

**THE CLAWHAMMER
BANJO
BOOK**



BEGINNER

**10 TABS!
& MORE!**

**by
HILARY HAWKE**

INTRODUCTION

I have wanted to put together a banjo book for a long time, and I am pleased that it is now in your hands! Thank you for picking it up, looking through it, and using it to learn how to play clawhammer banjo. The tabs in this book are just a starting point for what the songs can become after you add your own creative touch.

This book is meant for beginning players, but also for beginners crossing the bridge to intermediate. These tunes will get you playing and jamming at festivals, informal gatherings, in bands, or just in your living room! You will find the tabs are arranged from simpler technique to more difficult. All of the songs were chosen based on the input from the old-time community in Brooklyn, NY, and from many lessons with banjo students over the years.

To simply pick up an instrument, learn a tune, and mess around with it is relatively easy. To play an instrument with musicality, beauty and grace is an art form. I recommend spending some time really learning the tunes in this book. Find and listen to recordings of the songs, play slowly at first, and then speed up. Try to memorize the songs, and perform for someone - or record yourself and listen back.

Above all, acknowledge the traditions, the sources, the stories and feelings that the notes and lyrics communicate. We can learn and emulate songs of the past, but the truth in music is when it combines with your own soul's stories. That is what makes a song personal and meaningful. We carry on traditions but also extend them. The goal of this book is to give you some tools, then you take it from there.

Enjoy!

- Hilary

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 How to play the banjo
- 4 Chord Chart
- 5 The Basics: Right Hand
- 6 The Basics: Left Hand

SONGS:

- 7 Sourwood Mountain
- 8 Georgie Buck
- 9 Cripple Creek
- 10 Greasy Meat
- 11 Sail Away Ladies
- 12 Roscoe
- 13 Cluck Old Hen
- 14 Shady Grove
- 15 Cuckoo
- 16 Willow Garden
- 17 Red Rocking Chair
- 18 Red Prairie Dawn
- 19 Big Sciota

- 20 Recommended Listening

For videos of songs in this book go to: www.youtube.com/hilarybanjo

A Big Thank You to Brian Geltner and Hilary Downes for their hard work and support during the making of this book and in all of my banjo efforts!

**For more information, permission requests, questions, or bookings, please contact Hilary Hawke:
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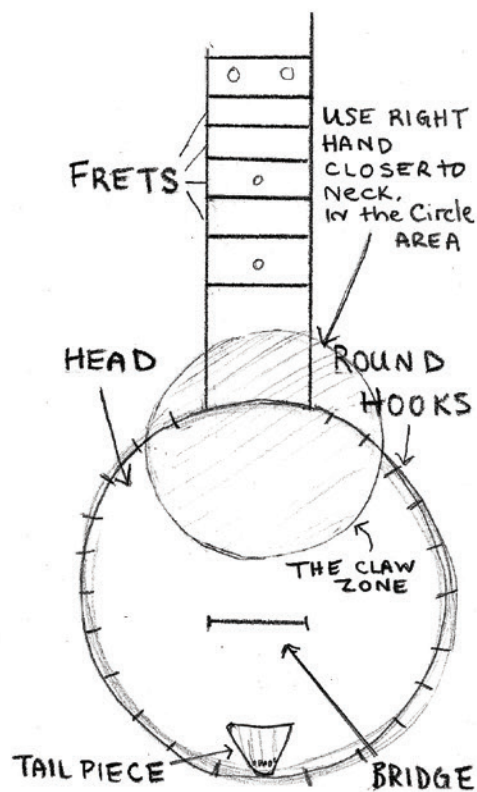
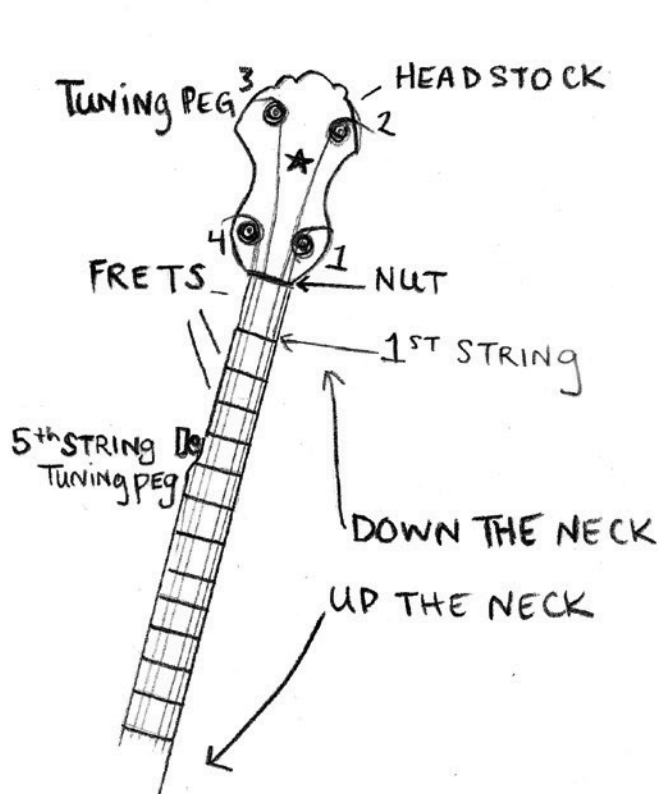
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HOW TO PLAY CLAWHAMMER BANJO

