

ŠOPSKO HORO

Bulgarian

PRONUNCIATION: SHOHP-skoh hoh-ROH

TRANSLATION: Šop dance

SOURCE: Dick Oakes learned Šopsko horo from Dennis Boxell who arranged this medley of steps from Graovsko horo, Zidarsko horo, and original source material he learned in Europe during 1961. He taught it at the 1977 California Kolo Festival.

BACKGROUND: The steps of this dance are typical of the Šop ethnographic region in western Bulgaria. The horo was, until recently, danced every Sunday and on holidays all over Bulgaria, and is still danced at weddings, country fairs, regional festivals, and at large national festivals, such as held at Koprivštica every five years. There are more than five types of horo that are usually danced at every wedding. They differ by the rhythm of the music and the steps taken. There are no two horo dances with similar steps. There are probably over one hundred types of horo dances in the Bulgarian folklore. In the past, the horo dance had a social role in Bulgarian society. It was mainly for fun, as a contest of skills, or for show, leading to the development of the variety of horo dances. There are hora (plural of horo) for people with little skill that can be learned in five to ten minutes, but there are also very sophisticated dances that cannot be learned unless one is fluent in many of the simpler dances.

MUSIC: XOPO (LP) X-LP-1, side B, band 5
XOPO (45rpm) X-309

FORMATION: Segregated short lines of dancers holding neighbors' belts ("na lesa") in "X" pos, R arm under.

METER/RHYTHM: 2/4

STEPS/STYLE: ŠOPSKA STEP: Bounce on both ft with wt predominately on R (ct 1); bounce on both ft with wt predominately on L (ct &); step R in place, raising bent L knee with L ft beside lower part of R calf (ct 2). Repeat action for next meas with opp ftwk. Repeat action of both meas. (Total of 4 meas.)

TRAVELING STEP: With wt on L, L knee bent, touch R heel fwd with R knee straight, body leaning slightly to R (ct 1); step R fwd, body straight (ct 2). Repeat action in same dir for next meas with opp ftwk.

Repeat action of both meas.

(Total of 4 meas.)

GRAOVSKO STEP: With wt on L, trace a small double cir in the air with R knee straight, body leaning slightly to R (cts 1-2);

Step R fwd, body straight (ct 1); slap L strongly fwd, L knee straight, R knee bent (ct 2);

Step L bwd (ct 1); step R bwd (ct 2);

Step L bwd (ct 1); hop L, raising bent R knee with R beside lower part of L calf (ct 2).

(Total of 4 meas.)

RUNNING THREES: Facing diag R, run R,L,R (cts 1&2);

Repeat action of the first meas in the same dir, alternating ftwk, three more times.

(Total of 4 meas.)

ŠOPSKA-POINT STEP: Bounce on both ft with wt predominately on R (ct 1); bounce on both ft with wt predominately on L (ct &); step R bending R knee and thrusting straight L leg fwd and down (ct 2);

Repeat action of first meas with opp ftwk.

Repeat action of first meas.

Close L forcefully to R with heel-click (ct 1); hold, taking wt on L (ct 2).

(Total of 4 meas.)

PAWING STEP: Hop L, bringing R knee up in front (ct 1); extend R fwd, straightening R knee (ct &); bending R knee, brush R bwd beside L (ct 2);

Repeat action of first meas.

(Total of 2 meas.)

(This step resembles the pawing of a horse's foreleg.)

ZIDARSKO STEP: Hop L, raising bent R knee high in front (ct 1); strike R heel forcefully slightly fwd (ct 2);

Facing slightly L, step R in place (ct 1); strike L heel (ct 2);

Facing ctr, step L bwd (ct 1); facing R, step R swd away from ctr (ct 2);

Step L in place twd ctr (ct 1); pivoting slowly on L to begin facing ctr, and yelling "o-o-O-OH!" with a rising tone, raise straight R leg in front (ct 2);

Facing ctr, and yelling "PAH!" strongly, slap R fwd with emphasis, R knee straight, L knee bent (ct 1); pause (ct 2).

