

European Folk Dances

A folk dance is a dance that reflects the life of the people of a certain country or region. Not all ethnic dances are folk dances.

For example, ritual dances or dances of ritual origin are not considered to be folk dances. Ritual dances are usually called "religious dances" because of their purpose. Video link:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=european+folk+dancing+in+this+area&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&hl=en-us&client=safari#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:9040bca7,vid:HLVcO6y-fQE>

Austria:

Krakowiak or **Cracovienne** - polka style, popular in Poland, France, & Austria. 20th century dances - foxtrot, maxixe, one-step, tango, and waltz.

The Ländler is a folk dance in 3/4 time which was popular in Austria, Bavaria, Germany, Switzerland, & Slovenia

Schuhplattler is a traditional style of folk dance popular in the Eastern Alps, specifically originating from Upper Bavaria, Tyrol, and Salzburg. In this dance, the performers stomp, clap, and strike the soles of their shoes (Schuhe), thighs, and knees with their hands held flat (platt).

Belgium:

The **Chapelloise** or **Belgijka** is a traditional folk dance with change of partners (a so-called Mixer), belonging to the standard repertoire of a Bal Folk.

Denmark: Folk dances were influenced by Poland & Russia.

The **Mazurka** is a Polish musical form based on stylized folk dances in triple meter, usually at a lively tempo, with character defined mostly by the prominent mazur's "strong accents unsystematically placed on the second or third beat".

The **Khorovod** or **Horovod** is an East Slavic and pagan art form and one of the oldest dances of Russia with its more than 1,000 years history. It is a combination of a circle dance and chorus singing, similar to the choreia of ancient Greece.

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Bulgaria:

Dajchovo horo is a Bulgarian folk dance done to a nine-beat meter. It is unique in two ways: it is a circle dance (most Bulgarian dances are either line or couple dances), and yet it has a leader (most circle dances have no leader).

Trite pati in 2/4, Line dance with rapid feet movement; step rhythm quick-quick-slow = 1+1+2.

Lesnoto (Macedonian and Bulgarian: "The Easy One" or "The Simple One"), or Lesno, is the name of a family of simple, popular folk dances from North Macedonia, also done in Bulgaria and parts of neighboring Balkan countries. It is a line dance, usually done to a seven-beat meter organized in a slow (3 beats), quick (2 beats), quick (2 beats) rhythm, often abbreviated 3+2+2.

Pravo horo (Bulgarian: 'straight dance') is a very popular, simple folk dance from Bulgaria that is done throughout the Balkan countries. In Greece, it is called Zonaradiko. It is considered the "national dance" of Bulgaria, Albania, and North Macedonia. It is a rustic village line dance with a three-measure pattern, done to 2/4 or 6/8 music.

Netherlands:

Klompdansen Traditional dancing in the Netherlands is often called "Folkloristisch", sometimes "Boerendansen" ("farmer-dancing") or "Klompdansen" (clog dancing). Wooden shoes are worn as an essential part of the traditional costume for Dutch clogging, or Klompdanskunst.

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Russia:

Metelitsa is a popular folk dance from Ukraine and Belarus. This dance abounds in swift changes of choreographed figures of a spinning nature, symbolizing a snowstorm. The dance still retains its Khorovod character, the ancient form of group dancing and choral singing with the many figures in a circle form.

Troika is a Russian performance dance based on Russian folk dances. The Russian word troika means three-horse team/gear, and the dancers imitate the prancing of horses pulling a sled or a carriage.

Serbia:

Kolo is a South Slavic circle dance. The circle dance is usually performed amongst groups of at least three people and up to several dozen people. Dancers hold each other's hands or each other's waists. They form a circle, a single chain or multiple parallel lines.

Kolo requires almost no movement above the waist. The basic steps are easy to learn. Experienced dancers demonstrate virtuosity by adding different ornamental elements, such as syncopated steps.

Crnogorsko oro The name 'oro' derives from the dialectal form of the word 'orao', meaning 'eagle', referring to how the dance is performed to resemble the movements of an eagle.

Slovakia:

The **Odzemek** is a Slovaksolo traditional dance for men which always has an improvised character. The dance starts out slow and gets faster as the dance goes on, and is traditionally danced in Slovakia and also Moravian Wallachia.

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England:

The **Schottische** (originated in Bohemia), is a partnered country dance of a very large number of social dances, that started in the British Isles; it is the repeated execution of a predefined sequence of figures, carefully designed to fit a fixed length of music, performed by a group of people, usually in couples, in one or more sets. The figures involve interaction with your partner and/or with other dancers, usually with a progression so that you dance with everyone in your set.

Morris is a form of English folk dance. Based on rhythmic stepping and choreographed figures by a group of dancers in costume, usually wearing bell pads on their shins and/or shoes. A band or single musician, also costumed, will accompany them. Sticks, swords, handkerchiefs, and a variety of other implements may be wielded by the dancers.

Finland:

Jenkka is a fast[citation needed] Finnish partner dance found in Finnish folk dance, the Finnish version of the schottische. It is danced to music in 2/4 or 4/4 time signature, with about 140 beats per minute.

