

TURKISH FOLK DANCES



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- Turkiye is known for its sophisticated culture that reflects in various dances considered as the richest country in the world in terms of folk dance diversity. There are approximately 4000 types of folk dance in Turkiye. Turkish folk dance is an important element of Turkish folklore.
- Folk dances are an art that reflects life in a figurative and artistic way. In dance, through movement, facial expressions and music, a person's thoughts, feelings, experiences are conveyed, the unique characters inherent in this society are reflected.
- Folk dances are generally performed at weddings, festivals, meetings, sending off sons for the military service, religious and national holidays
- Folk dances in various regions of Turkey show great differences in terms of choreography, rhythm, dress and melodies. For example, traditional dance zeybek is dominant in Aegean Region and Western Anatolia, halay is dominant in Central and Southern Anatolia, the Black Sea region prefers horon, and halay dance is preferred in Eastern Anatolia, and it is the most popular dance of folk dance. Thrace is hora.

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- Here are dominant Turkish dances you can come across from the rich culture in Turkey:

Zeybek



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In the old days, the word "zeybek" (in Central Anatolia - "seimen") meant "warrior"; then they began to look for the warriors of the people's militia in the days of war. Then this word remained only in folklore. It is a "male" dance, although sometimes women can participate in it. Zeybek can be both a couple and a group. The dance starts with slow movements, then accelerates sharply with the music. The main figure of the dance is the rotation of one leg with the simultaneous lunge of the second leg bent at the knee: this movement symbolizes heroic strength. In some versions of the dance, dancers swing daggers or short swords.

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- The most common Zeybek style:

HARMANDALI



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- Harmandalı is a music and dance style from Aegean region. The difference between Zeybek and Harmandalı has always been confusing. Harmandalı is a type of Zeybek which is a traditional dance.
Harmandalı, like all other Zeybek styles, represents bravery, chivalry and courage. The figures in Harmandalı are slow and have big foot movements. Staying straight, opening the arms wide, looking straight with brave eyes and moving with the music makes this dance very effective.
Harmandalı is easy to learn like other Zeybek styles but takes time to fit in the body and needs practice. Practicing the moves over and over again is very important. The movements should be counter clockwise . If there are more than one person it needs to be danced in a circle. Dancing with self confidence is very important.
Harmandalı is a dance that is significant with the way you stand. So sharp looks and big and slow movements make you look stupendous.

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Halay



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- The history of this dance starts from the time of the Assyrian kingdom. The word halai means duration, mutual aid, joint action . Currently, it is a dance similar to a round dance. Such dances are conditionally divided into steppe halai, Çukurova (according to the name of the region where it is most popular), halai and eastern halai. The figures and movements are very diverse and there can be many variations in different regions, but basically during the dance the dancers (men and/or women) form a circle or row. The leaders hold each other by the fingers or shoulders, sometimes under the arms, and the trailing ones hold in their hands a large multi-colored scarf called a “handkerchief”. The musical accompaniment is very rhythmic, it becomes faster and faster. Instruments: drum, zurna, baglama, various types of pipes.

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Horon



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A typical dance from the Black Sea region. Its name comes from the Greek word Horod, which translates simply as "dance". This is a group dance. Both men and women dance. Participants make a circle or half circles and dances, twists and turns, also crouches, squats and stands. Accompanied by music - very fast



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Bar



A popular dance in Eastern Anatolia. The dance bar is male and female. Men usually dance in groups of 16 and women in groups of 12. Participants hold each other's hands as in halay and dance in line

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Hora



The general name of the dances common in the Thrace region and some parts of Western Anatolia. This dance is characterized by a very fast tempo and rhythm. Men or women line up, clapping their hands and dancing, crouching and throwing their legs forward.

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Misket Dance



It is an interesting folk dance from Ankara, the capital city in Central region of Turkey with a melody appearing only on off-beats. 3rd and 4th 16th's are also used a lot to embellish melodies.

Originally the dancers accompany the music with a special rhythm played with a couple of wooden spoons in each hand (Here, the same rhythm is played with small finger cymbals).

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A very dynamic dance:

Çiftetelli



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Almost everybody is familiar with Çiftetelli which is danced around the Marmara, Aegean, Middle Anatolia and Mediterranean regions. Although the style of music is the same, dance moves can be different according to region. Çiftetelli is the name of the music and dance.

The foot movements are small and don't have specific numbers. It can be danced freely. The important thing is to have a connection with the music. The joy in the body is the most important thing in Çiftetelli. It can be danced in a couple or in a group.