

Maxixe II

(Brazil-France-United States)

The title *Maxixe II* refers to the fact that many folk dancers already know the Maxixe which I presented at the 1989 University of the Pacific Folk Dance Camp. In order to avoid the possible confusion that might arise from the option of a second Maxixe sequence, this pattern follows the same floor path as the first Maxixe, so couples who know more Maxixe can dance among those doing the first Maxixe without collision. Advanced dancers may also combine both patterns into a longer sequence if they so wish.

The Maxixe (Mah-SHEESH) as done in the U.S. was one of the more popular dances of the Ragtime-era dance craze, but was probably not the original Brazilian form. The Maxixe was modified by Parisian dancers when it was first introduced there in 1906 (it didn't catch on) and was modified again when it was successfully re-introduced in 1912, with further revisions by English and American dancers. Since the original Maxixe was the Brazilian style of dancing a Parisian-modified Polka, which was possibly a Bohemian form of a German folk dance with Polish and Scottish influences, this hybrid is one of the most international folk dances of all.

Music: “Buenos Dias Maxixe” (with intro) performed by the Fleeting Moments Orchestra “Down in Zanzibar” (no intro) performed by the Fleeting Moments Orchestra

Rhythm: 2/4 meter Brazilian Maxixe compositions have a fast Habanera rhythm. U.S. versions usually do not. Tempo: Maxixe recordings from the era vary widely in tempo, from very slow to a normal polka tempo. Vernon and Irene Castle preferred a lively, sunny interpretation of the Maxixe, about 116 bpm.

Formation: Cpls in Ballroom pos.

Steps: Ftwk described for M; W use opp ftwk.

Maxixe Two-Step (turning): While starting to rotate CW (as a cpl), step on L to L side, starting to bend body to R, starting to raise clasped hands (ct 1); close R to L (or cross R slightly behind L) continuing to turn and bend (ct &); step L to L side, completing 180° turn and ending with body leaning to R side, M L (and W R) hands arched overhead (ct 2). Repeat to R side, continuing CW rotation, but leaning to L side, clasped hands coming down in a smooth sweep (cts 3,&,4).

Sliding Step: Step on one ft to side (ct 1); bring other ft up to it, taking wt (ct &). Two per meas.

Step-Kick: Step fwd on L (ct 1); kick R straight fwd into the air, matching ptrs elevation (ct 2); step R slightly behind L, beginning to turn CW as a cpl (ct 3); close L to R (ct &); step R in place, continuing to turn CW (ct 4).

Styling: Dance is somewhat on heels, as much as is comfortable. The body should be very flexible, with graceful bends and arm-sweeps, and smooth turns of the Two-Step without bouncing.

Meas

PATTERN

INTRODUCTION

1-4 No action.

5-8 Walk 8 steps in LOD in Ballroom pos M start L ft fwd, W start R ft moving bkwd. On meas 8, lower clasped hands and start to turn CW so that man ends with his back to ctr. “Buenos Dias” begins with this introduction. “Down in Zanzibar” does not include meas 5-8.

Maxixe 2—continued

I. TURNING TWO-STEPS; ZIG-ZAG; CORTEZ

- 1-4 Maxixe Two-Steps turning, traveling LOD
- 5-6 4 Sliding Steps traveling LOD diag L (toward ctr), beg M L ft. On the 4th ct '&', close the trailing ft (M R, W L) without taking wt, turning as a cpl 1/4 CCW to line up for the next Sliding Steps.
- 7 2 Sliding Steps traveling LOD diag R (away from ctr), beg M R ft. On the 2nd ct '&', close the trailing ft (M L, W R) without taking wt, turning as a cpl 1/4 CCW. M ends facing RLOD.
- 8 Maxixe Cortez: M step straight bkwd on the L toe, leaving R leg extended fwd, as W steps R ft straight toward him, also rising onto the toe, leaving L leg extended bkwd. M may slightly lift W in Ballroom pos.

II. TURNING TWO-STEPS AND SUNBURST IN RLOD

- 1-4 Two-Step turning, traveling RLOD, beg M R ft, W L ft. On meas 1 and 3, lower clasped hands, raising them on meas 2 and 4.
- 5-7 6 Sliding Steps to M's R side, traveling RLOD. After the first 2 slides, release Ballroom pos to touch fingertips of opened hands together, palm-to-palm with ptrs palms, about eye level. Then open arms up and out to both sides in a "sunburst" arc, while continuing the sliding steps.
- 8 M steps R foot to R side without closing L to R, leaning body and tilting outstretched arms toward his L side and raising L toe, L heel to the floor. W mirrors this pose.

III. FACE-TO-FACE, BACK-TO-BACK

- 1 Single Two-Step to the side without turning, beg M L (toward LOD) releasing M L (W R) hand but keeping the other hand. Optional styling: Take the 1st step of each Two-Step with a strong heel-lead.
- 2 Two-Step, turning individually away from ptr, swinging held hands fwd toward LOD.
- 3 Two-Step oscillating back to face ptr, swinging held hands back toward RLOD again.
- 4 Two-Step turning away from ptr again, but release hands and turn a full 360° with this Two-Step (M turning CCW, W to CW) to face ptr again. Note: Take all 3 steps of this Two-Step, not 2 pivot steps.
- 5-8 Two-Steps turning, in Ballroom pos, as in Part I.

IV. STEP-KICKS

- 1-2 Step-Kick toward LOD, then turn as a cpl 120° (1/3 turn) CW.
- 3-8 Repeat 3 more times. The 4th Step-Kick is again toward LOD.
- Final 7-8 If the music is ending, hold the kick of the last Step-Kick for 2 full counts (counts 2 and 3), then drop fwd onto the kicking foot and the supporting knee.

SEQUENCE: Repeat from Part I (without the walking Introduction) until music ends. Dancers who know Maxixe I may alternate both patterns, ending with Maxixe II, which has the more dramatic ending.

Presented by Richard Powers

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