

Hineh Ma Tov

(Israel)

The words for Hineh Ma Tov come from Psalm 133, and have been set to a number of melodies. One of those melodies was used in the 1950's by Rivka Sturman when she created a simple circle dance which is still done today. This version of Hineh Ma Tov was created in 2000 by Silvio Berlfein, an Argentine Jew currently living in Florida, and it has become popular as well, particularly with young dancers, due chiefly to the infectious, upbeat music.

The music for this line dance is an arrangement by Yerachmiel Begun, the director of the Miami Boys Choir. The Miami Boys Choir, which sings in this recording, is modeled after the Vienna Boys' Choir. Pre-adolescent Orthodox Jewish boys audition to sing in the choir and are released when their voices change.

Line dances such as this one are a small but popular sub-set of Israeli dances done by individual dancers in rows facing the same direction. Many dancers assume this dance is Israel's attempt to mimic Country-Western line dances or the more recent recreational line dances being done in the U.S. On the contrary, Israelis have been doing dances like this since the mid-1960s when such dances as Sapri Tama, Debka Lahat, and Shalom Al Israel were first created. Line dances represent 10-12% of the Israeli dance repertoire.

This dance was presented by Loui Tucker at Stockton Folk Dance Camp in the summer of 2006.

CDs:	<i>Israeli Dances Stockton 2006</i>	2/4 meter
Video:	Cassette or DVD, SFDC 2006	
Pronunciation:	ee-NAY mah tohv	
Formation:	Dancers stand individually, in rows, all facing the same direction, usually the front of the hall.	
Steps & Styling:	Light, bouncy, joyous. Unless otherwise noted, arms are bent at the elbow so hands are at waist level. Fingers snapping with the beat is common.	

Meas.	PATTERN
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1-6 INTRODUCTION. No action. Begin dance with the lyrics to the song.

FIGURE I

- 1 Step on R to R, bending and straightening the R knee slightly during the transfer of wt (ct 1); step on L to L, bending and straightening the L knee slightly during the transfer of weight (ct 2).
- 2 Step on R to R (ct 1); step on L next to R (ct &); step on R to R (ct 2).
- 3-4 Repeat meas 1-3 with opp ftwk and direction.

- 5 Kick R sharply fwd with a flexed ft, almost touching the heel to the ground and hopping lightly on the L (ct 1); step fwd on R (ct &); kick L sharply fwd with a flexed ft, almost touching the heel to the ground and hopping lightly on the R (ct 2); step fwd on L (ct &).
- 6 Step fwd on R while turning 1/4 L (ct 1); step on L in place (ct &); step fwd on R while turning 1/4 L (ct 2); step on L in place (ct &).
Note: Having executed a half-rotation in place, dancers now face the opp wall.
- 7-8 Repeat meas 5-8 with the same ftwk, ending in the beginning position and orientation.

FIGURE II

- 1 A large step to R on R while arms reach high and straight, fingers of the hand spread (ct 1); step on L slightly behind R (ct 2); step in place on R as arms bend at the elbow and come down to about shldr height, fingers relaxing (ct &).
- 2 Repeat meas 1 with the opp ftwk and direction.
- 3 Fast grapevine: step on R to R (ct 1), step on L behind R (ct &); step on R to R (ct 2); step on L in front of R (ct &).
- 4 Jump lightly on to both feet with feet spread about shldr distance apart and arms stretching wide to the sides with palms up (ct 1); jump on both feet with feet together, bringing arms high over head and clapping hands (ct 2).
- 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4 with opp ftwk and direction.
- 9 Repeat Fig I, meas. 5 (heel-steps).
- 10 Repeat meas 4.
- 11-12 Repeat meas 9-10.
- 13 Step bkwd onto R, bending and straightening the knees slightly during the transfer of wt to effect a light bounce on both feet (ct 1); step bkwd onto L with the same action as ct 1 (ct 2).
- 14 Repeat meas 13, continuing to back up.
- 15-16 Repeat Fig I, meas 6 *twice* (full rotation instead of half-rotation).

SEQUENCE:

Each figure is danced twice, ending with Fig. II, meas 9-10.