

Name of dance: Khosidl

Pronunciation: **khohss**-ihdll, or **khuhss**-ihdll

Place of origin: eastern European Jewish communities in general

Source of music: The Andy Statman Klezmer Orchestra (Shanachie Records LP 21004), Side B Band 6: “*Galitzianer Chusid*”; also Alicia Svigals, Fidl, Traditional Crossroads CD 4286, Band 6: “*Dem Trisker Rebns Khusid*”: also Budowitz, Mother Tongue: Music of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Klezmerim on Original Instruments, CD 3-1261-2, Band 16: “*Leibowitz’s Khusidl*”

Learned from: Michael Alpert, 1993

About the dance: Michael Alpert writes of *khosidl*: “A diminutive of Yiddish *khosid* (‘Hasid’, ‘Hasidic Jew’), the term does not connote a miniature member of the Hasidic sect but rather ‘a Hasidic one’ – i.e. a dance or tune in Hasidic style. Among Jews from some areas of Jewish Eastern Europe, particularly East Galicia, Bukovina and other southerly regions where Hasidim was the predominant form of Jewish religious expression, the term *khusidl* has a broader musical and dance connotation, corresponding to the more widespread *freylekhs* or *freylekh* (lit. a ‘merry’ tune, usually in 2/4 time). This version of a *khosidl* represents a combination of steps and sequences learned and absorbed from a number of East European Jews of the immigrant generation, including the late klezmer musicians Ben Bazylar (b. 1922, Warsaw) and Leon Schwartz (b. 1901, Bukovina). It thus constitutes part of the broad repertoire of steps and figures one can dance to *khosidl* tunes.”

Rhythm: 2/4

Formation: Circle dance, less frequently done in lines. Hand hold varies. For steps that involve traveling directly CW or CCW in the circle, dancers can place one or both hands on the shoulders of the dancer in front of them. For steps that involve facing center, dancers can rest their hands on their neighbors’ shoulders, or can hold hands down in “V” position, or can hold hands (usually forward, and with some strength) at chest height.

<u>Direction</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Step</u>
→	1	<u>Basic Step:</u> Facing and moving to the R or CCW in the circle, step with strength or accent towards center on L foot, allowing body to lean slightly toward center and R foot to follow behind L and come to rest behind it (ct. 1), continue traveling to the R by stepping on R, leaning back a bit away from center and letting L foot drag back next to R (ct. 2). <i>Note: As dancers’ fervor rises, the step toward center becomes more of a stamp. This step can be done as long as you like to the R, or can be reversed to the L, with the R foot leading into center. Among Szatmar Hasidim, the hand hold at chest height seems to be preferred for this step, with the hands rocking in and out of center as the</i>

Direction	Measure	Step
		<p><i>body also sways in and out. Among Lubavitchers, hands that are away from the center (e.g. R hands when traveling to the R), are placed on the shoulder of the dancer ahead, while the free other hand reaches toward the center to form “spokes of a wheel”, leading to pinwheel formations that lock all the dancers into a large rotating spiral.</i></p>
		<p><u>Variation A:</u> Traveling 1-2-3s</p>
→	1	Facing and moving to the R or CCW in the circle, step R (ct. 1), close L to R (ct. &), step R (ct. 2), brush or scuff L next to R (ct. &).
	2	Repeat Measure 1 with reverse footwork but in the same direction.
		<p><i>Note: Depending on the hand hold being used, Measure 1 is sometimes started by turning the shoulders just a bit toward the R foot that leads off, and Measure 2 by turning just a bit toward the leading L. This step can be done as long as the the dancers like to the R, or it can be reversed to travel to the L, or CW in the circle. Which foot leads off in either direction (i.e. which of the above measures is the first one) is arbitrary and depends only on which foot is free when it is time to lead off.</i></p>
		<p><u>Variation B:</u> Twists</p>
→	1	Facing center and moving to the R with feet slightly apart at first, lift up on the balls of both feet and displace both heels to the R, landing on them with a thump (ct. 1), rocking back slightly on the heels, pivot the toes of both feet to the R (ct. 2).
		<p><i>Note: This movement can be repeated as long as dancers want to to the R, or, at a signal from the ‘leader’, it can be reversed to travel to the L.</i></p>
		<p><u>Variation C:</u> Travel and Kick</p>
→	1	Facing center and moving to the R, lift R knee to step on R to R side (ct.1), lift L knee to step on L across in front of R (ct. 2).
⊥	2	Step on R next to L (ct. 1), lift L knee high to kick vigorously toward center leading with the heel (ct. 2).
	3	Repeat Measure 2 with reverse footwork.
		<p><i>Note: The kicks (Measures 2 and 3) can also be done repeatedly without a travel step.</i></p>

Khosidl (continued):

<u>Direction</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Step</u>
→	1	<u>Variation D</u> : Leaps to the Side Facing center with weight on R, leap forcefully onto L across behind R while kicking R foot sharply up to the L in front of L leg (ct. 1), step on R to R side (ct. 2). <i>Note: This step may be done as long as desired to the R, or it can be reversed to travel to the L. To switch directions, the simplest transition is to let the final step on count 2 be without weight.</i>

dance notes based on those by Michael Alpert