

# Slow Hora

## also called Zhok

Slow Hora

( as described by Jacob Bloom, learned from Michael Alpert 1994 KlezKamp)

After teaching the Slow Hora on Friday night, I had several people ask questions about the history of klezmer music. For those interested, I suggest visiting <http://www.budowitz.com> and read the section titled A Short History of Klezmer Music. (The tune that we danced to is called Beckerman's Hora and comes from their CD: Mother Tongue.)

Helen

Slow 3/8 time signature

1 step per measure

If you check your klezmer cd's you are bound to find a hora which has this characteristic 3/8time signature. Note that the rhythm pattern is very different from the Israeli hora, and the dance is much slower.

Formation: circle or line, W hand hold

Styling: Dance progresses to the right-steps made to the right are larger than steps to the left. There is no movement into centre

Arms up and joined, arms raising slightly on each step

(facing right) Walk right, left, right, (facing center) touch left foot  
(facing left) Walk left, right, left, (facing right and leaning back slightly) touch right foot.



Slow Hora, also called Zhok

Region: Moldova and Bucovina (see below)

Formation: Open circle or line

Music: Slow Hora (5.5 /8 rhythm, sometimes described as a 3/8 rhythm),

Slow-Quick dance rhythm in each measure

In general, women's movements less exaggerated than men's.

Jewish Version

Arms in W position, facing LOD a little on the diagonal

The symmetrical nature of this step differentiates it from the non-Jewish versions described below.

Measure	Steps
1	Step on R fwd
2	Step on L fwd
an">3	Step on R fwd
4	Touch L foot FWD, slight upward pulse through body and arms
5	Facing Centre, small step L to left, (small lilt/lift of L leg while swinging L foot over to take this step)
6	R Crosses in front of L (small step), slight rock fwd in body
7	Step L to L (small step)
8	Facing mostly centre but slightly diagonally to R, touch R FWD, slight upward pulse through body and arms, slight backward tilt to body



## Slow Hora

Movements are bearlike, grounded stance.

Moldovan Version, created by Non-Jewish aristocracy, Jews also did this dance.

Holding hands, forearms extended towards centre, facing diagonally LOD. Note there is some autonomy in the hand hold and it would be not exactly uniform with that of the leader as one moved down the line of dancers.

This dance can be done with more gentle or more vigorous arm movements (italicized version)

### Measure

#### Steps

1

R fwd moving in LOD, arms swing to the right on the horizontal plane

2

L fwd moving in LOD, arms swing to the Left on the horizontal plane

3

R fwd (slow beat) while arms follow as in meas 1, L fwd (quick beat) while arms follow as in measure 2

4

R fwd and arms follow as above

5

Facing centre, step in with L foot, arms pulse up slightly or more vigorously

6

Step out from centre by stepping back on R foot, arms pulse



## Slow Hora

- 7 back a bit or swing right down to sides
- Step back on L foot , arms come forward a bit, or begin to come up again
- 8 Facing centre, Touch R slightly FWD , with slight upward pulse through body and arms, or a more vigorous upward pulse straightening elbows, slight backward tilt to body

## Bucovina Version

Hold hands, arms extended forward towards centre, at shoulder level with straight elbows, somewhat stiff erect posture, facing diagonally LOD

Danced by Jews and Non-Jews in Bucovina

- | Measure | Steps   |
|---------|---|
| 1       | R fwd moving in LOD   |
| 2       | L fwd moving in LOD   |
| 3       | R fwd (slow beat), L fwd (quick beat)   |
| 4       | R fwd   |
| 5       | Facing centre, step in with L foot  |
| 6       | Step out from centre by stepping back on R foot                                     |
| 7       | Step back on L foot (slow beat), bring R foot back to L and step on it (quick beat) |
| 8       | Step back on L  |



Slow Hora

2nd Variation

Facing Centre

Measure

Steps

1

Beginning on L foot step fwd diagonally to R towards centre (slow beat), Bring R foot to L along same path (quick beat)

2

Step fwd along same path with L foot

3

Swivel to back out creating a "sawtooth" pattern, step diagonally to the right Back on R foot (slow beat), bring L foot back to the R foot (quick beat)

Step back on R foot

Because this variation begins on the Left foot, you must fudge a step to keep the weight off the left foot at the end of the previous variation. Similarly, to move to a new variation you must fudge a step to free the right foot.

Optional: During Measures 1& 2 arms swing up to shoulder level,

During Measures 3&4, arms swing down to sides

Notes by Helen Winkler, as taught by Zev Feldman, Neskaya Workshop,  
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