

Clawhammer Banjo

Beginner Track: Janie Rothfield

Clawhammer Beginner/Refresher Track (Five Sessions)

This track focus on learning (and refreshing) good basic techniques for clawhammer banjo, with a focus on the all-important RIGHT HAND rhythm, chords, how to add melody to your playing, how to pick up a tune on the fly and learn some fun tunes and song to play in a jam. You'll also get a chance to play with a fiddler (Janie)! Don't forget your long nails (I will have stick on nails for you to use if needed), fully charged recording device (audio and video are fine), notebook and pen, water bottle, banjo strap, capo, tuner, spare strings...and chocolate is always nice!

Session 1 (N-B) We will start in G tuning and learn to play the basic "bum ditty" right hand rhythm and the essential techniques such as slides, pulloff's and hammer-on's, and simple chords to get you playing pronto! This class will be a great refresher for those who want to improve their basic techniques and get moving to the next level of playing.

Session 2 (N-B) A continuation with the focus on the essential bum ditty right hand rhythm, basic techniques (hammer on's, pull off's, slides, maybe some drop thumb) and how to find easy melody from our chords in G tuning. If there is time, we have an introduction to double C tuning to get us also playing in the key of D.

Session 3 (N-B) It's time to learn a tune by ear! We will work on a couple of fun tunes in G and D to play in your next jam! Remember, you don't have to play all the notes-just keep that right hand rhythm and all will be fine!

Session 4 (N-B) Continuation of our right-hand rhythm techniques with a focus on how to get drive and groove into your playing, with some attention on drop thumb and the addition of ghosting! Candy Girl will be our tune!

Session 5 (N-B) Our final class will be a nice review of the techniques, tunings, and tunes from the weekend. Maybe a nice jam too with Janie fiddling along!

Matt Arcara

Sandy River Belle (I)

A classic fiddle tune in G major

Basic Clawhammer Technique and Timing Practice (AB)

Using *Cluck Old Hen* as the vehicle to look at basic right hand technique, timing and technique.

Greasy Coat (I)

Learn a version of the modal festival favorite

Squirrel Hunters (I)

Another festival favorite, modal tuning!

Hilarie Burhans

Learn/Improve your Drop Thumb (AB-I)

get lots of practice learning *Bill Cheatham*

Sandy Boys (I)

All about Dynamics, Percussion & Drive

Tunes in Waltz (3/4) Time for Clawhammer (I)

Faking It: Hearing & Using Chords to Play Tunes You Don't Know (I)

Learn two Twisty D tunes: *Sullivan's Hollow* and *5 Miles from Town* (A)

Howie Bursen

Blues Banjo (I)

Take your clawhammer playing into the world of the blues. In this class we'll find out what makes a song or tune a blues, learn some useful licks, and then take a close look at a blues-style *Wild Bill Jones*.

Playing in 3s- Jigs and Waltzes (I-A)

A friend once described jigs as "19th century rock 'n' roll". Great for listening and for dancing too. Of course waltzes are lots of fun for dancing. And many fine songs are sung in waltz time. As it happens, clawhammer works very well in jig time as well as in waltz time. We'll learn how to play both, with a simple waltz and a simple jig. Expand your playing into the world of 3.

Drop Thumb (AB-I)

Make the jump to double thumbing. We'll get that steady rolling clawhammer, and then drop in those sweet notes which pop out when you learn to double thumb. It's easier than you think!

Banjos and Ballads (Demo)

For centuries, the banjo has been used to accompany singing. Here's your chance to see how Dave Kiphuth and Howie use their banjos to carry the song forward, to bring the song to life.

Wine Appreciation (B-A) Open to all 21 years and up

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 500 medals in national and international competitions.

note: There will be a separate charge of \$10. Half of that fee will be donated to the scholarship fund, and the other half will be used to cover the cost of, ahem, supplies.

Hilary Hawke

Don't Rush the Brush (I)

Using rhythmic strumming to create a fuller, more driving sound. We'll work on right-hand techniques and how to apply them to songs, helping improve feel and groove in any playing situation.