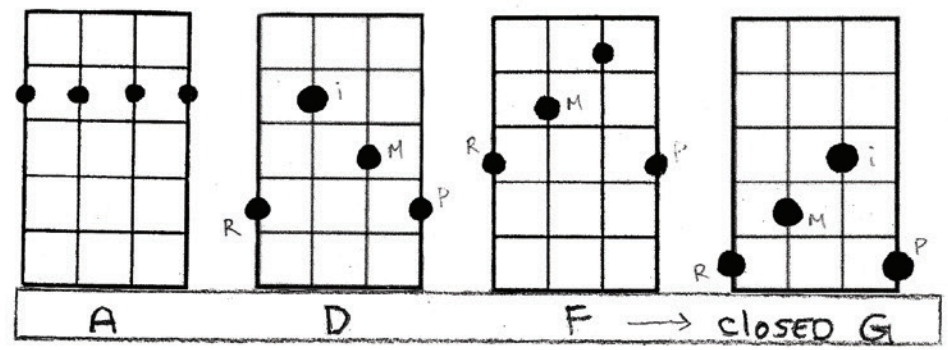
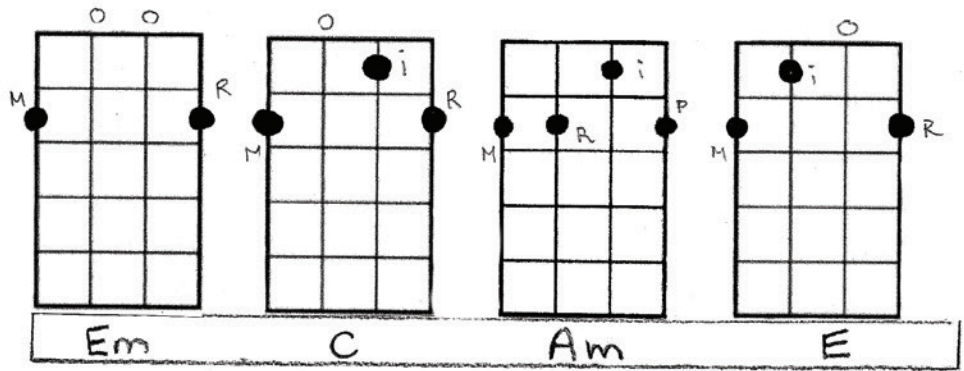
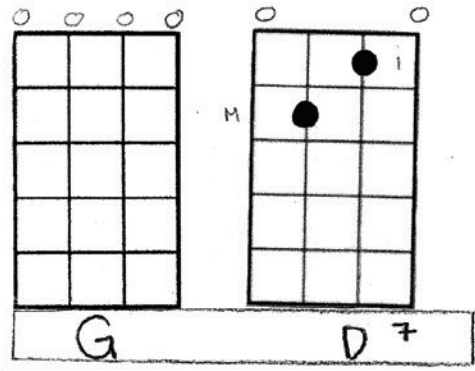
TECHNIQUE:

