

Tsakh Bar

(Armenia)

If I understood this correctly, “tsakh bar” means nimble dance. This dance passes through an extraordinarily wide range of Armenian styles, from lyrical at the beginning to fierce by the end. Learned from Eddie Djololian, 2003.

Pronunciation: TSAHKH BAHR

CD: “Armenian Dances” CD made available by Eddie Djololian 2/4 meter

Formation: (For Step I only): Stand shoulder to shoulder, L hand around the back of the waist of the person on one’s L side, R hand reaching to the L across in front of one’s own torso to clasp the L hand of the person on one’s R.

Meas

Pattern

I. MOVING SLOWLY TO THE LEFT

- 1 Looking to the L, step on L to L side, softly letting knees bend and unbend (ct 1); softly dip in the knees again (ct &); turning to look twd ctr, step on R next to L, again softly dipping in the knees (ct 2); dip in the knees again (ct &).
- 2 Repeat meas 1.
- 3 Step to the R side on a straight R leg, leaving L toe in contact with the ground and lifting head to look up to above the heads of the people to your R (ct 1); bend knees as you turn past facing ctr (ct &); looking up to the L, shift weight onto a straight L leg, leaving R toe in contact with the ground (ct 2); let R toe lift off the ground (ct &).
- 4 Step down on flexed R across in front of L (ct 1); step up on ball of L ft to the L side with L leg straight (ct &); step down on flexed R across in front of L (ct 2); straighten up on R leg while bending L knee to flick L ft up in back (ct &).
- 5 Turning 180 degrees CCW to face away from ctr (and thereby unraveling the handhold to face one’s own crossed wrists); step on L away from ctr, dipping softly in the knees (ct 1); dip knees again (ct &); step on ball of R ft next to L, dipping knees twice and dropping the head to look down (ct 2,&).
- 6 Turning 180 degrees CW to face ctr (rewrapping arms); step on R twd ctr, dipping softly into the knees and looking straight ahead (ct 1); dip knees again (ct &); step on ball of L ft next to R, dipping knees twice (cts 2,&).
- 7 Quickly turn 180 degrees CCW to step on L away from center, swiftly raising crossed wrists overhead (hands still held!) while looking up and leaving R toe still touching floor behind (ct 1); hold this position (cts &,2,&).
- 8 Very slowly turn back 180 degrees CW to step on R twd ctr (cts 1 &); quietly bring L back toward center to step next to R (cts 2,&).
- 9-40 Repeat meas 1-8 until the pause at the end of the slow music.

II. SCISSORS

(Hands drop to a normal V hold; L foot is free when this step begins.)

- 1 L ft steps across in front of R with L leg straight while R ft kicks up in back, R knee bent (cts 1,&); step back on R, extending L leg low in front (cts 2,&).

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- 2 Scissors in place: step on straight L leg in place, extending R leg low in front (ct 1); step on straight R leg in place, extending L leg low in front (ct &); step on straight L leg in place, extending R leg low in front (ct 2); pause (ct &).
- 3-4 Repeat meas 1-2 with opp ftwk.
- 5-16 Repeat meas 1-4 three more times.

III. DUCK BACK, FOOT SLAP FORWARD

- 1 Facing somewhat R of ctr, weight on both ft in ballet 4th position with L ft pointing twd ctr, wt shifted twd ctr over L ft, both knees bent (ct 1); shift back into upright stance, wt moving back over R ft and heels briefly lifting to drop (ct 2); briefly lift and drop heels again (ct &).
- 2 Repeat meas 1, cts 1, & (cts 1,&); lift and drop L heel with wt over it while picking R ft up in back, bending R knee (cts 2,&).
- 3 Look down to drop head and shldrs, as if ducking under something while taking a long step back onto R (cts 1,&); straighten up while stepping on L next to R (ct 2); lift straight R leg up in front (ct &).
- 4 Slap R ft down in front (ct 1); pause (ct &); bring wt over R, quickly bending R knee and bringing L ankle sharply in to touch the back of the R knee (ct 2); swing L ft fwd out from behind R knee (ct &).
- 5-16 Repeat meas 1-4 three more times.

IV. CLAPS, HOPS, AND JUMPS

- 1 Release handhold to step twd ctr on L, swinging hands up to slap in front (ct 1); hop on L (ct &); step back in place on R, bringing hands back down to sides (ct 2); step on L in place (ct &).
- 2 Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk.
- 3 Step on L across in front of R, moving arms apart into T-pos with hands resting on neighbors' shldrs (ct 1); bend L leg while leaning fwd over it and extending R toe as far as you can to touch the floor to your R side (ct &); step on R next to L keeping legs bent (ct 2); jump straight up and land on both feet (ct &).
- 4 Repeat meas 3 with opp ftwk.
- 5-6 Repeat meas 1-4.

V. QUICK STEPS IN PLACE

- 1 Taking hands at sides (in conventional V-pos); jump slightly in place onto balls of both ft (ct 1); take a slight jump onto R in place while kicking L heel up in back (ct &); kick R heel up in back, landing on L ft in place (ct 2); pause (ct &).
- 2 Repeat meas 1, cts 1, & (cts 1,&); take a slight jump onto R in place while kicking L ft forward (ct 2); pause (ct &).
- 3 Step on L ft in place, lifting R ft up in back (ct 1); swing R ft out to R side, leaving R knee hanging down (ct &); lift R knee up in front, letting R foot hang down below it (ct 2); pause (ct &).
- 4 Drop R heel to touch in front (ct 1); pause (cts &,2,&).
- 5-16 Repeat meas 1-4 three more times.
- 17 Jump straight up from meas 4 position, tucking ft up in back and quickly extending them to land in the same position again.

Dance notes by Erik Bendix

Presented by Erik Bendix