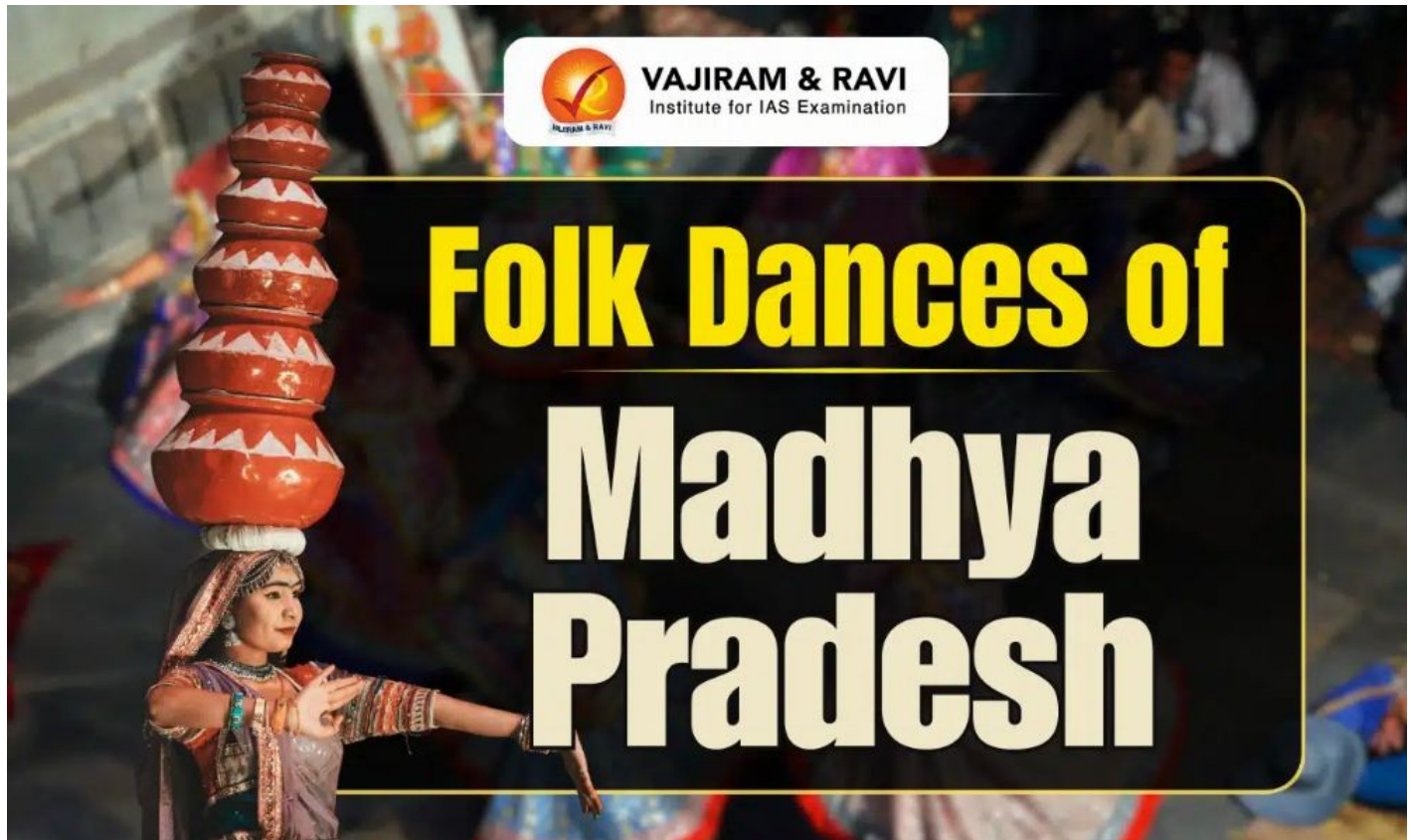


Folk Dances of Madhya Pradesh 2026, Famous Dance Forms List

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Madhya Pradesh is often called the “Heart of India.” It preserves one of the richest folk dance traditions in the country. The **Folk Dances of Madhya Pradesh** are performed during harvests, marriages, births, seasonal celebrations and religious occasions and combine music, rhythm, costumes and storytelling. Every region, including Bundelkhand, Baghelkhand, Malwa, Nimar, Gwalior and tribal areas, has developed distinctive dance forms that continue to represent the cultural identity of the state.

