

A7 HORA

Jewish

Melodies such as that of *Di mezinke* recorded here by NAMA are referred to as *freylekhs* ("joyful" or "merry") by Jews of Eastern European origin, and are associated with a kind of spontaneous dancing that was an integral part of old-time celebrations, especially weddings. The forms of these dances were loosely defined and varied considerably; sometimes dancing was an expression of devout religious experience, as was often the case in the Hassidic communities. People from many backgrounds remember a kind of dance in which everyone joined hands in a long chain that meandered around the room, formed into a circle, moved forward and back, wound up into a spiral and unwound, etc., with simple walking or shuffling steps. This form did not have a specific name, although some people called it by the Byelorussian-Yiddish name *karahod* ("circle dance").

Hora (HOR-ah) is a Romanian word referring to traditional Romanian dances done in circle formation. When Jews from Romania and Bessarabia settled in Palestine as far back as the 1880's, they carried the *hora* with them. It took root, flourished, and by the time the state of Israel was established in 1948, the *hora* had virtually become its "national" dance. Many Jews in America have also adopted the *hora*, and it can be seen today at weddings and other celebrations, done to *freylekhs* and many other tunes.

Meter: 2/4

Formation: Closed circle, M and W, arms on neighbors' shldrs.

MEAS	PATTERN
	Dance may begin with any meas of the music.
1	Facing ctr, step Rft sdwd R (1); step Lft behind Rft (2).
2	Still facing ctr, step Rft sdwd R (1); hop on Rft in place, swinging Lft fwd or across in front of R leg (2).
3	Still facing ctr, step Lft sdwd L (1); hop on Lft in place, swinging Rft fwd or across in front of L leg (2).

Note: Sometimes the above pattern is done to the L rather than to the R (depending on the initiative of the first people who begin to dance) with opposite footwork from that described.