

Mandolin Camp North Class List 2023

Guide to "Skill Levels"

N/B: Novice/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

Please also note the instrument(s) the class is aimed for. Mandolin, Guitar, and Fiddle.

Classes and Jams:

Different from other music camps, at Camps North there are no restrictions on which classes or jams you may attend- everything is ala carte. But, try to stick to your skill level. If you find yourself in a class above or below where you are either; find another more suited class (it's OK to leave a class), or hang with it at the speed/topics being presented.

Mandolin Beginner Track: Lorraine Hammond

Mandolin Camp North Beginner/fresh start Track

Music camps can be intimidating for beginners – so many students, instructors, classes, topics. With this in mind, MCN offers “Beginner Track”: five sequential classes designed to provide a smaller, relaxed, carefully guided environment, a “home at camp” and a safe place to learn.

Beginner/fresh start Mandolin Track (N-B) with Lorraine Hammond.

These playful classes will introduce (or perhaps re-introduce) you to the amazing mandolin. We’ll cover holding and tuning, how to coordinate the pick, and how to play simple chords and lead lines. Then we’ll relax into a weekend of songs and tunes to strengthen and expand your mandolin playing and overall musicianship. Bring a notepad and recording device. Come as you are, leave as a mandolin player!

Interested in a beginner track? Meet the instructor Friday afternoon and determine your level.

Session 1 – Get a (gentle) grip

We’ll cover holding and tuning, how to coordinate the pick, left hand position, and how to play simple chords and lead lines. Simple tab reading.

Session 2 – Mapping a tune

A quick review of session one basics, then a tune that we will choose together and learn by ear (I’ll teach you guidelines) and then write out in tab.

Session 3 – Back-up, (don’t push)

A quick review of session one basics, then on to chords for accompaniment. We’ll consider old time and bluegrass chord forms and play with each.

Session 4 – Right Hand Rhythms

A quick review of session one basics, and the emphasis is then on picking patterns and options for right hand rhythms, from boom chukkas to chops. Plenty of good tunes to try ideas out on.

Session 5 – Moving Forward

We’ll review and play through material from the earlier sessions, adding resources, warm-ups and best practice techniques to include in your mandolin future. Bring your questions.

Sharon Gilchrist

Learn Ricky Skagg's Solo on *Old Home Place* (I-A)

Bluegrass Album Band recording.

Learning to Integrate Licks from Transcribed Solos into your Improv (I-A)

We'll explore how to vary signature licks from set solos you've learned in order to make them your own. We'll also learn how to apply these licks into other songs and tunes. (We'll reference the Ricky Skagg's solo on "Old Home Place " as well as other solos; it might be helpful to take the class where I teach that solo).

Play a Melody in all 12-keys! (AB-I)

In this class we'll learn a classic closed position finger pattern on the mandolin and apply it to songs with I, IV and V chord progressions. This is a must-have skill for all mando players. A great time to learn this concept is when players have learned many basic tunes (often that is fiddle tunes) and have started jamming with other players. About this time, players wonder how to solo over songs they have never heard before no matter in what key they are played.

No....YOU Back-Up! (I-A)

In this class, we'll delve into the art of backing up singers. You will come away with some set licks you can use for this purpose. You will also learn a broader method for generating these licks on your own. We'll also learn a rhythmic figure used when backing up vocalists which is specific - and essential - to the bluegrass genre. This one concept alone can make the difference between a jam feeling flat and static or feeling alive and energized like the bluegrass we know and love.

How to Pick Up Chord Progressions in a Jam (B-AB)

Playing rhythm is what we do most in a jam. Yet, it is the skill we often practice the least before jamming with others... meanwhile, jamming with others is the best way to develop one's rhythm and ability to track chord progressions. So, how do players do it?? How do they learn to follow chord progressions they have never played and have possibly never heard?! Come jam with Sharon and Lincoln. This class provides a guided-jam context demystifying these skills. Students will learn basic theory as it applies to chord progressions in several keys. Mando players will learn how to follow guitar chord shapes in order to pick up chord progressions. We'll also share tips allowing you to make educated guesses as to where a chord progression is heading. These are basic essentials you want to know in order to get your bearings in a jam and be able to pick up chord progressions on the fly. (To clarify: This course is for Mandolin Players. Mando players do NOT need to play guitar in order to take this class. Lincoln will do all the guitar playing!)

