

Sobótki

(Poland)



On the eve of June 23rd, the shortest night of the year, the Poles celebrate St. John's Eve, or, as it was known in pagan times "Sobótki." (The name is derived from the Polish word "Sobota," meaning Saturday.) Many celebrations included music and dancing, fireworks, boat parades and the lighting of bonfires. In some regions women celebrated the shortest night separately from men. Women threw herbs into the bonfire, hoping it would protect them from evil. Single women made wreaths from herbs and floated them down the river hoping that their future husband would find it and fall in love with them. It was called the "Throwing of Wreaths" (Rzucanie Wianków). Men jumped through the bonfire to test their strength and courage. Even today, traditional candle-lit wreaths are floated on the Vistula in Krakow during the St. John the Baptist feast, along with fireworks and bonfires to commemorate the holiday. This non-partner dance is done to a "chodzony" (walking) melody, the precursor to the Polonaise.

Pronunciation: soh-BOOT-kee

Music: 3/4 meter

*Folk Dances of Poland by Richard Schmidt,
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Formation: Dancers in one circle facing ctr.

Steps & Styling: Walking step: Extend R fwd, knee slightly bent until it becomes straight, moving ft fwd with toes just above floor level (ct & before ct 1); step R fwd on ball of ft, straightening L (ct 1); step L fwd on ball of ft (ct 2); step R fwd on ball ft (ct 3). Repeat with opp ftwk.

Note: This step can beg with either R or L, and can be done fwd, bkwd and sideways. Ct 1 is the longest step in relation to the next two steps.

Walking step and Cross step: Using the basic movement of the Walking step, step on L behind R (ct 1); straighten both knees so R leg is fully extended with pointed toes in front of L (ct 2); hold (ct 3).

Floating Step: On tiptoes, six small steps per 3-ct measure, keeping the movement fluid and flowing, as if carrying a full glass of water on the head. Step can also be done beg with L or R.

<u>Meas</u>	<u>3/4 meter</u>	<u>Pattern</u>
4 meas	<u>INTRODUCTION.</u>	
1-2	Open circle of dancers facing ctr, arms extended to either side parallel to the floor, with palms up, down or fwd.	
3-4	Two Walking steps (R, L, R; L, R, L) making a small individual CCW circle and ending in beg pos.	
	I. <u>FIGURE I</u>	
1	Three steps (R, L, R) while making a full turn R and fwd along the circle.	

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- 2 Bring ft together with deep knee bend.
 3-4 Repeat meas 1-2.
 5-6 Facing ctr, one Walking step moving R (CCW), followed by one Cross Step.
 7-8 Repeat meas 5-6.
 9-12 Four Walking steps moving L (CW).
 13-14 Repeat meas 5-6.
 15-16 Repeat Introduction, meas 3-4 (small individual CCW circle).

Lyrics

Wianku, wianku ruciany
 Na sobótki zwijany
 Zwijałam cię ranna rosą
 Niech cie fale darmo niosa
 Wianku ruciany.

II. **FIGURE II.** Close the circle by joining hands during meas 1.

- 1-7 Facing ctr, seven Walking steps moving sdwd R (CCW). Arms rise during meas 5 and move back down on meas 6 until parallel to the floor on meas 7.
 8 Beg Walking step (L, R), but turn body and put L ft behind R (ct 3).
 9-10 Without dropping hands, face CW. Two Floating Steps fwd, while bringing arms down to V-pos and making the circle smaller by moving twd ctr.
 11-12 Continuing moving CW with Floating Steps, raise both arms up over head (meas 11). Continuing moving CW with Floating Steps, each puts R hand on his/her own L shldr and L hand on L shldr of dancer ahead (meas 12).
 13-14 Without changing hand pos, continuing moving CW with Floating Steps.
 15 With ft together and raising arms overhead, make a quarter-turn R to face ctr.
 16 One Floating step bkwd (L, R, L, R, L, R) and releasing handhold.
 17-32 Repeat Fig I, meas 1-16 (turning with deep knee bends).

Lyrics

Płynie rzeka, Hej płynie
 Po łowickiej dolinie
 Rzuć wianek ten daleko
 Niech popłynie razem z rzeką, wianek ruciany

- 33-64 Repeat Fig II, meas 1-16. Repeat Fig. I, meas 1-16.

Lyrics

Wodo, wodo daleka
 Nie zaganiaj wianeczka
 Niech go złapie chłopak luby
 Niech się spełnia wieczne śluby
 Wianku ruciany.

Presented by Richard Schmidt

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