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Foreword

Enda Scahill is a gifted banjo player blessed with extraordinary technique. Yet he never allows himself to get carried away by his technical abilities. His playing is always supremely tasteful and never unduly flamboyant. He operates out of the epicenter of the Irish musical tradition combining seemingly effortless virtuosity with an unerring sense of taste.

He also has the gift of being an exceptional teacher and this is evident in this ground breaking tutor on the Irish tenor banjo, a relatively new instrument in the tradition.

The story of the banjo in Irish music is a fascinating tale linking three continents over three centuries. It is now well known that the precursors of the banjo as we know it today were various West African instruments picked and strummed in different styles. The idea of the instrument was carried by African slaves to the plantations of the Caribbean and the Southern States of America where it emerged in a new form known by such names as the banjar and banze. It was eventually appropriated and technologically transformed by White Americans, a large number of them Irish Americans. In the 1840's it became the dominant instrument in minstrelsy, America's first form of popular music.

Various types and sizes of banjos with different numbers of strings proliferated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Construction techniques improved, frets were added and the art of banjo playing progressively improved. Virtuoso five string banjo players such as Vess Ossman and Fred Van Epps graced the early years of the recording industry adding lustre and increasing status to the instrument.

The tenor banjo was invented perhaps as early as 1910 coinciding with the arrival of the tango in the United States. Along with the plectrum banjo this new addition to the banjo family became an instrument popular in many American musical forms in the 1920's and '30's. In the tenor banjo tuned in fifths, Irish traditional musicians now had a plectral instrument which was suitable for playing the dance music with its distinctive rhythmic pulse and complicated ornamentation and embellishments. American dance hall players such as John Wheeler, Michael Gaffney, Neil Nolan, Mike McDade and the peerless Mike Flanagan set the stage for the entry of this novel instrument into an already venerable tradition.

These great players seemed however to have little impact on the tradition of banjo playing in Ireland where a parallel banjo culture evolved. The instrument had been around in various forms since its formal introduction on the Irish stage by the Virginia Minstrels in 1843. This was the fretless banjo of the minstrel stage and though jigs and reels could be picked out in rudimentary fashion on this version of the instrument it was perhaps better suited for use as an accompanying instrument to fiddle, uilleann pipes and voice. Traveling musician such as the Dunne Family were associated with the banjo from the end of the century and the instrument appears to have played an important role in the music of travelers in late 19th and early 20th century Ireland. The banjo mandolin and zither banjo continued to enjoy a measure of popularity alongside the tenor banjo and the five string banjo continued to be used by well known figures such as the colorful and charismatic Margaret Barry. In fact tenor banjo players were few in the 1960's when I started to play myself and it was not until the 1980's that the instrument really took off in Irish music.

Tutors in the art of playing the banjo are not new. The nineteenth century abounded with manuals on how to play the banjo in various styles. The Converse Banjo Book published in 1865 is perhaps the best known of these early manuals but there were many more. However tutors in playing the Irish tenor banjo are a relatively recent phenomenon. The Irish banjo is a classic hybrid and the GDAE tuning pioneered by Barney McKenna is unique in the world of banjos.

Enda's tutor is masterfully conceived, the product of years of playing and thoughtful reflection. He takes nothing for granted. The most fundamental issues are addressed painstakingly including how the banjo should be held and the body aligned. He maintains that the pick should be held in a certain way and positioned in a certain way. Style in the Irish banjo is mostly about picking (or picking as it would be known in the US) and this is where this tutor excels. Enda bases most of his interpretation of the rules of Irish banjo playing on the principles and mechanics of reel playing and logically sets out the principles of picking with very clear delineation of when up and down pick strokes should be used. He selects lovely and for the most part simple tunes and clearly indicates pick direction with the utmost clarity. The techniques of ornamentation are clearly delineated and the instruction narrative moves from simple to complex in the most logical of ways. Good banjo playing involves tasteful and appropriate use of chords and the possibilities for this are outlined in considerable detail with careful micro-transcription of chordal additions to melody playing with the purpose of adding tone color and variation.

There is now an increasing number of aspiring musicians in Ireland and elsewhere in the world who want to learn the Irish tenor banjo but for a variety of reasons are not in a position where they can regularly be around live music and learn in the old style from players by osmosis or imitation. This tutor will be of immense assistance for them and also for good players who want to improve their technique and understanding of the instrument. It is a most impressive and timely contribution to the rich and varied world of Irish music.

Mick Moloney
Professor of Irish Studies and Music
New York University

Introduction

Welcome to my Irish Banjo Tutor.

This tutor is designed for banjo players of all levels from beginners to advanced. It lays out in simple instruction, explanation and illustration the complete framework you need to successfully play the banjo. It covers all aspects from physically holding the banjo to intricate picking and ornamentation exercises. It sets down simple rules that will guide you through the picking intricacies required for most Irish tunes and types of ornamentation. The only thing it won't do is practice the banjo for you!

The past 30 years has seen a phenomenal increase in interest in Irish banjo with the emergence of some terrific players, the arrival of gifted Irish banjo makers, a huge increase in the output of recorded banjo music and an ever increasing number of young and young-at-heart banjo players. As someone who has been involved for many years in performance, sessions, banjo workshops and banjo teaching I have become aware of the need for the type of comprehensive and detailed banjo tutor that I have now produced. I hope that it adds greatly to our burgeoning Irish banjo tradition.

Good luck!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Enda Cahill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Getting Started

The Goal

The aim of this book is to describe a method of playing the banjo that makes it as easy as possible for you to play to the best standard you can.

The most important word that you will read in this book is "**RELAX**". Relaxation is the key to good banjo playing. Try this quick test:

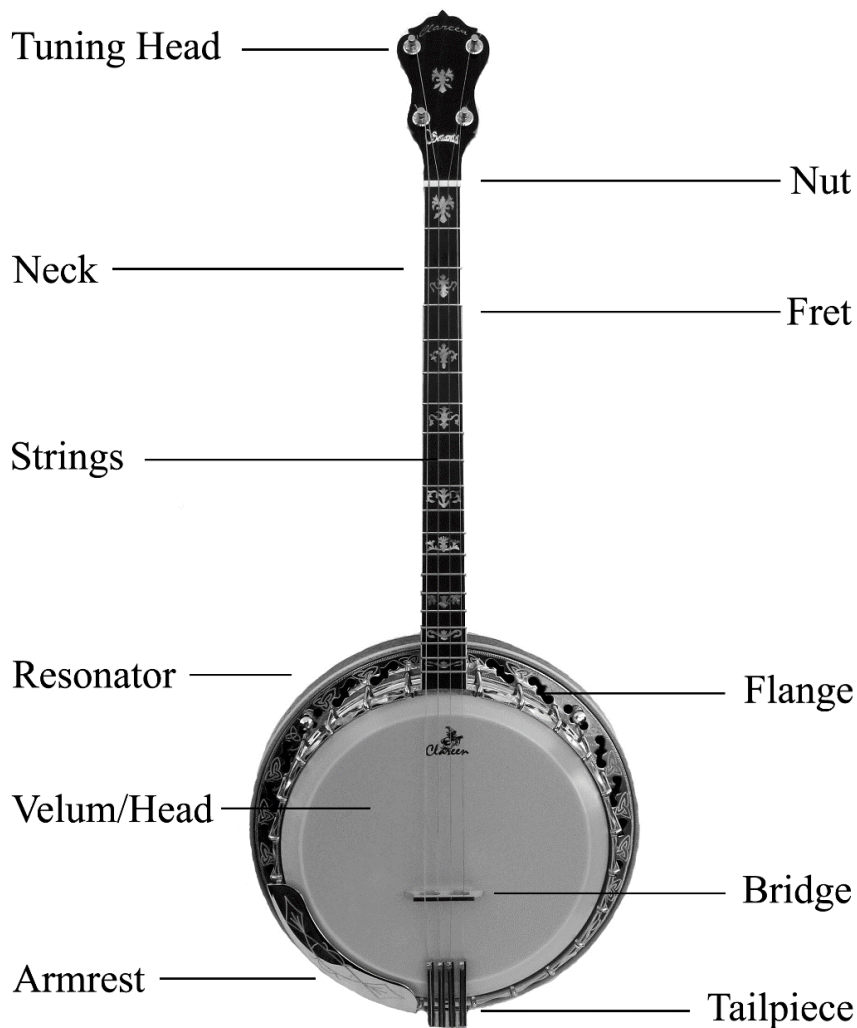
Clench your fist as tightly as you can. Now try to shake your wrist back and forth as quickly as you can. Now, completely relax the fingers of your hand and let the hand flop down. Now shake your wrist.....

Your goal during this tutor is to constantly concentrate your mind on the various muscles in your shoulders, arms, wrists, hands and fingers and relax them as much as possible. Tension in your shoulders creates tension in your hands. Become aware of these tensions because they are a great barrier to comfortable, smooth banjo playing.

The other word that is important at this stage and impacts on relaxation and performance is "**alignment**". If your body is aligned correctly it functions correctly. Just so, if it is aligned correctly with the banjo, the plectrum, the strings and so on, it will function correctly.

I will go through the various alignment requirements in each section as we go on.

The Parts of the Banjo



Tuning the Banjo

The banjo tuning that we are going to use is the standard Irish Banjo tuning GDAE.

G is the string nearest the ceiling and is the G **below** middle C.

E therefore is the string nearest the floor. It is also referred to as the Top String being the highest in pitch.

At the beginning of your accompanying CD there is a tuning track.

CD1 Track 1	-	A
CD1 Track 2	-	E
CD1 Track 3	-	D
CD1 Track 4	-	G

The simplest method of tuning your banjo is to buy a digital tuner. A good quality tuner should suffice. Remember that the picked note will initially reverberate slightly sharp, then true and then slightly flat before returning to the true note. This is a problem with all stringed instruments. Therefore allow the indicator on the digital tuner to settle.

The other option is to tune one string to an instrument such as tin whistle, piano, tuning fork etc and then to tune the other strings from the first string.

Start with the A string. Tune this using your ear to the reference note. This may be difficult at first and the best way to do it is to relax, close your eyes and try to hear if the two notes are the same.

Gently adjust the tuning peg on the banjo until you think it matches the reference note. You may find it easier to start with your string flattened below the note you want and to gently ease it sharper and sharper until you reach the correct tuning. Listening too intently can easily distract and confuse you.

Once you have one string in tune you can use this to tune the other strings. Be aware that if the intonation of your banjo is out (i.e. if the notes sharpen as you move further up the neck) this method may not work exactly.

Initially try tuning the banjo using the 7th frets. The 7th fret on the D string is the note A. (See fold-out Reference Page at back of this book) Hold down this note and compare it to the open A string that is in tune. Adjust your D string until the 7th fret A is the same as the open A note.

The 7th fret on the A string is high E' and so on. Tune one string to the other.

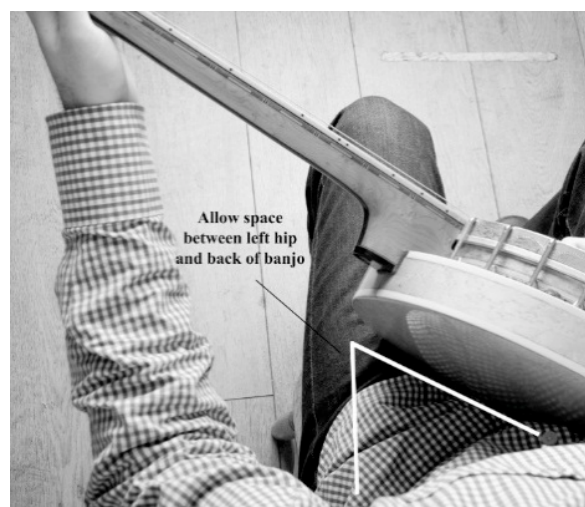
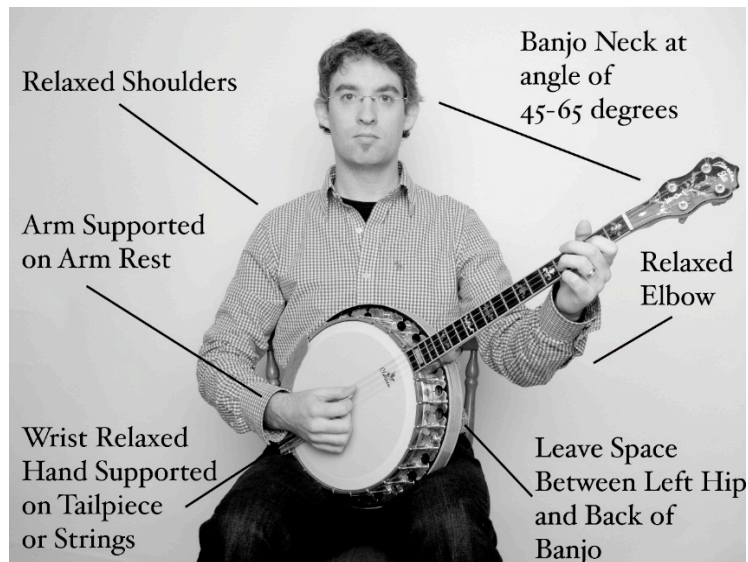
Eventually, you will be able to tune automatically by ear. Trust your own ear, the ability to tune by ear will develop over time.

Holding The Banjo

The principle behind the way you hold the banjo is that you achieve a comfortable, relaxed playing position that allows you to align your right and left hands and arms correctly with the banjo.

- Sit with your feet planted squarely on the floor and your back supported
- Seat the banjo on your lap
- Tuck the tail piece end of the banjo into your right hip allowing space between your left hip and the left side of the banjo rim. The angle between your left hip and the butt of the banjo neck as you look down at it should be around 30-45°
- The banjo should sit in place relatively unsupported. It is important that neither left nor right hand is supporting or holding the banjo to any great extent as this will hinder their movements when it comes to playing. If you need a strap, use one, they are a very useful piece of equipment.
- The neck of the banjo (if looking straight into a mirror) should be at an angle of approximately 45-65° to your body. If the banjo neck is too high toward the shoulder it will cause problems for the right hand placement later on.
- Now relax! It is so important in banjo playing that you relax completely from your shoulders down to your fingers. Tension in the shoulders will impact on the way you grip the plectrum and pick the strings. Tension causes stiff, jerky playing.

The picture on the next page illustrates the aspects of holding the banjo correctly.



The Right Hand

Placing The Right Hand

The right hand is the engine of the banjo. If it is forced and strained it will choke up. It is vital to know where to put your right hand on the banjo so that the wrist is supported and the hand moves freely.

First find the "karate chop" part of the hand, it is the area of the hand opposite the thumb. This is part of the hand that rests on the banjo. It is the **pivot point** for the hand and the support for the wrist. It should be placed on the tail piece or, if you can't reach, on the strings behind the bridge. This will not affect the tone to any large degree.



As in the pictures above, place the hand at the "karate chop" area on to the tailpiece or strings of the banjo and then fold your hand over the until your palm "cups" the bridge. Be certain not to touch the bridge as this will dampen the tone.

The wrist, which is the hinge for the hand must NOT be arched. Arching causes tension.



A good test to see if you understand how the hand must be supported here is as follows:

Hold out your left hand in a fist in front of you as a support. Now place your right hand on top of your left hand at the karate chop point of your right hand. Let your right arm flop down and now wiggle your right hand back and over from the wrist. The left hand is the tailpiece of your banjo and this is exactly how your right hand and arm should be supported on it.



Regarding the rest of the arm, imagine a straight line running down the neck of the banjo, along the strings, down the hand and wrist and down to the elbow. It will not be completely straight or even close, but it is a good guideline. Do not move your arms, shoulders or back to achieve this "straight line" - move the banjo or the banjo neck up or down or out.

Now check that the right hand is placed so that it is aligned with the strings. The right hand should comfortably "cup" the bridge. This is so that the natural movement of the wrist will cause the hand to evenly cover all four strings. Again, adjust the banjo to meet your hand not the other way round.



You should pick the strings approximately 1"-2" from the bridge. It depends on the individual banjo where exactly the nicest tone is; very close to the bridge tends to be very tinny and if you go too far towards the neck you can't keep the right hand in place.



In the picture above, note the alignment of thumb and plectrum, index finger and thumb, and thumb and strings.

Holding The Pick

The pictures below demonstrate the correct way to hold the pick.

1. Loosely curl in the index finger



2. Place the pick on the outside edge of the curled index finger pointing downwards along the second section of the finger



3. Now place the thumb over the pick evenly covering the pick with the flat of the thumb at the soft pad area of the thumb. Try to keep the thumb straight and not bent at the joint, making certain the thumb is relaxed



The weight of the thumb should be enough to keep the pick in place. When trebling or playing quickly the pick should be loose enough to flicker back and forth between thumb and finger. **DO NOT SQUEEZE!**

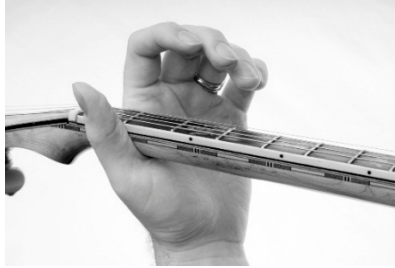
The method of holding the pick between the flat of the index and middle fingers and the thumb (like holding a pencil) is not recommended as the opposing action required by the fingers and the thumb to hold the pick in place causes lots of tension.

NEVER place any fingers on the velum as a support. It is fine to allow the fingers of the right hand to rub limply off the velum or keep them curled up neatly. To place any of the fingers on the velum or curled around the bridge again causes unneeded tension.