Skip Gorman

All the Pretty Waltzes

Which are your fav-or-ite waltzes for mandolin? Are they sappy ones or mighty powerful ones? We'll choose a few of the best and learn them.

Tennessee Blues, Key of A

This was the first mandolin instrumental that Bill Monroe recorded with his Bluegrass Boys in 1940-41. We'll work on this number carefully as there's a lot more there than meets the ear at first.

Mandolin Riffs, Fills, Cliches, Licks and Slides for Backing Bluegrass Vocals

Ideas from the old time bluegrass greats like Bill Monroe, John Duffy, Frank Wakefield, Pee Wee Lambert and Harry West .

Old-Time style Fiddle Tunes Played on the Mandolin in the Key of A

We'll pull some bow stroke and get the right hand moving.

Ragtime Tunes in the Key of C

Hawkin's Rag, The Baltimore Rag and others.

Lorraine Hammond

Breathe! Vocal Warm-Ups and Cool Songs

We often take singing for granted, but there are basic techniques to strengthen your voice, sharpen your ability to match pitches and help you really enjoy singing. We will put some into practice. Come learn about breathing well and extending vocal range and volume. We'll spend plenty of time singing together.

Jacob Jolliff

Right Hand Technique (all)

Strategies for building speed, power, tone and facility in the picking hand.

Jazz Mandolin (I-A)

Learn approaches to practicing improvising over jazz chord changes.

Embellishing Bluegrass (and other) Melodies (all)

We'll cover a blueprint for building mandolin solos based around the melody.

Comprehensive Fretboard Knowledge (I-A)

Together we will outline an approach for getting to know the entire fingerboard through arpeggios, scales, and tunes.

Practicing Strategies (all)

Let's talk about different overarching strategies for how and what to practice.

Don Julin

Intro to Bluegrass Double Stops (I)

Double stops are a great way to add a bit of that high-lonesome sound to your mandolin playing. With these three two-note forms, you can add bluegrass double stops to any song. This class will show you how to locate three common double-stop forms.

Experiencing the Power of Pentatonic Scales (I)

Pentatonic scales are responsible for many of the most recognizable licks and melodies. The guitar lick from "My Girl," the melody of "Amazing Grace," and Lester Flatt's famous G-run are examples of major pentatonic scales. Classic rock songs "Voodoo Child" (Jimi Hendrix) and "Sunshine of Your Love" (Cream) are built around minor pentatonic riffs. David Grisman's mandolin standard E.M.D. also is based on the minor pentatonic scale. These scales are easy to hear and master on the mandolin and are a favorite choice among many improvisers. Learn how mastering pentatonic scales can take your mandolin playing to the next level.

Intro To Three-Note Chords (I)

By learning this three-note mandolin chording system, you can play any chord in any key without digging out your mandolin chord book. The bonus is that these three-note chords are all easy-to-play chord shapes with no significant stretches. Once you have a few easy, moveable chord shapes under your fingers, we will learn the Beatles song "With A Little Help From My Friends."

What Goes Up, Must Come Down (all)

Whether you play fiddle tunes, rags, bluegrass, classical, jazz, or Led Zeppelin, a well-organized right hand is essential to mandolin playing. Alternate picking and its cousin, the tremolo, are considered one of the most crucial techniques for the mandolin player to master. This workshop includes exercises designed to build right-hand strength and coordination. Soon after you have added these exercises to your daily routine, you should notice a difference and be able to play faster, smoother, and more relaxed.

Playing The Changes (I-A)

Learn the art of creating beautiful melody lines through any chord progression. This melodic voice-leading technique will give your improvised melodies direction and drama. To get the most out of this class, students should have a basic understanding of chord theory.

Claudine Langille

Celtic/Irish Mandolin I (AB)

Technique for playing Irish dance tunes, looking at an overview of airs, jigs, slipjigs, slides, hornpipes, barn dances and reels. An introduction to getting the right rhythms. Learn a tune or two.

Celtic/Irish Mandolin II (AB-I)

Focusing on ornamentation-right and left handed triplets, hammer-ons and pull-offs, double stops, slides and variations, and tremolo, and where to put them. Learn a tune or 2 with examples.