1. Pick a finger with a good strong nail. (I use my middle finger.)
2. Use the back of one nail to strike downward on the strings. In general you will mostly rely on one finger.
3. Keep a relaxed claw shape to your right hand (or left hand, if you are left handed).
4. Avoid flicking your finger outward, keep the claw or C shape.
5. Your thumb will land and bounce off the 5th string.
6. Use the basic hand exercises to get this motion feeling automatic.

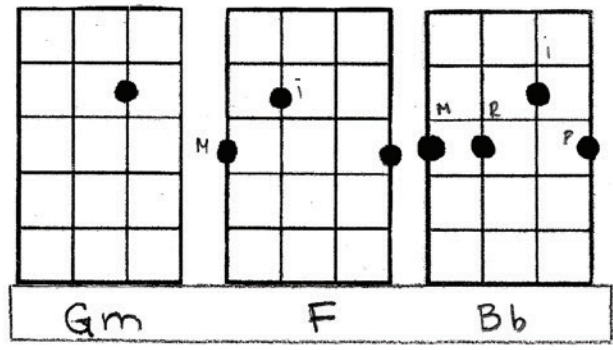


CHORDS

STANDARD G
TUNING G
G D G B D
5 4 3 2 1



SAWMILL
TUNING G
G D G C D
5 4 3 2 1



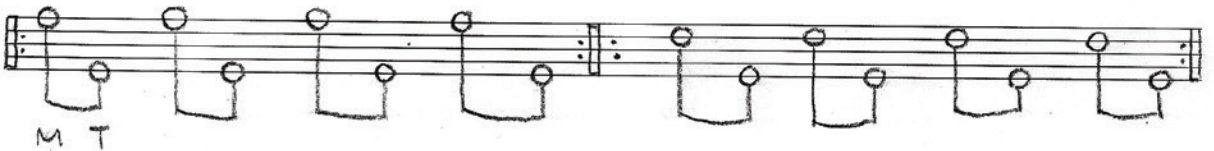
THE BASICS: RIGHT HAND

I = Index
M = Middle
R = Ring
T = Thumb

1. Downstrokes. Use back of nail middle or index.



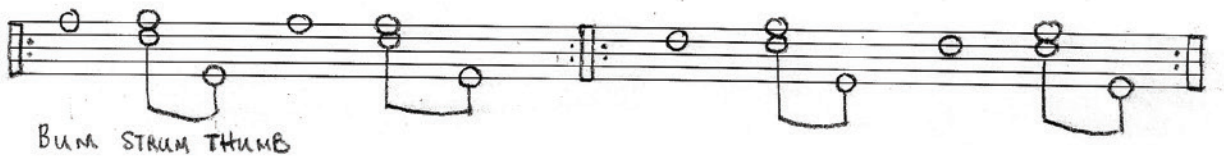
2. Alternate finger and thumb. Continue on every string.



3. Bum Dittys. Continue on every string.



4. Bum Strum Thumbs. Fills out chords continue on every string.



THE BASICS: LEFT HAND

h = Hammer on
 i = Index
 M = Middle
 R = Ring

1. Hammer ons: Pick the string open. Use Left hand to hammer onto note.

2. Use the same fingering as above

3. Pull offs: Fret the string, pick it, then pull off with left hand

4. Hammer ons and pull offs

5. Slides

6. Slide Ditty

SOURWOOD MOUNTAIN

I = Index
M = Middle
R = Ring

Key of A
Capo 2
AABB

A

B

* TRY THIS!
SLIDE

Chickens a-crowin' on Sourwood Mountain,
Hi, ho, Hi diddle-ay day.
So many pretty girls I can't count 'em,
Hi, ho, Hi diddle-ay day.

