

Stara baba

Pronunciation: STAH-rah BAH-bah

Record: ZM-46729 "Tańce ludowe z Polski - Volume 2" (Folk Dances from Poland), side A, band 7, available from Ada Dziewanowska.

Stara baba is a couple dance in 2/4 time from the region of Kurpie zielone [KOOR-pyeh zyeh-LOH-neh] in northeast Poland. It came to Kurpie from the neighboring region of Warmia and Mazury [VAHR-myah & mah-ZOO-rih], where another version of this dance also exists. The title, which means "an old woman," derives from the words of a song which goes with the dance.

Stara baba, dziad młody
 pedzą byczki do wody,
 :od wody do siana,
 :pokaż, baba, kolana.:

Translation

An old woman and a young guy
 are driving young bulls to water,
 from water to the hay,
 old woman, show your knees.

Pronunciation

Stah-rah bah-bah jiaht mwod-dih
 pen-dzom bich-kee doh voh-dih
 ohd voh-dih doh shah-nah
 poh-cahsh bah-bah koh-lah-nah

Originally, the dance was done at parties and weddings by four couples dancing from four corners of the room, moving in and out of the center and changing partners. Here the dance has been adapted to two lines to fit the American folk dancing situation.

Styling and Steps:

Stara Baba Step (in this description will be referred to as the **Basic Step**) done in closed social dance pos, ptrs facing each other:

Part (a) Slightly bend knees and lean in the dir of travel (ct & of previous meas).

1-2 Move in the dir of the joined hands with three small step-togethers (cts 1,&2,& of 1st meas and cts 1,& of 2nd meas) and one step-hold (cts 2,& of 2nd meas).

3-4 Repeat action of meas 1-2 with opp ftwk and dir.

Part (b)

5 Dance three steps (M-LRL, W-RLR) in place on bent and springy knees (cts 1,&2); hold (ct &). M: call "ozwij się" [oh-zveey sheh] (means: say something).

6 Repeat action of meas 5 with opp ftwk. W: call "u-ha-ha" [oo-hah-hah].

7-8 With four smooth, flat steps (M-LRLR, W-RLRL) dance one full cpl CW turn in place.

9-12 Repeat action of meas 5-8. (Note: the CW turn done during meas 11-12 will often be adjusted.)



Variations to meas 5-6

1. With the three steps make a 1/4 CW cpl turn (meas 5) and a 1/4 CCW turn (meas 6).

2. With a preliminary flex of the knees stamp with outside (M-L, W-R) ft (meas 5); repeat action with inside ft (meas 6).

Formation:

Pairs of cpls across from each other in two lines approx 15 ft apart, cpls in closed social dance pos, M's back to ctr, W faces ptr.

Measures

PATTERN

INTRODUCTION

1-2 No action.

I. UP AND DOWN THE SET

1-4 Dance part (a) of the Basic Step, cpls moving up and down the set (note: the two lines will move in opp dir).

5-12 Dance part (b) of the Basic Step, except with the second pivot make only a 3/4 CW turn.

II. IN AND OUT

1-12 Dance the Basic Step, moving with part (a) twd and away from the other cpl in your pair.

III. CHANGE PARTNERS

1-4 Dance part (a) of the Basic Step, moving twd and away from the other cpl in your pair, except during cts 2,& of the 2nd meas "swap" ptrs, i.e., W make a 1/2 CW turn, passing back to back, while M "send off" your orig ptr and join in social dance pos with your new ptr. The remaining side-together steps are then done with your new ptr, M returning to his orig place (meas 3-4).

5-12 Dance part (b) of the Basic Step with your new ptr. With the second pivot end with M's back to ctr.

Repeat the dance with the new ptr. At the beg of Fig III orig ptrs will return to each other.



Dance introduced in the Fall of 1977, at the Fourth Annual North-South Folkdance Teachers' Seminar in Ben Lomond, California, by Ada and Jaś Dzielanowski, who learned it in Ostrołęka and Myszyniec, Poland. Do not reproduce these directions without the Dzielanowskis' permission.