Rocking out on the Favorites (A)

Strategies and techniques for getting up to tempo and adding variations to some of the most rocking oldtime tunes.

Melody is Key! (AB)

Starting with the melody of a favorite old-time tune and learning how to build on it. We'll go up the neck and discover shapes that unlock the fingerboard, using scales to find notes all around the neck.

ALL INSTRUMENTS Country and Gospel Singing with the Banjo (All)

Singing all together with the group while accompanying yourself on the banjo. Learn some great group singing songs and rhythm for playing while you're singing.

Dock Boggs D Tuning (I)

Exploring D tuning through the music of Dock Boggs, whose style bridges old-time and bluegrass. We'll learn some of his signature fingerpicking phrases and licks from tunes like *Sugar Baby*, *Country Blues*, and *Little Black Train*.

Adam Hurt

Be the Banjo Player in the Old-Time Trio with Beth Hartness (All)

Understanding the Structure of Old-Time Tunes with Beth Hartness (All)

Interpret a Tune Directly From the Fiddle (I-A)

Scale Exercises as Warm-Ups and Tuning Road Maps (I)

Fretless Banjo, Round Peak-style (I-A) Learn repertoire and technique associated with historical musicians from the Round Peak community that make the most of the fretless fingerboard--although the material and concepts transfer well to fretted banjos! Adam will teach the class using a standard-tuned fretless banjo; bring one of these if you have one, or come with your fretted banjo and learn ways to bring out surprisingly fretless-sounding qualities in it.

Brad Kolodner

Beyond the Bum-Ditty (AB-I)

Explore the many ways you can take your playing to the next level by developing a toolbox of ideas to implement in creative ways.

Playing Up the Neck (I-A)

You paid for all those frets - so let's figure out how to use them! Let's break down how you can approach playing up the neck with the important anchor spots and patterns.

Improving Tone & Clarity (All)

Let's dig into the subtleties of how to really let your banjo ring. Some minor adjustments to your technique and banjo can dramatically improve your tone.

Drop Thumb Deep Dive (I-A)

Unlock the groovy, plunky, funky possibilities of drop thumb. We'll experiment with a variety of drop thumb uses including syncopations, bass lines, backup patterns and more.

Percussive Clawhammer (All)

The cluck, the ghost strum, the strum ditty - these percussive clawhammer tools (and more) will be broken down for you to implement in your playing.

Micheal Miles

Tone, Articulation & Phrasing (I)

Music begins once you know the notes. These ideas will make everything you play sound better and more compelling.

Intro to JS Bach (I)

When he died, Bach owned a few harpsichords and a few lutes. He was imagining the sound that we have on the banjo, before he had access to one. In this class, we'll step into a few signature phrases of some of his greatest works.

Take Five (I-A)

After Michael recorded Take Five, he got a note from Dave Brubeck that said "thanks for recording that one!" 5/4 time is a mystery that unfurls in a remarkable way with this clawhammer arrangement.

Mystical World of Double C (I)

Quite literally, almost anything is possible here up and down the neck. This class will explore how to explode a simple melody and create the inexplicable wonder that is there for the asking.

Fretless Banjo Blues (I)

The most heart-rending notes are the ones that are not on the scale.... the notes between the notes that nobody can write down. With the right attitude and a fretless banjo, they are yours for the taking.

Tim Rowell

Simple Modal Tunes

Mace Bell's *Civil War March* and Melvin Wine's tune *All Young*.

Dock Boggs Signature Song *Country Blues*

3 finger up-picking in a tuning inspired by blues guitar player *Go Lightning*.

Angeline The Baker

Composed by Stephen Foster and published in 1850. Great tune with thumb skipping.

Crooked Tunes and Organic Phrasing

Hog Eyed Man from eastern Kentucky's Hiram Stamper.

Wade Ward

Banjo player from Independence, Virginia. His version of *Molly Put The Kettle On*. Incorporating the clawhammer roll or Galax lick.

Maggie Shar

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. We will work with the tune IDA RED to get familiar with each tool.

