

Buck Dancing ^[1]

Buck Dancing

by Bruce E. Baker, 2006

See also: [Clogging](#) ^[2]; [Step Dancing](#) ^[3].

Buck dancing is a folk [dance](#) ^[4] that originated among [African Americans](#) ^[5] during the era of slavery. It was largely associated with the North Carolina [Piedmont](#) ^[6] and, later, with the [blues](#) ^[7]. The original buck dance, or "buck and wing," referred to a specific step performed by solo dancers, usually men; today the term encompasses a broad variety of improvisational dance steps.

In contemporary usage, "buck dancing" often refers to a variety of solo step dancing to [fiddle-based music](#) ^[8] done by dancers primarily in the Southern Appalachians. Among North Carolinians, buck dancing is differentiated from [clogging](#) ^[2] and flatfooting by the use of steps higher off the floor, a straight and relatively immobile torso, and emphasis on steps that put the dancer on his or her toes rather than heels.

Reference:

Mike Seeger and Ruth Pershing, *Talking Feet: Buck, Flatfoot, and Tap: Solo Southern Dance of the Appalachian, Piedmont, and Blue Ridge Mountain Regions* (1992).

Additional Resources:

Emmylou Harris: Buck Dancing, YouTube video, 3:28, posted by 1000Magicians, Oct 13, 2010. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DsIBS0l7Hqg> ^[9] (accessed October 11, 2012).

Driggs, Jeff. "A Brief History of Clog Dancing." *Doubletoe Times Magazine*. <http://www.doubletoe.com/history.htm> ^[10] (accessed October 11, 2012).

Bradley, Sandra Lee. "[The Social Context of Buck Dancing in North Carolina in the 1940s](#)" ^[11]. M.S. Thesis, University of Washington. Seattle, Wash. 1978.

Image Credits:

Duke University Professor Thomas F. DeFrantz: Buck, Wing & Jig. Duke University on YouTube. <http://youtu.be/A34OD4eA17o> ^[12] (accessed February 9, 2015).

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From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[18]

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