The Left Hand

Placing the Left Hand

The left hand should lightly cup the neck of the banjo so that the neck sits in the "crook" of the hand between thumb and forefinger. The palm and butt of the hand should be well away from the neck and not flat against it in a supporting role. If the neck is falling away or down use a strap. The left arm should be relaxed and natural and not sticking stiffly out at the elbow.



Left Hand Technique

What we want to achieve with the left hand are light, nimble fingers.

Remember to hold the neck of the banjo in the crook of the left hand keeping the fingers nice and high above the fingerboard. Don't squeeze with your thumb; allow the hand to be free enough to move up and down the neck. Remember to keep the heel of the hand away from the neck.

The fingers of the left hand should resemble a claw shape. This keeps the fingers upright and ready for action. Flattening the fingers makes it much harder for them to move around quickly and they will also touch off the other strings.



Always place the finger that you are using for a note squarely in the centre of the fret and press down firmly.



Keep your fingers close to the strings so that they are readily available for use. Don't have them wiggling about in midair!



Picking

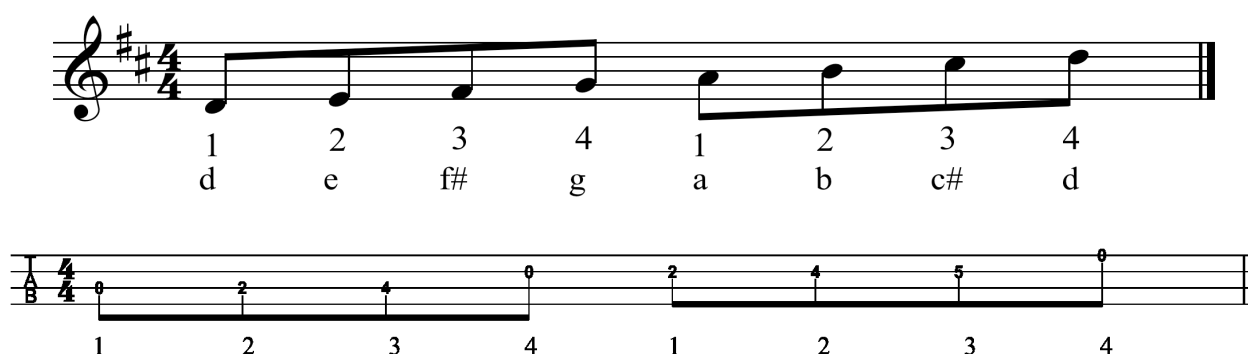
I am now going to deal in some detail with picking. It is absolutely essential that you establish a definite structure to your picking. If you don't, you literally won't know what your right hand is doing. Most of the problems that occur around rhythm, dropped notes, missed trebles etc can be attributed to incorrect picking and of course, tension.

One of the most common questions I get asked at workshops is "When do I pick Up and when do I pick Down?" Firstly let's establish that a Down pick is Down towards the floor and an Up pick is Up towards your head! This may seem a little self explanatory but you never know.....!! I am going to give you a few simple rules that, if implemented, will ensure that beginners will encounter few picking problems and more experienced players will improve greatly.

For the moment I am going to deal exclusively with 4/4 timing, i.e. reels and hornpipes etc. The reason for this is that if your reel playing is good your jig playing will be simple.

KEY: the Symbol $\square$ will denote a Down Pick. ∇ denotes an Up Pick

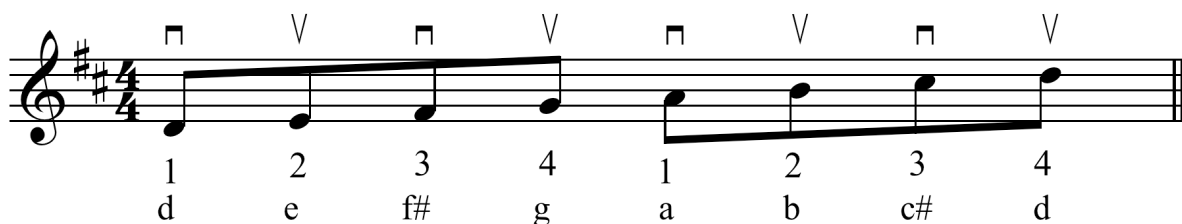
Let's take a bar of reel and let's say that in each standard bar of a reel there are 8 notes or, for simplification purposes, 2 sets of 4 notes.



**RULE 1: ODD numbered notes are always picked DOWN
EVEN numbered notes are always picked UP**

Always means Always.

Therefore in our bar above, notes 1 and 3, D F and A C# are picked Down. Notes 2 and 4, E G and B D' are picked Up.



This by logic gives us:

RULE 2: The first note of each bar is always Down and the first note of each set of 4 notes is also Down

Now let's try a slightly different bar



Notice that Note 1, D is long. This long note encompasses beats/notes 1 and 2 and therefore F is still note number 3 and is also Down. This means that note 4, A is up and we're back ready for a Down on 1, B. Although this is a double Down pick, the long note leaves plenty of time to achieve this.

Another version of this bar is as follows:

Here, D F# B and D are all Down picks.

In the following bar the first note is very long for emphasis:

D is Down and A is Up.

Here is a simple but very effective exercise to practice this picking pattern:

EXERCISE:

CD1 Track 5

The notes to watch out for here are FA, GB and CE'.

As you cross strings you may tend to carry the Down pick across to the next note. Careful attention is required.

Practice this exercise with great care and concentration. It is easy to learn the notes and skip quickly over the exercise. Practice it very slowly and deliberately ensuring that your picking is correct on each and every note. You are now teaching your right hand a brand new discipline and it will take time for it to sink in fully. Some players will naturally pick in this manner and if so, lucky you, you have been saved much effort!

Picking Trebles and Triplets

A form of Ornamentation, a Treble is one note played three times in the space of two. A Triplet is three notes in the space of two. As such a Triplet is more of a left hand ornament. However, the picking is exactly the same for each.

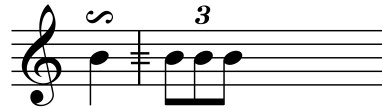
RULE: A Treble or Triplet is always Down Up Down

RULE: The note after a Treble/Triplet is always Down

A Treble is denoted using the symbol

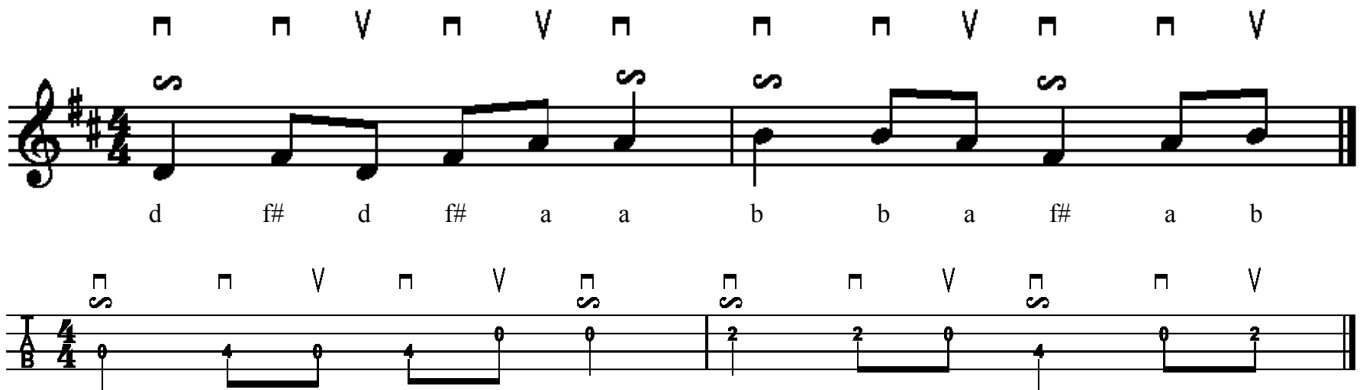


CD1 Track 6

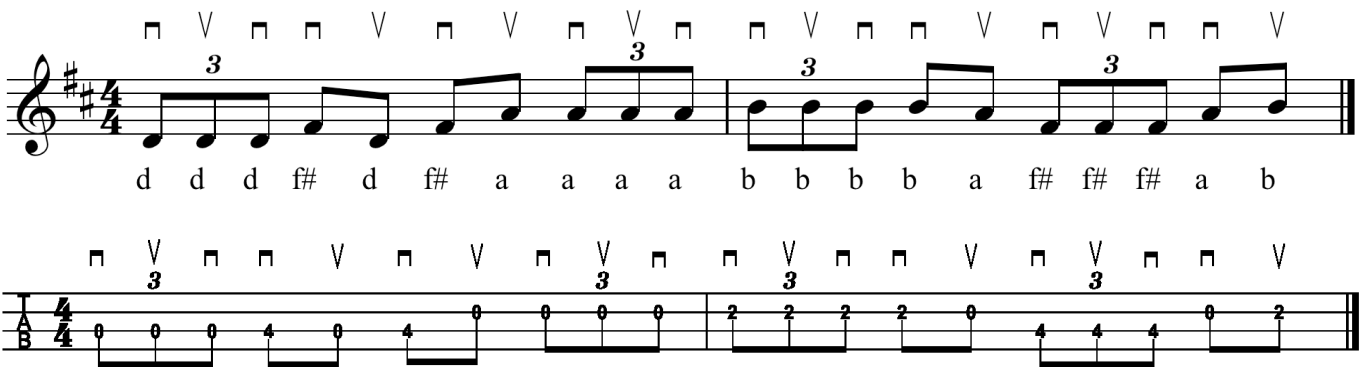


CD1 Track 7

An example of Picking Trebles:



In effect this is actually:



This Down Up Down-Down picking sequence is essential for good trebling.

A Triplet is picked exactly the same way:

CD1 Track 8

Musical score for guitar in D major, 4/4 time. The score consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a melody with notes: d, f#, e, d, f#, a, a, b, c, d', b, a, d, e, f#, a, b. Above the staff are pick marks (V) and a '3' indicating a triplet. The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line with notes: 0, 4, 2, 0, 4, 0, 0, 2, 4, 5, 2, 0, 0, 2, 4, 0, 2. Above the staff are pick marks (V) and a '3' indicating a triplet. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

The key to successful trebling/tripleting is relaxation in the right hand, wrist and fingers. Do not squeeze the pick or tense up when trying to treble. Keep the pick nice and light between thumb and finger and stroke it across the strings. A tense hand will transfer tension to the pick making it harder and more difficult to pull across the strings.

Picking Exercises

Exercise 1.

CD1 Track 9

D A E A F# A G A F# A E A

Exercise 2.

CD1 Track 10

D F# E G F# A G B A C# B D' C# E' D'

Exercise 3.

CD1 Track 11

D E F# D E F# G E F# G A F# G A B G

A B C# A B C# D' B C# D' E' C# D'

Exercise 4. (Note: the marked "A" in bar 4 is the A on the D string at Fret 7)

CD1 Track 12

E A E' A F# A E' A G# A E' A A A E' A

Exercise 5. (Incorporating Trebles)

CD1 Track 13

D D A E E A F# F# A G G A F# F# A E E A

Exercise 6.

CD1 Track 14

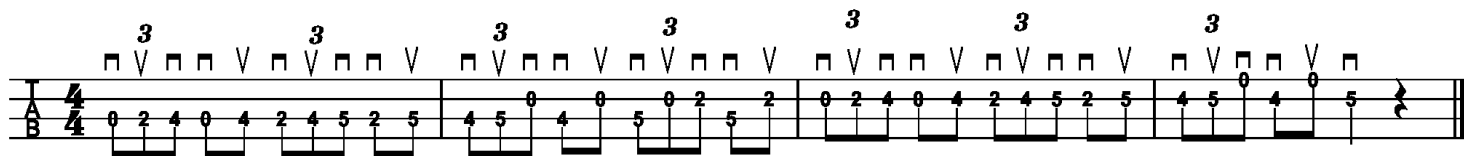
D D F# E E G F# F# A G G B A A C# B B D' C# C# E' D'

Exercise 7.

CD1 Track 15

D E F# D F# E F# G E G F# G A F# A G A B G B

A B C# A C# B C# D' B D' C# D' E' C# E' D'



Practicing these exercises slowly and carefully every day for a minimum of 15-20 minutes will greatly improve your picking, fingering and overall dexterity and ability.

If you have been playing banjo for a time and now wish to correct or change your picking method it is advisable to practice these exercises for 20-30 minutes a day. It is also advisable that for a period of about 3-4 weeks you don't play your old tunes or play in sessions or gigs. Practicing and learning this new picking technique takes time to imbed and reverting to old picking patterns in tunes you already know will undo a lot of your hard work and prolong the transition to this new picking method. My advice is to persevere with the exercises and learn the new tunes in this book with the correct picking, slowly and accurately. Over time you can re-introduce your old tunes and you should find that your new picking technique will come through quite easily.

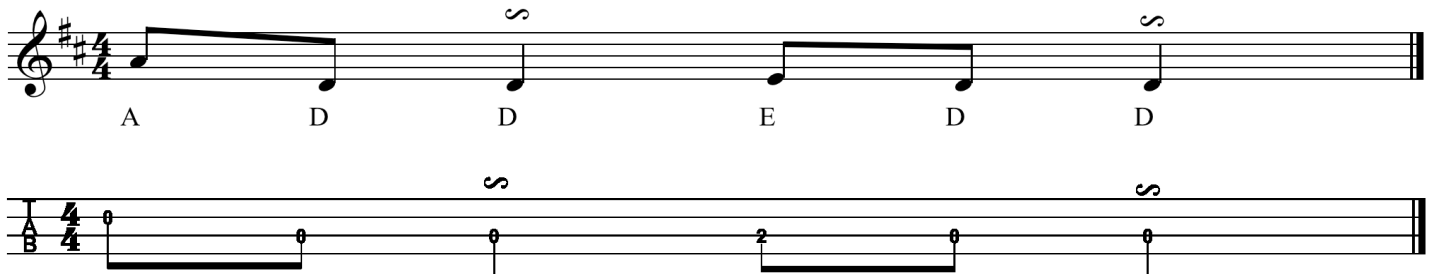
Ornamentation

Treble

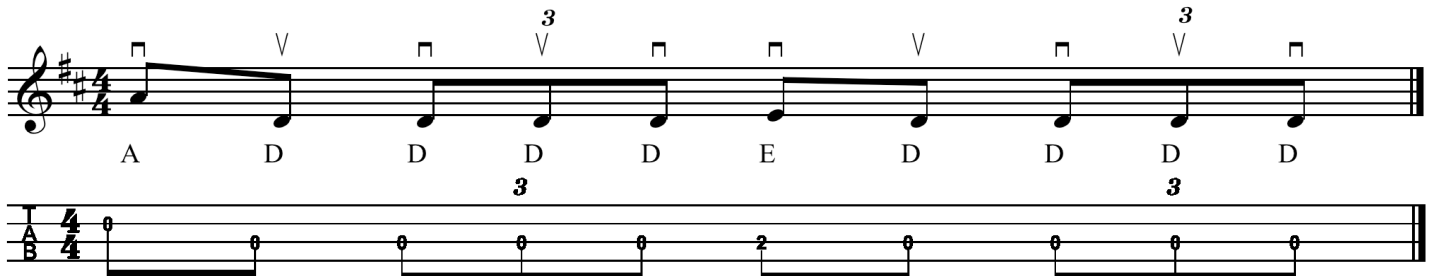
The most basic form of ornamentation is the Treble - one note played three times with the plectrum. It is generally played on the downbeat where there is a long note (crotchet) in a reel or a jig.

A treble is written like this:

CD1 Track16



And rhythmically, is played like this:



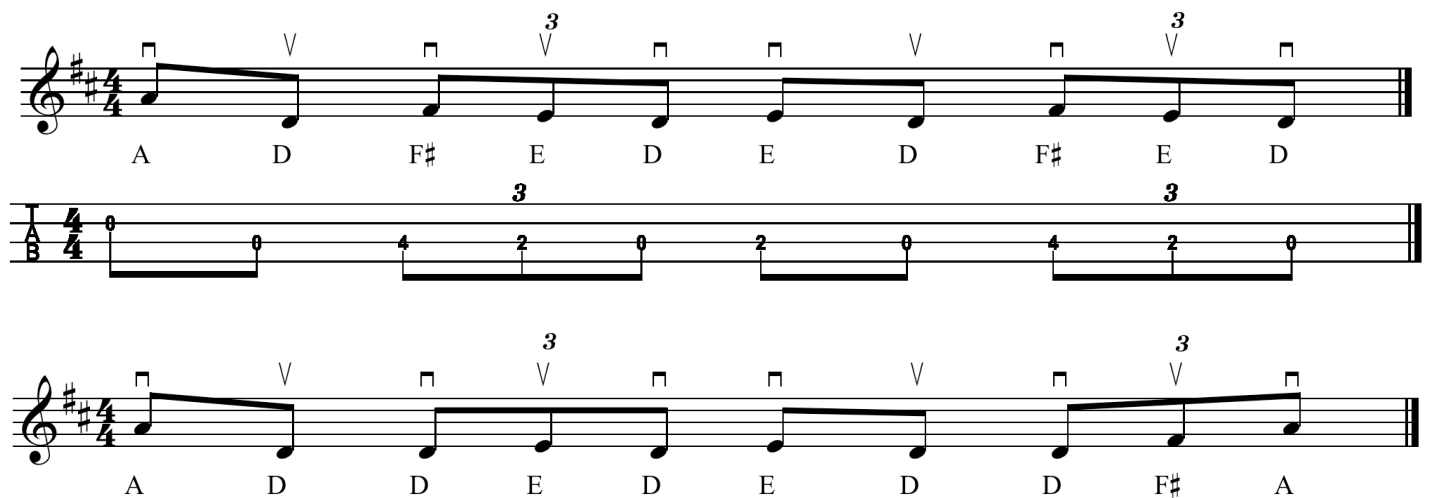
(See the Picking Section of this Tutor for the rules of picking trebles)

Triplet

The Triplet is rhythmically identical to the treble but involves changing notes with the left hand.