Chords up the Neck in Double D Tuning (I-A)

Learn 3 movable major shapes to take you up and down the neck in this beautiful tuning. We will cover 3 ways to practice so they become part of your mental map of the banjo.

Rhythm Lab (I-A) with Brian and Laura

Learn cool catchy rhythmic patterns to lock in with fiddlers on the rhythm train. We will work on ghost notes, syncopation, polyrhythms and emphasis to improve your groove.

Campfire Clawhammer (AB-I)

Learn (at least) two hits everyone knows, Jon Denver's *Country Roads* and Paul McCartney's *Let it Be* to bring to any sing along. This class will also build skills for playing any folk song in the clawhammer style.

Salt Spring (I-A)

Learn this beautiful modern tune written by Jon Reischman

3- Finger Banjo

Beginner Track: Bruce Stockwell

Session 1: Getting Started (N-B) Essential listening, set-up, tuning, positioning, playing with others, our 3 “jobs” - rhythm, backup and soloing.

Session 2: The Basics (N-B) 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 (N-B) Rolls- Alternating Thumb and Forward 1 and 2 with roll specific tab examples, left hand ornaments.

Session 4: Backup and Rhythm (N-B) 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 (N-B) 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.

Tom Adams

DTN Rolling Backup in G Part 1 - the Basics, Rolls and Runs (I)

From J.D. Crowe with Jimmy Martin in the 1960’s to Jason Bureson with Blue Highway in 2026, rolling down-the-neck backup in Open G position is at the very heart of bluegrass banjo playing. In Part 1 I’ll cover all the basics including how to connect vamping to rolling, learning to think in terms of roll patterns that span two measures, and the various runs that connect chords when you’re playing backup.

DTN Rolling Backup in G Part 2 - Connecting Breaks and Backup (I)

Building on the basics I covered in Part 1, this class will cover how to get into and out of breaks and backup on bluegrass vocal numbers, making a smooth pro sound. I’ll cover in detail what to do leading up to your solo and what to play as you hand the song back to the vocalist when you start your rolling backup. I’ll also cover DTN licks to play between vocal lines (think of Crowe’s playing on *Old Home Place*), and Endings you can play on a vocal number.

Essential Scruggs-Style Licks for DTN Breaks (I)

These licks are a foundation of down-the-neck Scruggs-style breaks. Understanding how these licks work together and how they represent the banjo version of what the singer is singing will allow you to play breaks to songs that 1) you haven’t learned from tab and 2) you’re hearing at a jam for the first time. I’ll cover how to quickly work out what you start your improvised with to make it sound like you already know the song.

Practice Like This to Make the Best Progress (I)

You have a limited amount of time to practice each day. The key is that you practice every day. But what you focus on is just as crucial. I'll cover in detail my tips for what will give you the greatest benefit from having the banjo in your hands each day. Are you learning or practicing, are you progressing and #1 above everything else, are you listening?

DTN Rolling Backup in C and D Chord Positions (I)

Not every vocal number at a jam is played in an Open G position (the Keys of G, A, Bb, and B). I'll start by covering the similarities and differences in backup rolls between G songs and songs where you'll either be working out of the C chord position at frets 1 and 2, or the D chord position at frets 2, 3, and 4. And I'll cover the runs that connect chords, how to use a capo with C and D, and useful tag licks and endings for vocal numbers in C and D.

Dick Bowden

ALL INSTRUMENTS How to Jam in a Group (B-I) 2 Sessions

We will all play on two songs — *I'll Fly Away* in A and *Hand Me Down My Walking Cane* in G, *Cripple Creek* in A and *Bile Them Cabbage Down* in G. Bring a capo. Practice these songs ahead of time so you can spend your time learning to jam rather than learning the song(s).

Gretchen Bowder

How to Read and Write a Chord Chart (All)

Being able to write and read a chord chart is a real-life skill that makes it easier to communicate with other musicians. You'll learn the essentials of charting out songs and tunes so that everyone in the group is on the same page — literally. Along the way, you'll deepen your understanding of song and tune structure, and refine what you think you're hearing.

