

Banjo Camp North Class List 2022

Guide to "Skill Levels"

Skill Levels:

N: Novice

B: Beginner

AB: Advancing Beginner

I: Intermediate

A: Advanced

During registration on Friday, you may want to attend "Find Your Level" where instructors advise campers, one-on-one, on their level.

Novices (N) Little or no experience, need help tuning, still learning basic techniques- just starting out. We have a Novice/Beginner Track- series of 5 classes to cover all the basics.

Beginners (B) Able to tune, have learned basic techniques, can play a few songs. We have a Novice/Beginner Track- series of 5 classes to cover all the basics. If this is too slow, jump into the AB classes.

Advancing Beginners (AB) have been practicing for some months, perhaps a year. They're comfortable tuning and have command of fundamental techniques. They've been learning to play simple melodies and can play along with a number of tunes and may even have started jamming.

Intermediates (I) Have likely been jamming on a regular basis. Comfortable with tuning, can play songs and tunes, recognize chord changes, can play with others.

Advanced (A) Have command of basic and advanced techniques, play a variety of tunes up to speed, play regularly with others, may play professionally as a solo act or in bands.

All (all) indicates a hands-on class for campers of any level of skill, maybe a demonstration

Classes and Jams:

There's no restriction on which classes or jams you may attend- everything is ala carte. For the benefit of all, try to stick to your skill level. If you find part-way into a class or a jam that you'd rather try a different one, it's OK to leave. Do not press for the class to be simpler or more complex than the designated level.

Interested in a Beginner Track?

Come meet the instructors, Lorraine and Bruce on Friday before classes in Sage Hall (where registration is). If you can't make it Friday you can join the track on Saturday, and if you are interested in one or more of the topics you can join/leave anytime you like. We suggest attending all the classes in the series.

3 Finger Beginner Track: Bruce Stockwell

Session 1: Getting Started Essential listening, set-up, tuning, positioning, playing with others, our 3 "jobs" - rhythm, backup and soloing.

Session 2: The Basics Tablature, the key of G, the Nashville Number System, major and minor chords, the basic rhythm pattern, "pinch" solos: *Shady Grove* and *I'll Fly Away*.

Session 3: Rolling Along Rolls- Alternating Thumb and Forward 1 and 2 with roll specific tab examples, left hand ornaments.

Session 4: Backup and Rhythm Explaining backup, performing all three duties- rhythm, backup, and solos, jamming skills, the F, D and Barre shapes. Tabs provided.

Session 5: Putting it All Together Other important rolls- Reverse 1 and 2, *Foggy Mt Breakdown*, and Backwards 1 and 2 with roll specific tabs, mixed roll solos, using the capo, playing in C, D and F.

Clawhammer Beginner Track: Lorraine Hammond

Session 1: Starting strong with G tuning and the rudiments of frailing. This class will include basic back-up chords, and an introduction to reading tablature.

Session 2: We'll refine the right-hand frailing pattern to introduce melody, learn a simple song or two, and develop some jamming skills.

Session 3: A review of the basics and the introduction of left-hand techniques – hammers and pulls - with songs to help integrate them.

Session 4: Capos and keys, G tuning is a great place to start, and with the capo you'll learn to play in other keys for the jams.

Session 5: Wrap up. We'll review and play through material from the earlier sessions, adding resources, warm-ups and best practice techniques to include in your banjo future. Bring your questions.

3-Finger Banjo

Dick Bowden

Schedule one on one time with Dick Bowden Banjo or Guitar. Scruggs, Stanley, Reno, Flatt, banjo tone, entertaining with banjo, jam etiquette, solo construction, song help, etc.

Gretchen Bowder

I know we're in D, so what are these other chords? (AB-I)

If you don't know that an F# minor chord is a part of the key of D major, then you need this workshop. I could use words like "diatonic," "music theory," or even "Nashville number system," but that might scare you off. We'll cover other keys too - I just wanted to get your attention!

Writing Your Own Tablature: Defining What You Hear (I)

There's no substitute for learning by ear, but sometimes you want to remember what someone else played or write down your own compositional ideas. I'll have tab paper and pencils (with erasers!) on hand so that we can work through some bits together. Then we'll look at some computer platforms you could use, some of which include slow-downers.