Folk Dances of Madhya Pradesh 2026

The **Folk Dances of Madhya Pradesh** are closely linked with local traditions, dialects, occupations and social customs. Their costumes, musical instruments, formations and themes vary according to the surrounding environment and community practices. Festivals of Madhya Pradesh such as Khajuraho Dance Festival, Lokrang and Akhil Bhartiya Kalidas Samaroh continue to promote these traditional dance forms and preserve the state’s rich cultural heritage for future generations.

List of Famous Folk Dances of Madhya Pradesh 2026

The List of Most Famous Folk Dances of Madhya Pradesh 2026 has been provided below:

Rai Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Originating in Bundelkhand, Rai derives its name from the swirling movement of mustard seeds (rai).
- Traditionally performed by women of the Bedia community, dancers wear lehengas up to seventeen yards long.
- The performance begins with Dadra rhythm using nagada, dholak, jhika and ramtula, while drummers perform acrobatic movements, including the famous scorpion pose.

Naurata Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Performed during Navratri in Bundelkhand, Naurata is associated with prayers for unmarried girls to receive suitable life partners and a happy married life.
- Decorative lime and natural colour designs are created outside homes before the ritual dance begins.

Badhai Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- This joyful dance marks auspicious occasions such as births, marriages, Teej celebrations and festivals.
- Men and women perform together wearing colourful traditional attire, while mridang and dhaple create energetic rhythms that match the vigorous dance movements.

Saira Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Saira is performed mainly by young boys and girls carrying sticks while dancing to folk songs centred on Lord Krishna.
- Farmers also associate the dance with prayers to Lord Indra for favourable rainfall and agricultural prosperity.
- Dholak, timki, manjira, mridang and flute accompany the performance.

Jawara Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Popular among farming communities, Jawara is celebrated as a harvest dance.
- Women balance baskets of Jawara crops on their heads while maintaining steady body movements, symbolising agricultural prosperity.
- Both men and women participate in this dance during **festive agricultural celebrations**.

Kanara Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Kanara is traditionally performed by the Dhobi community of Bundelkhand.
- The dance reflects community customs and local cultural identity and is usually presented during festive and social gatherings.

Dhirmarthai Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Associated with the Dhimar community, Dhirmarthai is performed during births, engagements, weddings and festivals.
- The dance incorporates graceful movements resembling Kathak while singers accompany the performance with traditional **folk music**.

Diwari Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Celebrated during Deepawali, Diwari depicts the legend of Lord Krishna lifting Govardhan Hill.
- Male dancers perform martial style movements with long sticks and peacock feathers.
- Dholak and nagaria provide rhythmic accompaniment throughout the energetic performance.

Ahirai or Birha Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Found in Baghelkhand, Ahirai combines dance, music and social interaction.
- Men and women perform together in a competitive question answer style using Birha songs accompanied by nagadiya and shehnai.
- Traditionally, it also provided opportunities for selecting life partners.

Kalsa Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Performed mainly by Ahir and Gadariya communities, Kalsa features dancers balancing decorated urns on their heads while welcoming guests.
- The dance follows a question answer pattern, displaying balance, coordination and hospitality.

Dadar Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Dadar is a community dance jointly performed by men and women from **Kol**, Kotwar and Kahar communities during happy occasions.
- Its inclusive nature symbolises social unity and collective celebration.

Kemali Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Also known as Sajan-Sajni dance, Kemali is performed during marriage ceremonies.
- Male and female performers present songs and dance in a conversational question answer style, highlighting family traditions and joyful celebrations.

Kehra Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Kehra features both men and women dancing separately on the rhythmic Kaharwa beat.
- The dance showcases different movement styles while maintaining coordinated musical patterns rooted in Baghelkhand traditions.

Atari Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Performed by the Bhumiya and **Baiga communities**, Atari is among the most spectacular Folk Dances of Madhya Pradesh.
- Dancers create human pyramids by standing on each other's shoulders while moving in circular formations, displaying remarkable balance and teamwork.

Matki Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- A signature dance of the Malwa region, Matki is performed by women during weddings and festivals.
- A solo performer begins the dance while balancing earthen pots on her head, later joined by a group dancing gracefully in circular formations to the beat of the dhol.

Gangaur Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Popular in the Nimar region, Gangaur is performed during the nine day Gangaur festival in honour of Ranubai, Dhaniyer Suryadev and Goddess Parvati.
- Women dance around the deity's idol with rhythmic clapping and traditional songs. Two popular forms are Thalariya and Thola.