The initial dance position is with the man to the left of the woman both facing in the direction of the line of dance, with their inner arms on each other's waists. The dancers go forward in a run similar to that of the polka.

Czech Republic:

A **Redowa** is a dance of [Czech](#) origin with turning, leaping [waltz](#) steps that was popular in European ballrooms.

The **Špacírka** is a moderately fast [Bohemian](#) dance in 2/4 time. The dance starts out slowly with the dancer(s) walking; (got its name: in Czech "*špacírovat*" (from the German word *Spazieren*) means "to walk around."

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France:

Bal-musette is a style of French instrumental music and dance that first became popular in Paris in the 1880s. Although it began with bagpipes as the main instrument, this instrument was eventually replaced by the accordion, on which a variety of waltzes, polkas, and other dance styles were played.

A **Branle** (Popular in France, Italy, Spain & Scotland) is a type of French dance popular from the early 16th century to the present, danced by couples in either a line or a circle. The term also refers to the music and the characteristic step of the dance.

The **Farandole** is an open-chain community dance popular in Provence, France. It bears similarities to the gavotte, jig, and tarantella.

Java is a dance which was developed in France in the early part of the 20th century. The origin of its name is uncertain, but it probably evolved from the valse. Mainly performed in French bal-musette between 1910 and 1960, the dance was largely conceived due to popular demand for a new type of waltz.

A **Minuet** (/ˌmɪnjuˈɛt/; also spelled menuet) is a social dance of French origin for two people, usually in 4/3 time.

Germany:

The **Zwiefacher** (German pronunciation:[ˈtʃviːfaxe]) is a southern German folk dance with a quick tempo and changing beat patterns. The couple turns very quickly in a closed position, similar to the waltz.

Schuhplattler/Lander/Waltz – same as in Austria

Der Deutsche – Couples dance in circles to a 3/4 or 3/8 meter.

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Greece:

The **Ballos** is a Greek folk dance and a form of sirtos. There are also different versions in other Balkan countries.

The melody of a ballos is generally joyous and lyrical which is typical of the music of the Aegean Islands. This couples' dance incorporates all the elements of courtship: attraction, flirtation, display of masculine prowess and feminine virtue, pursuit, and rejection followed by eventual capture and surrender.

The **Diplos Horos** is a dance from Messenia in the Peloponnese, Greece. It is a dance where the dancers form a single circle formation into a double via the hand hold. The dance is a simple sta tria in formation but is accompanied by the song.

The **Kalamatianós** is one of the best known dances of Greece. It is a popular Greek folk dance throughout Greece, Cyprus and internationally. As is the case with most Greek folk dances, it is danced in chain with a counterclockwise rotation, the dancers holding hands.

It is a joyous and festive dance. Depending on the occasion and the dancers' proficiency, certain steps may be taken as jumps or squats.

Poland:

The **Kujawiak** is a Polish folk dance from the region of Kujawy in central Poland. It is one of the five national dances of Poland (Krakowiak, Mazur (**Mazurka** as in Denmark), Oberek, and Polonaise).

The **Polonaise** original name is *Chodzony*, meaning "the walking dance". It is one of the most ancient Polish cultural dance traditions. Polonaise dance influenced European ballrooms, folk music and European classical music.

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Hungary:

Csárdás is a traditional Hungarian folk dance and is characterized by a variation in tempo: it starts out slowly (lassú) and ends in a very fast tempo (friss, literally "fresh"). The music is in 2/4 or 4/4 time. The dancers are both male and female, with the women dressed in traditional wide skirts, which form a distinctive shape when they whirl.

Karikázó is a Hungarian folk dance traditionally performed by women. It is a circle dance in 4/4 time, traditionally to a cappella rather than instrumental music.

Verbunkos is an 18th-century Hungarian dance and music genre. It is typically in a pair of sections, slow with a characteristic dotted rhythm, and fast with virtuosic running-note passages. In some cases, this slow-fast pair alternates at greater length.

Switzerland:

Folk dance in Switzerland today has its roots in the 18th and 19th centuries. The dances are pieced together from the many dance traditions of Switzerland's neighbours including France, Germany, Austria, and Italy. The main kinds of dance include the **Schottisch**, **Walzer**, **Ländler**, **Marsch**, and **Polka**.

The **Schottische**, as in England, is a partnered country. The basic step is made up of two sidesteps to the left and right, followed by a turn in four steps.

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Ukraine:

Chumak is a popular folk dance from Ukraine. In it, the dancers reenact the lives of salt-merchants. The dancers begin by interpreting mining salt from a cave, they then proceed to go through the desalinization process, which allows them to sprinkle their salt on pretzels, all while dancing.

Hopak-Kolom is a popular folk dance from Ukraine. It is similar to the Hopak, although it is performed in a circle. The dance itself reflects the full breadth of the Ukrainian soul, and has long been a hallmark of Ukrainian culture. Hopak depicts a kind of dialogue in which men show their character, strength and courage, and girls - their elegance and beauty.

The **Kolomyika** is a Hutsul (Ukrainian) music genre that combines a fast-paced folk dance and comedic rhymed verses.