My true love's a blue-eyed daisy,
Hi, ho, Hi diddle-ay day.
She won't come and I'm too lazy,
Hi, ho, Hi diddle-ay day.

GEORGIE BUCK

Key of G

DOC WATSON version

My name is Georgie Buck,
Ain't never had no luck,
Always been treated this-a way, boys,
Always been treated this-a way,

Oh, me and it's oh my,
What's gonna become of me.
What's gonna become of me.

CRIPPLE CREEK

Key of G or A
ABB

From the playing of TOMMY JARRELL

A

B

Roll my britches up to my knees,
 Wade ole Cripple Creek whenever I please
 Oh me, Oh my,
 Wade old Cripple Creek when I die

Goin' up to Cripple Creek, Goin' on a run,
 Goin' up to Cripple Creek to have some fun
 Goin' up to Cripple Creek, Goin' on a whirl,
 Goin' up to Cripple Creek to see my girl!

GREASY MEAT

Key of G
AABB

A

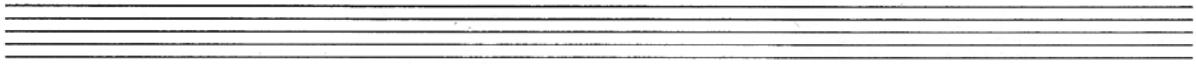
G 5 5 2 0 0 5 7 5 0

5 5 2 0 0 D7 G 0

B

G 2 0 0 0 2 0 2 0

G 2 0 1 0 D7 G 0



TRY THIS!

* SLIDE 2 5 5 2 0 0

* = Anticipate the note

SAIL AWAY LADIES

Key of G
AABB

From UNCLE BUNT STEPHENS

Handwritten guitar tablature for the song "Sail Away Ladies". The piece is in G major and 2/4 time. It follows an AABBB form. Section A (first two lines) starts with a G chord and features a melody with hammer-ons (h) and palm mutes (p). Section B (next four lines) continues the melody with various chords (D7, C, G) and includes an anticipation (*) mark. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

* Anticipate the note to make the music have more of a groove.



ROSCOE



Key of G
AABB

A

G h 2 5 0 2 P 0 3 P 2 0 2

5 5 5 5 D 7 7 7 7

* G h 5 7 5 5 5 C 1 2 2 2

G h 1 0 D P 2 0 4 G 0 0 0 h 2ND TIME

B G 0 0 2 P 0 0 C 1 2 1 2

G 0 0 2 P 0 0 D7 2 1 2 h 2

G 0 0 2 P 0 0 C 1 2 1 2

G h 1 0 D P 2 0 4 G 0 0 0

* 9 7 8 0

VARIATION

Sawmill
2nd string ↑ C
gDGCD

CLUCK OLD HEN

Key of Am
Capo 2
AABB

System A:
Staff 1: G chord, notes G, 5, 3, 3, 5, F
Staff 2: notes 5, 3, F, P, G

System B:
Staff 1: G chord, notes G, 3, 3, 3, F
Staff 2: notes P, F, P, G

My old hen is a good old hen,
She lays eggs for the railroad men.
Sometimes one, sometimes two,
That's enough for the railroad crew.

Cluck old Hen, Cluck and sing,
Ain't laid an egg since way last spring.
Cluck old hen, cluck and squall,
You ain't laid an egg since way last fall.

Sawmill
2nd string ↑ C
gDGCD

SHADY GROVE

Key of G

SHA - DY GROVE MY Little LOVE

SHA - DY GROVE I SAY

SHA - DY GROVE MY Little LOVE

BOUND TO GO A - WAY

* Add THIS DROP THUMB

Add TIME-KEEPING BETWEEN VERSES

Shady Grove, my little love
Shady Grove I say
Shady Grove, my little love
I'm bound to go away

I wish I was in baltimore
sitting in a big arm chair
One arm around my whiskey keg
and the other around my dear

A kiss from pretty little Shady Grove
Is sweet as brandy wine
And there ain't no girl in this whole world
That's prettier than mine

