

Turkey Trot

These notes (based on 1987 dance notes from Richard Powers) give the men's/leads' steps; ladies/follows will need to make the usual "mirror" adjustments.

LOD = line of dance
CW = clockwise
Q = quick
S = slow
L = left foot
R = right foot

Both = bounce (or more accurately, LAND), with both feet taking weight on the beat
Walk = a slow walk
Trot = a double-time walk

The entire choreography is danced in ballroom position, twice through, adding the closing section (D) only after the second time; thus, the sequence is: A - A - B - B - C - A - A - B - B - C - D

A. STEP-HOPS

Man backs the lady in LOD in this manner:

Both, hop-L, both, hop-R, walk, walk. (QQQQSS) Kick the free foot back and up during the hops. Repeat.

Pivot CW around as a couple with 4 both-hops (one full turn, QQQQQQQQ); then in LOD: 2 walks and 4 trots (SSQQQQ).

Repeat this entire section.

B. ZIG ZAG RUN (or ZIG ZAG TROT)

Trot forward diagonal L; cross R behind L; trot fwd diag. L (QQQ).

Repeat forward to the right diagonal. Repeat both again, and finish with 2 walks. (QQQQQQQQQQQQSS)

The lady has the option of crossing the 2nd trotting steps in front of or behind her other foot; however, we* teach the front-cross version because it mirrors the man's steps, and seems more comfortable.

Repeat this entire section.

C. CHASSEZ

Side-together-side-together traveling to the left (LOD) and swaying left (starting with a 90°CW turn), then a 180° CW turn with 3 kicking trots. (QQQQQQS)

Repeat to the other side (note that you'll still be traveling LOD), but this time turn only 90°CW with the 3 kicking trots, so the man is again in position to back the lady LOD.

Continue with 6 walks and 4 trots.

D. CLOSING

Both, hop-L, both, hop-R, walk, walk, both, hop-L. (QQQQSSQQ)

This is the same as the first phrase of section A, then "freezing" with an extra both-hop.

STYLING

Think of the Turkey Trot as a "staccato" dance ... i.e., crisply bouncy. You'll find it easier to achieve this styling if you stay on the balls of your feet as much as possible, particularly on the quick steps. The original arm-styling (flapping/pumping) done in conjunction with the hops really helps you to keep up with the peppy music, and to achieve the (silly) turkey-like look of this dance. You can also turn your head a bit to look toward your kicking foot during the hops; this is particularly satisfying during the "freeze" at the end.

* at Waltz & Such™ in San Diego