

Scandinavian Dancers of Vancouver POLSKA MEMORY JOGGER
originally created by Deborah Jones for the 1998 Spring Equinox Ball

DANCE	WOMAN'S STEPS						MAN'S STEPS					
	FÖRSTEG			TURN			FÖRSTEG			TURN		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Generic polska	R		L	Both	R	L	L		R	L	Both	R
Föllinge polska pt. 1	small hop L	R	L	R		L	small hop R	L	R	L		R
Föllinge polska pt. 2	R		L	R		L	L		R	L		R
Föllinge polska pt. 3	L		R	L		R	L		R	L		R
Rättviks polska (smooth Cadillac)	R		L	R		L	L		R	L		R
Bingsjö polska (level, with twizzle)	R		L	Both	R	L	L		R	L	Both	twizzle onto R
Orsa polska (surge in LOD on ct. 1 of turn)	Tap R heel	L	R	L		R	Tap R heel	L	R	Twizzle onto R	L	both
Boda polska (more up and down feel)	Tap R heel	L	R	L	Both	R	Swivel on R	L	R	Swivel on R	L	<i>(briefly)</i> both
Bondpolska fr. Viksta (Woman--low leap Man--"forward & back" Boda)	R		L	L - both <i>(almost simultaneous)</i>		R	L		R	Swivel on R	L	<i>(briefly)</i> both
Föllinge hambo pt. 1	(fancy försteg)			L		R	(fancy försteg)			R		L
Föllinge hambo pt. 2	L		R	L		R	R		L	R		L
Hambo	(2 dalsteg, 3 walk)			L	Both	R	(2 dalsteg, 3 walk)			R	L	both

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See over for a chart of Swedish polskas that we often dance, especially at the Spring Equinox Ball. Many other "important" polskas are lacking from this list (e.g., Senpolska fr. Torp, Senpolska fr. Gimdalen, Malung, Älvdalen, Åmot, etc.) Also lacking are details of style, hold, transitions, etc.

A few explanatory notes:

1. The "**left-foot**" polskas (for the man) are shown first, from basic polska down to Bingsjö polska. These are the ones where, in the turn, the man's weight is on his left foot on count 1. (Or to put it more accurately, he transfers his weight to his left foot on count 1.)
If you don't know the particular polska being danced but recognize that it is a "left-foot" polska, then you can just dance generic polska.
2. The "**right-foot**" polskas (for the man) are shown next, from Orsa polska down to basic hambo. These are the ones where, in the turn, the man's weight is on his right foot on count 1. (Again, to put it more accurately, he transfers his weight to his right foot on count 1.)
If you don't know the particular polska being danced but recognize that it is a "right-foot" polska, then it may be appropriate to dance basic hambo, but not always. Orsa polska music is generally not suitable for basic hambo, because it lacks the same "up and down" feel and also has uneven numbers of measures. Bondpolska, Boda polska, and Föllinge hambo tunes often work fine for regular hambo.
3. In all cases where you're substituting a simpler dance for the "real" dance, be sure to adjust your style and progression around the dance floor to that of dancers who appear to be doing the real thing. Listen for the "feel" of the music (smooth vs. bouncy, gentle vs energetic, etc.)
4. **Man's "twizzle"** = turning to right by swiveling on left toe and right heel simultaneously; right-toe-tap which marks end of twizzle should be on the beat.
Man's "swivel" = turning to right by swiveling on right heel only; again, right-toe-tap which marks end of twizzle should be on the beat.
5. **Men**, with the exception of basic polska and hambo, **your "both" step** is done with the feet quite far apart, not close together. This is especially important in Bondpolska. To get your feet apart on both, think about reaching back in the line of direction with your right leg as you bring your right foot to the floor. Note that "both" in Bingsjö and Orsa polskas lasts long enough for you to do a twizzle turn on both feet. By contrast, "both" in Boda and Bondpolska lasts only briefly; your left foot should lift off the floor almost immediately (in a smooth motion generated from the hip), so that you can live dangerously by doing a swivel turn on just your right heel.
6. **Föllinge polska försteg, women's Boda försteg**: Various teachers, Swedes included, have given conflicting or ambiguous instructions in these steps over the years. Chart shows hop (Föllinge) or heel tap (Boda) on beat one, followed by a transfer of weight to opposite foot on beat 2. Though the opposite foot doesn't actually take weight until beat 2, it's a good idea to have it already hovering just above the floor or even grazing the floor immediately following the hop or tap on beat 1. This keeps your footwork understated and "in good taste", and at the same time is ambiguous enough to fit various interpretations.