Let's Duet (AB-I)

Playing a tune with some mapped out harmony parts or countermelodies that sounds great on double mandolins.

French-Canadian and Quebecois tunes (AB-I)

French-Canadian and Quebecois tunes that work well on mandolin, from bands like LeVent du Nord and Genticorum

The Mandolin in World Music (AB-I)

Checking out tunes from places such as Venezuela, Galicia, Greece, Paraguay, maybe with a bit of Klezmer and Gypsy Swing.

Lauren Price Napier

"The High, Lonesome Sound" Solos (A)

Monroe's "The High, Lonesome Sound" record remains one of my favorites to this day. Be ready to dive into a few solos on this classic recording, specifically looking at ones with emphasis on the illustrious 'downstroke' – "The First Whippoorwill," "Letter From My Darlin," and "My Dying Bed."

Southern Flavor (B-I)

A tune class geared towards the advancing beginner/intermediate picker, demonstrating one of Monroe's most popular tunes, "Southern Flavor."

Building a Monroe Style Break in a New Key (I-A)

A look at transposing and building breaks with Monroe vocabulary in mind. Whether you can't sing the song in the same key, or you're trying something new altogether, never fear! This class will show you some ideas on how to transpose/build a new Monroe style break in a different key, by dissecting some classic, versatile solos.

A Monroe Lens on Fiddle Tunes in G (I)

"The Lee Wedding Tune" and "Heel and Toe Polka." Two new numbers for your repertoire – these tunes, both in the key of G, are good study material for playing catchy single note melodies around the chord shape, which you can easily take to build your own breaks to a common tune.

Monroe Groove in the Key of A (I)

Referencing some classic Monroe breaks circa late 1940s – early 1950s, providing a good look at tastefully blending the melody with some improved licks between the lines, as well as using your open notes in A to their fullest advantage. This will be a good study into using tremolo and dynamics to really bring a song to life.

Moria Ozberkmen

Hidden Jam Gem (I-A)

"Come learn a tune that could become your new jam favorite!
Tennessee Politics is a groovy Hartford tune that will have your foot tapping and fingers dancing. Taught by ear."

The Three Little Jigs (I-A)

"Let's learn a set of jigs together by ear! Kerfunken Jig, Out On The Ocean Jig and Cowboy Jig (if time allows.) These are a group of fun tunes that will be stuck in your ear and fingers by the end of class."

Exercises for Effortless Playing (all)

This class will explore three different exercises to help unlock the courage to play without self-judgement. Fear of sounding "bad" can be a huge factor in how we jam, solo and gig. Be prepared to step out of your comfort zone a bit with these exercises and the reward could lead to more relaxed playing."

Slip into Harmony (I-A)

"Join to work up Golden Slippers with melody and harmonies! We will separate into small groups to learn specific parts, play together and alternate."

Building Blocks for Basic Improv (B-I)

"We will look at ways to form a solo over a simple progression. Internalizing melodies and using musical vocabulary to create breaks is an exciting process. Let's workshop it together!"

Ben Pearce

Fiddle/Mandolin Duet playing (I-A)

Janie Rothfield and Ben Pearce help you learn how mandolin and fiddle can accompany each other.

Learning the Numbers: I, IV, V (AB-I)

a look the most common bluegrass and folk progressions and the mandolin as a great medium for playing rhythm along with them, and we'll unlock a fundamental secret to navigating the mandolin fingerboard

Know Thy Mandolin (all)

the construction and constituent parts of the mandolin, how each contributes to the functionality of the mandolin as a whole, as well as setup tweaks that you can do yourself to improve playability. This class looks at how to take care of your instrument as well as how to identify when things are amiss.

Dissecting Double Stops (I)

understanding double stops in terms of scales as well as partial chords, how to effectively use double stops in both lead and backup playing. This approach helps underscore the harmonic underpinnings of commonly used double stops and their place in the chords over which they are played.

Get a Grip! (AB-I)

This class looks behind the most ubiquitous bluegrass "grip" shape to its harmonic underpinnings and extends them as a source for endless variation of licks, fills, and improvisational direction.