Examples of different forms of Triplets:

CD1 Track 17



Stuttered Treble/Triplet

A technique used among many players to add extra interest to a triplet or treble is to dampen the first two notes in the treble/triplet. This is done by lightly touching the string with the finger of the left hand to "kill" the string for the first two notes and then either pressing down to make the third note or, if the treble is on an open string, lifting off to allow the open string ring out for the third note.

CD1 Track 18

Dampen the string on the E fret for the first two notes of the treble and then lift off for the third D. Practice this very slowly first. In effect what you are doing is playing AD EED but are dampening the 2 E notes. There may be a hint of the E note in the treble if you like.

CD1 Track 19

Here dampen the string on the F fret and then press down as usual to make the last note. This "stuttered" sounding treble/triplet can make your playing sound more exciting and energetic, but can also become tedious if overused.

Slide

Sliding up to a note is a commonly used form of ornamentation most likely adopted from bluegrass playing.

Here, pick the F natural but not the F sharp. Instead, slide the finger up to F sharp, keeping the finger pressed down strongly. The action of the finger sliding over the fret makes the second note. The 2 notes of the slide in this example are played in the same time as if they were picked.

(Note the picking here - as the F# is made using the finger and not picked, the 3rd note A is still picked Down)

CD1 Track 20

CD1 Track 20 musical notation. The staff shows a melody in 4/4 time. The notes are F^b, F[#], A, B, A, F[#], E, D. The F[#] is reached by sliding from the F^b. The picking pattern is indicated by squares (up) and inverted triangles (down). The bass staff shows the fretting hand with fingerings 3, 4, 0, 2, 0, 4, 2, 0. A slide 's' is marked under the first two notes.

In this example, the slide is executed in exactly the same way except that the F natural is played as a crushed note.

CD1 Track 21

CD1 Track 21 musical notation. The staff shows a melody in 4/4 time. The notes are F^b, F[#], A, A, B, A, F[#], E, D. The F[#] is reached by sliding from the F^b. The picking pattern is indicated by squares (up) and inverted triangles (down). The bass staff shows the fretting hand with fingerings 3, 4, 0, 0, 2, 0, 4, 2, 0. A slide 's' is marked under the first two notes.

Hammer-On

To perform the Hammer-On, pick the F natural and then, holding on the 2nd finger to sustain the string, hammer the 3rd finger onto the F# to make the note. Basically hit the string with your finger - hard!

CD1 Track 22

CD1 Track 22 musical notation. The staff shows a melody in 4/4 time. The notes are F^b, F[#], A, B, A, F[#], E, D. The F[#] is reached by hammering on from the F^b. The picking pattern is indicated by squares (up) and inverted triangles (down). The bass staff shows the fretting hand with fingerings 3, 4, 0, 2, 0, 4, 2, 0. A hammer-on 'H' is marked under the first two notes.

The Hammer-On is most useful when used in Triplets:

CD1 Track 23

The musical notation for CD1 Track 23 is in 4/4 time. The treble clef staff shows a triplet of eighth notes (E, F#, A) followed by a quarter note (D), then another triplet of eighth notes (A, E, F#) followed by a quarter note (D). The bass clef staff shows a triplet of eighth notes (2, 4, 0) followed by a quarter note (0), then another triplet of eighth notes (2, 4, 0) followed by a quarter note (0). Above the treble staff, there are pick marks (V) and a hammer-on symbol (H) under the first triplet. Below the bass staff, there are pick marks (V) and a hammer-on symbol (H) under the first triplet. The notes are: E F# A D A E F# A D A.

(There is an exception to the picking rule here: for the sake of good rhythm as we cross strings in this Hammer-On Triplet, the A's are Ups instead of Down)

Pull Off

The Pull Off is another subtle ornament. In this instance the crushed B note is picked and then quickly pull the A string with the finger of the left hand to make the A note. At Reel speed, and with practice, the pick and the pull of the string happen at the same time. This gives a nice "twangy" sound which can be fun!

CD1 Track 24

The musical notation for CD1 Track 24 is in 4/4 time. The treble clef staff shows a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (A), a quarter note (A), a quarter note (B), a quarter note (BA), a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (E), and a quarter note (D). The bass clef staff shows a quarter note (4), a quarter note (0), a quarter note (0), a quarter note (2), a quarter note (2), a quarter note (4), a quarter note (2), and a quarter note (0). Above the treble staff, there are pick marks (V) and a pull-off symbol (P) under the B note. Below the bass staff, there are pick marks (V) and a pull-off symbol (P) under the 2nd note.

Tunes

The tunes in this book have been specifically selected to help you master different aspects of banjo playing. It is not a selection of “great banjo tunes” although they may all be just that! They have been selected for instructional purposes.

Why is your first tune a reel and not a jig or polka? The importance of establishing a correct picking method has been outlined in great detail earlier. Reel playing is the best way to learn this method and to train your right hand to pick correctly. The rules of picking don’t really apply to jig playing and polkas have lots of long notes and applying the rules means a lot of down strokes in a row which won’t help you much.

Don’t be freaked out by starting straight in with a reel. Learn it note by note, bar by bar, part by part. Build it up slowly. Slow, precise practice will pay huge dividends. Be certain that your picking is correct. Constantly check yourself for tension or clenching. Relax.

Crowley’s Reel will be our first tune. It’s a lovely simple reel that will help imprint the picking method. It’s a reel that we will use again later on to introduce ornamentation and variations as we progress through the book. The 11 tunes after Crowley’s Reel are all to be used to practice and perfect the rules of picking reels correctly.

Moving on from there, there are tunes that will show you how and when to use the various types of ornamentation and help you to practice and develop these skills. I have included a number of tunes to help you train your little finger to reach the High B note and I will also show you some fingering tricks to get around this long stretch.

We will then look at jig playing and jig ornamentation. I have included a section on the use of chords in tunes. We will look at the use of variation in tunes.

I have also included an eclectic mix of advanced tunes at the end of the book to demonstrate the use of ornamental techniques in faster and more intricate playing and also to challenge the more advanced players!

Simple Tunes to Practice The Correct Picking Method

CD1 Track 25

Crowley's Reel

a a d' b b d' a d d d a d d d a a d' b a b c# d' f# e' g' f# e' d' b

5 a a d' b b d' a d d d a d d d a a d' b a b c# d' f# e' g' f# d' d' e'

9 f# f# a' g' f# g' e' a a a e' a a a f# f# a' g' f# g' a' f# e' g' f# d' d' e'

13 f# f# a' g' f# g' e' a a a e' a a a f# f# a' g' f# g' a' f# e' g' f# d' d' b

Crowley's Reel

0 0 5 2 2 5 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 5 2 0 2 4 5 2 0 3 2 0 5 2

5 0 0 5 2 2 5 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 5 2 0 3 2 5 5 0

9 2 2 5 3 2 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 2 5 3 2 3 5 2 0 3 2 5 5 0

13 2 2 5 3 2 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 2 5 3 2 3 5 2 0 3 2 5 5 2

The Concertina Reel

□ □ V □ V □ V □ □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V

a f# a b a f# a a f# a b a f# a b a c# a b a c# a b a c# a b a f# g

5 □ □ V □ V □ V □ □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V

a f# a b a f# a a f# a b a f# e f# a b c# d' d' b a f# e f# d d' b

9 □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V

a d' d' d' a d' d' d' a d' d' d' b a f# a b a c# a b a c# a b a c# a b a f# g

13 □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V

a d' d' d' a d' d' d' a d' d' c# d' d' b a f# a b c# d' b a f# e f# d d' b

The Concertina Reel

□ □ V □ V □ V □ □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V

1 4/4 0 0 2 0 4 0 | 0 0 2 0 4 0 | 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 | 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 5

5 □ □ V □ V □ V □ □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V

1 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 | 0 4 0 2 0 4 2 | 4 0 2 4 5 5 2 | 0 4 2 4 0 5 2

9 □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V

1 0 5 5 5 0 5 5 5 | 0 5 5 5 2 0 4 0 | 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 | 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 5

13 □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V

1 0 5 5 5 0 5 5 5 | 0 5 5 4 5 5 2 | 0 4 0 2 4 5 2 | 0 4 2 4 0 5 2

Soldier's Joy - Barndance

d' b a f# d f# a f# d f# a d' d' c# b a f# d f# a f# d f# g e e f# g
 6 a f# d f# a f# d f# a d' d' d' e' f# a' f# d' e' g' e' c# d' d' d'
 10 d' e' f# f# 'e f# a' g' f# e' d' c# d' e' f# g' e' f# f# e' f# a' g' f# e' d' c# b a d' e'
 15 f# f# 'e f# a' g' f# e' d' c# d' e' f# g' e' f# a' f# d' e' g' e' c# d' d' d'

Soldier's Joy

5 2 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 5 5 4 2 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 5 2 2 4 5
 6 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 4 0 5 5 5 0 2 5 2 5 0 3 0 4 5 5 5
 10 5 0 2 2 0 2 5 3 2 0 5 4 5 0 2 3 0 2 2 0 2 5 3 2 0 5 4 2 0 5 0
 15 2 2 0 2 5 3 2 0 5 4 5 0 2 3 0 2 5 2 5 0 3 0 4 5 5 5

Mulqueen's Reel

□ □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V
 f# e g f# d d e f# d a g f# d d e f# e g f# d d e f# a b c# d' a b g
 5 □ □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V
 f# e g f# d d e f# d a g f# d d e f# e g f# d d e f# a b c# d' c# d'
 9 □ □ □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V
 e' e' e' f# e' d' c# d' e' f# g' f# g' e' e' e' f# e' d' c# a b c# d' c# d'
 13 □ □ □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V
 e' e' e' f# e' d' c# d' e' f# g' f# g' a' f# f# f# g' e' e' e' d' e' f# e' d' a b g

Mulqueen's Reel

□ □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V
 T 4/4 4 2 5 4 0 0 2 4 0 0 5 4 0 0 2 4 2 5 4 0 0 2 4 0 2 4 5 0 2 5
 B 4/4
 5 □ □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V
 T 4 2 5 4 0 0 2 4 0 0 5 4 0 0 2 4 2 5 4 0 0 2 4 0 2 4 5 4 5
 B
 9 □ □ □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V
 T 0 0 0 2 0 5 4 5 0 2 3 2 3 0 0 0 2 0 5 4 0 2 4 5 4 5
 B
 13 □ □ □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V □ V
 T 0 0 0 2 0 5 4 5 0 2 3 2 3 5 2 2 2 3 0 0 0 5 0 2 0 5 0 2 5
 B

The Clumsy Lover - Reel

c# e' e' f# e' c# a c# d' e' f# g' f# e' d' c# e' e' f# e' c# a c# d' b b a b c# d' b
 5
 c# e' e' f# e' c# a c# d' e' f# g' f# e' d' c# e' e' c# d' c# b d' c# a a b a a b
 9
 c# a' a' c# a' a' c# a' d' a' a' d' a' a' d' a' c# a' a' c# a' a' c# a' b a' c# a' d' a' b a'
 13
 c# a' a' c# a' a' c# a' d' a' a' d' a' a' d' a' c# e' e' c# d' c# b d' c# a a b a a b

The Clumsy Lover

1
 5
 9
 13

This tune has a syncopated rhythm in the second part. The cross picking in this part makes it almost impossible to play the tune correctly at speed if your picking method is incorrect.

The Humours of Tulla - Reel

d' a d' b d' a b d' f# d' e' d' b c# d' a d' b d' a d' b d' e' f# g' f# e'
 5 d' a d' b d' a b d' f# d' e' d' b c# d' a d' b d' a d' b d' e' f# g' f# g'
 9 a' f# f# f# d' f# f# f# a' f# f# f# g' e' e' e' a' f# f# e' d' f# e' d' b d' e' f# g' f# g'
 13 a f# f# f# d f# f# f# a f# f# f# g' e' e' e' a' f# f# e' d' f# e' d' b d' e' f# g' f# e'

The Humours of Tulla

5 0 5 2 5 0 2 5 2 5 0 5 2 5 0 5 2 5 0 2 3 2 0
 5 5 0 5 2 5 0 2 5 2 5 0 5 2 4 5 0 5 2 5 0 5 2 5 0 2 3 2 3
 5 2 2 2 5 2 2 2 5 2 2 2 3 0 0 0 5 2 2 0 5 2 0 5 2 5 0 2 3 2 3
 5 2 2 2 5 2 2 2 5 2 2 2 3 0 0 0 5 2 2 0 5 2 0 5 2 5 0 2 3 2 0

Johnny Will You Marry Me - Barndance

e e f# a b c# b a f# f# f# d' f# a f# e e f# a b c# d' e' f# e' c# b a
 5 e e f# a b c# b a f# f# f# d' f# f# f# e e f# a b c# d' e' f# e' c# b a
 9 e' e' d' c# d' e' f# f# e' f# g# a' e' e' d' c# d' e' c# a b c# a b a
 13 e' e' d' c# d' e' f# f# e' f# g# a' f# e' f# a' e' f# a' e' c# a b c# a b a

Johnny Will You Marry Me

2 2 4 0 2 4 2 0 4 4 4 5 4 0 4 2 2 4 0 2 4 5 0 2 0 4 2 0
 5 2 2 4 0 2 4 2 0 4 4 4 5 4 4 4 2 2 4 0 2 4 5 0 2 0 4 2 0
 9 0 0 5 4 5 0 2 2 0 2 4 5 0 0 5 4 5 0 4 0 2 4 0 2 0
 13 0 0 5 4 5 0 2 2 0 2 4 5 2 0 2 5 0 2 5 0 4 0 2 4 0 2 0

Ms Galvin's Hornpipe

d c# a g e f# e d f# a d a f# a d b c# a g e e c# d e f# g e f# e
 5 d c# a g e f# e d f# a d a f# a d b c# a g e e c# d e c# d f# e
 9 f# g a f# d d e f# g a f# g a g f# g a f# d c# a d b d e f# g f# e
 13 f# g a f# d d e f# g a f# g a g f# e f# d c# a d b d e f# g f# e

Mrs Galvin's Hornpipe

5 4 0 5 2 4 2 0 4 0 0 0 4 0 5 2 4 0 5 2 2 4 5 0 2 3 0 2 0
 5 5 4 0 5 2 4 2 0 4 0 0 0 4 0 5 2 4 0 5 2 2 4 5 0 4 5 2 0
 9 2 3 5 2 5 5 0 2 3 5 2 3 5 3 2 3 5 2 5 4 0 5 2 5 0 2 3 2 0
 13 2 3 5 2 5 5 0 2 3 5 2 3 5 3 2 0 2 5 4 0 5 2 5 0 2 3 2 0

Murphy's Hornpipe

3
d e f# g a b g e f# g e a b c a f# g a f# g b d' g' e' c a g f# g a f# d e f# d

6
g a b g e f# g e a b c a f# g a f# g b d' g' e' c a f# g g g

10
b c d' e' d' c b c d' b e' f# e' d' c# d' e' f# g' d' b d' e' c a g f# g a f# d e f# d

15
g a b g e f# g e a b c a f# g a f# g b d' g' e' c a f# g g g

Murphy's Hornpipe

3
0 2 4 | 5 0 2 5 2 4 5 2 | 0 2 3 0 4 5 0 4 | 5 2 5 3 0 3 0 5 | 4 5 0 4 0 2 4 0

6
5 0 2 5 2 4 5 2 | 0 2 3 0 4 5 0 4 | 5 2 5 3 0 3 0 4 | 5 5 5

10
2 3 | 5 0 5 3 2 3 5 2 | 0 2 0 5 4 5 0 2 | 3 5 2 5 0 3 0 5 | 4 5 0 4 0 2 4 0

15
5 0 2 5 2 4 5 2 | 0 2 3 0 4 5 0 4 | 5 2 5 3 0 3 0 4 | 5 5 5

The Congress - Reel

e' a a g a b c d' e' a' a' f# g' e' d' g' e' a a a e' a a a b a g a b c d g'
 5 e' a a g a b c d' e' a' a' f# g' e' d' b c b c d' e' g' e' d' c a b g a b c d'
 9 e' a' a' g# a' a' g' e' a' a' f# g' e' d' g' e' g' d' g' e' g' d' g' e' a' a' f# g' e' d' g'
 13 e' a' a' g# a' a' g' e' a' a' f# g' e' d' b c b c d' e' g' e' d' c a b g a

The Congress

0 0 0 5 0 2 3 5 0 5 5 2 3 0 5 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 0 5 0 2 3 5 3
 5 0 0 0 5 0 2 3 5 0 5 5 2 3 0 5 2 3 2 3 5 0 3 0 5 3 0 2 5 0 2 3 5
 9 0 5 5 4 5 5 3 0 5 5 2 3 0 5 3 0 3 5 3 0 3 5 3 0 5 5 2 3 0 5 3
 13 0 5 5 4 5 5 3 0 5 5 2 3 0 5 2 3 2 3 5 0 3 0 5 3 0 2 5 0

Lady Ann Montgomery - Reel

d e f# a d a f# a d a f# a d' a b a d' a f# a a f# e d e f# d b a b d d e
 f# a d a f# a d a f# a d' a b a b c# d' b a f# e d e f# d b a b d
 d' e' f# f# f# e' d' e' f# e' d' b a b d' e' f# f# f# e' d' e' f# a' a' f# e' f# d' e'
 f# f# f# e' d' e' f# e' d' b a b d' e' f# d' e' d' b d' a d' e' g' f# e' d'

Lady Ann Montgomery

Introducing Ornamentation

A frequently asked question is: “Where and when do I use triplets and trebles?” The simple answer is: As often or as little as you like. The amount and type of ornamentation that you use in a tune is purely down to individual style and taste. What I will show you in this section is how to use different types of ornamentation and where they will work in a tune.

