

# BALLOS

Greece (Island of Chios)

The couple dance *Ballos* (BAH-lohss) is found in many variants in the Greek islands. Its name is derived from the Italian word *ballo*, 'dance'. In its original setting it is improvised, with the man leading and setting the sequence of figures. The version presented here was learned from Mr. S. Kolaras, a former teacher in Athens, and is a set pattern of traditional figures intended for recreational folk dance use in the U.S.

**Recordings:** The classic *Matia san kai ta dika sou* used to be available on an old 78 rpm; currently there are others available on Greek LP's.

**Meter and rhythm:** 4/4, in a slow-quick-quick pattern.

**Formation:** Couples; see individual figures for positioning.

## Steps used:

### 1) Forward syrtó:

Man's steps are given here; woman uses opposite footwork.

Meas 1 S Step Lft forward  
q Step Rft forward  
q Step Lft forward

Meas 2 S Step Rft forward  
q Step Lft forward  
q Step Rft forward

Meas 3 Same as meas 1

Meas 4 S Step Rft back  
q Step Lft back  
q Step Rft back beside Lft

### 2) Cross-balance:

Man's steps are given here; woman uses opposite footwork.

Meas 1 S Step L with Lft  
q Step onto Rft in front of Lft  
q Shift weight onto Lft

Meas 2 Same as meas 1, but with opposite footwork and direction

### 3) Side syrtó with cross:

	Man	Woman
M.1	S Step Lft across in front of Rft; bring L shoulder forward.	Step R with Rft; bring R shoulder forward
	q Step Rft to R; bring R shoulder forward.	Step Lft behind Rft; bring L shoulder forward
	q Step Lft across again; bring L shoulder forward.	Step R with Rft; bring R shoulder forward

(continued)

M.2	S	Step Rft to R; bring R shoulder forward.	Step Lft behind Rft; bring L shoulder forward
	q	Step Lft across in front of Rft; bring L shoulder forward.	Step R with Rft; bring R shoulder forward
	q	Step Rft to R; bring R shoulder forward.	Step Lft behind Rft; bring L shoulder forward

## SEQUENCE

**Introductory figure:** Done at the beginning and not repeated thereafter. M and W side by side (W on M's R) facing CCW around floor. Do **Forward syrtó** for 8 meas, inside hand on hip or held out to side. Then turn toward partner, join L hands and move around axis of joined hands, doing **Forward syrtó** 8 more meas. (1 full turn).

**Figure 1:** Keep L hands joined, but both face CCW around circle. W's free hand on hip, M's free hand (R) extended to side behind W. **Forward syrtó** 8 meas.

**Figure 2:** Release hands. W puts both hands on hips. M puts L hand on own hip. Both take one **Forward syrtó** (4 meas), the W making a full turn R with her steps on meas 1-2. Repeat for total of 8 meas.

**Figure 3:** W moves forward in LOD with **Forward syrtó** step. M makes a preliminary 1/2 turn so his back is in LOD, his L arm extended in front of her (as if blocking her way). His **syrtó** step is done backwards, so that both dancers move CCW in LOD. On the final measure of the **syrtó** step, each dancer makes a 1/2 turn L, and then do the figure in the opposite direction (RLOD, i.e., CW around), M's R arm extended in front of W this time. Total 8 meas.

**Figure 4:** Partners face, M's back to center, W facing center. Do 8 **Cross-balances**. During first four, M raises arms horizontally at shoulder level and snaps fingers on each downbeat. W's hands on hips. During the final four, W raises arms and snaps fingers, M places backs of hands at small of his back.

**Figure 5:** Doing **Side syrtó with cross**, partners move around each other one time, facing throughout. W's hands on hips, M's arms raised, he snaps fingers. Total 8 meas.

Repeat the dance as often as music permits; remember that the Introductory figure is not done again after the very beginning.