Jim Richter

The Mandolin of Led Zeppelin (I-A)

The mandolin found its way into multiple Led Zeppelin tunes through the work of John Paul Jones or Jimmy Page. For some, tunes like Going to California or Battle of Evermore have been a beckoning for taking up mandolin. This class does look at the three primary Zeppelin tunes—Going to California, Battle of Evermore, and Boogie with Stu—but goes beyond these to arranging Zeppelin for mandolin. Rain Song, Ten Years Gone, and Stairway to Heaven will be used as examples for mandolin arrangement.

Nothing But the Blues (B-I)

Yank Rachell once said, "I've had the blues so long they done turned into the blacks!" This class focuses on the blues idiom—basic framework including rhythm, harmony, and melody. Class will look at some classic mandolin blues by Charlie McCoy, Yank, and Johnny Young, but more importantly will focus on practical elements of blues that will expand the mandolinists immediate implementation of blues in their playing.

Pentatonic Scales and Shapes (B-I)

Pentatonic scales are the bread and butter of blues, country, rock, and traditional bluegrass musicians. The class will review major and minor pentatonic scales, why they work, and when to use them. Beyond theory, the class will look at “box patterns” or closed shapes that allow easier transposition into less common mandolin keys like F#.

Too Long: The Mandolin of Papa Charlie McCoy (all)

This class will look at the life and music of one of the most interesting prewar blues mandolinists and guitarists. From playing with Tommy Johnson or Bo Carter and the Mississippi Sheiks to later with Memphis Minnie or the first Sonny Boy Williamson, “Papa” Charlie’s mandolin and guitar can be heard on some of the most memorable cuts of the prewar blues era. The class will dissect versions of one of his most memorable tunes “Too Long” along with the mandolin staples Vicksburg Stomp and Jackson Stomp.

Arranging Rock Tunes for Mandolin (I-A)

This class intends to teach you how to ROCK! The mandolin is an incredible rock instrument and many classic rock tunes by bands such as AC/DC, Black Sabbath, Steve Miller, BTO, etc. work well on mandolin without the need “bluegrassify” them. This class will look at the process of how to arrange electric guitar oriented rock music for mandolin.

Ethan Setiawan

Octave mandolin (AB-I)

The octave mandolin is an increasingly popular instrument among mandolinists wanting to sound like guitarists. We'll demystify how to get around the instrument, and what translates well from standard mandolin vs what doesn't."

Rhythm All Instruments (AB-A)

Exercises to double down and tighten up on time. The metronome is your friend

The secrets of Gambit (I-A) (all instruments)

Learn a tune from Ethan's new album Gambit, and some of the ideas behind the writing of it. I find tunewriting is one of the best ways to establish or explore an artistic voice. Come get some ideas to get started writing tunes, or get out of a rut.

Right Hand Workout (all)

The right hand gets neglected from time to time in favor of that flashy left hand. However as the foundation of your sound as it may be even...MORE important???

The Mandolin of Tiny Moore (A)

Tiny Moore was one of the great early swing mandolinists. Check out a great solo or two of his!

Don Stiernberg

Chord voicings and Rhythm Playing for Swing and Grass (I-A)

All the chords, pick strokes, and rhythm patterns you'll need to play good rhythm (and have more fun doing it), applied to actual tunes from each style.

Interesting Repertoire for Swing and Grass (A)

Tunes that offer a little something extra, whether it be a challenge, a chord or progression unique to the style or not often heard, or tunes just off the beaten path that should be played more often.

Routes to Improve for Grass and Fiddle Tunes (I-A)

Necessary vocabulary and fretboard familiarity applied to commonly played tunes. Approach to assembling stylistically appropriate improvised solos."

Routes to Improv for Swing and Jazz (I-A)

Necessary vocabulary and fretboard familiarity applied to commonly played tunes. Approach to assembling stylistically appropriate improvised solos."

Donnie Listening Party and Storytime (all)

Instructor will present recordings for listening and discussion. Recordings will be either things every mandolin player should hear or things that are just plain cool as anything. If discussion veers in certain directions, instructor may offer a BRIEF anecdote. Bring mandolins just the same.

Bill Thibodeau

The Inner Secrets of the Mandolin Chop. (AB-I)

Here we will learn the importance of the "chop" and find easy and alternate ways to find and implement the chords.

Fills When and Why (I-A)

Fills can be fun and cool. We will learn when and learn some really cool riffs that will help the lead singer focus on their vocals.

Solos in Bb Can Be Easy (AB-I)

Playing mandolin in Bb can be scary but we will learn a few easy positions on the neck to make it less scary.