Trebles

We’ll start with our anchor tune Crowley’s Reel. The most straightforward method of ornamenting a tune is to play a treble on the long notes (crotchets).

Remember the rule that a treble is always Down Up Down followed by a Down.

CD1 Track 36

Crowley's Reel with Ornamentation (Trebles Only)

Sheet music for Crowley's Reel in D major, 4/4 time, featuring treble ornaments (Down Up Down followed by a Down) on the long notes (crotchets). The melody is written on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: a a d' b b d' a d d a d d a a d' b a b c# d' f# e' g' f# e' d' b. The melody is repeated four times, with the first two lines ending with a double bar line. The notes are: a a d' b b d' a d d a d d a a d' b a b c# d' f# e' g' f# d' d' e'. The notes are: f# f# a' g' f# g' e' a a e' a a f# f# a' g' f# g' a' f# e' g' f# d' d' e'. The notes are: f# f# a' g' f# g' e' a a e' a a f# f# a' g' f# g' a' f# e' g' f# d' d'.

Crowley's Reel

Sheet music for Crowley's Reel in D major, 4/4 time. The melody is written on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: a a d' b b d' a d d a d d a a d' b a b c# d' f# e' g' f# e' d' b. The melody is repeated four times, with the first two lines ending with a double bar line. The notes are: a a d' b b d' a d d a d d a a d' b a b c# d' f# e' g' f# d' d' e'. The notes are: f# f# a' g' f# g' e' a a e' a a f# f# a' g' f# g' a' f# e' g' f# d' d' e'. The notes are: f# f# a' g' f# g' e' a a e' a a f# f# a' g' f# g' a' f# e' g' f# d' d'.

Boil The Breakfast Early is a reel with lots of trebles. In Bar 2 there are 2 trebles back to back. The same rules apply – Down Up Down and Down Up Down followed by a Down. (To reduce clutter I've only marked the Downs and the trebles)

CD1 Track 37

Boil The Breakfast Early - Reel

d' b a d d a d d a d d a g f# e g g a g g e g g e f# g b
 6 a d d a d d a d d g f# g a a b c# d' e' d' c# a g e d
 10 d' b a d' d' d' c# d' e' a' a' g' e' f# g' e' a a b a g e g a b c b a g f# g
 15 a d' d' d' c# d' e' a' a' g' e' f# g' e' a' f# g' e' f# d' d' e' f# a' g' e' d'

Boil The Breakfast Early

5 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 5 4 2 5 5 0 5 5 2 5 5 2 4 5 2
 6 0 0 0 0 0 0 5 4 5 0 0 2 4 5 0 5 4 0 5 2 0
 10 5 2 0 5 5 5 4 5 0 5 5 3 0 2 3 0 0 0 2 0 5 2 5 0 2 3 2 0 5 2 5
 15 0 5 5 5 4 5 0 5 5 3 0 2 3 0 5 2 3 0 2 5 5 0 2 5 3 0 5

The Doon Reel

d f# a f# b f# a f# d f# a f# e d e f# d f# a f# b a f# a b b c# d' b a f#
 5 d f# a f# b f# a f# d f# a f# e d e f# d f# a f# b a f# a b b c# d' b a f# b b c# d' a b c#
 10 d' f# d' a d' f# d' d' f# d' b a b c# d' f# d' a d' f# a' g' f# g' e' g' f# e'
 14 d' f# d' a d' f# d' d' f# d' e' e' f# g' f# e' c# d' c# b a b c# d' e' c# d' a b c# b c# d' e' c# d' b a f#

The Doon Reel

0 4 0 2 4 0 4 0 4 2 0 2 4 0 4 2 0 0 2 2 4 5 2 0 4
 5 0 4 0 2 4 0 4 0 4 2 0 2 4 0 4 2 2 4 5 2 0 2 2 4 5 0 2 4
 10 5 2 5 0 5 2 5 5 2 5 2 0 2 4 5 2 5 0 5 2 5 3 2 3 0 3 2 0
 14 5 2 5 0 5 2 5 5 2 5 0 0 2 3 2 0 4 5 4 2 0 2 4 5 0 4 5 0 2 4 2 4 5 0 4 5 2 0 4

Triplets

Now we'll introduce some triplets. Again we'll use Crowley's Reel.

Remember that the picking for a triplet and a treble are exactly the same. Initially take your time playing the triplet, there is a tendency to try to play it really fast even if the tune is being played slowly.

Ensure that that you are leaving enough time for your left hand to play each of the notes of the triplet. You will quickly build up speed with careful practice.

Placing a triplet in a tune involves finding two quavers that are moving in one direction and putting a third note either between them or before or after them. In Bar 2 of Crowley's we simply play an E note between F and D and make it into a triplet.

However, in Bar 3 of the 3rd line the original notes are F-FA GEFG; to create a triplet here we add a second E to make: F-FA GEFG

Note that in the Bar 1 of the 4th line the long F and G notes are played long and not ornamented. Sometimes, in order to highlight the triplet, you need to leave space or room in the bar. Don't be afraid to allow some long notes ring out in a tune. You don't have to ornament every note. In the same way that a fiddle, accordion or flute player will emphasise a long note, so too can the banjo player.

CD1 Track 39

Crowley's Reel with Ornamentation (Triplets)

a a d' b b d' a d f# e d a d f# e d a a d' b a b c# d' f# e' f# g' f# e' d' b

5 a a d' b a b c# d' a d f# e d a d f# e d a a d' b a a b c# d' f# e' g' f# d' d' e'

9 f# f# a' g' f# g' e' a c# b a e' a c# b a f# f# a' g' e' e' f# g' a' f# e' g' f# d' d' e'

13 f# f# g' a' g' f# g' e' a c# b a e' a c# b a f# f# a' g' e' e' f# g' a' f# e' g' f# d' d'

Musical score for guitar, 4/4 time signature. The score consists of four systems of staves, each with a treble (T) and bass (B) clef. The notation includes fret numbers (0-5), accidentals (sharps, naturals), and various musical symbols such as triplets, slurs, and vibrato marks. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the fourth system.

System 1: Measures 1-4. Includes triplets and slurs.

System 2: Measures 5-8. Includes triplets and slurs.

System 3: Measures 9-12. Includes triplets and slurs.

System 4: Measures 13-16. Includes triplets and slurs. Ends with a double bar line.

The Pinch of Snuff - Reel

d d a d d a b c a g e c e d d a d d d' e' d' c a g e
 5 d d a d d a b c a g e e c a b g a a b c d' e' d' c a g e
 9 a d' d' a d' d' a d' d' e' d' c# d' e' a' a' g# a' a' g' e' a' a' g' e' d' c# d'
 13 e' f# g' e' a' f# g' e' f# e' f# d' c# a b c b c a a b c d' e' d c a g e

The Pinch of Snuff

0 0 0 0 0 2 3 0 5 2 5 2 0 0 0 0 5 0 5 3 0 5 2
 5 0 0 0 0 2 3 0 5 2 2 3 0 2 5 0 0 2 3 5 0 5 3 0 5 2
 9 0 5 5 0 5 5 0 5 5 0 5 4 5 0 5 5 4 5 5 3 0 5 5 3 0 5 4 5
 13 0 2 3 0 5 2 3 0 2 0 2 5 4 0 2 3 2 3 0 0 2 3 5 0 5 3 0 5 2

The Templehouse - Reel

e f# g a b f# a f# d f# e d a d f# d e f# g a b e e b a c b a g f#
 5 d e f# g a b d' c# b a d f# d a d f# e d e f# g a b e e b a c b e' e' f#'
 9 g' f# e' f# g' f# e' g' f# d' f# a' f# d' f# g' f# e' f# g' f# e' d' b a c b c# d' e' f#'
 13 g' f# e' f# g' f# e' g' f# d' f# a' f# d' f# e' e' f# g' f# e' d' b c b a c b a g f#

The Templehouse

2 4 5 0 2 4 0 4 0 4 2 0 0 4 0 2 4 5 0 2 2 2 2 0 3 2 0 5 4
 5 0 2 4 5 0 2 5 4 2 0 0 4 0 0 4 2 0 2 4 5 0 2 2 2 2 0 3 2 0 0 2
 9 3 2 0 2 3 2 0 3 2 5 2 5 2 3 2 0 2 3 2 0 5 2 0 3 2 4 5 0 2
 13 3 2 0 2 3 2 0 3 2 5 2 5 2 5 2 0 0 2 3 2 0 5 2 3 2 0 3 2 0 5 4

The Moneymusk is a Fling, an older type of dance tune played at the same tempo as a hornpipe but with much more bounce and swingy rhythm. The cross-picking in the second part is again good practice for the right hand and the run of triplets at the end will certainly challenge!

CD1 Track 42

Moneymusk - Fling

a f# a a d' b a f# d e f# g b a f# a a f# a b g e g f# a d' b

5 a f# a a d' b a f# d e f# g b a f# a a f# a b g e g f# d f# a

9 d' a f# a f# a f# a d' a f# a b e' e' d' a f# a f# a f# a g b a g f# d d c#

13 d' a f# a f# a f# a d' a f# a b e' e' d' e' d' c# d c# b c# b a b c# d' e' c# d' d' b

The Moneymusk

0 4 0 0 5 2 0 4 0 2 4 5 2 0 4 0 0 4 0 2 5 2 5 4 0 5 2

5 0 4 0 0 5 2 0 4 0 2 4 5 2 0 4 0 0 4 0 2 5 2 5 4 0 4 0

9 5 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 5 0 4 0 2 0 0 5 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 5 2 0 5 4 0 0 4

13 5 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 5 0 4 0 2 0 0 5 0 5 4 5 4 2 4 2 0 2 4 5 0 4 5 5 2

Miss Thornton's Reel

f# e d f# a d' a f# a g f# d e f# g b a g f# e f# d e f# a d' b g e f# g f# e f#
 6 d f# a d' a f# a g f# e d e f# g b a g f# e f# d e f# a d' b g e f# d
 10 d' e' f# d' e' d' f# d' e' d' b c# d' a d' b c# d' a d' f# d' e' d' f# d' e' d' b c# d' c# e' d' d' e'
 15 f# d' e' d' f# d' e' d' b c# d' a d' b c# d' a d' f# d' e' c# d' c# b a b d' c# e' d'

Miss Thornton's

4 2 0 4 0 5 0 4 0 5 4 0 2 4 5 2 0 5 4 2 4 0 2 4 0 5 2 5 2 4 5 4 2 4
 6 0 4 0 5 0 4 0 5 4 2 0 2 4 5 2 0 5 4 2 4 0 2 4 0 5 2 5 2 4 0
 10 5 0 2 5 0 5 2 5 0 5 2 4 5 0 5 2 4 5 0 5 2 5 0 5 2 5 0 5 2 4 5 4 0 5 5 0
 15 2 5 0 5 2 5 0 5 2 4 5 0 5 2 4 5 0 5 2 5 0 4 5 4 2 0 2 5 4 0 5

Playing High B (Fret 7) and Above

One of the aspects of banjo playing that causes plenty of heartache is reaching the High B note (fret 7) with the left hand. The general rule is that this note is played by the little finger. Over time, the little finger should increase in strength and agility.

Here is an easy reel with a High B to practice stretching out the little finger:

CD2 Track 1

The Crooked Road - Reel

g g f# g a f# g f# g a d' c a g g f# g a g' f# d' c a d' c a

5 g g f# g a f# g f# g a d' c a g g f# g a g' f# d' c a d' b c

9 d' g' g' f# g' a' f# d' g' g' a' g' f# e' d' g' g' f# g' a' g' f# d' c a d' b c

13 d' g' g' f# g' a' f# d' g' g' a' g' a' b' g' a' f# g' b' a' g' f# d' c a d' c a

The Crooked Road

5 5 4 5 0 4 5 4 5 0 5 3 0 5 5 4 5 0 3 2 5 3 0 5 3 0 5 2 3 5 3 3 2 3 5 2 5 3 3 5 3 2 0 5 3 3 2 3 5 3 2 5 3 0 5 2 3 5 3 3 2 3 5 2 5 3 3 5 3 5 7 3 5 2 3 7 5 3 2 5 3 0 5 3 0

5 5 4 5 0 4 5 4 5 0 5 3 0 5 5 4 5 0 3 2 5 3 0 5 2 3 5 3 3 2 3 5 2 5 3 3 5 3 2 0 5 3 3 2 3 5 3 2 5 3 0 5 2 3 5 3 3 2 3 5 2 5 3 3 5 3 5 7 3 5 2 3 7 5 3 2 5 3 0 5 3 0

9 5 3 3 2 3 5 2 5 3 3 5 3 2 0 5 3 3 2 3 5 3 2 5 3 0 5 2 3 5 3 3 2 3 5 2 5 3 3 5 3 5 7 3 5 2 3 7 5 3 2 5 3 0 5 3 0

13 5 3 3 2 3 5 2 5 3 3 5 3 5 7 3 5 2 3 7 5 3 2 5 3 0 5 3 0

Off to California - Hornpipe

b a g a b d' d' b d' e' g' a' g' e' d' e' g' a' b' a' g' e' d' b g a b a a b a

6 g a b d' d' b d' e' g' a' g' e' d' e' g' a' b' a' g' e' d' b a b g g g

10 f# g' a' f# d' c# d' e' g' a' b' g' e' d' e' f# g' a' b' g' a' f# g' e' d' b b a a b a

15 g a b d' d' b d' e' g' a' g' e' d' e' g' a' b' a' g' e' d' b a b g g g

Off to California

2 0 | 5 0 2 5 5 2 5 0 | 3 5 3 0 5 0 3 5 | 7 5 3 0 5 2 5 0 | 2 0 0 2 0

6 5 0 2 5 5 2 5 0 | 3 5 3 0 5 0 3 5 | 7 5 3 0 5 2 0 2 | 5 5 5 7 7

10 2 3 | 5 2 5 4 5 0 3 5 | 7 3 0 5 0 2 3 5 | 7 3 5 2 3 0 5 2 | 2 0 0 2 0

15 5 0 2 5 5 2 5 0 | 3 5 3 0 5 0 3 5 | 7 5 3 0 5 2 0 2 | 5 5 5 7 7

However, there are ways around this potentially awkward stretch up to the High B.

One way is to move the left hand up a fret or two and finger some of the other notes differently preparing to reach the High B using the 3rd finger or the 4th finger but with a lesser stretch involved. The best way to describe this is with a practical example in the tune In The Garden. The numbers written above the notes in the second part refer to the fingers of the left hand – see Reference Page.

At the very start of the 3rd line move the hand up a position. In the last bar of the 3rd line use the open E at the start of the Bar to move the hand down into regular position to get the F note and immediately use the 2nd and 3rd G notes to switch back up. Move the left hand up the neck slightly to reach the High B with the 3rd finger.

In bar 2 of the last line use the open note E to move the hand back down into the regular fingering position.

Back In The Garden - Reel

d' c b g b a g a b g g f# g b d' c b g b a g f# g e a a a d' d' c
 6
 b g b a g a b g g f# g a b c d' c b c a b g a g e g f# a g
 10
 1 2 3 1 2 1 3 1 2 1 0 1 2 1 0 1 2 1 3 1 2 1 3 1 2 1 0 2 1 3 2 1 2
 g' a' b' g' a' g' b' g' a' g' e' g' d' g' e' g' d' g' b' g' a' g' b' g' a' g' e' g' f# a' g' g' a'
 15
 3 1 2 1 3 1 2 1 0 2 3 2 0 2 3 2 1 3 1 0 1 2 3 0 2 1 3 2
 b' g' a' g' b' g' a' g' e' g' d' g' e' g' d' c b g b a b c d' e' g' f# a' g'

In The Garden

5 3 2 5 2 0 5 0 2 5 5 4 5 2 5 3 2 5 2 0 5 4 5 2 0 0 0 5 5 3
 6
 2 5 2 0 5 0 2 5 5 4 5 0 2 3 5 3 2 3 0 2 5 0 5 2 5 4 0 5
 10
 1 2 3 1 2 1 3 1 2 1 0 1 2 1 0 1 2 1 3 1 2 1 3 1 2 1 0 2 1 3 2 1 2
 3 5 7 3 5 3 7 3 5 3 0 3 5 3 0 3 5 3 7 3 5 3 7 3 5 3 0 3 2 5 3 3 5
 15
 3 1 2 1 3 1 2 1 0 2 3 2 0 2 3 2 1 3 1 0 1 2 3 0 2 1 3 2
 7 3 5 3 7 3 5 3 0 3 5 3 0 3 5 3 2 5 2 0 2 3 5 0 3 2 5 3

In the next tune Maude Miller's Reel there is quite a bit of jumping of position with the left hand. Again, watch out for long notes or open string notes and use these to move hand position.

Look out for bar 3 in the 4th line where the left hand fingers move down in a "crab" like motion.

