

DOSPATSKO HORO

History

This is a Bulgarian dance, from Dospat in the Rhodopes. I have learnt several slightly different versions of the dance, my version combines elements from each of these but is mainly based on dancing it at an SIFD event. The music I use is quite slow, most of the traditional pieces of music I've heard have been much faster.

Rhythm

The music is in 7/8 time, and is danced as 3-2-2 (slow-quick-quick) or 3-4 (slow, slower).

Steps

Start in a line with arms in a W hold, facing to the right. The steps are mostly very small, except for the middle section.

First Part

Take three steps forward, starting with the right, in slow-quick-quick rhythm. Repeat starting with the left foot. Turning to face centre step to the side with the right foot (slow), lift the left foot where it is (quick), then step across behind with the left (quick). Step to the side with the right (slow), cross in front with the left (quick) and replace the right (quick).

Repeat the whole of the first part with reversed feet and moving to the left, like a mirror image.

Second Part

Facing centre, step to the side with the right (slow), cross in front with the left (slower), step to the side with the right (slow), and cross behind with the left (slower).

Do the side-lift-step, side-cross-replace sequence from the end of the first part.

Repeat the second part as a mirror image to the left, then repeat it right and left again.

Third Part

Step forwards towards the centre with the right (slow), rock back onto the left (quick), and rock forward onto the right (quick). Step forward with the left (slow), then make a small jump forward on the right, ending up with a slightly bent knee (quick), and hold it there (quick). Take six steps backwards, starting with the left, in slow-quick-quick rhythm, keeping each step tucked in tightly behind the standing foot.

Repeat the third part with reversed feet starting with the left, then repeat it again starting with the right, and again starting with the left.

Middle Section

The dance sequence goes through the three parts and repeats, however at some point the music will change and the middle section is done just once. This part can come in different places, depending on the version of the music, but when it has finished you return to the original sequence where you left off. The most usual place is after the third part, so after the middle section you start again with the first part. Each part has its own melody, so it should be easy to spot.

The middle section is like the second part except that it starts with a cross behind instead of in front, and the last step is slow so that the sequence progresses to the right without mirroring. It is, in effect, a grapevine with a little lift in the middle. The steps can be larger in this part.

Step to the side with the right (slow), cross behind with the left (slower), step to the side with the right (slow), cross in front with the left (slower).

Step to the side with the right foot (slow), lift the left foot where it is (quick), then step across behind with the left (quick). Step to the side with the right (slow), cross in front with the left (slower).

Repeat the middle section three more times.

Music

Dospatsko Horo from **Music from Eastern Europe** by **Makedonski Bop** (private release, not for sale).

Hajdut Énekek from **6** by **Kolinda** is a medley of Bulgarian songs with a version of Dospatsko in the middle.