Success with 2 Mandolins in 1 Jam (All)

We will practice give and take, eye contact, harmony and splitting solos.

Voicings and Improvisation (I-A)

This can be tricky but together we will brainstorm when and where on the neck to improvise. We also will learn some cool licks to use when this opportunity arises.

Maddie Witler

Technique From the Ground Up (all)

"Thoughts on the mechanics of playing the mandolin for the left and right hand. Good reminders for any level of player. Right hand technique and left hand technique. How to stay loose, get good tone, get clean smooth notes, play fast, work on difficult moments. earlier in weekend"

Improvising (I-A)

Ideas for improvising, whether it's on fiddle tunes, bluegrass, other styles, or nothing at all. How to get started making small variations, continuing motifs, or creating new melodies over the form. What's appropriate and when. Come with questions, leave with answers (and maybe more questions).

Time and Rhythm, Chopping and Not Chopping (I-A)

Ideas for playing rhythm in bluegrass or not bluegrass. Chopping, strumming, cross picking. How to feel time and develop a strong sense of it. How to play something that supports the folks you're playing with and makes them sound better.

Maddie's Masterclass (all)

Come and play me something! Have a short little private lesson in front of the class so we can all learn together. We'll figure out where you're at, what you'd like to work on, and what to do next to get better. There'll be time for 4-5 folks to participate but more are welcome to attend, lots to learn from what others are doing. I'll have a sign up sheet at the class so arrive on time if you'd like to play.

Bluegrass Licks (I-A)

"Licks that fit the bluegrass idiom, Monroe-y and beyond, taught by ear, bring your recording device.

Mostly Guitar Classes

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.

Bennett Hammond

Guitar left hand

EZ jammin' backup and jam chords

All keys no capo needed (tho' one is always fun)

The big picture

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

Guitar Right hand

Thumb-pickin 10: The key to the highway

John Kael

Traditional bluegrass rhythm guitar 2 classes (B-I)

Rhythm guitar is a hugely important and often under-emphasized piece of the bluegrass puzzle. In this class we'll nail down some fundamental techniques, but then take it further to explore different rhythm feels and tempos, dynamics, using bass runs and accents to drive the song, specific techniques for different instrumental combinations, how to best support a soloist or vocalist - all the skills you need to have more fun playing, and to make it more fun for other folks to play with you! Be prepared to play a lot!

Simple Bluegrass Solos on the Mandolin - a framework (B-I)

Once you have an idea of the melody for a song you're singing, how do you easily translate that to a recognizable mandolin solo? and how do you give it a 'bluegrass sound'? We'll work on an easy to understand framework that will give you confidence to solo in any key, on any song - even if you haven't heard it before! We'll use standard songs in the bluegrass repertoire for examples. This will likely change the way you look at the mandolin, and give you tools to use right away in jams as well as plenty to work on through the year.

Double Stops on the Mandolin (B-I)

Double stops is just a fancy word (ok, two words) for two-note chords on the mandolin. We'll look at several common double stops to add to your toolkit right away in any key, and demystify them a bit so you can explore more fun variations. We'll use some common bluegrass songs for examples. These will immediately add interest to your solos and backup, and help you get that 'authentic' bluegrass sound.

Simple Bluegrass Solos on the Guitar - getting started (B-I)

Switching from rhythm to lead on the guitar and playing a solo that's recognizable for the song can feel a bit intimidating. We'll look at some tips for getting off on the right foot for a variety of songs, finding melodies easily, and translating these into solos that will sound appropriate for bluegrass guitar. We'll learn several 'kickoff' licks and a couple tags to make the solos sound interesting, and ease the transitions from rhythm to lead and back again.

Lincoln Meyers

Flatpicking Fundamentals BG Guitar (AB-I)

Let's take an in depth look into the art of flatpicking. We'll discuss the importance of alternate picking, cross picking, floating, tone, timing, economy of motion and relaxation techniques.

Exploring Bluegrass Rhythm Guitar (AB-I)

We'll look at a variety of rhythm patterns, walking bass lines, and some practice techniques to help make your rhythm playing more interesting and fun!

One on one classes, schedule time with Lincoln at camp!