CD2 Track 4

Maude Miller's Reel

e' d' b a g e d e g b g d' g b d' e' d' b a b g a b e' e' d' e' f# g' f#
 5
 e' d' b a g e d e g b g d' g b d' e' d' b a b g a b e' e' d' e' f# g' e'
 9
 3 0 1 2 3 1 1 2 1 0 1 2 3 2 0 3 0 1 2 3 1 1 2 1 0 3 0 3 2 0
 d' e' g' a' b' g' g' a' g' e' f# g' a' g' e' d' e' g' a' b' g' g' a' g' e' d' e' a' g' e'
 13
 3 0 1 2 3 1 1 2 1 0 1 2 1 2 3 1 3 1 2 1 0 3
 d' e' g' a' b' g' g' a' g' e' f# g' g' a' b' g' a' f# g' f# e' d' b e' e' d' e' f# g' f#

Maude Miller's

0 5 2 0 5 2 0 2 5 2 5 5 2 5 0 5 2 0 2 5 0 2 0 0 5 0 2 3 2
 5
 0 5 2 0 5 2 0 2 5 2 5 5 2 5 0 5 2 0 2 5 0 2 0 0 5 0 2 3 0
 9
 3 0 1 2 3 1 1 2 1 0 1 2 3 2 0 3 0 1 2 3 1 1 2 1 0 3 0 3 2 0
 5 0 3 5 7 3 3 5 3 0 2 3 5 3 0 5 0 3 5 7 3 3 5 3 0 5 0 5 3 0
 13
 3 0 1 2 3 1 1 2 1 0 1 2 1 2 3 1 3 1 2 1 0 3
 5 0 3 5 7 3 3 5 3 0 2 3 3 5 7 3 5 2 3 2 0 5 2 0 0 5 0 2 3 2

This next tune, The Coast of Austria, is in the key of A and the top note is High C. Again we adjust the position of the left hand to comfortably reach the top notes.

The switch in hand position occurs in bar 4 of the 1st line. Use the long A note to jump the 1st finger up to the High A. The switch back to regular hand position occurs at the open E note in the Bar 1 of the 2nd and 4th lines

Note: The boxed number 3 in bar 1 of the 2nd and 4th lines is the note F played on the A string at fret 9.

CD2 Track 5

The Coast of Austria - Reel

c# e' e' f# e' c# e' f# a' f# e' c# b a c# e' e' f# e' c# e' f# a' a' g# a' a' b'
 5 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 0 1
 c# b' a' c# b' a' f# e' f# f# e' f# g# a' f# e' c# e' f# g# a' f# e' c# b c# a a b
 9 c# c# b a f# f# e e f# a a b c# e' e' f# e' c# e' f# a' a' g# a' a' b'
 13 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 0 1
 c# b' a' c# b' a' f# e' f# f# e' f# g# a' f# e' c# e' f# g# a' f# e' c# b c# a a b

The Coast of Austria

1 2
 4 4 0 0 2 0 4 0 2 5 2 0 4 2 0 4 0 0 2 0 4 0 2 5 5 4 5 5 7
 5 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 0 1
 9 7 5 9 7 5 2 0 2 2 0 2 4 5 2 0 4 0 2 4 5 2 0 4 2 4 0 0 2
 9 4 4 2 0 4 4 2 2 4 0 0 2 4 0 0 2 0 4 0 2 5 5 4 5 5 7
 13 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 0 1
 9 7 5 9 7 5 2 0 2 2 0 2 4 5 2 0 4 0 2 4 5 2 0 4 2 4 0 0 2

Other Ornamentation

Here is Crowley's Reel incorporating slides and hammer-ons. Don't forget that the hammer-on triplet is a slight exception to the picking rules. (The CD tracks in this section are recorded slowly first and then at speed to illustrate how these ornaments work in a tune.)

CD2 Track 6

Crowley's Reel - Other Ornaments

The musical score for Crowley's Reel - Other Ornaments is presented in six staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The time signature is 4/4. The notes are written in a simplified notation where the pitch is indicated by a letter and an accent (e.g., a, a', d', b, b', d', b, a, d, f, f#, d, a, d, f, f#, d). The ornaments are indicated by symbols above the notes: 's' for slide, 'H' for hammer-on, and '3' for triplet. The first staff shows a sequence of notes with slides. The second staff shows a triplet of eighth notes followed by a hammer-on. The third staff shows a sequence of notes with slides. The fourth staff shows a sequence of notes with slides. The fifth staff shows a sequence of notes with slides. The sixth staff shows a sequence of notes with slides.

Staff 1: a a d' b b d' b a d f f# d a d f f# d

Staff 2: a a d' b a b c# d' f# e' g' f# e' d' b a d f# a b b d'

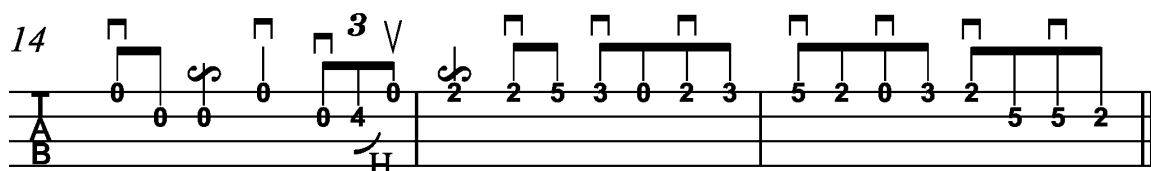
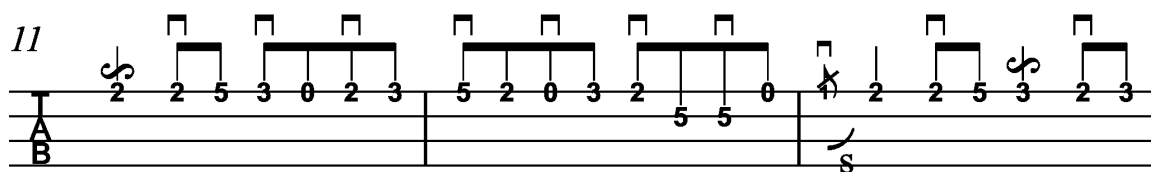
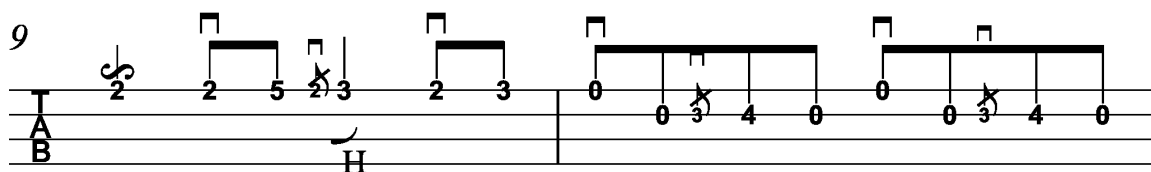
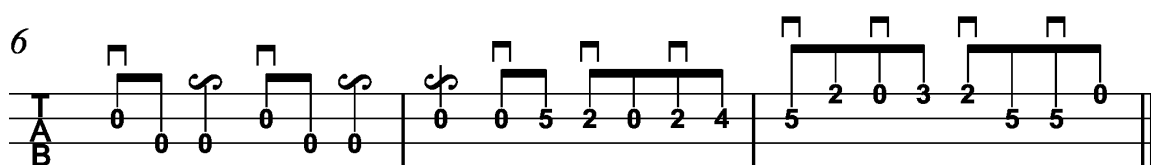
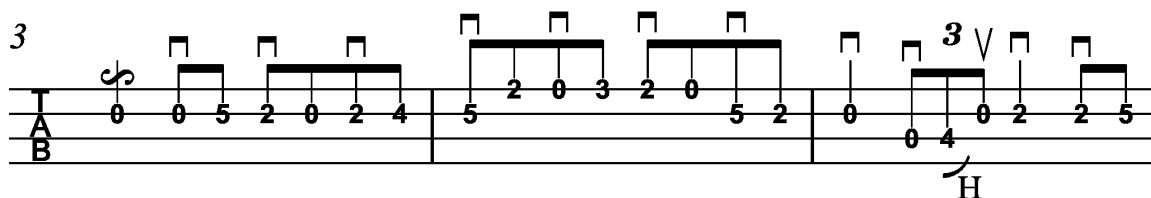
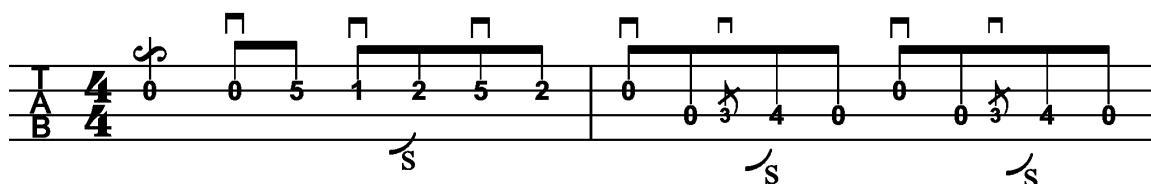
Staff 3: a d d a d d a a d' b a b c# d' f# e' g' f# d' d' e'

Staff 4: f# f# a' f# g' f# g' e' a c# a e' a c# a

Staff 5: f# f# a' g' e' f# g' a' f# e' g' f# d' d' e' f# f# a' g' f# g'

Staff 6: e' a a e' a c# e' f# f# a' g' e' f# g' a' f# e' g' f# d' d' b

Crowley's Reel - Other Ornaments



Sean Hayes Barndance below includes some hammer-ons and slides. Note that in bar 2 of the 1st line there is a hammer-on incorporating 2 notes. The crushed note B is picked Down and the C and D notes are hammered on.

CD2 Track 7

Sean Hayes' Barndance

a g f# f# f# g f# g b a bc# d' d' c# b a f# f# g g f# g b e e e f# e d e

6 f# f# f# g f# g b a d' f# f# e' d' a f# a b g e f# d d d

10 bc#d' e' d' f# f f# d' c# b e e d c# d e f# g a b d' e' f# e' d' c# b a bc#d'

15 e' d' f# f f# d' c# d' c# b e e d c# d e f# g a b c# d' f# d'

Sean Hayes'

4 0 5 4 4 4 5 4 5 2 0 2 4 5 5 4 2 0 4 4 5 5 4 5 2 2 2 2 4 2 0 2

6 4 4 4 5 4 5 2 0 5 2 2 0 5 0 4 0 2 5 2 4 0 0 0 0

10 2 4 5 0 5 4 3 4 5 4 2 2 2 0 6 0 2 4 5 0 2 5 0 2 0 5 4 2 0 2 4 5

15 0 5 4 3 4 5 4 5 4 2 2 2 0 6 0 2 4 5 0 2 4 5 2 5

The Woman of the House - Reel

g b b a b b b a g a b c d' e g d' b b a g b a b d e b b g' e d b

d e g b a b b a g a b c d' e' g' d' b g g b a g a b g a g e g g

f' f# f# d e' d' b c d' e' d' f# d e' d' b d' f# f# d' e' d' c# d' a c# e' a' g# a' a' g'

f# f# d' e' d' e' f# g' a' g' f# g' f# e' d' b a g g b a g a b g a g e g g

The Woman of the House

5 2 2 0 2 2 0 5 0 2 3 5 0 3 5 2 2 0 5 2 0 2 5 0 2 2 3 0 5 2

0 2 5 2 0 2 2 0 5 0 2 3 5 0 3 5 2 5 5 2 0 5 0 2 5 0 5 2 5 5

2 2 5 0 5 2 3 5 0 5 2 5 0 5 2 5 2 2 5 0 5 4 5 0 4 0 5 4 5 5 3

2 2 5 0 5 0 2 3 5 3 2 3 2 0 5 2 0 5 5 2 0 5 0 2 5 0 5 2 5 5

Miss Monaghan's Reel

Musical score for Miss Monaghan's Reel, vocal line. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written on a treble clef staff. The notes are: d, f#, e, d, f#, a, a, b, b, a, f#, a, a, b, d', b, b, a, a, b, c#, d', e', f#, e', d', f#, e', c#, a, f#. The notes are grouped into measures of 4 beats each. There are triplets (3) and slurs (s) over some notes. The score is divided into systems of 5, 9, 13, and 16 measures. The first system ends with a repeat sign. The second system has a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.). The third system has a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.). The fourth system has a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.).

d f# e d f# a a b b a f# a a b d' b b a a b c# d' e' f# e' d' f# e' c# a f#
 d f# e d f# a a g a a g f# a b c# d' f# e' d' e' f# d' b a f# g e f# a g e
 a f# g e f# a d' e' f# a' a' b' a' f# d' f# g' a' g' f# g' g' e' d' b c# d' b b a a b c# d' e'
 f' f# e' d' f# e' e' g' f# a' g# b' a' f# d' f# g' f# g' f# e' d' b c#
 d' b b a a b c# d' b a f# e g f# d d

Miss Monaghan's

Musical score for Miss Monaghan's, piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written on a treble clef staff. The notes are: d, b, b, a, a, b, c#, d', b, a, f#, e, g, f#, d, d. The notes are grouped into measures of 4 beats each. There are triplets (3) and slurs (s) over some notes. The score is divided into systems of 5, 9, 13, and 16 measures. The first system ends with a repeat sign. The second system has a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.). The third system has a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.). The fourth system has a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.).

d' b b a a b c# d' b a f# e g f# d d
 d' b b a a b c# d' b a f# e g f# d d
 d' b b a a b c# d' b a f# e g f# d d
 d' b b a a b c# d' b a f# e g f# d d

Using Chords

The use of chords can be a very effective way of adding interest to a tune. The chords we are dealing with here will be 2 or 3 string melodic chords as opposed to full 4 string chords used as rhythmical backing. The key to playing chords is that the strings are gently stroked not hit hard. There is an inclination to strike a chord harder because there are 2 strings involved but this only serves to make the chord sound harsh and louder than the melody. The chords that we will deal with here are played on the Down stroke.

The two main reasons to use chords are rhythmical emphasis and melodic harmony.

CD2 Track 10

Crowley's Reel - D major

Four staves of musical notation for Crowley's Reel in D major. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 4/4. The notation includes notes, rests, and fingerings. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. The notes are: a, a, d', b, b, d', a, d, a, d, a, d, a, d, a, d, a, d, a, d, b, a, b, c#, d', f#, e', g', f#, e', d', b. The second staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. The notes are: a, a, d', b, b, d', a, d, a, d, a, d, a, d, a, d, a, d, a, d, b, a, b, c#, d', f#, e', g', f#, d', d', e'. The third staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. The notes are: f#, f#, a', g', f#, g', e', a, a, e', a, a, e', a, f#, f#, a', g', f#, g', a', f#, e', g', f#, d', d', e'. The fourth staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. The notes are: f#, f#, a', g', f#, g', e', a, a, e', a, a, e', a, f#, f#, a', g', f#, g', a', f#, e', g', f#, d', d', b.

Crowley's

Four staves of musical notation for Crowley's. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 4/4. The notation includes notes, rests, and fingerings. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. The notes are: 0, 0, 5, 2, 2, 5, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 5, 2, 0, 2, 4, 5, 2, 0, 3, 2, 0, 5, 2. The second staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. The notes are: 0, 0, 5, 2, 2, 5, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 5, 2, 0, 2, 4, 5, 2, 0, 3, 2, 5, 5, 0. The third staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. The notes are: 2, 2, 5, 3, 2, 3, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 2, 2, 5, 3, 2, 3, 5, 2, 0, 3, 2, 5, 5, 0. The fourth staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. The notes are: 2, 2, 5, 3, 2, 3, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 2, 2, 5, 3, 2, 3, 5, 2, 0, 3, 2, 5, 5, 2.