(Total of 5 meas.)

GRAPEVINE STEP: Facing fwd, step R swd, leaning fwd from hips (ct 1); step L in back of R, straightening body (ct 2);

Step swd R (ct 1); step L in front of R (ct 2).

(Total of 2 meas.)

HOPPING STEP: Hop L, moving slightly swd R, simultaneously touching R toe diag out to R (ct 1); hop L, moving slightly swd R,

simultaneously touching R toe fwd in front of L (ct 2).
Repeat action of first meas.
(Total of 2 meas.)

MEAS

MOVEMENT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION - No action, or start at beg of any meas.

I. EDNO (ED-noh) "One"

- 1-2 Four running steps RLRL to R raising knees.
3-6 Šopska Step in place.
7-10 Traveling Heels fwd.
11-14 Graovsko Step.
15 Step in place R (ct 1); hop R, raising bend L knee with L ft beside lower part of R calf (ct 2).
16 Repeat action of meas 15 with opp ftwk.

II. DVE (DVEH) "Two"

- 1-4 Running Threes to R.
5-8 Šopska-Point Step facing ctr.
9-10 Pawing Step.
11 Hop L, raising bent R knee high in front (ct 1); strike R heel forcefully slightly fwd (ct 2).
12 Facing slightly L, step R in place (ct 1); strike L heel (ct 2).
13 Step L bwd (ct 1); step R bwd (ct 2).
14 Step L in place (ct 1); hop L, raising bent R knee with R ft beside lower part of L calf (ct 2).
15 Repeat action of meas 14 with opp ftwk.
16 Repeat action of meas 14.

III. TRI (TREE) "Three"

- 1-2 Four running steps RLRL to R, raising knees.
3-6 Šopska Step in place, facing ctr.
7-11 Zidarsko Step.
12 Turning body slightly to L and yelling "EEE!," step R in place with emphasis (ct 1); yelling "HAH!," stamp L close behind and almost perpendicular to R heel (ct 2).
13-16 Repeat action of Fig II, meas 13-16.

IV. ČETIRI (CHEH-tree) "Four"

- 1-2 Four running steps RLRL to R, raising knees.
3-4 Grapevine Step facing ctr.
5-6 Hopping Step swd R.

- 7 Hop L (ct 1); step R swd (ct &); step L next to or slightly in front of R (ct 2).
- 8 Small leap R swd (ct 1); stamp L next to R without wt (ct 2).
- 9 Small leap L swd (ct 1); stamp R next to L without wt (ct 2); small leap R fwd (ct &).
- 10 Step L next to R, raising acutely bent R knee across L leg (ct 1); pause (ct 2); small leap R fwd (ct &).
- 11 Repeat action of meas 10.
- 12 Step L next to R, raising straight R leg in front (ct 1); beg to trace a CW cir in the air, lower straight R leg in front (ct 2).
- 13-14 Continue leg cir motion by tracing two slow CW cir in the air with bent leg, starting at bottom of cir.
- 15 Trace an even slower, larger partial cir CW in the air in preparation for a leap onto R.
- 16 Leap R in place, extending L fwd (ct 1); slap L strongly fwd, L knee straight, R knee bent (ct 2).
- 17-20 Repeat action of Fig II, meas 13-16.

NOTE: The figures may be danced as many times or in any order the leader wishes, although they are usually danced by folk dancers in the United States in the order shown above.

ARRANGED SEQUENCE

For performing or just for fun with the XOPO 45rpm record, the dance works out nicely as follows (no introduction):

FIG I - 2 times
FIG II - 2 times
FIG III - 2 times

FIG IV - 3 times - After three 16-meas phrases there is a 12-meas interlude!

FIG I - 2 times
FIG II - 2 times
FIG III - 2 times - except instead of last step-lift, leap L and slap R fwd, bending at waist, head up.