

HALAY #2 (TRADITIONAL MEN'S)

There are (or were) hundreds of different HALAYS/KOTCHARIS/GOVANDS, many going back to different regions of Eastern or Western Armenia. Aside from these traditional dances, there are many modern American-Armenian communities having their own particular favorite dance and style distinct to that community. Originally a men's dance adopted from Kurdish mountain tribes, there are still many versions, both traditional and modern, done by men only. At a major picnic or gathering it is possible to see a dozen different HALAYS being done simultaneously.

Source: This is a simplified version of an old village HALAY, as taught by Tom Bozigian of Fresno, Calif. Tom is an Armenian dance performer and instructor who has studied dance at the Sayat Nova Choreographic School in Soviet Armenia, and teaches dance workshops around the world.

Music: Dance Armenian Side B-band #2, The Armenian Side B-"Zurna Halay", or any good 2/4 or 4/4 music.

Style: The subtleties of the traditional men's dances are too complex to detail here, and can only be learned by dancing with someone who knows it, rather than watching them. The most outstanding characteristic is the "knee breaks" as the old-timers call it. Knees are always flexed, never straight or locked. This flex can vary, from sudden powerful movements which are almost full squats, to subtle weight shifts while rocking or leaning. The line must be a single cohesive unit.

Formation: Short lines in "Kurdish hold" (dancers very close with fingers interlocked and arms bent at elbows, so that the forearms are at a right angle to the body, pointing forward, while touching neighbor's forearm). Men often shout and leader (man on right end) waves handkerchief.

<u>Meas.</u>	<u>Ct.</u>	<u>Movements</u>
1	1,2	Facing center but moving to right, take four steps while in a slight crouch forward, walking very 'gingerly'. Step R to right (ct 1). Step L behind R (ct 2).
2	3,4	Step R to right (ct 3). Touch ball of L foot forward as body straightens slightly, with weight remaining predominantly on R, facing right diagonal (ct 4).
3	5,6,&	Flex both knees as shift weight forward to lean on the L (ct 5). Leaning forward with weight predominantly on L, bounce twice (cts 6, &).
4	7,8	Flex both knees again, still leaning forward (ct 7). Small hop on L as R is lifted slightly to right (ct 8).