but it is known by other names as well, such as Polketta, and even (rare) Hambopolkett! "Mazurka-Polketta" is a possible compromise designation.

There is no "pattern" to this version of the dance; it consists solely of dancing Swedish polka-mazurka steps (described below) in above-described Baltic dance hold. A freestyle dance, the turn is both CW and CCW. M always begins L ft, W R ft.

As a transition from one turning direction to the other, it is customary for the M to stamp on both ft on the 1st beat of the

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1st meas of the new phrase. (The stamp is thus in lieu of his L-lead step, and is followed by close-R and step L, as usual).

Svensk mazurka II

This "fancy" version of the Swedish Mazurka is known variously in Sweden as Sprättmazurka (Kick-Mazurka) or Skånsk mazurka (Scanian Mazurka, erroneously ascribed to southern province of Scania). It is today danced mostly in the Stockholm area, and then only by the most "eager" of the folk- and oldtime dancers. Properly performed, with all the movements sprightly but graceful and with the pattern flowing from part to part, it can be a very impressive little dance.

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Pattern</u>
	<u>A. STEP-SWINGS</u>
1-2	Inside hands joined at shoulder level, free hand on hip, beg on outside ft, 2 step-swings, away from and twd ptr.
	<u>B. INDIVIDUAL TURNS</u>
3-4	With both hands on hips, dancers individually make 2 complete turns away from ptr, M to own L (CCW) dancing L, R, R; W to own R (CW) dancing R, L, L, for each turn.
	<u>C. MAZURKA FWD</u>
5-6	In open shoulder-waist pos, free hands firmly on hips, 2 kick-mazurka steps fwd in LOD, beg each on outside ft.
	<u>D. STAMP AND TURN IN PLACE</u>
7-8	Beg with stamp on both ft on 1st beat, cpl turns in place once around CW, while dancing 2 Polka-mazurka steps (as described below) in open pos, free hands firmly on hips.

Note: If cpl is not able to dance gracefully the Polka-mazurka steps around as prescribed, it is possible to make the turn with small running steps, as follows:

M: stamp both ft, R, L, R, L, R (2 meas, 6 cts).
W: stamp both ft, L, R, L, R, L (2 meas, 6 cts)

Altho not as "proper" as the traditional step, this "shortcut" detracts far less from the dance as a whole than improper and clumsy dancing of the "right" step.

Repeat pattern 1-8 as many times as desired.

Swedish Polka-mazurka step:

This 3/4 time step goes by a number of names in Sweden. Most often it is called Mazurka step, but properly this is in reference to the music rather than the foot pattern. Some folkdance groups call it Västgöta-step (West-Gothian step), so named after the big dance Västgötapolska (Polska from West-Gothia) in which the step appears. To really add to the confusion it has even been called "Hambopolkett"! The Norwegians have a similar step in one of their country dances, and simply call it a "two-step with hopp". In actuality, this step can best be termed a Polka-mazurka, for it is just that: a polka step in mazurka time. Maintaining a constant, even "bounce" on each beat of the music, one takes the "hop-step, close, step (hold)" of the 2/4-time polka and

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dances it straight "hop-step, close, step", without the hold, in 3/4-time mazurka rhythm. In essence, the "hop-step" of the first beat become "both", so the pattern may be called: "both, close, step".

Here is the step-pattern chart for both M and W:

Music:	Ct:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Step:	M:	Both (lead L)	close R	step L	Bth (ld R)	cl L	st R
	W:	Both (lead R)	close L	step R	Bth (ld L)	cl R	st L

Steps must be kept small, heels off the floor, lots of "spring" in the toes. Extreme lightness of feet, with lots of "bounce" (on each beat) is essential to the character of this step.

Kick-mazurka step (Swedish variant):

A variation of the continental mazurka step, the kick-mazurka is danced in all the Northern countries. While it is known as Mazurka in Denmark, Masurka in Norway, and Masurkka in Finland, Swedish folkdancers refer to it as Fryksdals-step, so named after the big dance Fryksdalspolska, from Värmland, in which the step appears. The same step is used in the Scandinavian Varsovienne.

Essentially the kick-mazurka is a fwd-moving mazurka step, but without the cross-over. It is danced either of two ways in Sweden:

- I. Ct 1: step fwd L
Ct 2: step fwd R, simultaneously lifting L and kicking it fwd (toe down)
Ct 3: hop on R, bringing L ft back, even with R.
- II. Ct 1: step fwd L
Ct 2: step fwd R, and lift L
Ct 3: skip fwd on R, simultaneously kicking L ft fwd and back very fast.

Above describes a L kick-mazurka step. R step is danced just the opp.

In all cases the kick should be kept short, toe pointed down, foot not extending too far fwd or bwd and not coming higher than the calf of the opp leg.

When two or more kick-mazurka steps are danced consecutively, each begins on the same ft.

Presented by Gordon E. Tracie