

Sister Kate (I Wish I Could Shimmy like My)

A. J. Piron

5

9

13

16 Chorus

20

24

28 1.

32 2.

1. I went to a dance with my sister Kate;
Everybody there thought she danced so great;
I realized a thing or two,
When I got wise to something new:
When I looked at Kate, she was in a trance,
And then I knew it was in her dance;
All the boys are going wild
Over sister Katie's style.

Chorus:

- Oh, I wish I could I shimmy like my sister Kate;
She shimmies like a jelly on a plate.
My mama wanted to know last night,
What makes the boys think Kate's so nice.
Now all the boys in the neighborhood,
They know that she can shimmy and it's understood;
I know that I'm late, but I'll be up-to-date
When I shimmy like my sister Kate.
2. I mean, when I shimmy like my sister Kate.
Now I can shimmy like my sister Kate,
I know that I'm real late,
I think I'll do a real shimmy dance,
Dancing like my sister Kate,
Sweet papa, just like my sister Kate.

"I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate"; often simply "Sister Kate", is an up-tempo jazz dance song, written by Clarence Williams and Armand Piron, and published in 1919. It is variously believed to be based on a bawdy tune by Louis Armstrong (about Kate Townsend, a murdered brothel madam) or transcribed from a version performed by Anna Jones and Fats Waller.

The song arrived in the 1960s and 1970s folk scene thanks to Dave Van Ronk (recording it twice on **In the Tradition** and on **Dave Van Ronk and the Ragtime Jug Stompers**) and Jim Kweskin, who made it part of a "Sister Kate's Night Out" medley on his **Relax Your Mind** album with Mel Lyman and Fritz Richmond. In 1967, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band included it in on their album **The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band**.

This jazz tune is related to the post-ragtime "rags" that fiddlers and mandolin players developed in the early 20th century using the syncopated rhythms of the ragtime tradition. and some of the influences of jazz.

Other rags/blues tunes in this collections are:

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| "Cherry River Rag" | "East Tennessee Blues" |
| "Colored Aristocracy" | "Eli Green's Cakewalk" |
| "Dora Dean" | "Hawkin's Rag" |
| "L & N Rag" | "Horace Hanesworth" |
| "Old Jackson Stomp" | "Sister Kate" |
| "Pig Ankle Rag" | "Stone's Rag" |
| "Ragtime Annie" | "Woody's Rag" |
| - all in the Tunes section | - in the Legacies section |

I learned it from Dave Van Ronk.