Modern Fiddle Tunes Finding Playable Arrangements (I-A)

It can be challenging to get beyond just vamping when you're playing a new fiddle tune. I'll share my process for figuring out how to hit the high points of the melody while also determining what to leave out when it gets up to speed. Get familiar with tunes by Andrew Marlin, George Jackson, John Reishman, and Banjo Camp's own Jane Rothfield!

Jazz Chords for Banjo (A)

This workshop will arm you with chord shapes for major and minor 6 and 7 chords all over the neck and help you understand how to form those chords when you encounter them in a chart. We will also touch on 9, 11, and 13 chords, as well as diminished and augmented. From there, we can begin to explore how to create melody lines that include the important chord tones.

BB Bowness

Intro to Melodic style (I)

A melodic style workout great for folks new to the style. We'll learn two octave scales in G, C and D as well as Soldier's Joy in all 3 keys

Get the Most out of Your Favorite Lick (I)

Taking a few common Scruggs style licks and dissect each one to find a variety of uses. By making a few subtle alterations, we will be able to use the same basic licks in a variety of ways - a quick easy way to expand your banjo vocabulary.

Using 6th's to Improvise and Play Songs (I)

A really common sound for the modern banjo player is using intervals of 6th's. We'll explore the diatonic chord progression in G then take those shapes to explore the many options for improvisation and spicing up your simple song melodies. An easy way to unlock the fingerboard and start improvising.

Bobby Hicks on the Banjo (A)

Let's take a classic Bobby Hicks solo and how it translates to the banjo to give us some cool new fiddle licks.

Technique toolbox (A)

I'll teach single string scale shapes, arpeggios, and scale patterns that I find useful in my own practice routine for improving technique, developing vocabulary for improvisation and increasing my knowledge of the banjo fretboard.

Bill Evans

It's About Time You Sounded Better (all)

Finding the optimal position of the banjo in relationship to your body and hands, discovering how to play with relaxation, finding the right hand position that works best for you, uncovering your best tone, checking your pick angles and finger motion and much more in this right hand workout designed for everyone who is interested in sounding their best on the banjo.

What I Learned from J. D. Crowe (I to A)

We'll take a look at some of the most important aspects of J. D.'s playing style that can't be expressed in tablature, including his right-hand "claw" position, his use of left- and right-hand muting techniques to create note separation, his overall sense of rhythm within the band and his use of accents and right-hand finger repetition. We'll also take a look at a couple of classic Bluegrass Album Band solos.

Advanced Melodic Style: Up The Neck Melodic Positions (A)

We'll learn how to find up-the-neck groupings of three, four and five note scale clusters / melodic positions that enable you to use melodic style in any key up the neck. We'll then tackle some ascending and descending scale patterns and discuss the various options of when and how to shift from one position to the next to play melodies and licks.

Using Single-String Scales Out of the D position (I-A)

A great way to move forward with single-string style is to work on scales and scale fragments that are found around commonly played up-the-neck chord positions. We'll focus on the D position in this session, learning Don Reno's "Follow the Leader" licks before moving into the key of D to play "Whiskey Before Breakfast" down the neck in single-string style based around the D position scale notes.

The forward roll is what gives drive to both down-the-neck back-up and Scruggs-style solos but it's easy to get lost knowing where to begin and end these rolls. We'll look at one- and two-measure formulas for great sounding down-the-neck backup as well as analyze how Earl uses forward rolls in "Fireball Mail" and "No Mother and Dad." We'll then take our great leap and try a few solos to straightforward melodies on the fly using forward rolls.

Murphy Henry

Basic improvisation (AB)

How to take a simple break--on the fly--to a song you don't know. "Just play something!" [No tab]

Minor chords (AB)

Minor chords and how to find them, how to use them. [No tab]

My First Jams (AB)

I'm terrified! What do I do? How to prepare. [No tab]"

Playing in Open C (AB)

No capo needed! Basics of how to play simple breaks in Open C. [No tab]

Using a Capo: As many keys as we can cover! (AB)

In this order: A, B-flat, B, C, D, E. Why "playing capoed up two frets is not always playing in A." [No tab]

Gabe Hirshfeld

Wareham/Hirshfeld John Hartford Songs (I-A)

Basics of Banjo Set Up

In this class we will discuss the basics of banjo set up to keep your banjo sounding and playing its best. By the end of this workshop students will know how to adjust their head tension, bridge position, tailpiece, truss rod, and coordinator rods. We will also discuss how different set up adjustments affect the tone of the banjo.

