

PENZOZALIS
(Six-Figure)

Greek

PRONUNCIATION: pen-toh-ZAH-lees

TRANSLATION: Five dizzying steps

SOURCE: Dick Oakes learned this dance six-figure Pentozalis from Chris Tasulis who introduced it to folk dancers in the Unites States. It also has been taught by Athan Karras and Oliver "Sonny" Newman.

BACKGROUND: The men of the Greek islands, such as Crete, often became sailors in the Greek and Byzantine navies, necessitating practicing fast and tricky footwork that might be required on the pitching deck of a ship. Pentozali was originally a warlike dance used to test men's agility. In western Crete, Pentozalis (also spelled Pentozales or Pendozalis) is often preceded by a Siganos (slow) Pentozali in which the dancers, holding hands, sing as they dance two step-swings forward and two step-swings backward as the line moves slowly to the right. Pentozalis, with its small, rapid foot movements and leaps, is one of the most characteristic and most popular dances of Crete, its island of origin. The "five steps" of the dance refer to the five "dizzying" movements: 1) forward, 2) backward, 3) left, 4) right, 5) up.

In case you were wondering, Pentozalis is in the nominative case and Pentozali is in the accusative case.

MUSIC: Kefi Records (45EP) KER-101
Folkraft (LP) LP-3, side B, band 2
Folklore (LP) LARS-2027, side B, band 1
EMI (LP) 70158
Panhellenion (LP) KT-1001, side B, band 8

FORMATION: Open cir of dancers with hands grasping neighbors' shldrs in "T" pos; leader at right has arm extended; dancer at the other end has fist at back of waist. Usually M and W dance separately, but it is also correct for the lines to be mixed. The leader calls the steps.

METER/RHYTHM: 2/4

STEPS/STYLE: The steps are quick and springy. When the lines are separated, it is easier for the W to dance with the appropriate (to Crete) feminine style without the M making larger leaping steps next to them. The dance can be done either calmly or with great vigor. A figure is continued until the leader calls the next figure or otherwise indicates a change.

MEAS

MOVEMENT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

Dance starts at beg of any musical phrase, although some Greeks tend to start on the second meas of the phrase.

I. ÉNA "One" (Basic)

- 1 Step L fwd (ct 1); hop L (ct 2);
- 2 Step R bwd (ct 1); leap L swd (ct 2); step L across in front of R (ct &);
- 3 Step L in place (ct 1); leap R swd (ct 2); step L across in front of R (ct &);
- 4 Step R in place (ct 1); hop R, bringing bent L knee up in front (ct 2).

II. THÍO "Two" (Scissor)

- 1-2 Repeat action of Fig I, meas 1-2;
- 3 Step L in place, extending R fwd in preparation for next step (ct 1); leap R in place, extending L fwd (ct 2); leap L in place, extending R fwd (ct &);
- 4 Leap R in place, extending L fwd (ct 1); hop R, bringing bent L knee up in front (ct 2).

III. TRÍA "Three" (Double Scissor)

- 1 Step L fwd (ct 1); hop L (ct 2);
- 2 Step R bwd, extending L fwd in preparation for next step (ct 1); leap L in place, extending R fwd (ct 2); leap R in place, extending L fwd (ct &);
- 3 Leap L in place, extending R fwd (ct 1); leap R in place, extending L fwd (ct 2); leap L in place, extending R fwd (ct &);
- 4 Leap R in place, extending L fwd (ct 1); hop R, bringing bent L knee up in front (ct 2).

IV. TÉSERA "Four" (Jump)

- 1-2 Repeat action of Fig I, meas 1-2;
- 3 Step L in place (ct 1); jump to both ft wide apart (ct 2);
- 4 Hop R, bringing L up in back with bent knee (ct 1); hop R, bringing bent L knee up in front (ct 2).

V. PÉNTE "Five" (Slap)

- 1-2 Repeat action of Fig I, meas 1-2;
- 3 Step L in place (ct 1); leap R swd (ct 2);
- 4 Swing L leg CW in large arc and slap floor with L as R knee bends (ct 1); hop R, bringing bent L knee up in front (ct 2).

VI. ÉXI "Six" (Double Slap)

- 1 Step L fwd (ct 1); hop L (ct 2);
- 2 Step R bwd (ct 1); leap L swd (ct 2);
- 3 Swing R leg CCW in larg arc and slap floor with L as R knee bends (ct 1); leap R swd (ct 2);

4

Swing L leg CCW in larg arc and slap floor with R as L knee bends (ct 1); hop R, bringing bent L knee up in front (ct 2).

NOTE: Combinations of these figures are danced, such as combining a scissor and a slap, or by holding the jump in Tesera for two counts.

Copyright © 2018 by Dick Oakes