

Polska Med Bakmes (Sweden)

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Polska Med Bakmes (POHL-skah med BAWK-mehs) translated literally means polska with reverse turn. Bakmes is a Swedish dialect word implying 'backwards', which refers to the reverse or backward turns found in western and northern Sweden or the Swedish districts of Finland. It comes from the province of Dalarna, specifically Transtrand. The dance combines a Gammal Polska in the Västerdalsk (western Dalarna) style and the Västerdalsk Bakmes. It consists of the open polska or promenade forward and two different turns, one CW and the other CCW. The open polska serves as a rest step between the two turns. There are also transitional steps in order to get into and out of the turns. The dance is essentially free form, and the order in which the parts are danced is not fixed. The pattern presented below, however, is a logical progression and well suited for learning. Gordon Tracie has researched the dance in Sweden since 1951 and presented it at the 1980 University of the Pacific Folk Dance Camp.

RECORD: Viking V-821a 3/4 meter
Hurv 2 Side A/6, 9, 11, or 12 and Side B/1, 3, 5, or 9.

FORMATION: Cpls in open pos at random about the floor, facing LOD, free hand at side.

STEPS: Open Polska (Försteg): Step fwd on L, heel contacting floor first (ct 1); keeping ball of R in contact with floor, roll fwd onto full L (ct 2); step fwd on R, ball of L remaining in place (ct 3).

This timing produces a smooth but syncopated or uneven walk. The movement is smooth and flowing and should not be in any way jerky or 'military' in character. Steps described for the M, W on opp ft.

Closed Polska Turn (Rundpolska): Rotate once CW per meas as follows:

M: Step on L far out around ptr (bkwd in LOD) (ct 1); bring R heel beside L heel, toes at 90°, and place some wt on R heel. Pivot 1/2 CW with wt on ball of L and R heel (ct 2); step on R slightly fwd in LOD (ct 3). Cue- L, both, R.

W: Ft together, wt on both (ct 1); step on R between M ft (fwd in LOD) (ct 2); step on L far out around ptr (bkwd in LOD) (ct 3). Cue- Both, R, L.

Bakmes Turn: Rotate once CCW in 2 meas as follows:

M: Step on L diag fwd to L of LOD (ct 1); pivot on L swinging R around CCW, no wt change (ct 2); step on R in front of L forming a 'T' with L toe at instep of R (ct 3).

W: Step on L behind her R twd LOD to form an 'L' with L toe adjacent to R heel at 90° angle, bend both knees slightly (ct 1); pivot on both heels 1/2 CCW (ct 2); step on R beside L (ct 3).

During this first meas a half turn CCW should be completed. Finish CCW turn by repeating meas 1 exactly with W dancing M part and M dancing W part, meas 2 (cts 1-3).

Basic Polska Closed Pos: Face ptr, ML hand on W upper R arm just below her shldr, MR around W waist. WL arm on M upper R arm. WR hand just below M shldr.

Bakmes Pos: L hip to hip, ML arm around W waist, MR hand on W upper L arm just below her shldr, WR arm on M upper L arm, WL arm on inside of MR arm with her hand just below the M shldr.

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STYLING: All steps are danced with a very slight bend of knees so that both steps and turns are smooth with little or no bounce or emphasis on any ct. Keep ft fairly close together, close to the floor, and do not fling ft outward. All movements are relaxed with flowing motion, yet firm and powerful.

As in the case of all cpl polskas, the M is the master of the dance and he must lead it firmly. The W in effect gets a 'free ride'. Lean away from ptr slightly in order to get a good firm swing on the turns.

MUSIC 3/4

PATTERN

Measures

INTRODUCTION Beg whenever desired.

Continued...

I. OPEN POLSKA LOD (Promenade)

any number In open pos, beg ML, WR, dance fwd in LOD with any number of Open Polska steps. A musical phrase is appropriate.

II. CLOSED POLSKA TURN

1 Transition: M step fwd on L across in front of ptr, turning 1/2 CW to face ptr and assume Basic Polska Closed Pos, W pause or hold, wt on both ft (ct 1); continue turning CW with Closed Polska Turn (cts 2, 3).

any number Dance Closed Polska Turn CW progressing LOD any number of meas, one turn per meas. In order to keep progressing in LOD, both M and W must step alternately in LOD bkwd on L, and fwd in LOD on R.

III. OPEN POLSKA LOD

1 Transition to Open Polska: Beg ML, WR, step fwd LOD, releasing ML, WR hands to assume open pos (ct 1); proceed with Fig I (cts 2, 3).

any number Repeat Fig I.

1 Transition to Bakmes Turn: Whenever desired, preferably on last meas of musical phrase, use the following steps to assume Bakmes Pos, M facing LOD, W RLOD.

M: Step on L fwd LOD with emphasis (stamp) (ct 1); hold, keeping R in place (ct 2); step on R beside L (ct 3).

W: Step fwd on R beg a 1/2 CCW turn crossing over in front of M (ct 1); step on L to end by ML side (ct 2); step on R beside L (ct 3).

IV. BAKMES TURN

any number Dance any number of Bakmes Turn steps progressing in LOD, one CCW turn per 2 meas.

1 Transition to Open Polska: Preferably on last meas of a musical phrase M dance same step as meas 2 of Bakmes Turn, releasing hand hold and turning W slightly CW in place to end facing LOD, W to MR; W step L, R, L in place facing LOD (cts 1, 2, 3). Assume open pos.

Repeat dance using any sequence of patterns desired, alternating Open Polska with Polska Turn or Bakmes.