The Merry Blacksmith - Reel

a b c# d' d' a b a a a a b d' a b a a a a b d' e' f# d' e' d' b e' d' f# e' f# g' f# e'
 6
 d' d' a b a a a a b c# d' a b a a a a a d' e' f# d' a f# e d e f# d
 10
 f# g' a' a' g' f# f# e' d' d' a b a a a a d b d' e' f# d' e' d' b e' e' d' e' g' f# e'
 15
 a' a' g' f# f# e' d' d' a b a a a a b d' e' f# d' a f# e d e f# d

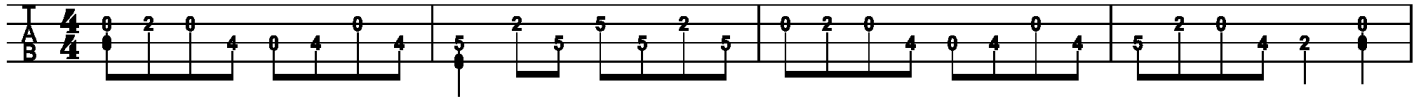
The Merry Blacksmith

3
 0 2 4 5 5 0 2 0 0 0 0 0 2 5 0 2 0 0 0 0 0 2 5 0 5 2 0 6 2 0 2 3 2 0
 6
 5 5 0 2 0 0 0 0 0 2 4 5 0 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 5 0 2 5 0 4 2 0 2 4 0
 10
 2 3 5 5 3 2 2 0 5 5 0 2 0 0 0 0 0 2 5 0 2 5 0 5 2 0 0 5 0 3 2 0
 15
 5 5 3 2 2 0 5 5 0 2 0 0 0 0 0 2 5 0 2 5 0 4 2 0 2 4 0

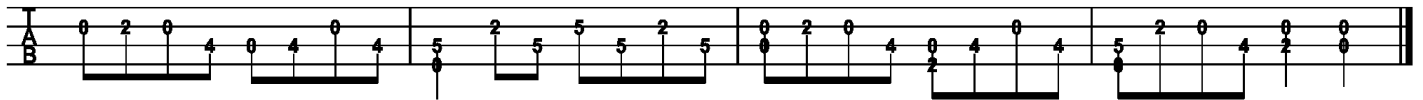
Rolling in the Ryegrass - Reel

a/d b a f# d f# a f# g/g b g d' g b g a b a f# d f# a f# g b a f# e a/d
 5
 a b a f# d f# a f# g/g b g d' g b g a b a f# d/a f# a f# g/g b a f# a a
 9
 a b d'/d e f# d'/d f# g' d'/d g' f# e' d' b a b d'/d e' f# g' a' f# d' f# e' d' b
 13
 a b d'/d e' f# d'/d f# g' d'/d g' f# e' d' b a b d'/d e' f# g' a' f# d' f# e' d'
 17
 a/d b a f# d f# a f# g/g b g d' g b g a b a f# d f# a f# g b a f# e a/d
 21
 a b a f# d f# a f# g/g b g d' g b g a/d b a f# d/a f# a f# g/g b a f# a/e a/e
 25
 a b d'/f e' f# d'/f f# g' g'/b e' f# e' d'/d b a b d'/f e' f# g' a' f# d' f# e'/c d' b
 29
 a b d'/f e' f# d'/f f# g' g'/b e' f# e' d'/d b a b d'/f e' f/a g'/b a'/a f# d' f# e'/c d'/d

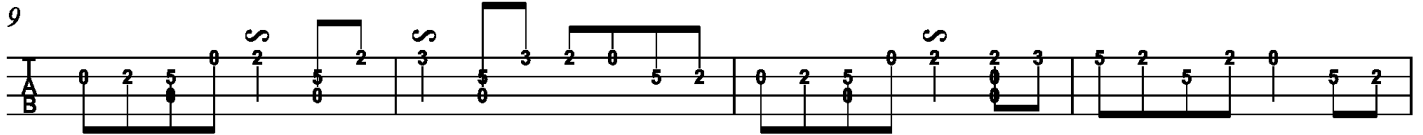
Rolling in the Ryegrass



5



9



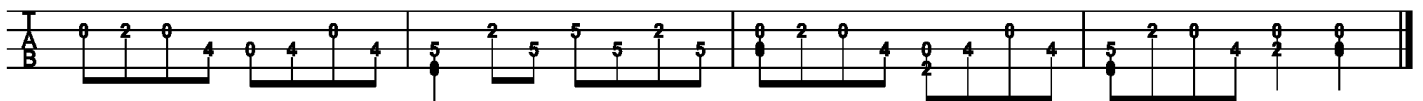
13



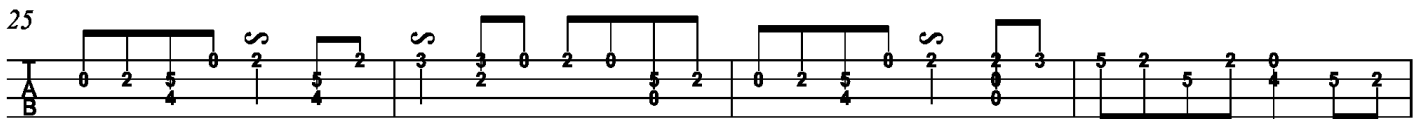
17



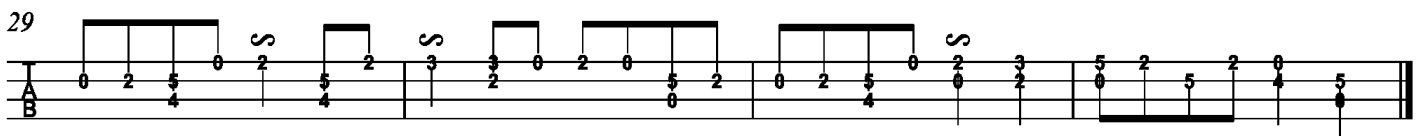
21



25



29



The Green Groves of Erin is illustrated below on the double (written twice through). The first time round of the tune the second half chords are played on the off-beat, emphasizing the A minor nature of the tune. On the repeat of the tune, the first half chords are on the beat and emphasize the Dominant note of the A minor scale, namely D. Then in the second half the chords produce a rising counter melody on the off-beat.

(On the CD this track is played slowly then at speed to emphasize the use of chords for rhythm and counter melody effects)

CD2 Track 13

The Green Groves of Erin - Reel

1 a b a e' a b a g b d' g' e' d' b a b a e' a b a b g e f# g a b g

5 a b a e' a b a g b d' g' e' d' b a b a e' a b a b g e f# g a b d'

9 e' a' a' a' e' a' a' a' e' g' g' g' e' g' g' g' e' a' a' a' e' a' a' a' e' d' e' f# g' e' d' g'

13 e' a' a' a' b' a' g' e' d' e' f# g' g' e' d' e' g' a' b' g' a' g' e' g' f# a' g' e' d' b

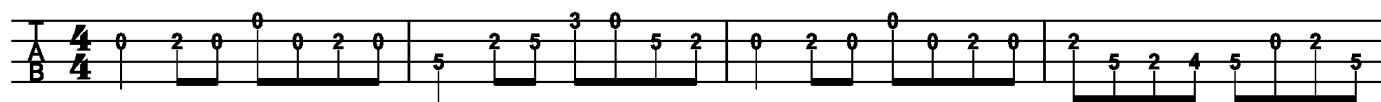
17 a b a e' a b a g b d' g' e' d' b a b a e' a b a b g e f# g a b g

21 a b a e' a b a g b d' g' e' d' b a b a e' a b a b g e f# g a b d'

25 e' a' a' a' e' a' a' a' e' g' g' g' e' g' g' g' e' a' a' a' e' a' a' g' e' d' e' f# g' e' d' g'

29 e' a' a' a' b' a' g' e' d' e' f# g' g' e' d' e' g' a' b' g' a' g' e' g' f# a' g' e' d' b

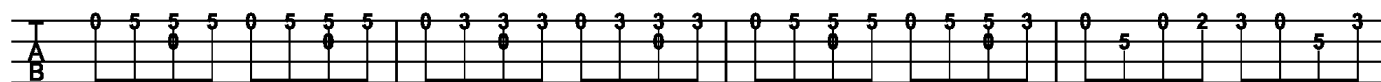
The Green Groves of Erin



5



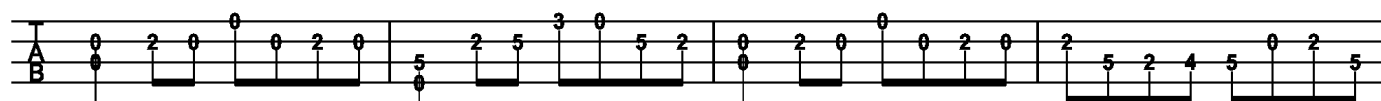
9



13



17



21



25



29



Jigs

So far we have been dealing exclusively with tunes in 4/4 timing (reels, hornpipes, barndances, flings etc) This has been to firmly establish a correct method for picking. When you can pick reels correctly, jigs are a piece of cake!

The usual question asked about picking jigs is whether to pick Down Up Down, Down Up Down or Down Up Down, Up Down Up. My answer to this is to apply a number of the rules for reel playing (see below) and after that it doesn't really matter too much. Down Up Down, Down Up Down will achieve a strong rhythmical effect; Down Up Down Up Down Up a more lyrical effect.

The rules that apply to jigs are as follows:

The first note of the bar should be a Down
Trebles and Triplets should be Down Up Down

I have included a number of jigs beginning with nice simple jigs and then onto using ornamentation and chords and variations in Jigs.

CD2 Track 14

Sackow's Jig

a f# a a g b b f# a d' f# e' d' c# e' c# a b c# d' f# e' d' a g

6 f# a a g b b f# a d' f# e' d' c# e' c# a b c# d' f# e' d'

10 c# d' b b f# b b f# g' f# f# e' d' c# a a e' a a e' f# e' e' d' c#

15 d' b b f# b b f# g' f# f# e' d' c# e' c# a b c# d' f# e' d'

Sackow's

0 4 0 0 5 2 2 4 0 5 2 0 5 4 0 4 0 2 4 5 2 0 5 0 5

6 4 0 0 5 2 2 4 0 5 2 0 5 4 0 4 0 2 4 5 2 0 5 7

10 4 5 2 2 2 2 2 2 3 2 2 0 5 4 0 0 0 0 0 2 0 0 5 4

15 5 2 2 2 2 2 2 3 2 2 0 5 4 0 4 0 2 4 5 2 0 5 7

The Cat That Ate The Candle

a b g a g e g a g g b d' e' g' e' d' b g a b a a b c
 6
 b g a g e g a g g b d e' g' e' d' b g a g f# g
 10
 f# g' e' f# g' f# a' g' f# e' d' g' e' d' b b a g a b c
 15
 b g a g e g a g g b d' e' g' e' d' b g a g f# g

The Cat That Ate The Candle

6
 10
 15

Shandon Bells

b a f# d d f# a d' e' d' c# b a b g e e g a b a b c# d'

6

a f# d d f# a d' e' d' c# b a b c# d' e' c# a d' e' d' d'

10

e' f# d' d' d' c# d' f# a' a' a' f# d' c# a a e' a a b c# d' e' f# g'

15

f# d' d' d' c# d' f# a' a' a' f# d' b c# d' e' c# a d' e' d' d'

Shandon Bells

6

10

15

The Mouse in the Cupboard

b a g a g f# d g g f# g a b a b c b c d' g' g' f# d' c
 5
 b a g a g f# d g g f# g a b d' b c a f# a g f# g a
 9
 b a b c b c d' g' g' f# d' c b a b c b c d' b g f# g a b a b c b c d' g' g' f# d' c
 15
 b d' b c a f# a g f# g a b a b c b c d g' g' f# d' c# d' e' f# g' f# g'
 20
 e' a' g' f# d' c# d' g' g' b' g' g' a' g' f# d' c b d' b c a f# a g f# g

The Mouse in the Cupboard

2 0 5 0 5 4 0 5 5 4 5 0 2 0 2 3 2 3 5 3 3 2 5 3
 5
 2 0 5 0 5 4 0 5 5 4 5 0 2 5 2 3 0 4 0 5 4 5 0
 9
 2 0 2 3 2 3 5 3 3 2 5 3 2 0 2 3 2 3 5 2 5 4 5 0 2 0 2 3 2 3 5 3 3 2 5 3
 15
 2 5 2 3 0 4 0 5 4 5 0 2 0 2 3 2 3 5 3 3 2 5 4 5 0 2 3 2 3
 20
 0 5 3 2 5 4 5 3 3 7 3 3 5 3 2 5 3 2 5 2 3 0 4 0 5 4 5 7

The Woods of Old Limerick is here in its basic format. It is also included a little later incorporating ornamentation and variations.

CD2 Track 18

The Woods of Old Limerick

g f# d d e f# g a d' d' c# a g f# d d e f# g e a a e f# g

6 f# d d e f# g a d' d' c# a g f# d d e f# g e d d d

10 e' f# d' d' d' e' d' c# a a a a' f# g' e' c# d' e' f# g' e' a' d' e'

15 f# d' d' e' c# a d' e' d' c# a g f# d d e f# g e d d d

The Woods of Old Lierick

6 4 0 0 2 4 5 0 5 5 4 0 5 4 0 0 2 4 5 2 2 2 2 4 5

6 4 0 0 2 4 5 0 5 5 4 0 5 4 0 0 2 4 5 2 0 0 0 7

10 0 2 5 5 5 0 5 4 0 0 0 5 2 3 0 4 5 0 2 3 0 5 5 0

15 2 5 5 0 4 0 5 0 5 4 0 5 4 0 0 2 4 5 2 0 0 0 7

Ornamentation in Jigs

We use the same basic ornamentation in jigs as in reels – trebles and triplets. In a jig, where there is a dotted crotchet we have a choice of playing the treble in one of two ways: before the quaver or after the quaver.

CD2 Track 19



CD2 Track 20

The Rose in the Heather

e d f# e d b, d f# a b a f# a b d' e' d' e' f# d' b a f# e

f# f# e e d f# a a b d' e' d' b a f# e f# d d d

e' f# d' b a b d' f# a' a' a' f# d' g' e' f# e' d' b e' e' e' f# g'

f# d' b a b d' f# a' a' a' f# a' b' a' g' f# g' e' f# d' d' d'

The Rose in the Heather

2 0 4 2 0 4 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 5 0 5 0 2 5 2 0 4 2

4 4 2 2 0 4 0 0 2 5 0 5 2 0 4 2 4 0 0 0 7

0 2 5 2 0 2 5 2 5 5 5 2 5 3 0 2 0 5 2 0 0 0 2 3

2 5 2 0 2 5 2 5 5 5 2 5 7 5 3 2 3 0 2 5 5 5 7

Boys on the Town

Vocal score for 'Boys on the Town' in 6/8 time, key of D major. The score consists of four staves of music with lyrics written below the notes. The melody is written in a treble clef. The lyrics are: f# g' e' d' b a b g d g a b d' b a b a g b d' e' f# (measures 1-5), g' e' d' b a b g d g a b d' b a g a b g g g (measures 6-10), c d' e' f# g' f# g' e' a' a' e' a' a' b' a' g' e' d' e' f# g' e' f# g' (measures 11-15), d' e' f# g' f# g' a' f# d' e' f# g' e' d' b a g a b g g g (measures 16-20). The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Boys on the Town

Piano accompaniment for 'Boys on the Town' in 6/8 time, key of D major. The score consists of four staves of music with fingerings indicated by numbers 0-5. The accompaniment is written in a bass clef. The fingerings are: 2 3 0 5 2 0 (measures 1-5), 3 0 5 2 0 2 5 2 0 2 0 5 2 5 5 7 (measures 6-10), 2 0 2 3 2 3 0 5 5 0 5 5 7 5 3 0 5 0 2 3 0 2 3 (measures 11-15), 5 0 2 3 2 3 5 2 5 0 2 3 0 5 2 0 5 0 2 5 5 5 7 (measures 16-20). The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

The same idea applies to playing triplets. In Rosemary Lane below the triplet in the 2nd line is before the quaver and the triplet in the 3rd line is after the quaver. Each has a distinctive rhythm.

CD2 Track 22

Rosemary Lane

a g f# e f# d f# a d' c# e' d' c# b a d' b a f# d e f# d e f# g
 6
 f# e f# d f# a d' c# e' d' c# b a d' e' f# g' a' f# g' e' c# d'
 10
 f# g' a' g# a' f# d' f# g' f# g' e' c# e' f# e' d a b c# d' e' d b a b c#
 15
 d' c# d' a f# a b e' d' c# b a f# g' a' f# g' e' c# e' d' c# d'

Rosemary Lane

6
 10
 15

The following two tunes I composed for my first solo album Pick It Up.

CD2 Track 23

The Black Frog

d d d d e f# e d b, d b, a, d e d d e f# a b a f# a d' b a f# e
 6 f# e d b, d a, d e f# a f# e d e d d f# e d e d d b a
 10 d f# a' g' e' c# f# d' b e' c# a g a b a b c# d' e f# e' c# a a' a' a' g' f#
 15 g' a' g' g' f# e' f# g' a' f# e' d c# d' a f# d f# a f# d' b e' c# a d' a f# b g e

The Black Frog

6 0 0 0 0 2 4 2 0 4 0 4 2 0 2 0 0 2 4 0 2 0 4 5 2 0 4 2
 6 4 2 0 4 0 2 0 2 4 0 4 2 0 2 0 0 4 2 0 2 0 0 2 0
 10 5 2 5 3 0 4 2 5 2 0 4 0 5 0 2 0 2 4 5 0 2 0 4 0 5 5 5 3 2
 15 3 5 3 3 2 0 2 3 5 2 0 5 4 5 0 4 0 4 0 2 5 2 0 4 0 5 0 4 2 5 2

The Sanctuary

f# e f# a a b c# e' c# a a' f# e' c# a a b c# b a f# f# a f#
 6
 e f# a a b c# e' c# a a' f# e' c# a a b c# b c# b a
 10
 f# e' c# a f# g# a' f# e' c# a f# g# a' f# e' c# a a b c# b a f# f# a' f#
 15
 e' c# a f# g# a' f# e' c# a f# g# a' f# e' c# a a b c# b c# b a
 2.
 b a f# f# a f# e f# a a b c# e' c# a a' f# e' c# a a b c# b c# b a

The Sanctuary

6
 2 4 0 0 2 4 0 4 0 5 2 0 4 0 0 2 4 2 0 4 4 0 4
 10
 2 0 4 0 2 4 5 2 0 4 0 2 4 5 2 0 4 0 0 2 4 2 0 4 4 5 2
 15
 0 4 0 2 4 5 2 0 4 0 2 4 5 2 0 4 0 0 2 4 2 4 2 0 7
 2.
 2 0 4 4 0 4 2 4 0 0 2 4 0 4 0 5 2 0 4 0 0 2 4 2 4 2 0 7

In Dancing Eyes, the start of the 2nd line features what can best be described as a quadruplet. Whilst this is an unusual ornament and is difficult to play it can also be very effective. (On the CD this track is played slowly and then at speed. At speed, the quadruplet is played first as a hammer-on and then fully picked to emphasize the two options).