Playing in the Key of D: Scruggs Licks and More (I)

That low D string makes playing in D really satisfying and fun. Come learn the basics of backup in D, as well a break from both a classic and a modern bluegrass number.

Using Chord Scales for Improvisation (I)

Fun and easy ways to get the most out of the whole neck of your banjo. The picking patterns are for 3-finger players, but clawhammer players will also benefit from knowing these chord patterns.

Essential Scruggs Style Licks for Up the Neck (I-A)

Learn the building blocks of that ultra-cool up the neck stuff that Scruggs style players do under a sung verse. This is essential vocabulary!

Cattle in the Cane 2 ways (I / A)

Cattle in the Cane (in A) seems to be coming back around in popularity. This tune has some interesting lines which work well melodically with no capo. Alternatively, you can play it with a combination of styles at capo 2. You will learn both in this class.

BB Bowness

Single String *Sally Goodwin* (A)

We'll learn this great fiddle tune in single string style and play around with moving keys, improvising and explore how the single string sound differs from melodic and Scruggs style.

Ear training for bluegrass banjo (All)

We're going to learn how to listen, sing and then find a melody by ear on our instrument. We'll go over ways to practice ear training in a simple but effective way. We'll apply this exercise to learning common bluegrass standards by ear. If you're stuck on tablature and unsure how to untangle from visual learning, this is the class for you!

A Study of 6th's (I)

The interval of a 6th on the 1st and 3rd strings are a user-friendly way to map the banjo fretboard with slightly easier partial chord shapes. We can use 6th's to play tunes, song melodies and improvise solo's.

Improvising Workshop for Beginners (B)

If you've never improvised and feel overwhelmed by the concept, this is the class for you! We will learn 3 different common Scruggs style licks by ear and practice putting them together in different orders to improvise over songs.

Improvising with Single String Technique (A)

We'll learn a few single string scale shapes and come up with some phrases to practice developing ideas while improvising in single string style.

Eli Gilbert

Western Swing/Country Licks for 5-String Banjo (A)

Licks and Patterns from Electric Guitar and Pedal Steel Players for 3-finger banjo.

My Favorite J.D. Crowe Licks (I-A)

Licks taken from classic J.D. Crowe solos and backup with recorded reference examples

Building a Bluegrass Backup Vocabulary (I)

Common rolling backup patterns and licks for use in any key.

What was Gabe Thinking!? (All)

Analysis of Gabe Hirshfeld's *Clown Meat*

CLAWHAMMER Drop-Thumb Workout (AB-I)

Exercises designed to make the drop-thumb as comfortable as the bum-ditty.

Scott Hopkins

Chord Inversions and Triad Shifting (AB)

We'll learn/review the three major chord inversions (voicings/shapes/positions) along with the parallel and relative minor for each.

Scale Studies (I)

We'll learn how to apply and practice scales, improving both your understanding of music and the banjo.

Using Kickoffs Efficiently (I)

We'll not only learn kickoffs to various tunes and in various keys, but also how to effectively and efficiently use them as transition material from chord to chord in backup and solos by using target chord tones.

Big Sciota (A)

We'll learn the melody to this tune then apply it to Scruggs, melodic and single string approaches.

Iconic Licks of Banjo Masters (A)

Famous licks from Earl Scruggs, Don Reno, JD Crowe, Mike Mumford, Scott Vestal, Alison Brown, Béla Fleck and more!

Alan Munde

Kickoffs and Endings (B-I)

Getting a song or instrumental underway in a stylistic way is important for the success of the solo. Here are a number of standard kickoffs in the keys of G, C, and D. Endings are equally important. Shown in this class are a number of standard, stylish endings in the key of G, C, and D.

Around the Banjo in 80 Ways (I)

Using the song Around the World in 80 Days we will explore practical applications of varying aspects of music theory and gain insights into... well, just about everything - how melodies relate to chords, how half-step movements are so meaningful, how the sense of dominance in a chord is powerful, how logical it all can be, and in general, how to spice up your arrangements.