Learning Scruggs Style Vocabulary by Ear (I)

In this workshop we will discuss the distinct vocabulary of Earl Scruggs' style of playing the banjo. We will learn how to listen for the common rolls, licks, and runs that Earl used to create his kick offs and banjo solos.

Perfecting Your Right Hand Technique

In this workshop we will discuss the subtleties of proper right hand technique. We will discuss the different tools to find a right hand position that works for you and allows economy of motion while pulling volume and tone.

Scott Hopkins

Music Theory (all)

The chromatic scale, intervals, major and minor, chord construction and the circle of fifths.

Add the 7th (I)

Exploring the sound and use of the 7th in your banjo playing.

Practice with Purpose (all)

Why do you play the banjo and how to put your goals in perspective.

Harmony Singing (all)

Let's sing!

Alan Munde

The Melodic Style (A)

Playing fiddle tunes and the different way of viewing the fingerboard needed to perform them.

Munde's Tunes (A)

A look at "Peaches and Cream," "Molly Bloom," "Munde Night Waltz," and others.

Playing in 3/4 time Waltz time (I)

A look at how to play "All the Good Times Are Past and Gone," plus some backup ideas.

Three Strategies for Bluegrass Backup (I)

How to combine chord shapes, rolls, licks, and runs to produce quality bluegrass banjo accompaniment and a strategy for putting it all together.

Finding the Melody (B-I)

Tips, hints, suggestions, on where to look when trying to find the melody to a song.

Glenn Nelson

Turn it Up

Amplifying your Instrument and electrifying the banjo

Banjo Care and Maintenance

Advice on setting up your instrument, diagnosing problems, evaluating an instrument before buying

Music Theory/Music fact and Chord Study

Rich Stillman

Rolls are Not the Answer (AB)

Just about everyone who plays banjo thinks in roll patterns, but rolls are very confining when you try to transition from tablature to improvisation. This class will present a completely different way to approach the structure of banjo breaks, starting with the rhythms of the music itself instead of predefined rolls. We'll talk about techniques that will help develop banjo fluency and make it as easy as possible to play songs you've never played, or even heard, before.

Playing the Syllables (I)

"I just try to play all the syllables", said Earl Scruggs. In this class we look at ways to translate lyrical phrasing into banjo phrasing, to make your breaks sound less like a chord progression and more like the banjo is singing the words.

Double C Tuning (I)

If you're trying to get your banjo to make new sounds, double C tuning is a great place to start. Simultaneously familiar and foreign, this incredibly warm-sounding tuning is a terrific medium for slow tunes and exotic chord movement. We'll discuss arranged tunes as well as improvisational techniques that will have you thinking you've got a brand new instrument.

Bluegrass Karaoke (all)

Tony Trischka

Earl jams (I-A)

Tunes you've never heard Earl Scruggs play, taken from his jams with John Hartford.

TTTidbits (A)

Concepts and licks of my own and stolen from others, useful for improvisation and composition.

Playing in the key of E (A)

Without a net or a capo, Tony will be your spotter.

Improvising with the Interval of the Sixth (I-A)

Sammy Shelor's "Dark Hollow"

Tunes We All Love on Bluegrass and Clawhammer Banjo (all)

Molsky + Trischka

There are so many ways to find your way into a great tune on banjo! Tony and Bruce will take us through a few classic ones and compare how they can be done in bluegrass and old time styles.

Grace Van't Hof

TBA

Max Wareham

How to Play Better Backup (AB-I)

How to Sing Bluegrass Harmony (all)

Rudy Lyle: The Unsung Hero of the Five-String Banjo (all)

Wareham/Hirshfeld John Hartford Songs (I-A)

Clawhammer Banjo

Riley Baugus

Riding "Reuben's Train" (I)

This is one of the oldest tunes in the old time genre. We will learn a version of the tune in the f#DF#AD tuning, then look at a version in "G", and a version from Banjo Bill Cornett from Kentucky.

