

La Raspa and Other Folk Dances

MICHAEL HERMAN'S FOLK DANCE ORCHESTRA

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SIDE 1

LA RASPA (Mexico)

La Raspa is a novelty dance, rather than one of Mexico's traditional dances. In the United States it is quite often called the *Mexican Hat Dance*, which is confusing, for there is a traditional dance by that name that is quite different from *La Raspa*. Other names for *La Raspa* include *Shuffle Dance*, *Scissors Dance* and *The File*. Note that the step is known as the "bleking" step in folk dance circles and is similar to that found in the Danish *Ace of Diamonds*, Swedish *Bleking*, Lithuanian *Noriu Mirgo* and German *Herr Schmidt*.

OPENING FORMATION: Couples scattered around the room, partners facing each other.

CHORUS: Hold two hands. Spring on left foot and send right foot forward, heel down, toe up. Spring on right foot and send left foot forward, heel down, toe up. Spring on left foot and send right foot forward, heel down, toe up.

Pause.

Repeat above but start on right foot. Repeat again starting on left foot. Repeat again starting on right foot.

FIGURE: Variation 1: Clap hands once, hook right elbows with partner and skip around 8 steps. Clap hands again, hook left elbows and skip around 8 steps. Repeat all of this.

Repeat the whole dance from beginning.

Variation 2: Skip 16 steps, linking right elbows, and 16, linking left elbows. Do not repeat.

Variation 3: Take ballroom position and do a polka around the ring for 16 polka steps.

Variation 4: Face partner (all should be in a single-circle formation for this version) and do a grand right-and-left around the circle; then repeat the chorus with a new partner.

Variation 5: Instead of a two-hand hold for the CHORUS, all face center or partner and do the "bleking" or "raspa" step. On each pause, clap own hands twice.

Variation 6: For sessions with boys only: during the CHORUS, boys may do the "raspa" step, gradually going down into a crouching position, holding on to two hands for support.