Joe Newberry

Carter Scratch Guitar (I)

Maybelle Carter's thumb-based lead guitar style has influenced every guitarist who has followed her. It incorporates melody and rhythm all in one motion, and is perfect for accompanying singers.

Missouri Backup Guitar for Fiddle Tunes (AB-I)

Missouri Backup Guitar uses a combination of bass runs and moving bass lines that echo the left hand of a piano.

Mississippi John Hurt and Doc Watson Fingerstyle (I)

Fingerpicking in the style of these two legendary guitarists is good for tunes, and for accompanying songs.

Performance Lab for Groups and Individuals (all)

From the first and last notes of a tune or song, to the arc of a full performance, this session offers tips and techniques on connecting with an audience and as performers. Topics include: dynamics, arrangements, beginnings and endings, and flow of a set.

Singing Tips and Techniques for Vocalists (all)

Using repertoire from traditional folk, country and Bluegrass, this class will explore ways to make your singing more enjoyable, whether at home or on stage.

Alex Rubin

Basic Rhythm for Bluegrass and Old-Time: The Boom-Chuck (B-AB)

We'll learn and practice one of the most fundamental rhythm techniques for bluegrass and old-time music: the boom-chuck. The skills involved are essential even for strumming and playing lead. We can learn it on any chord, and will start with very simple and common ones. If you have some experience with boom-chucking, we will also look at some additions to the basic technique.

Basic Improvisation: Aiming for Targets (AB-I)

This one practice and soloing technique will allow you to work on many of the challenges of improvisation by helping you think ahead. It's so easy to feel like you're chasing chords or moving aimlessly; by creating targets to aim for, you can stay ahead in your solos and better enact your favorite ideas.

Scale Patterns in Fiddle Tunes (I-A)

Simple manipulations of the major scale are the source of many a melody in common fiddle tunes. Starting with simple scale patterns, we'll look at how they show up in melodies and how we can use them in our own improvisation. More complex scale patterns can be incredibly powerful melodically and are also a great way to practice on the guitar. This is an especially useful class if you feel you are having trouble seeing the utility of scales and shapes.

Starting To Play Up the Neck: Triad Shapes as a Guide (I-A)

Getting comfortable playing up the neck can be a daunting proposition. Perhaps you feel you often get lost and don't know what notes you're playing; perhaps you have some familiarity with vertical shapes (like CAGED) but aren't sure how to implement them. We will learn how to "see" some small shapes to guide us around the neck without having to learn the names of every note. By focusing on just the top three strings, we can make the task much more manageable.

Learning Solos From Other Instruments (A)

Learning solos or lines played by other bluegrass instruments is a great way to unlock new ways of thinking about your guitar playing. Every instrument involves different intuitions, and trying to mimic those of another instrument can lead to new tools for us to express our ideas. We'll look not only at which notes are played but also how, and try to emulate some of those sounds and techniques.

Tony Watt

Introduction to Harmony Singing - All Instruments (all)

Have you ever listened to three people sing harmony on a chorus and wondered what they were singing and how they knew how to do it? If you want to get a complete introduction to the ins and outs of harmony singing, then this class is for you! We will learn all about the different roles in harmony singing and the role that harmony singing plays in jamming. We will also cover many of the biggest challenges to - and most efficient strategies for - learning harmony singing. There

2023 Preliminary Class List, subject to change

are no prerequisite songs, and you don't need to be able to read music or play lead, but please be aware that we will be learning the number system on the spot and using it in this class.

Introduction to Ear Training - All Instruments (all)

Have you marveled at those musicians who can just pick up a tune on the fly, and play a melody-based solo seemingly instantaneously? Have you ever wanted to be able to find the melody of a song so you could incorporate it into your solos or sing it cleanly? While some people may be born with a strong ear for melodies, most of us have to work hard to develop the ears to do it. Fortunately, ear training includes a set of skills that you can learn and practice just like learning chords or solos. The class is open to all levels but is geared towards those who have trouble finding either the melody or chords on their instrument.

Unlocking the Guitar Fretboard Using the Chords Within a Key (I-A)

Do you know why most songs in Western music feature the 1, 4 & 5 chords more than any other? Did you know that there are only 5 major open chords on guitar? And that there are only 3 minor chords?!? We'll learn the answers to all of these questions and more as we explore the diatonic chord sequence. The word 'diatonic' means 'within a key', so a diatonic chord progression is a set of chords made up of notes from within a key. You may already be familiar with the diatonic chord progression, but did you know that you can use it to unlock the entire fretboard of the guitar? In this class, we'll focus on using common chord shapes to help learn the entire fretboard, and in the process, learn many of the most important double stops in bluegrass guitar.

