

PAJDUŠKA
(Bulgaria-Macedonia)

One of the most beloved and popular dances in the whole Bulgarian-Macedonian common repertoire is Pajduška (Bulgarian - pie-DOOSH-kah; Macedonian - PIE-doosh-kah), also known as Pajduškata, Pajduško, etc. People still dance it today from western-most Macedonia to the Black Sea coast of Bulgaria, and it is even found in neighboring Greece (Trapanistós, Baidouška) and Romania (Paidușca, Rustemul), not to mention immigrant communities in the U.S. and Canada. There is also a definite relationship, not yet investigated, between Pajduška and the various forms of the Serbian Djurdjevka.

Strangely enough, for all its immense popularity and diffusion, the derivation of its name is a mystery. It has no other meaning in Bulgarian and Macedonian than the name of a dance called Pajduška.

The most important characteristic which distinguishes Pajduška from other dances is its typical "quick-slow" rhythm pattern, conventionally notated in 5/16 meter (♩ ♩.); (it should be noted, however, that many good native folk musicians clearly play it in what could be written as 3/8: ♩ ♩). The question of time signatures is more important to musicians than to dancers, however. All a dancer need know is that there are 2 dancer's beats per measure, in a "quick-slow" pattern -- the amount of ct 2's "slowness" depending on the music used:

	1	2
	Q	S
5/16	♩	♩.
3/8	♩	♩

There are many other dances in this rhythm, and even though their names, step sequences, phrasing and styling may differ, their common quick-slow pattern places them in what Balkan dance specialists call the "Pajduška family." The version described below is by far the most common in Bulgaria, Macedonia and among North American immigrants from those countries. It was first learned by Dick Crum in 1951 among Bulgarian immigrants in Pittsburgh, and subsequently danced innumerable times by him, in the U.S., Canada and the Balkans themselves.

Records: Of the many Pajduška recordings available, the following are recommended: (a) XOPO 325, "Pajduško horo," and (b) Folk Dancer MH 3039, "Pajduška."

Formation: Mixed open circle, hands joined and held down at sides ("V" position).

MeasPattern

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| 1 | Facing ctr or very slightly L of ctr, step R ft across in front of L ft (ct 1, Q); small step L with L ft (ct 2, S). |
| 2-3 | Repeat movements of meas 1, 2 more times (for a total of 3), continuing to L. <u>Note:</u> In meas 2, some native dancers step R ft behind L ft on ct 1, instead of across in front. |
| 4 | Facing ctr, hop in place on L ft, bringing R leg a bit fwd in a relaxed fashion (ct 1, Q); step R ft in place (ct 2, S). |

PAJDUSKA (cont)

- 5 Still facing ctr, hop in place on R ft, bringing L leg a bit fwd in a relaxed fashion (ct 1, Q); step L ft in place (ct 2, S).
- 6 Step R ft in front of L ft (ct 1, Q); step on L ft in its place behind R ft (ct 2, S) and turn to face directly R, i.e., in LOD.
- 7 Moving in this new direction, hop fwd on L ft (ct 1, Q); continuing, step fwd on R ft (ct 2, S).
- 8 Continuing in LOD, hop fwd on R ft (ct 1, Q); continuing, step fwd on L ft (ct 2, S).
- 9-10 Repeat movements of meas 7-8, continuing in LOD with 2 more hop-steps; at the end, pivot quickly on L ft to face ctr, bringing R ft around in front in order to begin the dance over again with a definite step onto R ft to start meas 1.

Variations: In observing native dancers dancing this Pajduška, you will occasionally notice individual and regional variations, such as hand claps, complex arm movements (especially in eastern Bulgaria and among exhibition groups in general) and others. These are too variable and unpredictable to be described here.

Note on accent: (ct 1 (quick) receives the accent in all measures, despite the fact that ct 2 (slow) is longer! Many non-native dancers, equating length with stress, mistakenly come down very heavily on ct 2; native dancers feel the rhythm as QUICK-slow, QUICK-slow, or ONE-two, ONE-two, etc. To more closely approximate native styling, remember that the action on ct 2 is longer but not stronger.

Presented by Dick Crum