

# Italian Quadrille

(USA/Italy)

There are many figures for the Italian Quadrille which can be danced in any order or combination. Traditionally the figures were called, and sets were composed of 4, 6, or more couples. The following choreography is popular with most groups in California. This account is based on descriptions published by the Folk Dance Federation of California, Inc. (*Folk Dances from Near and Far*, vol V, 1950, p.10; vol B-1, 1960 (rev. 1966), pp. 14-15). The source of this dance is unknown, although it is assumed that it originated with an Italian-American community.

Music: Records: Columbia 10071, Columbia 14316-F, Oliver 1011 and 202A 6/8 meter

The music consists of three melodies (A, B, C) each 16 measures long and repeated in sequence four times with one extra 16 measures of A music at the end. Rhythm is counted as 2 even beats per measure (3/8 + 3/8).

Formation: Regular square formation with Cpl 1 having backs to music. Free hands hang at sides.

Steps and Styling: Walk\*, Grand Right and Left\*, Varsouvienne position\*

Styling: Rapid, smooth, and even walking steps; two steps per measure.

\* Described in *Steps & Styling* (rev. 1996), published by the Folk Dance Federation of CA, Inc.

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| Meas | Pattern |
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INTRODUCTION. Pickup beat only.

## I. CIRCLE LEFT AND RIGHT

- A 1-8 Join hands on pickup beat, and circle L with 15 steps, starting with L ft; close R to L without wt on 16th step.
- 9-16 Circle R with 16 steps, starting with R ft; end in original starting positions.

## II. GREET OPPOSITE AND CHANGE PARTNERS

- B 1-2 Cpls 1 and 3 acknowledge ptr and with inside hands joined, advance 3 steps twd opp cpl (cts 1,2,1), and bow to opposites (ct 2).
- 3-4 Same cpls retire to place with 4 steps.
- 5-6 Cpls 1 and 3 acknowledge ptr and advance as in meas 1-2, but on 4th step drop ptr's hand and M take L hand of opp W with own R.
- 7-8 M1 and M3 make turn to own L and take opposite W back to place. On meas 8, M turn L in place guiding W around CCW so both face center of square.
- 9-16 Cpls 2 and 4 repeat action of meas 1-8.

Italian Quadrille—page 2

- C 17-24 Cpls 1 and 3 repeat meas 1-8, escorting own ptr back to home.  
25-32 Cpls 2 and 4 repeat meas 17-24.

III. LEFT-HAND STAR

- A 1-3 M join L hand in a star, W on outside hook L arm through ptr's R arm; all face CCW and move fwd with 6 steps.  
4 M continue moving 2 steps fwd; W withdraw L arm and with 2 small steps in place hook arm with M coming from behind.  
5-16 Repeat meas 1-4 three more times until last ptr change brings original ptrs together. Star keeps revolving CCW throughout the Fig.

IV. LONGWAYS SET

- B 1-8 M drop L hands. Cpl 1 leads others around CCW reaching the bottom of the set by the end of the phrase.  
9-14 Cpl 1 turn sharply L leading up the set. Cpls are now lined up as 1, 4, 3, 2.  
15-16 Ptrs face each other and with 4 steps back into longways sets (line of M facing line of W, M's L shldr twd music).

V. ADDRESS PARTNERS

- C 1-2 Line of M advance 3 steps twd ptrs, close ft and bow on 4th ct.  
3-4 M retire to place with 4 steps.  
5-8 W repeat meas 1-4 making slight curtsey on ct 2 of meas 6.  
9-16 Repeat meas 1-8.

VI. PROGRESSIVE REEL

This Figure uses the musical motifs A, B, C (16+16+16 = 48 meas).

- 1-4 Cpl 1 starts the reel. Join R hands at shoulder level, with elbows bent and forearms upright; circle once and a half around until M1 faces W4 and W1 faces M4.  
5-6 Join L hands with person facing and turn once around to face original ptr.  
7-8 Ptrs join R hands and circle once around.  
9-48 Cpl 1 continues the reel down the set, next turning with Cpl 3, then with each other, then with Cpl 2, and finally with each other, backing into place on their own side at the bottom of the set. As Cpl 1 takes hands with Cpl 3, Cpl 4 starts the reel from the top; as Cpl 4 takes hands with Cpl 2, Cpl 3 starts to reel. As each cpl reaches the bottom of the set they move back twd the top taking L hands with each successive reeling cpl; all cpls end back in original positions.

Note that the entire reel takes 45 meas (90 steps) to complete, but there are 48 meas (96 steps) of music available so it is not necessary that reeling cpls keep exactly to the music after the first 8 meas.

VII. GRAND RIGHT AND LEFT

- A 1-4 Both M and W make quarter turn to their L. W keep time (8 steps) in place. M cast off with M1 leading line around to meet W 2 in 8 steps.
- 5-16 Reform circle of cpls with Grand Right and Left starting with R hands, continuing until everyone meets their own ptr for second time. Join L hands and move into Varsouvienne position facing CCW.

VIII. PROMENADE CHANGING PARTNERS

- B 1-2 Cpls move fwd 4 steps in circle CCW.
- 3-4 Without dropping hands, M raise R arm fwd and pass it to L over their heads turning W to L and back, releasing her to new ptr behind; resume Varsouvienne position. W take 4 steps to make turn and M take 4 steps fwd to meet new ptr.
- 5-16 Repeat meas 1-4 three more times, regaining original ptr.

IX. THE SPIRAL

- C 1-8 With W to R of ptrs, all join hands, held down, and circle (CCW) for 16 steps.
- 9-16 M1 and W4 drop joined hands; W4 lead line to outside (CCW) around M1 forming a spiral while M1 turns slowly to R in place to tighten spiral.

X. BREAKOUT AND CIRCLE LEFT

- A 1-8 M1 breaks out of spiral by bending low and leading line beneath arch formed by Cpl 4. M1 lead line CW and join hands with W4 to reform circle.
- 9-16 Circle L (CCW) as in Fig 1, meas 1-8. End with bow twd center of set.