Round Peak Style Basics (AB-I)

"Round Peak" is the style that comes from the Round Peak community in Surry County, NC. It was played by such greats as Tommy Jarrell, Fred Cockerham and Kyle Creed, just to name a few. We will learn some of the basic techniques that go into creating this style.

Wade Ward Banjo Tune (A)

Wade Ward was a banjo player from Grayson County, Virginia, and is well known for his Galax Style. We will learn to play one of Wade's Tunes and learn a bit about his signature techniques and tricks.

Advanced Round Peak Style (A)

I love teaching the fun and useful techniques used in Round Peak Style. One of the best tunes to learn the "Hot Licks", is Sally Ann, the National Anthem of Surry County, NC. There are lots of ways to play it, but it is the one tune you'll always hear in a Round Peak session, in the key of D.

Undone In Sorrow (A)

This tune is one that comes from Ola Belle Reed. I play it in what's known as Sandy River Belle tuning or Kentucky Cumberland Gap tuning. When tuned a step lower, it's called "F" tuning. To my mind, it's one of the most versatile, and useful tunings to use. It allows you to play in G, while being tuned in A.

Howie Bursen

Make the Jump to Double-Thumbing - UNLEASH THAT THUMB! (I)

We'll get that steady rolling clawhammer, and then move on to adding those sweet notes which pop out when you learn to double thumb. It's easier than you think!

Mountain Minor Tunes (I-A)

There's nothing like that high lonesome sound. We'll look at a few choice tunes, and at some cool moves.

Ghost Fingers (I-A)

Getting the Most Expression from the Fewest Notes - A Great Wise Man once said "If you play too many notes, each one is worth less." We'll look at situations where less is more. Being musical is our aim.

Blues Banjo (I)

Learn how to expand your clawhammer playing into the world of the blues.

Banjos and Ballads – Demonstration (all)

Howie Bursen, Lorraine Hammond and Sara Gray.

The banjo has long been a ballad accompaniment instrument of choice in the Southern Mountains. For many of us it still is. Savor some timeless tales.

Wine Appreciation (all 21+ for sampling)

This is your chance to investigate some of the world's fine wines, up close and personal. Your guide will be a professional winemaker with 47 harvests under his belt - a veteran whose wines have been awarded more than 600 medals in national and international competitions. This is open to anyone at camp.

PLEASE NOTE : There will be an additional charge of \$10 to cover the cost of supplies for the Wine tasting class.

Chris Coole

Skip, Stop, and Alternate (I-A)

Leaving space in clawhammer is actually sort of tricky. We'll look at how to add rests to your clawhammer playing and how that allows you to create some very cool alternate rhythms, not to mention some weird-sounding techniques such as "The Basic Thumb", "Ghost Thumbing" and "THULBAS".

Playing and Practicing for Tone, Timing, and Touch (all)

Get off the treadmill of learning tune after tune, and start to focus on making what you already play sound better. We'll look at developing the practice techniques, and attention to detail that will nurture these three key elements of every note you play!

What to Put In and What to Take Out (And When to Do Which) (I-A)

The notes you don't play are as important as the notes you do play. One of the most common mistakes I see people make is trying to play too many notes - either for the playing situation they're in, for their own technical ability, or for the speed they are trying to play at. Our tune arrangements have to take into consideration all these factors (and more). Art is subtraction, and the best arrangement of a tune is one that you can actually play. We'll look at the decision-making process that can make that happen.

Strumming on the Old Banjo

Being able to incorporate strumming (like a tenor banjo or mandolin player) into your clawhammer playing can instantly make it more versatile and dynamic. It can give you a unique voice and texture that is great for both band and solo playing. I'll share what I've learned about this technique and how to get around some of its challenges.

An Introduction to Clawhammer Rolls (I-A)

What I call "rolls" are clawhammer patterns that allow you to emulate 3 finger picking. I use these a lot in my playing and they are very versatile both as a backup technique and as melodic device. I'll give you the skinny on these things.

Craig Edwards

Get Your Clawhammer On! (N-B)

Get off to a good start in playing clawhammer. This step-by-step class will help you find the comfortable, relaxed hand positions and basic techniques that make clawhammer such a rewarding approach to the banjo. We'll look at the fundamentals of practicing, making the most out of your own "personal architecture," and how to make rhythm your ally as you learn.

