

# Guide to Basic Chacarera

by Milton "El Gallo" Azevedo  
1st Edition

## General Information:

- A very popular Argentinean folk dance believed to have originated in the remote province of Santiago del Estero.
- It is danced mainly at folklore fiestas but also as a break at many milongas (especially in Buenos Aires).
- It is a dance of lively rhythm (*allegro vivo*) with a flattering pantomimic game.
- Played by contemporary musicians as soloists or in small ensembles of voice, guitar, violin and bombo drum.

## Dance Specifics:

1. Always start on the left foot.
2. Each "count" generally consists of 3 steps (though just one step can also be used), with the accent on the first step. Examples below:
  - **left**-right-left
  - **right**-left-right
  - **left**-right-left
  - **right**-left-right
  - "1 and a..."
  - "2 and a..."
  - "3 and a..."
  - "4 and a..."
3. Technique:
  - During the introduction, both dancers clap to their right side around head-level
  - Try to maintain eye contact with your partner at all times.
  - In figures traditionally done with "castañetas", both dancers keep arms up and bent 90 deg at the elbow and hands up while snapping fingers to the rhythm (optional)
  - Men do the zapateo: tap/beat/stomp with shoes with hands behind the back or to the side
  - Women do the zarandeo which can be done in the two different ways described below:
    - a. left hand on hip and right hand to sway skirt, doing a diamond-like figure
    - b. both hands on hips to sway skirt, doing a diamond-like figure
4. Most songs are structured to have dancers perform the sequence of figures (listed below) twice.
5. The second sequence is the same as first, except dancers begin on the opposite side of the floor from where they started before.
6. The most common Chacarera is where the introduction and Full Revolutions are done to 8 counts.

## Sequence of Figures:

