

DAKOTA (SIOUX) INDIAN SOCIAL DANCE
(American Indian)

This social dance, done by both men and women, is performed by the Dakota (Sioux) Indians during their regular social gatherings. Research of this dance was done by Anatol Joukowsky in 1970 at the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota.

- Music:** Drum beats provide the music.
- Formation:** Dancers are close to dancing area waiting for drums to begin. W have a blanket folded and draped over their R forearm and carry a feather ornament in their L hand. M hold in one hand a group of decorated feathers taken from the wing of one of the larger birds.
- Basic Step:** Step on ball of L ft, heel raised (beat 1). Drop L heel to ground, at the same time raising R leg with knee bent (beat 2). Step on ball of R ft, heel raised (beat 3). Drop R heel to ground, at same time raising L leg with knee bent (beat 4). M body is bent a little fwd. W stand erect. M step is naturally larger than W. On this basic step many variations may be built.

Pattern

When drum beat starts, W gather on inside of dancing area facing CW. W may walk or dance to place. M, using Basic Step, gather around the outside facing CCW. Dancers move informally (W - CW, M - CCW) using Basic Step.

At a point in the dance the rhythm accelerates a little and M react by doing larger body motions. Shoulders weave more and M may make small circles on the spot as they dance. Nearby W may stop their fwd movement and facing M circle, may stand watching them with ft together, bending and straightening knees.

Suddenly the drummer beats a number of louder beats and stops. Dancers should quit with the last drum beat and "freeze." There is usually laughter at the dancer who does not stop in time. After a moment's wait, drummer and dancers start in again from the beginning. Dance usually goes two or three times through the sequence before it ends.

Presented by Anatol Joukowsky
Notes by Ruth Ruling