Second Banjo (I-A)

So the one banjo player in the old time session you really want to join looks a little apprehensive when you sit down with your instrument. Here are some ways you can make yourself welcome as a second banjo player without stepping on the first banjo player's toes. Everybody wins!

Banjo/Fiddle Duets (all)

Banjo and fiddle together is a core sound of old time music. I'll bring my fiddle, you bring your banjo and a couple of tunes, and we'll go around the circle with everyone getting a chance to stretch out a bit on their tunes. As we go, we'll discuss ways to make the most of this classic combination.

Alternate G and D tunings for Clawhammer (I-A)

Looking at some tunings that can offer interesting possibilities for clawhammer players.

Ed Haley's "Indian Ate the Woodchuck" (I-A)

This tune from Kentucky fiddle wizard Ed Haley takes advantage of some very fiddle-oriented techniques that can be a challenge to arrange for banjo. We'll use it as a template to consider ways to arrange solo banjo settings of such tunes.

Sara Grey

Different Tunings (I)

Using a variety of tunings on the banjo which changes the whole sound and gives lots of versatility when accompanying songs.

2 Finger Style for Waltzes (I)

Working on two finger style banjo to accompany songsparticularly songs in waltz rhythm.

Two Finger Style for Blues. (I)

Dynamics and Phrasing (I)

How the use of dynamics and phrasing makes such a difference in your playing of the banjo.

Roscoe Holcomb's Songs (I)

Working on some of Roscoe Holcomb's and Bascomb Lamar Lunsford's songs with banjo

Banjos and Ballads (all)

Demonstration, Howie Bursen, Lorraine Hammond and Sara Gray.

The banjo has long been a ballad accompaniment instrument of choice in the Southern Mountains. For many of us it still is. Savor some timeless tales.

Bennett Hammond

RockaFolky banjo right hand (AB-I)

The EZ blue-based two-finger picking style I use for everything

Banjo left hand; the big picture. (AB-I)

When you know where you are, you know where everything else is.

Lorraine Hammond

Banjos and Ballads – Demonstration (all)

Howie Bursen, Lorraine Hammond and Sara Gray.

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Michael Miles

Genius of Paul Simon

Learn Kodachrome and El Condor Pasa. Paul Simon is a folk singer with a big imagination and ears to hear cool rhythms and melodies played all over the world from New York City to South Africa to the Andes Mountains. The banjo is the perfect instrument to deliver those sounds.

37 Ways to Play G, C D Progressions

Clawhammer technique is the groove-making means, especially when combined with many partial (two finger) chord voicings up and down the neck. Even early players can voice chords with moveable shapes and take a two chord song and give it a sparkling life.

Composition 101

How to turn a simple melodic idea into a tune. Three notes is all you need to create a melodic phrase. And with that you have the roots of a tree that turns into a blossoming tune that is yours.

African and Latin Rhythms

The banjo is a drum and your right hand can bring it to life. Check out the AfroLatin Drum Machine app (it's free) for some new ideas about rhythms to play. We'll explore these and expand your inner-jukebox of rhythmic ideas on the banjo.

Jimmy Rodgers, aka "Father of Country Music"

Jimmy lived a short life (1897-1933) worked the railroad as waterboy and brakeman; started performing music at age 13. Blue Yodel #1 and Waiting for a Train were just two of his great classic hits. When you give them a try, they sound like they were written just for the banjo!

Bruce Molsky

Pickup Lines for Clawhammer Banjo Players (I-A)

There are several ways to lead into a phrase on clawhammer banjo. The pickups give so much momentum to the dance tunes and help to push the dancers across the floor. We'll use a couple of tunes to look at different rolls and slides that make that happen.

Tour of Old Time Banjo Tunings (I)

Every different tuning on the banjo changes the character and timbre of the instrument, and facilitates different fingerings. In this workshop we'll try out some common and not-so-common banjo tunings and talk about the possibilities.

Glen Smith of Virginia (A)

Glen Smith and Wade Ward played together for years, trading fiddle and banjo between them. Smith's banjo style was powerful on the dance tunes, and his use of ornaments was personal and unique. We'll explore a couple of his tunes in detail.