Bhagoria Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Bhagoria is closely associated with the **Bhil**, Bhilala, Patalia and Ranth communities of Jhabua, Alirajpur and Dhar districts.
- Performed during the Bhagoria festival before Holi, it celebrates youth, courtship and community interaction, with male dancers carrying bows during the Ger dance.

Kathi Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- One of the best known dances of the Nimar region, Kathi is performed by Balai Samaj artists between Ekadashi and Mahashivratri.
- Decorated bamboo structures, peacock feathers, Dhak drums, brass plates, Nimadi songs and stories of Raja Harishchandra and Goddess Parvati form its main features.

Phapharia Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Phapharia is a group dance where men and women perform together to the music of the pungi.
- Its coordinated movements and lively rhythm make it a popular traditional dance in the Nimar region.

Madalya Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Madalya is a women's group dance accompanied by drums and brass plates.
- Dancers rapidly change speed according to the drum beats while displaying coordinated hand and foot movements throughout the performance.

Aada-Khada Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Performed during births, deaths and important ceremonies, Aada-Khada features women dancing with veils while bending their bodies and moving hands and knees rhythmically.
- The dhol provides the principal musical accompaniment.

Danda Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Farmers of the Nimar region perform Danda Dance during Chaitra and Vaishakh, especially during the Gangaur festival.
- Groups of about 20 to 25 men dance together using dhol and thali to create powerful rhythmic patterns.

Karma Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Karma is performed jointly by Gond and Oraon communities during the rainy season.
- Instruments such as madhar, thumki, payri, chhalla and jhumki accompany the dance.
- Popular forms include Sikri, Jhumar, Ghatwar, Ektaria, Pendehar, Dohoari, Lahaki and Tegwani.

Saila-Reena Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Saila is performed by men, while Reena is performed by women of the Gond community.
- Dancers carry batons and peacock feathers, wear ghunghru and dance in circular formations.
- Mandhar is the principal instrument and Reena is especially popular in Dindori during Diwali.

Goncho Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Goncho is a traditional **Gond community** dance performed to pray for timely and sufficient rainfall.
- The dance highlights the close relationship between agriculture, seasonal cycles and community life.

Chatkora Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Chatkora is performed by the Korku community, mainly in Chhindwara and Betul districts.
- The dance reflects local traditions and remains an important part of community celebrations.

Thapti Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Thapti is another **Korku community** dance performed by both men and women.
- Men use Pancha and Jhangh, women use Chitkora, while flute and dhol provide musical accompaniment.
- Mojilaal Korku is a well known performer associated with this tradition.

Lehangi Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Performed by Sahariya, Banjara and Kanjar communities during Shravan and Raksha Bandhan.
- Lehangi features men striking sticks rhythmically while women wear colourful embroidered dresses decorated with silver ornaments and mirror work.

Lota Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Popular among the **Banjara community**, Lota Dance requires women to balance large metal pots on their heads while dancing in straight or circular formations wearing heavy ornaments and colourful traditional clothing.

Garba Dandiya Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- The Banjara community performs Garba Dandiya during the Dussehra festival in the Nimar region.
- The dance combines rhythmic stick movements with festive music and colourful traditional costumes.

Pardoni Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Pardoni is a marriage dance of the Baiga community performed during wedding ceremonies.
- It reflects traditional customs and strengthens social bonds within the community.

Baredi or Yadav Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Popular in Gwalior district, Baredi is performed from **Diwali** until Kartik Purnima.
- Dancers wear dhotis, carry peacock feathers and perform in circles accompanied by dholak, mridang, jhanz, manjira, dhapli and ramtula with question answer style folk songs.

Tertali Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- The Kamar community performs Tertali while seated on the ground.
- Women tie manjiras to their legs, hold cymbals in both hands and sometimes balance a decorated pot on the head or a sword between the teeth while dancing to vocal music and drums.

Sua or Sugga Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Performed by Baiga women in the **Maikal Hills**, Sua imitates the movements of a parrot.
- One dancer balances a pot while others clap using the wooden Thiski.
- No other musical instruments are used.

Muriya Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Muriya begins with ritual offerings carried by boys along with the bride and groom.
- Boys and girls dance together using running steps, circles, jumps and kneeling movements.
- Hulki, Har, Endanna and Karsana are important variants.

Grida Dance of Madhya Pradesh

- Grida celebrates the flourishing of rabi crops in villages of Madhya Pradesh.
- The dance progresses through three stages: Sela with slow footwork, Selalarki with faster movements and Selabhadoni where the entire body sways rhythmically in celebration.