Cheeks as red a blooming rose
And eyes are the prettiest brown
She's the darling of my heart
Sweetest girl in town

Peaches in the summertime
Apples in the fall
If I can't have that Shady Grove
I don't want no gal at all

Sawmill
2nd string ↑ C
gDGCD

CUCKOO

Key of Gm

A

Gm P T P P 2ND TIME

B

Gm P F Gm

OH THE CU - CKOO
is A pretty BIRD
AND SHE WOB BLES
AS SHE FLIES

Gonna build me, a log cabin
On a mountain, so high.
So I can, see Willie.
As he goes passing by

Oh the cuckoo, she's a pretty bird
And she wobbles, as she flies
She never, says Cuckoo
Till the fourth day, of July.

Jack of diamonds, Jack of diamonds
I've known you from old
You've robbed my poor pockets
Of my silver and my gold

My horses ain't hungry
They won't eat, your hay
I'll ride on, a little further
I'll feed them, on the way

WILLOW GARDEN

Key of G
Waltz

Handwritten guitar tablature for 'Willow Garden'. The piece is in G major and 3/4 time. It consists of 16 measures. The notation includes chord names (G, C, Em, D7, B, G), fret numbers (2, 3, 5), and fingerings (h for hammer-on, T for tap). A handwritten note '(END HERE) after B ↓' is placed above the 11th measure. A circled 'B' is above the 12th measure. A circled 'GO TO' with an arrow points to the 16th measure.

Down in the willow garden
Where me and my love did meet
It was there, we sat a courting
My love dropped off to sleep
I had a bottle of burgundy wine
Which my true love did not know
And there I poisoned that dear little girl
Down under the banks below.

I stabbed her with my dagger
Which was a bloody knife
I threw her into the river
Which was a dreadful sight
My father often told me

That money would set me free
If I would murder that dear little girl
Who's name was Rose Connelly

Now he sits by his old cottage door
Wiping his tear dimmed eye
Now he waits for his own dear son
Upon the scaffold high
My race is run beneath the sun
Hell is now waiting for me
For I did murder that dear little girl
Who's name was Rose Connelly

RED ROCKIN' CHAIR

Key of G

Traditional jam version

Oh I've done all I can do,
 Oh I've done all I can do, just to make peace with you
 Got me no sugarbaby nowshayd
 Got me no honeybaby now.

Who'll rock that cradle?
 Who'll rock that cradle? who'll sing that song
 Who'll rock that cradle when I'm gone?
 Who'll rock that cradle when I'm gone?

I've done all I can do,
 I've done all I can do, I've said all I can say
 I'll send you to your mama next payday
 I'll send you to your mama next payday

Some old rounder came along
 Some old rounder came along, took my sugar
 babe and gone
 Got me no sugar baby now
 Got me no honey baby now

I laid her in the shade.
 I laid her in the shade, gave her every dime I made.
 What else could a poor boy do?
 What else could a poor boy do?

Oh I ain't got no use,
 Oh I ain't got no use, for that red apple juice
 Got me no sugarbaby now
 Got me no honeybaby now.

BIG SCIOTA

Key of G
AABB

From BURL HAMMONS

A

B

*1. h

1ST TIME

2ND TIME

*1. h VARIATION

*2. h VARIATION

T

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

For the exact versions of the songs from this book, go to youtube, Hilary Hawke and the title of song. For more versions, check out the recommended musicians below.

Grayson + Whittier
Tommy Jarrell
Frank Profitt
Wade Ward
Clarence Ashley
Dink Roberts
Fred Cockerham
John Cohen
Samantha Bumgarner
Kosoy Sisters
Doc Watson
Uncle Bunt Stephens
Burl and Edden Hammons

CURRENT ARTISTS

Brad Leftwich
Adam Hurt
Hilary Hawke—Up Like the Clouds, Dubl handi album
Rhiannon Giddens
Carolina Chocolate Drops
Jay Ungar
Bruce Molsky

Please contact me with questions, happy playing!
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