Finding The Melody (AB-I)

Tips for finding the chord changes and the melody.

A Non-Theory View of Music Theory (A)

This class will explore a note movement view of the finger board. This approach allows for invention of your own melodies and harmonies.

Munde's Tunes (A)

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

Rich Stillman

Everything you Need to Know About the Right Hand (AB-I)

This class breaks down roll construction and how it relates to melody, song lyrics, syncopation and syllable phrasing. The purpose of this class is to get past the standard rolls that are taught in books and approach rolls as a way to create banjo breaks that sound like they belong to the song.

Everything you Need to Know About the Left Hand (AB-I)

This class studies chords and the relationship between chord inversions and chords in the same key, and how to find and play the melody of a song using the chords.

Alternate Keys and Tunings for Bluegrass Banjo (I)

This class will focus on common alternate tunings that can be used in a band or jam setting. The class has two goals: how to use keys other than open G so you can play in any key without capoing past the fourth fret, and a survey of alternate tunings that can give you access to unusual instrumentals and give your banjo a different sound when you play banjo breaks in a bluegrass setting.

Twelve Minutes of Earl (I-A)

In 1960, well before his instruction book was written, Earl Scruggs sat down with Fleming Brown and a tape recorder to capture solo recordings of some of Earl's most iconic banjo breaks. The recordings capture details the book can't, like dynamics, and gives us a chance to hear Scruggs' attack and tone without having to listen through the sound of a band. We'll listen through some of the ten songs on the recording and talk about nuances of Earl's style that could make you a better player.

Pentatonics and Minor Keys (I)

This class will get you playing in minor keys, and will help you incorporate minor, blues and pentatonic notes into your playing.

Max Wareham

The Music of Bill Monroe

In this class we'll take a look at the soul of bluegrass music by studying the man who created it, Bill Monroe. This class will incorporate many elements of a book I am currently working on in collaboration with banjo legend Butch Robins (who played in Bill Monroe's band during three different decades) about the history of bluegrass music.

How to Sound Like Yourself

A lot of banjo learning is centered around emulating the greats. But there's a whole world beyond that involving your own creativity and expression. In this class I'll give you tools and inspiration to find your own voice on the banjo.

Banjo Setup Workshop

In the tradition of Gabe Hirshfeld, I will take your banjo apart with you, showing you what each part does and how it affects the sound of your instrument. It will sound like a new banjo by the time we are done!

Metronome Bootcamp

Creative ways to use the metronome. A banjo player with perfect timing is everyone's best friend.

The Best Banjo Players You've Never Heard Of

How to even choose? There were so many incredible banjo players that nobody talks about. Many of them had unique approaches to the instrument. We'll pay tribute to a few of them in studying who they were, and what their musical approach was.

Old Time Fiddle

Brian Slattery

The Alphabet of Fiddle Bowings (AB-I)

Learn three bowing patterns that are the basic building blocks of Appalachian fiddle rhythms, and get more rhythm into all the tunes you play.

Seconding (AB-I)

More and more, when fiddlers jam together they don't play in unison; they take turns backing one another up. We'll go over the basics of seconding, of suggesting chords while also following the shape of the tune.

Check Your Pulse (AB-I)

Have you been looking to explore when and how to add pulses to your bows for deeper groove? We'll go over the mechanics of pulsing and how they fit into different bowing patterns for a simple tune.

Tunes and Variations (I-A)

We'll break down the classic *Sail Away Ladies*, introducing rhythmic variations to explore how to change the way you play the tunes you already know.

Waltzes (I-A)

We'll use Rayna Gellert's already-classic *Swannanoa Waltz* to delve into how to play waltzes in an Appalachian style.

Betsy Green

Learn a Crooked Fiddle Tune (I) *Pigeon on a Gate Post*

Exploring Singing & Playing on the Fiddle (All)

Learn a Double-stop Heavy Tune (I) *Whiteface*

Fills & Backup on the Fiddle (AB-I)

Ornamentation & Variations in Old-time Fiddle (I)

Steve Roy - TBA