CD2 Track 25

Dancing Eyes

b, a, g, b, d g b d' c a b a g a f# d f# e' d' c a g f# d c,

6 g, a, b, c, d g b d' c b a b g a f# d f# e' d' c a f# g

10 b a g b d' g' e' f# a' g' f# d' c b d' c a b a g a f# d

15 g b d' g' e' f# g' f# a' g' f# d' c b d' c a f# a g f# g

Dancing Eyes

4 2 0 4 0 5 2 5 3 0 2 0 5 0 4 0 2 0 5 3 0 5 4 0 5

6 0 2 4 5 0 5 2 5 3 2 0 2 5 0 4 0 2 0 5 3 0 4 5 7 7

10 2 0 5 2 5 3 0 2 5 3 2 5 3 2 5 3 0 2 0 5 0 4 0

15 5 2 5 3 0 2 3 2 5 3 2 5 3 2 5 3 0 4 0 5 4 5 7 7

Paddy from Portlaw

d' b a f# d d d a f# d d b a b c# d' d f# a b g e e b
 6
 a f# e f# e d f# a d' e' f f# d' b a b g f# d d d
 10
 f# g' a' f# d' d' d' a' f# d' d' e' f# a' f# a' g' f# g' e' g'
 15
 f# g' a' a' b' a' a' f# d' e' g' f# d' b a b g f# d d d

Paddy from Portlaw

6
 10
 15

Using Variations

A variation is simply slightly changing a number of notes or bars in a tune to add extra interest or intrigue. Generally Irish tunes are played 3, 4 maybe 5 times over and using variations to spice things up in the later rounds of the tune is very common.

It is close to impossible to describe or set down rules on how to produce a variation; gradually they will begin to happen spontaneously as a musician's experience and proficiency develops. Listening to lots of different musicians and styles of music also helps to develop this skill.

An entire book could be written on the use of variations. For illustration purposes I will use a few of the tunes that you have previously learned in this book.

To give an idea of how variations can be used we will initially return to Crowley's Reel. A good idea is to play the tune in its straightforward format first and then play this version on the repeat.

CD2 Track 27

Crowley's Reel with Variations and Ornamentation

a a d' b b' b d' a d f# e d a d f# e d a f# a d' b d' c# e' d' e' f# g' f# e' d' b

a f# a d' b g b c# d' a d f# e d f# e d a a d' c# d' b b c# d' f# e' g' f# d' d' e'

f# f# a' g' f# g' e' a a a b c# e' f# a' g# a' g' f# g' a' g' f# g' f# e' f# a' d' e'

f# a' a' f# g' f# g' e' a c# b a e a c# e' f# f# a' g' g# a' f# e' g' f# d' d'

Crowley's

0 0 5 2 1 2 5 0 0 4 2 0 2 0 4 2 0 0 4 0 5 2 5 4 0 5 0 2 3 2 0 5 2

0 0 5 2 2 4 5 0 0 4 2 0 4 2 0 0 0 5 4 5 2 2 4 5 2 0 3 2 5 5 0

2 2 5 3 2 3 0 0 0 0 2 4 0 2 5 4 5 3 2 3 5 3 2 3 2 0 2 5 5 0

2 5 5 2 3 2 3 0 0 4 2 0 2 0 4 0 2 2 5 3 4 5 2 0 3 2 5 5

The Woods of Old Limerick - Jig

g f f# d d e f# g a c# d' c# a g f# d e f# g e a, a, a, a g

6 f# d d e f# g a d' e' c# a g f# g f# d e f# g e d d d

10 e' f# d' d' d' e' d' cb c# e' a a' f# g' e' c# d' a' f# g' a' a d' e'

15 f# d' d' e' a a a d' e' c# a g f# d e f# g e d d d

The Woods of Old Limerick - with ornamentation and variations

6

10

15

The Woman of the House - Reel

d b b a ^s b b a g a b c d' e' g' d' b a g b a a b c d' g' b' g' a' b' g' e'

d' b b a b b a g a b d' e' g' d' b d g b g a g a b g a g e g g

f' f# f# d' e' d' b c d' e' d' f# d' e' d' b d' f# d' d' a d' d' c# e' a' g# a' b' a' g'

f# d' e' f# g' b' a' f# g' a' g' f# g' f# e' d b a g g b a g a b g a g e g g

The Woman of the House

0 2 2 0 ^s 2 2 0 5 0 2 3 5 0 3 5 2 0 5 2 0 0 2 3 5 3 7 3 5 7 3 0

5 2 2 0 ^s 2 2 0 5 0 2 5 0 3 5 2 0 5 2 5 0 5 0 2 5 0 5 2 5 5

2 2 5 0 5 2 3 5 0 5 2 5 0 5 2 5 2 5 5 0 5 5 4 0 5 4 5 7 5 3

2 5 0 2 3 7 5 2 3 5 3 2 3 2 0 5 2 0 5 5 2 0 5 0 2 5 0 5 2 5 5

ADVANCED TUNES

The tunes in this section are a culmination of all the techniques and ornaments that have been detailed in the book thus far. For this reason I have recorded these tunes at a faster tempo than the instructional tempo of the earlier tracks. This is to both demonstrate these techniques and also to challenge the more experienced banjo players to try these tunes and ornaments themselves.

CD2 Track 30

Tom Ward's Downfall - Reel

g a b g g g e d g e d e g a g e d e g a b a b d' e' g' g' e' g' d' c

6 b g g g e d g e d e g a g e d e g a b a b d' e' g' d' c b g

10 b c d' g' g' g' e' d' g' e' a' a' b' a' g' a' b' g' g' a' g' e' f# g' e' d' c b g b c

15 d' g' g' g' e' d' g' e' a' a' b' a' g' a' b' g' g' a' g' e' f# g' e' d' c b g

Tom Ward's Downfall

2 5 5 5 2 0 5 2 0 2 5 0 5 2 0 2 5 0 3 3 0 3 5 3

6 2 5 5 5 2 0 5 2 0 2 5 0 5 2 0 2 5 0 3 5 3 2 5 7 7

10 2 3 5 3 3 3 0 5 3 0 5 5 7 5 3 5 7 3 3 5 3 0 2 3 0 5 3 2 5 2 3

15 5 3 3 3 0 5 3 0 5 5 7 5 3 5 7 3 3 5 3 0 2 3 0 5 3 2 5 7 7

Mrs. Kenny's Barndance

3
b c c# d b a g d b a g e a c e' d# e' f# e' d' b c b c d e f# g f# g b g e d b c c#

6
d b a g d b a g e a c e' d# e' f# e' d' b c b c d e f# g b g

10
f# e' d' a f# e' d' a g' f# e' b g' f# e' b d' c# a g# a b c# d' c# d f# d' b a b a f#

14
f# e' d' a f# e' d' a g' f# e' b g' f# e' b d' c# a g# a b c# d' f# d'

18
f# f f# a g f# g b a d' d' d' c# c b b^b b d' e' d c# b a a a a g# g

22
f# d' d' f# e d e c# c# c c# d' e' b b d' c# b c# e' d' f# d'

Mrs. Kenny's Barndance

[illegible]

Grainne's Welcome Home - March

e' f# e' d c# a f#^p e' a b c# d' e' f# e' d' c# e' c# d' g a b c# d' f#
 5
 e' f# e' d' c# a e' a b c# b a b f#^h g a b d' g' a' g' e' d' g b c# d'
 9
 e' d c# a' f#^p e' a b c# d' e' f# e' d' c# a e' c# c#^h d g b c# d'
 13
 e' f# e' d' c# a a e' a c a b a b g a b d' g' a' g' e' d' g b c# d'
 17
 e' a c# a g#^h a' a' f# f#^p e' a b c# d' f# e' a c# a g' g' e' d' g b c# d' f#
 21
 e' a a a' g' f# a' g' f# e' g' f# e' f# c# d' e' f# g' a' g' e' d' g b c# d' f#
 25
 e' a a a a' a' f# f#^p e' a b c# d' f# e' a a f#^h g' g' e' d' g b c# d' f#
 29
 e' a a a' g' f# a' g' f# e' g' f# g' f# e' f# e' a d' e' f# g' a' g' e' d' g b c# d'

Grainne's Welcome Home - March

This image displays the first 32 measures of the piece "Grainne's Welcome Home - March" in fingerboard notation. The notation is organized into eight systems, each containing a treble (T) and bass (B) staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The notation includes various musical symbols such as fingerings (0-5), slurs, accents (p), breath marks (h), and articulation marks (s). The piece concludes with a double bar line at measure 32.

Measure numbers 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, and 29 are indicated at the beginning of their respective systems.

The Ash Grove Waltz

d' f# a' f# d' b e' f# g' f# e' d' f# e' d' c# b a d' e' f# d' e' f# d' b g a b c# d' a
 9
 d' f# a' d'' a' f# e' b e' f# g' a' b' g' e' d' c# d' e' f# g' a' f# d' e' a' g# a' g'
 17
 f# d' b b c# d' e' f# g' f# e' d' f# e' d' c# b a d' e' f# d' e' f# d' b g a b c# d' a

The Ash Grove Waltz

9
 17

Dinny O'Brien's Reel

f# d' d' a b c a c# d' e' d c a g e d f# e d a d f# d e f# g a b c d' e' g'
 5
 f# d' c a b c b a d' f# e' d' c a g e d f# e d e f# g a b c a g e e d d e'
 9
 f# d' d' d' c# a b c b c d c b a g e d d a d d e f# g a b c d' e' g'
 13
 f# d' d' a c c c c d' e' d' c a g e d f# e d e f# g a b c a g e e d d e'
 17
 f# d' d' c# d' e' f# g' a' d' d' a' d' f# d' e' c c b c d' e' f# g' c c g' c e' g'
 21
 f# d' d' a b c a d' f# e' d' c a g e d f# e d e f# g a b c a g e e d d e'
 25
 f# d' d' a' d' g' d' f# d' d' a' d' f# d' e' c c g' c c e' c c e' f# g' a'
 29
 f# d' c# d' a b c a d' f# e' d' c a g e d f# e d e f# g a b c a g e e d d e'

Dinny O'Brien's Reel

Fingerboard notation for the piece "Dinny O'Brien's Reel". The notation is presented in six systems, each corresponding to a 4-measure phrase. Each system consists of a treble (T) and bass (B) staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The notation uses numbers 0-5 to indicate fret positions. Various musical ornaments are used, including slurs, accents, and triplets. Measure numbers 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, and 29 are placed at the beginning of their respective systems. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the 32nd measure.

Measures 1-4: Treble staff starts with a 2 on the 2nd line, followed by 5, 5, 0, 2, 3, 0. Bass staff starts with a 4 on the 4th line, followed by 4, 0, 5, 3, 0, 5, 2. Measure 4 contains a triplet of 0, 4, 2 on the bass staff.

Measures 5-8: Treble staff starts with a 2 on the 2nd line, followed by 5, 3, 0, 2, 3, 2, 0. Bass staff starts with a 5 on the 5th line, followed by 2, 0, 5, 3, 0, 5, 2. Measure 8 contains a triplet of 0, 4, 2 on the bass staff.

Measures 9-12: Treble staff starts with a 2 on the 2nd line, followed by 5, 5, 5, 4, 0, 2. Bass staff starts with a 3 on the 3rd line, followed by 2, 3, 5, 3, 2, 0, 5, 2. Measure 12 contains a triplet of 0, 0, 0 on the bass staff.

Measures 13-16: Treble staff starts with a 2 on the 2nd line, followed by 5, 5, 0, 3, 3. Bass staff starts with a 3 on the 3rd line, followed by 3, 5, 0, 5, 3, 0, 5, 2. Measure 16 contains a triplet of 0, 4, 2 on the bass staff.

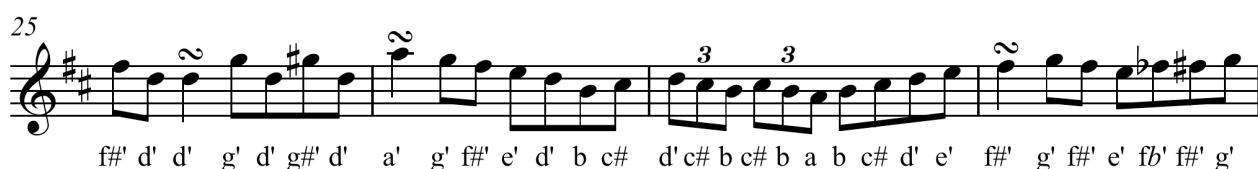
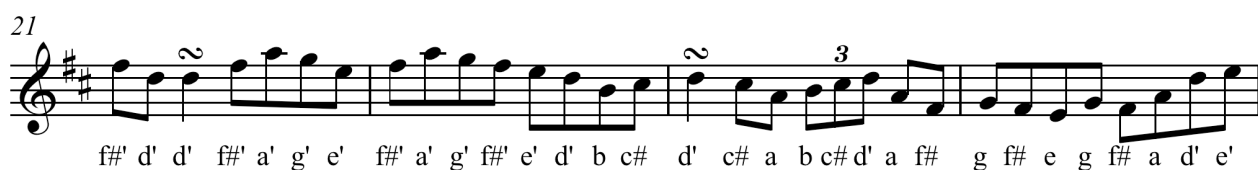
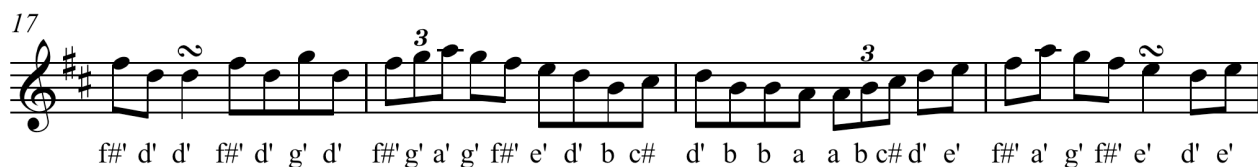
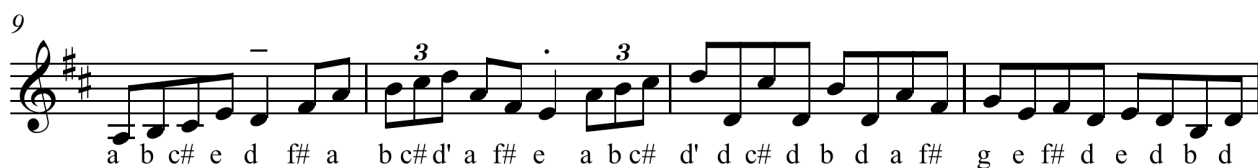
Measures 17-20: Treble staff starts with a 2 on the 2nd line, followed by 5, 5, 4, 5, 0, 2, 3. Bass staff starts with a 5 on the 5th line, followed by 5, 5, 2, 5, 0, 3, 3, 2, 3, 5, 0, 2. Measure 20 contains a triplet of 3, 3, 3 on the bass staff.

Measures 21-24: Treble staff starts with a 2 on the 2nd line, followed by 5, 5, 0, 2, 3, 0. Bass staff starts with a 5 on the 5th line, followed by 2, 0, 5, 3, 0, 5, 2. Measure 24 contains a triplet of 0, 4, 2 on the bass staff.

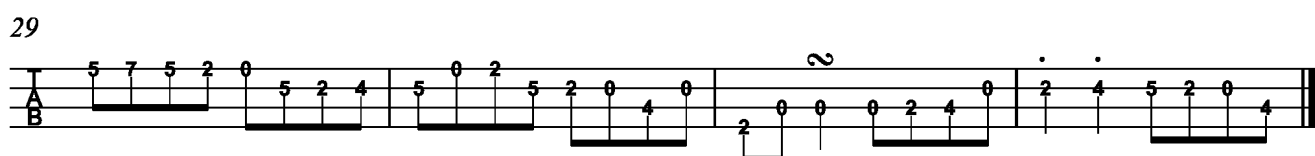
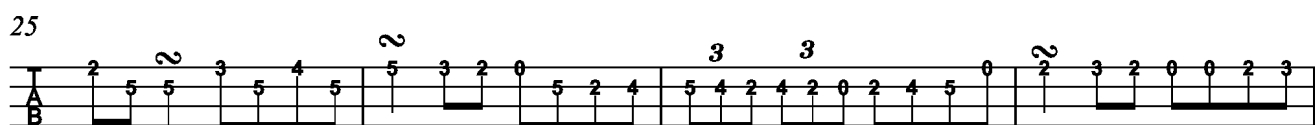
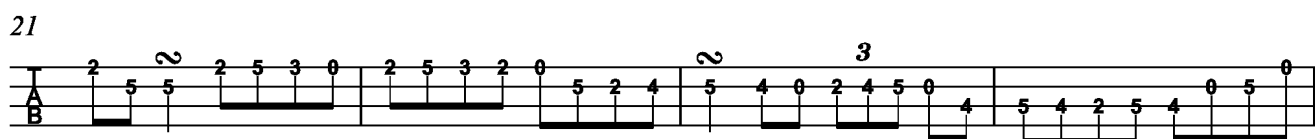
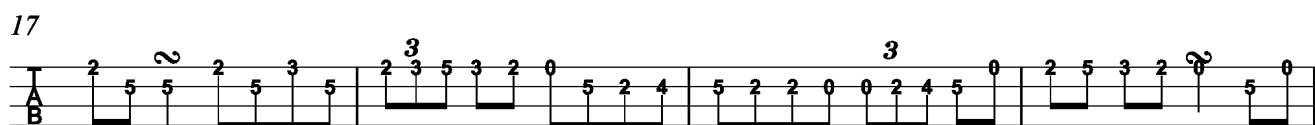
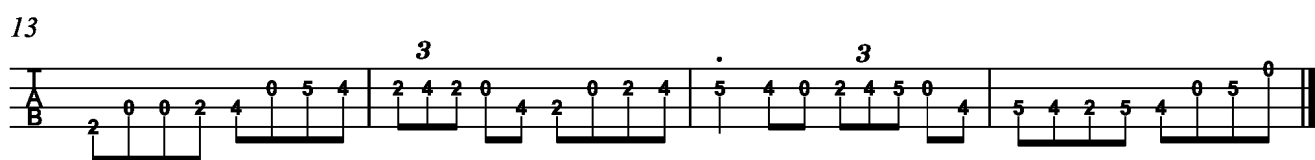
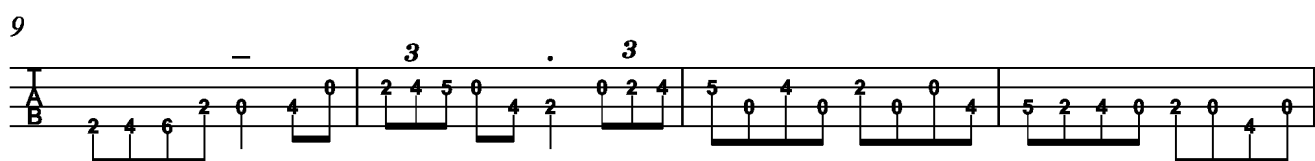
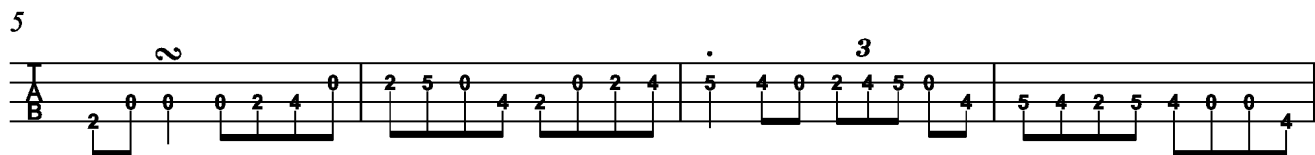
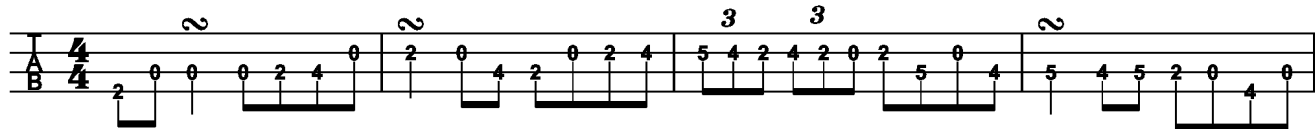
Measures 25-28: Treble staff starts with a 2 on the 2nd line, followed by 5, 5, 3, 5. Bass staff starts with a 2 on the 2nd line, followed by 5, 5, 2, 5, 0, 3, 3, 3, 3, 3. Measure 28 contains a triplet of 0, 3, 3 on the bass staff.

