

# Craițele

(Giubega, Dolj, Oltenia, Romania)

Craițele (CRY-tse-lay) is a "sirba"-type dance from the town of Giubega, in Dolj "county," the Oltenian region of Romania. It has two figures, with some individual freedom allowed in the execution of the second figure, and with shouting, in the Romanian tradition of "strigaturi." I learned this dance in Romania from Tita Sever.

MUSIC: "Craițele" on ST-EPE 01734 (Electrocord)

FORMATION: Closed circle. Hands held "high," that is, at shoulder level. ("W")

STYLE: Energetic (First figure slightly "old man"-like, but energetic!)

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METER: 4/4

PATTERN

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Meas

1 Introduction

**I. FIRST FIGURE: (Side-together steps, to the right and back, twice.)**

1 Facing center but moving sideways to the R: Step on R ft (heel first) to R (1), step on L ft. next to (and slightly behind) R (&). Repeat twice more (2&3&). Dancing in place: Slight jump onto R ft. (4), step on L (e), step on R (&).

(Note on style: There should be a slight downward movement of the body - that is, bend the knees slightly - on both the "step" and the "together" of the sideways movement. That is, down on both the count and the "and." The little "one-two-three" at the end of the phrase should look "jumpy," accomplished by keeping the knees straighter than normal, to produce some shaking of the upper body.)

2 Repeat meas 1 with opp dir and ftwk.

3-4 Repeat meas 1 and 2.

**II. SECOND FIGURE: (Crossing steps in place, plus kicks with shouting)**

1 Facing center, dance an "indirect" crossing step in place: Step on R ft to R (1), step on L ft in front of R (&), step back on R ft in place (2), step on L ft to L (&), step on R ft in front of L (3), step back on L ft in place (&), jump quickly onto R ft to R and, leaning slightly fwd from waist, kick L leg (near floor) twice while shouting "Hey, hey" (4&).

2 Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk.

3 Repeat meas 1.

4 Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk.

**OR: (important alternative for meas 3 and 4):**

3-4 Facing center, dance a longer "indirect" cross step: Step on R ft to R (1), step on L ft in front of R (&), step back on R ft in place (2), step on L ft to L (&), step on R ft in front of L (3), step back on L ft in place (&), step on R ft to R (4), step on L ft in front of R (&), step back on R ft in place (1), step on L ft to L (&), leaning slightly fwd from waist, push R leg fwd (near floor) three times, bending supporting knee on each push and shouting "Hey, hey, hey!" (2,3,4)

(Simple way to remember - and count! - the two possible variations of Fig. 2: You can either do 4 "sixes" or 2 "sixes" plus a "ten." That is: you could count to six on the short crossing steps whereas the long crossing step takes ten counts. And remember: the pushes and shouts which accompany the long 10-count crossing steps are slow.)

*Dance description by Lee Otterholt*

*Presented by Lee Otterholt at the Laguna Folkdancers Festival 2005*