The Three Most Important Practice Techniques Ever - All Instruments (all)

Have you ever wondered why some students progress faster than others? Or have you wondered what the pros really work on when they have free time to practice? This class will review the practice techniques that are the most effective and most efficient at helping musicians improve. Obviously, that means we'll only be covering... sorry, no spoilers! With these Most Important Practice Techniques Ever, you can become the musician you've always dreamt of... time and energy to practice still required!

Advanced Concepts in Bluegrass Rhythm Guitar (I-A)

There's a little secret in bluegrass rhythm guitar that many teachers aren't letting on to: we teach the "boom-chick" style rhythm as the basis of bluegrass, but then we almost never use it! If you've ever wanted to know what more advanced bluegrass rhythm players are doing, then please consider attending my Advanced Concepts in Bluegrass Rhythm Guitar class. But please be forewarned, this class will not be for the faint of heart: some of the stuff we're going to cover will be very difficult to master!

Mostly Fiddle Classes

Louise Bichan

An Orkney Strathspey

A Scottish Reel

A Louise Bichan original

A Swedish Polska

An Irish Tune

Janie Rothfield

Fiddle/Mandolin Duet playing (I-A)

Janie Rothfield and Ben Pearce help you learn how mandolin and fiddle can accompany each other.

How to play in a Jam! (AB)

How to pick up a tune on the Fly (AB-I)

Bowing with Rhythm and Groove: (AB)

Janie's Old Time Festival Tune Faves: All Instruments (I)

Austin Scelzo

Bluegrass Backup Fundamentals for Fiddle

Supercharge your practice by infusing fundamental scales and double stops in an accessible, fun, and engaging way. This interactive workshop will show you how to practice along with recordings while still focusing on fundamental skills. PDF sheet music and tab available upon request.

Essential Bluegrass/Country Shuffle Bowings

The key to sounding authentic in country and bluegrass fiddle music is to master the rhythmic feel. Central to the groove is the “train beat,” sometimes referred to as a “country shuffle”, which you can see broken down in this video. As you can see, this drummer has a constant movement/stream of notes on the snare drum, with an accent on the “backbeat”

Putting the Blues in Bluegrass

Scales, rhythms, double stops, and bowing techniques to put some grit into your playing.

Bobby Hicks Licks and Tricks

Learn some killer Bobby Hicks Fiddle breaks and licks and get them transposed to keys where you'll find them most useful in a jam setting

Demystifying Bluegrass Vocal Harmony

Learn to sing standards in perfect three-part harmony. We will explore important terminology like "Baritone, Tenor, and Lead singing", how to practice and learn harmony parts, and how to develop a natural understanding and approach to harmony singing.

Annie Staninec

Twin Fiddling (I-A)

Learn how to find a twin part on any bluegrass song! We'll discuss the concept of finding a harmony for a simple melody, and also learn twins to a standard bluegrass song or two. This is a hands-on workshop, so bring your fiddles!

Bluegrass Fiddle Backup (I)

Bluegrass Fiddle Backup - Explore ideas for backing up a singer. We'll discuss various options and learn some fills, try some longbow backup, shuffles, and more!

Finding Melodies in Different Keys (fiddle/mandolin) (B-I)

Ever had a song called in a jam in B and thought, "Darn, I can play this in A!"? We'll take a simple melody and move it around to several different keys and discuss tricks and shortcuts for transposing melodies quickly so you can take a break in any key!

Fiddle Kick-offs and Tags (B-I)

Explore some classic bluegrass fiddle kick-offs and tags. We'll learn some tricks for finding the first note of a song in various keys, discuss turn-arounds, and learn some tags that can be used in almost any bluegrass song!

Build a Bluegrass Fiddle Solo (I-A)

We'll take a simple melody to a classic bluegrass song or two and build a solo in the bluegrass fiddle style by adding double stops, ornaments, syncopation, and more! We'll discuss melody-based improvisation techniques so you can solo more freely and creatively within the style. We'll be doing a lot of playing, so bring your instruments!