Measures 29-32: Treble staff starts with a 2 on the 2nd line, followed by 5, 4, 5, 0, 2, 3, 0. Bass staff starts with a 5 on the 5th line, followed by 2, 0, 5, 3, 0, 5, 2. Measure 32 contains a triplet of 0, 4, 2 on the bass staff.

Fergal O'Gara - Reel



Fergal O'Gara



Carmel Mahoney Mulhaire's - Reel

a f# f# d f# f# a f# f# a b d' e' f# a' g# a' b' a' f# e' f# g' e' c# a b c#

5
d'c# b c# b a b d' a f# d f# e d a d f# a b g g b c# d' e' f# d' e' c# d' e' d' b

9
b g g c# a a f# e' g' f# e' d' e' f# g' f# e' f# g' f# e' d' f# f# a' f# f#

13
d f# a d' f# d' e' f# g' f# g' e' d' b d' f# f# e' f# g' f# e' d' f# f# a' d' e' f#

17
g' a' g' f# a' g' e' a' g' f# e' f# d' c# d' e' f# e' f# d' e' f# g' a' d' f# g' a' b' a' g# b'

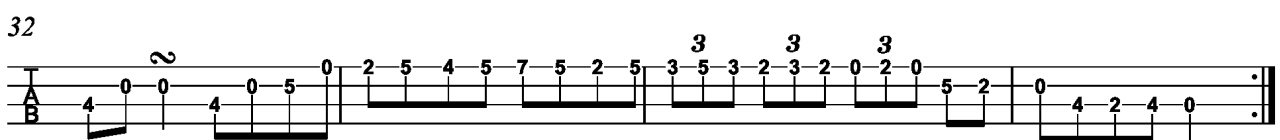
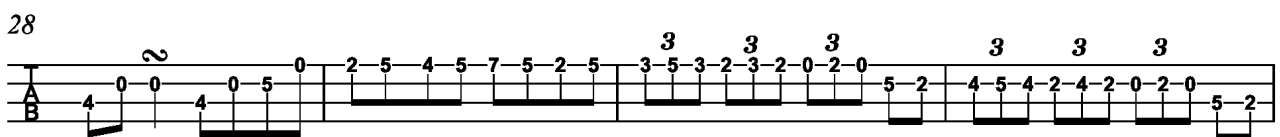
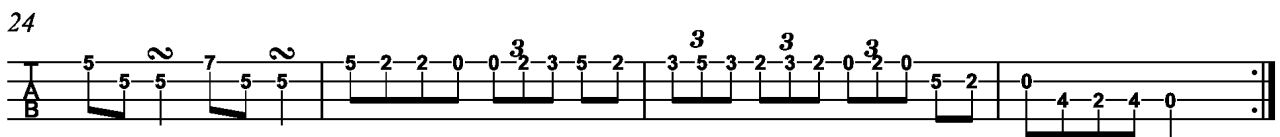
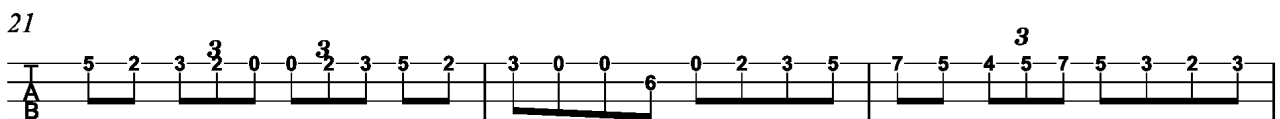
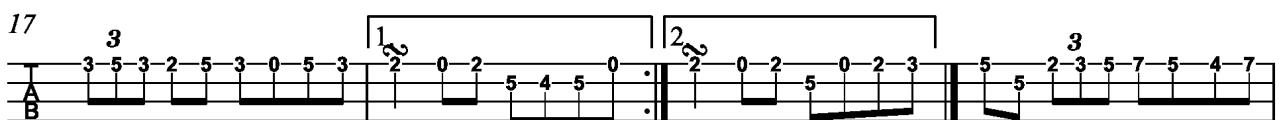
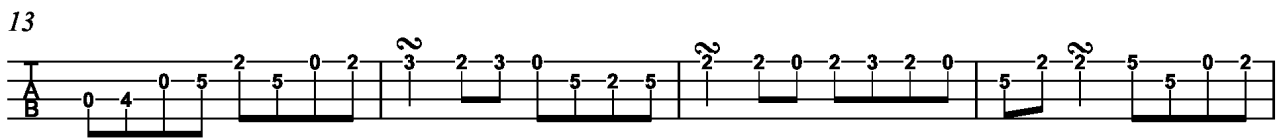
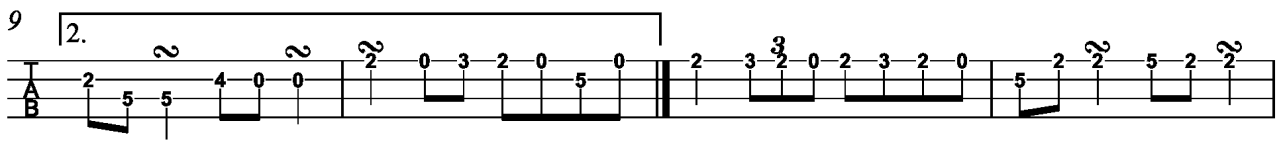
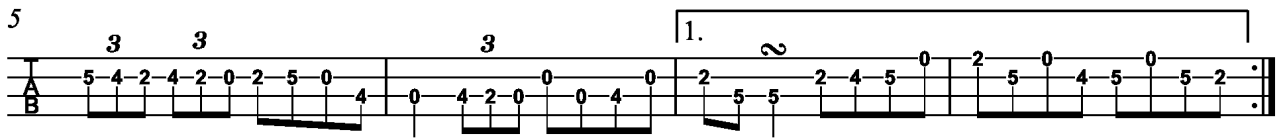
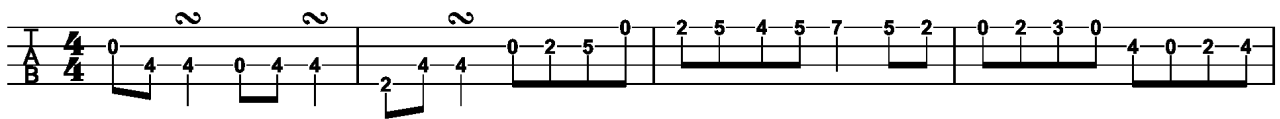
21
a' f# g' f# e' e' f# g' a' f# g' e' e' d# e' f# g' a' b' a' g# a' b' a' g' f# g'

24
a' d' d' b' d' d' a' f# f# e' e' f# g' a' f# g' a' g' f# g' f# e' f# e' d' b a f# e f# d

28
f# a a f# a d' e' f# a' g# a' b' a' f# a' g' a' g' f# g' f# e' f# e' d' b c# d c# b c# b a b a g e

32
f# a a f# a d' e' f# a' g# a' b' a' f# a' g' a' g' f# g' f# e' f# e' d' b a f# e f# d

Carmel Mahoney Mulhaire's



Colonel Fraser's Reels is one of the so-called "Big" reels. It is originally a piping tune named for a generous landlord in the times of the traveling. I've written the tune here on the double. The second time round of the tune incorporates some variations including some f natural notes, very much in the piping tradition.

CD2 Track 37

Colonel Fraser's Reel

d c b g g d g g a b c a d' c a b g g d g b d' c a f# g a g g a
 6 b g f# d g g a b c a d' c b c b a b g g d g b d' c a f# g a g b c
 10 d' g b c d' g' e' g' f# d' d' c a b c a d' g b c d' g' b' a' g' f# d' c a b g b d'
 14 g' a' g' f# d' d' c b a g b a c b a g b a c b c d' e' g' f# d' c a b g g a
 18 b c d' c b g g b a b c b a f# f# a b c d' c b g g b c a f# g a g g a
 22 b c d' c b g g b a b c b a d f# a g b a c b c d' e' g' f# d' c a b g g a
 26 b g b b g b a f# a a f# a b g b b g b c a f# g a g g a
 30 b g b g b g b a f# a f# a f# a g b a c b c d' e' g' f# d' c a b g g a
 34 b c d' g' d' b c d' g' d' a b d' f# d' a b d' f# d' b c d' g' d' b c d' g' d' c a f# g a g g a
 38 b c d' g' d' g' d' g' d' a b d' f# d' f# d' f# d' g b a c b c d' e' g' f# d' c a b g g
 42 b g g d g g a b c a d' c a b g g d e g b d' c a f# d a g g a
 46 b g f# d g g a b c a d' c b c b a b g b d' g' b' a' g' f# d' c a b g b c
 50 d' g b c d' g' b' a' g' f# d' c a b c a d' g' g' a' a' g' f# d' c a b g b c d'

54

g' a' g' f# d' c b a g b a b c b a g b a c b c d' e' g' f# d' c a b g g a

58

b d' c b g g b a b c b a f f a b g d' c b c d' g b c a d' c a b g a

62

a b c d' c b g g b a b c b a f f a g b a c b c d' e' g' f# d' c a b g g a

66

b g b b g b a f a a f a b g b d g b d' c a f# g a g g a

70

b g b d b g b a f a d a f a g b a c b c d' e' g' f# d' c a b g g a

74

b c d' g' d' b c d' g' d' a c f' c a c f' c b c d' g' d' b c d' g' d' c a f# g a g g a

78

b c d' g' a' b' g' d' b a d' f# g' a' f# d' b g b a c b c d' e' g' f# d' c a b g g

Colonel Fraser's Reel

2

4/4

6

10

14

18

22

26

30

34

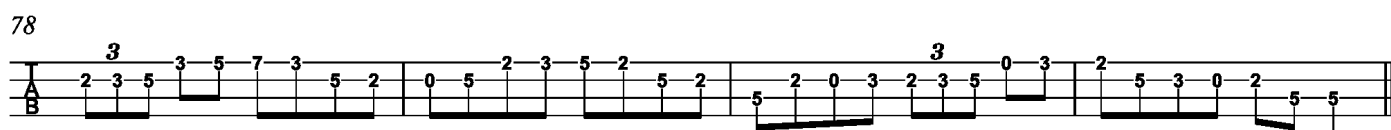
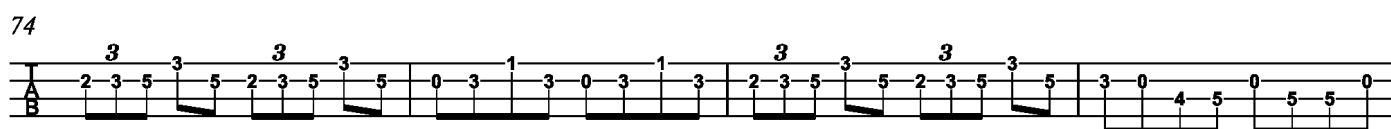
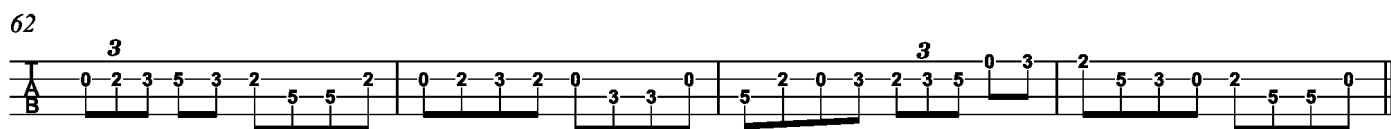
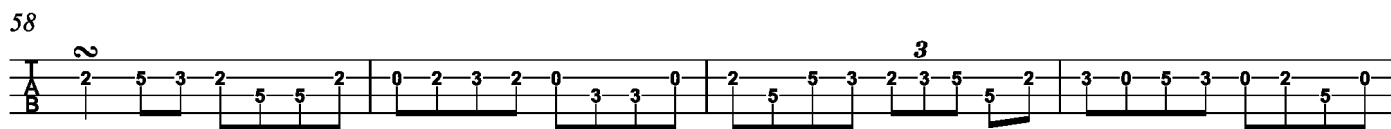
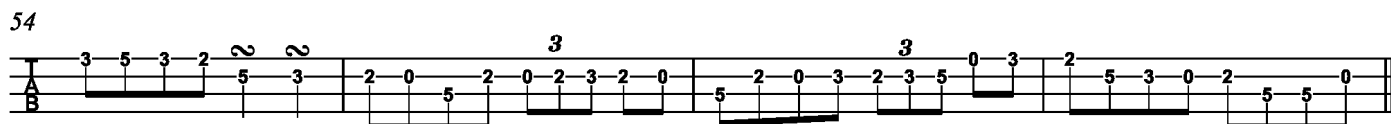
38

42

46

50

The sheet music for 'Colonel Fraser's Reel' is presented in a single system with measures 2 through 50. The time signature is 4/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music is written for a single melodic line. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. Trills are marked with a 'w' symbol. The music is divided into measures by bar lines. The first measure is measure 2, and the last measure is measure 50. The music is a reel, characterized by its 4/4 time signature and the presence of eighth and sixteenth notes. The melody is composed of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. There are several trills throughout the piece. The music is written in a standard musical notation with a single staff.



*

The Coalminer is a great old banjo tune harking back to the Golden era of Irish Music in America in the early 1900's. Again, the tune is written below on the double; the second time round I have included a lot of triplets where the first two notes of the triplet are the same. When these are played in the "stuttered triplet" style they are a very effective type of ornamentation.

CD2 Track 38

The Coalminer - Reel

a d f# d e d b d a d f# d e d b d a d f# d e d b d d' b a f# e d b d
 5
 a d f# d e d b d a d f# d e d b d a d f# d e d b d d' b a f# d d b d' b a f# d a b c#
 10
 d' d' b a d' b a d f# d e d b d d' d' b a b d' e' f# e' d' f# e' d' e' f# d' d' e' f# d' b
 15
 a d f# d e d b d a d f# d e d b d d' b a f# d a b c# d' b a f# d
 19
 a d f# f# d e e d b d a d f# f# d e d b d a d f# f# d e d b d d' d' b a f# e d b d
 23
 a d f# e d f e d b d a d f# e d f e d b d
 25
 a d f# f# d e e d b d d' d' b a f# d d b d' b a f# d a b c#
 28
 d' d' c# b a d' c# b a d f# d e d b d d' d' c# b a b c# d' e' f# a' g' f# e' f# e' d' e'
 32
 f# d' d' e' f# d' b a d f# f# d e e d b d a d f# f# d e e d b d d' b a f# d a b c#
 36
 d' b f a f# d' b a d f# d e d b d d' d' d' b a b c# d' e' f# d' d' e' f# d' e'
 40
 f# d' d' e' f# d' b a d f# f# d e e d b d a d f# f# d e e d b d d' b a f# d

The Coalminer

4/4

5

1. 2. 3

10

15

1. 3 2. 3

19

3 3 3 3

23

3 3 3 3

25

1. 3 2. 3

28

3 3 3 3

32

3 3 3 3 3

36

3 3 3 3

40

3 3 3 3