

GAMMAL SCHOTTIS

Swedish

- PRONUNCIATION:** GAH-mahl SHOH-tees
- TRANSLATION:** Old schottische
- SOURCE:** Dick Oakes learned this dance from Gordon E. Tracie who learned it in 1963 from Swedish ethnic dance authority Johan Larsson, a retired schoolteacher from Dalarna. He presented it at the 1980 San Diego State University Folk Dance Conference. Ingvar Sodal taught the dance at the 1975 San Diego State University Folk Dance Conference.
- BACKGROUND:** Gammal Schottis is from the province of Dalarna in the district of Bingsjö. Gammal Schottis is a traditional regional dance and a variant of the many "bygdedansar," or regional ethnic dances, collected by Johan Larsson on field trips to various "folklore pockets" of the area and annotated from living tradition bearers – elderly rural folk who had actually danced the dances in years past. As in all regional ethnic dances, the importance of proper music cannot be overstated. It must reflect the smooth, relaxed (legato) playing style. Thus, the Dalarna fiddle, with which this music grew up, is essential to providing the appropriate esthetic atmosphere in which the dance "lives and breathes."
- MUSIC:** Viking (45rpm) V-821-B
Viking (LP) SMF-201, side A, band 2
Viking (LP) SMF 200, "Regional Dances from Sweden," side A, band 3 and side B, band 5;
Odeon (LP) E 054-34262, "Dans I Dalom," side 1, band 1 and side 2, bands 1,5;
Odeon (LP) E 54-34342, side A, band 3;
EMI (LP) SCLP 1021, side B, band 1;
RCA (LP) YSJL 1-504, side A, band 6;
or any of several old-time Swedish schottis selections of Dalarna fiddle music.
- FORMATION:** Cpls facing CCW around the dance area with W to M R side in an open handhold: inside hands joined and held fwd at waist level, M R hand grasping W L hand from above so that both palms face downward, free hands hang loosely at sides, NOT on hips.
- METER/RHYTHM:** 2/4
- STEPS/STYLE:** SOFT SCHOTTIS: Step fwd on outside ft (ct 1); close inside ft to outside ft (ct &); step fwd on outside ft (ct 2); small lift on outside ft (ct &). Repeat is with opp ftwk. While structurally the same as the "international folk dancer's schottische step," with its run-run-run-hop, the Soft Schottis is less flamboyant, more elegant, and reserved, yet still retains a lilting springiness or "svikt," as the Swedes would call it.
- SOFT HOPSA: Step fwd on outside ft (ct 1); small lift on outside ft (ct &); step fwd on inside ft (ct 2); small lift on inside ft (ct &). Repeat is with opp ftwk.

Kinesthetically, rather than structurally, the Soft Hopsa is akin to the regular Danish "hopsa" (which is a waltz step in duple time), and has the same springy dignity of the Soft Schottis step.

SOFT HOPSA TURN: Using the Soft Hopsa steps, the M beg the turn by stepping across in front of his ptr and the cpl makes two complete CW revolutions in two meas while progressing CCW around the dance area in LOD. The torque of the turn comes on the first ct of the music, allowing the balance of the step to follow naturally. The lilt is still present, even in the cpl turn, giving the feeling of reserved power.

As in nearly all Swedish dancing, the M is the master of the dance and must lead it firmly, thoroughly, and unerringly, with the woman following his strong lead.

MEAS

FREESTYLE MOVEMENT DESCRIPTION

The following figures are traditionally not looked upon as set routines in a sequence dance, but may be used either selectively or freely alternated as determined by the M.

BASIC FORM

- 1-2 In open handhold as described under "Formation," dance 2 Soft Schottis steps fwd in LOD;
- 3-4 The cpl assumes a closed Swedish Polska Hold (slightly different from Swedish Folkdance Hold): Ptrs almost facing with M R arm around W waist, M L hand on W upper arm just below shldr, W hands holding M shldr around sides rather than on top, her arms both over top of his arms. Dance 4 Soft Hopsa Turn steps CW while progressing CCW around the dance area in LOD.

ALTERNATE FORM

- 1-2 Same action as in Basic Form, meas 1-2;
- 3-4 Cpl turns CCW instead of CW while progressing CCW around the dance area in LOD.

VARIATION WITH W TWIRL

- 1-2 In open handhold as described under "Formation," M dances 2 Soft Schottis steps fwd in LOD as W dances 2 Soft Schottis steps turning 2 revolutions CCW under M raised R arm;
- 3-4 Assuming closed Swedish Polska Hold, dance 4 Soft Hopsa Turn steps in either Basic Form or Alternate Form.

MINI-MIXER FORM

2 cpls line up, one in front of the other, each cpl facing LOD:

- 1 In open handhold as described under "Formation," both W and the second M dance fwd one Soft Schottis step as the first M dances obliquely fwd and outward one Soft Schottis step;

- 2 Dropping joined hands, both W dance one Soft Schottis step in place, the first M dances one Soft Schottis step bwd as second M dances one Soft Schottis step fwd, thus switching places;
- 3-4 Assuming closed Swedish Polska Hold, dance 4 Soft Hopsa Turn steps with new ptr in Basic Form while moving in LOD.
- 5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 to get back to, and turn with orig ptr.

The Soft Hopsa fwd in open handhold is almost never used except to get out of a tight spot and move to a more open spot of the dance area, or to better align cpls for the Mini-Mixer Form of the dance.