Fretless Banjo Basics (I)

Without those pesky speed bumps (frets), the bluesy slides and other ornaments have a different and wonderful character on fretless banjo. There are ways to "cheat" on a fretted banjo as well. We'll explore some of the possibilities. Fretless and fretted banjos welcome.

Tunes We All Love on Bluegrass and Clawhammer Banjo (all)

Molsky + Trischka There are so many ways to find your way into a great tune on banjo! Tony and Bruce will take us through a few classic ones and compare how they can be done in bluegrass and old time styles.

Tim Rowell

The Clawhammer Waltz

Henry Reed's Waltz in C because waltzes are great to play and good for your soul.

Clawhammer Country Rag

L&N Rag from Alex Hood & His Railroad boys of KY recorded in 1930

Dock Boggs

Unique Tuning and Unique up-picking style on Prodigal Son

Stole From The Throat Of A Bird

Garfield's Blackberry Blossom inspired by the cleaned up recording from the Ed Haley box set of the same name.

Clawhammer Barn Burner

Hell Broke Loose In Georgia from Gid Tanner And His Skillet Lickers. Georgia c.1930

Maggie Shar

How to Get Better (AB-I)

Tips for effective practice plus drills for both hands. This workshop is aimed at clawhammer players but may be useful for all.

Flexible and Fancy (AB-I)

Learn to insert hammer-ons, pull-offs, slides and more into a clawhammer tune for endless variations on the fly.

Bowling" Patterns for Banjo (I-A)

Learn cool catchy rhythmic sentences to lock in with a fiddler on the rhythm train.

Modal licks and tricks (AB-I)

A useful clawhammer workshop on pentatonic scale licks and rhythm tricks. We will focus on one tune, but you will be able to use these skills in any modal tune.

Funk and Groove (A)

Shar/Murawski Clawhammer syncopation and polyrhythms for adding deep funk to your playing. We will work with the tune Over the Mountain as a jumping off point to funky town.

Fiddle

Ella Jordan

Kicking off Tunes and Songs

Waltzes

Improvising Using the Melody

Masterclass

Harmony playing/hearing

Janie Rothfield

Fiddle-Banjo Duet Playing (I-A)

Come be the banjo or the fiddle player in a trio!

Back Up Chords and $\frac{3}{4}$ Rhythm AB-I

Purty Waltzes ALL instruments

Stringband Songs from Charlie Poole (I-A)

Bowing with Rhythm and Groove (AB-I)

Steve Roy

Improvising Classic Bluegrass Fiddle Tunes on the Fiddle

Improvising Classic Bluegrass Songs on the Fiddle

Let's write a fiddle tune! NOW! All Instruments

Violin Construction and Setup

John Showman

Technical Building Blocks

"We'll show players of all levels some fundamental techniques for mastering bow control, improving intonation and getting rid of any discomfort while playing. Players will learn how to structure these techniques as exercises that will give them months worth of learning in simple steps that will build their ability on the instrument to levels that might have previously seemed out of reach.

De-mystifying Double Stops

If you've ever wondered how those great country and bluegrass fiddle players like Tommy Jackson and Kenny Baker get that beautiful, rich and lonesome sound by playing two notes at once, this class will break down how to get the most out of some simple double stops, how to play them really in tune, and how to start building those simple techniques into really breathtaking combinations that will make playing leads on waltzes and songs a more exciting venture.

Slurs, Shuffles and Staccato - Bringing Bluegrass Bowing to Life

We'll help players with a couple years or more of playing under their belts to get inside some fundamental Old-Time fiddle grooves. With the help of a cool tune or two and a few exercises, players will learn how to turn a sequence of notes into pulses of rhythm that will carry them and the people they are playing with through the tunes with loads of energy and joy.

Playing In Time With A Metronome

This class is not only for fiddle players, but for anyone who has struggled to play in time and to really feel a rhythmic connection with the evil metronome! By breaking down the process into a few simple steps, John will help turn your worst enemy into your more faithful jamming buddy.

Fiddle Groove and Tone

In this class, John will help beginners and more advanced players to unlock their best tone and rhythm with the help of a few simple technical tools that will make playing in time, and with confidence, much easier. The focus will be on coordinating the bowing arm with the balance and rhythm of the player's body.