Sweden / Norway:

The **Slängpolska** ("släng" Swed. for "toss, throw, chuck") is a Swedish folk dance and sometimes also the description of certain folk music tunes. The dances bearing the name slängpolska can be divided into two major types. Spin in place and circle around room counterclockwise.

The **Halling** is a folk dance traditionally performed in rural Norway and in parts of Sweden. The dance is traditionally performed by young men. The halling is a quick (95–106 bpm) dance in 6/8 or 2/4 time includes acrobatic, athletic competition between the dancers. Hallingdansen can best be described as rhythmic acrobatic dance and consists of a number of steps which requires both strength and softness elation.

Snoa is a Swedish couple dance involving a simple pivot-spin step in 4/4 duple-meter time. It is related to the Norwegian Rudl or rull dance, which is often in a 2/4. The Swedish word Snoa, meaning "to turn or rotate", is used throughout a good part of northern Sweden to identify this dance.

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Ireland:

Irish stepdance is a style of performance dance with its roots in traditional Irish dance. It is generally characterized by a stiff upper body and fast and precise movements of the feet.

Ballu tundu or **ballu sardu** is a traditional Sardinian folk dance which is typically danced in a closed or open circle. In northern and central Sardinia, the dance is lively and animated with leaps and agile movements and usually accompanied by a choir of three or more singers in the center of the circle.

Spain:

Flamenco is an art form based on the various folkloric music traditions of southern Spain, developed within the gitano subculture of the region of Andalusia.

Zambra (originally from classical Arabic *zamr*) is a style of flamenco dance, It is danced barefoot with finger cymbals; the blouse is tied under the bust and the skirt is very tight around the hips, then flares out and has a ruffle at the end.

The **Sardana** is a Catalan musical genre typical of Catalan culture and danced in circles. Men and women join together in a circle by holding hands and facing inwards to dance either. The steps are meticulously counted as two- or three-step movements taken sideways within the circle. The direction of the steps is alternated. The hands stay on the hip or shoulder level depending on the step structure.

The **seguidilla** (means "sequence") is an old Castilian folksong and dance form in quick triple time for two people with many regional variations.

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Italy:

The **Saltarello** is a musical dance originally from Italy as a late-fourteenth- or early fifteenth-century dance form. It was usually played in a fast triple meter and is named for its peculiar leaping step, after the Italian verb saltare ("to jump"). This characteristic is also the basis of the German name Hoppertanz or Hupfertanz ("hopping dance).

Tarantella is a group of various southern Italian folk dances. It is characterized by a fast upbeat tempo, usually in 6/8 time (sometimes 12/8 or 4/4), accompanied by tambourines.

Tarantella calabrese is where a couple dance in a circular space made of moving people named "rota" (wheel). "U mastri i ballu" (Master of dance) decide the order of the dancers inside rota managed turns.

Monferrina is a lively Italian folk dance. The dance starts with two circular promenades by couples arm-in-arm using a lively march step. The individual couples then join both hands for a cross-step with bent knees. The dance often contains bows and mimed teasing and coaxing.

Romania:

Horă is a traditional Romanian and Moldovan folk dance where the dancers hold each other's hands and the circle spins counterclockwise, as each participant follows a sequence of steps. The dance is accompanied by a variety of musical small instruments.

Perinița is a traditional Romanian wedding folk dance. The dance consists of participants forming a circle with one of the participants holding a handkerchief (or pillow) while dancing inside the circle.

A **Sârbă** is a [Romanian](#) folk dance normally played in 6/8 or 12/8 time. It can be danced in a circle, line, or couple formations.

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Portugal:

Chula is a dance and music genre which originated in Portugal. The traditional folkdance has a tempo and rhythm marked by a bass drum, a triangle and cymbals, and is native to the Upper Douro. It incorporates singing accompanied by violins, violas, accordions and percussion.

The **corridinho** is a form of Portuguese folk dance. The name derives from corer, to run which partly describes this type of dance. The dance was performed in a round (dança de roda) in the open air.

Scotland:

The **Jig** (Irish/Scottish Gaelic) is a form of lively folk dance in compound metre, as well as the accompanying dance tune. It first gained popularity in 16th-century England, Ireland, Scotland, and other parts of the British Isles,[1][2] and was adopted on mainland Europe where it eventually became the final movement of the mature Baroque dance suite

Scottish country dance (SCD) is the distinctively Scottish form of country dance, itself a form of social dance involving groups of couples of dancers tracing progressive patterns. A dance consists of a sequence of figures. These dances are set to musical forms (Jigs, Reels and Strathspey Reels) which come from the Gaelic tradition of Highland Scotland, as do the steps used in performing the dances. Traditionally a figure corresponds to an eight-bar phrase of music.

The **Reel** is a folk dance type as well as the accompanying dance tune type. Of Scottish origin, reels are also an important part of the repertoire of the fiddle traditions of Britain, Ireland and North America. In Scottish country dancing, the reel is one of the four traditional dances, the others being the jig, the strathspey and the waltz, and is also the name of a dance figure.