

Introduction



Track 1

Welcome to *Play Banjo Today!* This beginner's book will guide you step by step to playing songs on your banjo in the popular and exciting bluegrass style.

About the Audio & Video

All the music written in this book is also on the audio. Each audio example has a track number that appears in the book next to the written music. Check out bonus Tracks 96 and 97 to hear a full performance of the banjo classic "Cripple Creek." Listening to the songs is so important that it actually counts as practice! When you can hear the song in your mind's ear, it will make learning it from the written music easier, faster, and more enjoyable.

Some lessons in the book include video, so you can see and hear the material being taught. Audio and videos are indicated with icons.



Audio Icon



Video Icon

About the Author

Author Colin O'Brien travels throughout the U.S.A. performing concerts and presenting banjo workshops. He has won several awards for his solo concerts and recordings which feature his banjo, fiddle, guitar, and his amazing foot percussion. He'd love to hear from you! www.colingobrien.com

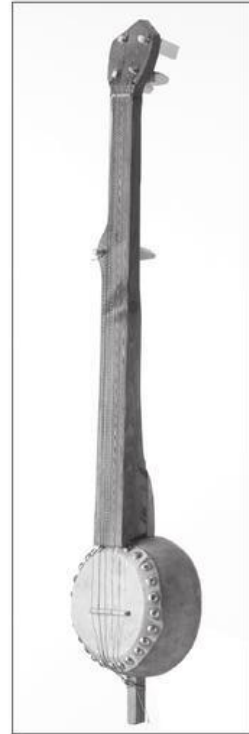
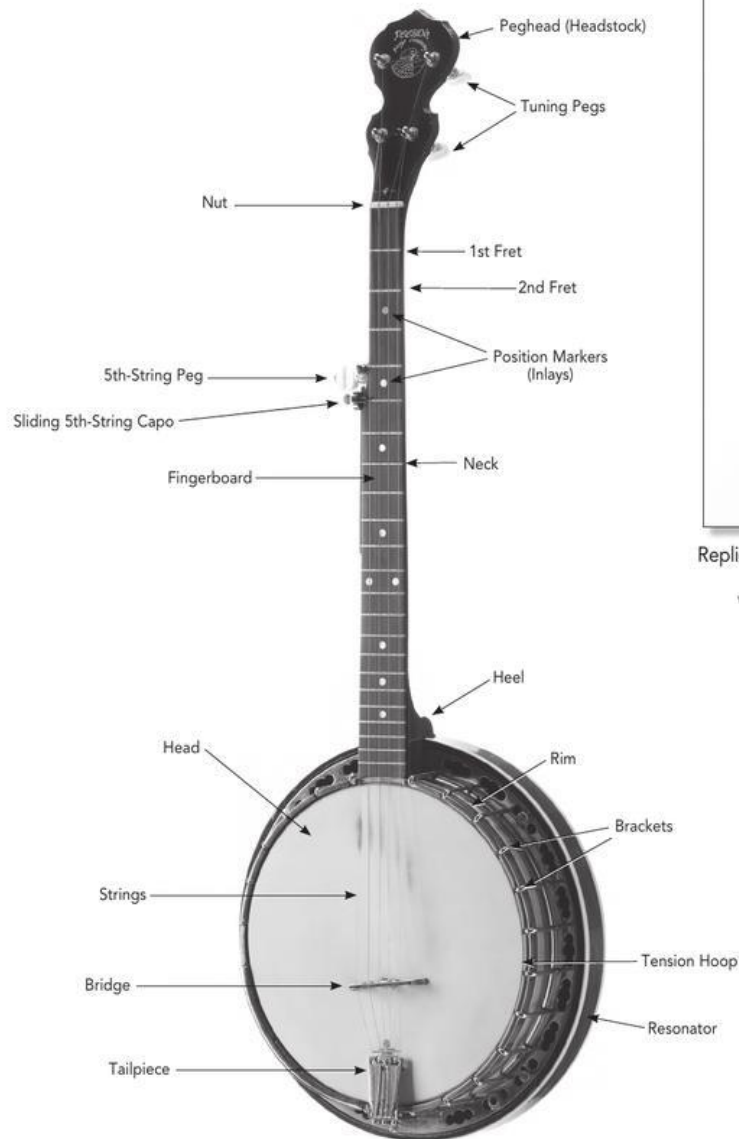
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Meet the Banjo



The first banjos in America were brought from Africa in the late 1600s. They were made from gourds and animal hides. These banjos could be considered the great-grandfathers of the banjo you have. Though the African banjos were very different from the one you're learning to play, you'll still see some similarities: the round body covered with a skin, and the neck and strings attached at the back of the body.



Replica of African Gourd Banjo
(made by Mike Gregory,
www.littlebanjos.lunare.net)

Lesson 10 Chords Up the Neck



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Expand Your FDAs!

You've already learned the three closed-position chord shapes, the F, D, and A shapes. Now it's time to play each of them up the neck in three different locations. On the track, these are played using the thumb test one note at a time, as you learned on page 32.

G Chord in Three Places

1

T	5
A	4
B	5

(F shape)

2

T	9
A	8
B	9

(D shape)

3

T	12
A	12
B	12

(A shape)

C Chord in Three Places

1

T	5
A	5
B	5

(A shape)

2

T	10
A	9
B	10

(F shape)

3

T	14
A	13
B	14

(D shape)

D Chord in Three Places

1

T	4
A	3
B	4

(D shape)

2

T	7
A	7
B	7

(A shape)

3

T	12
A	11
B	12

(F shape)



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Now it's time to play each chord in three places using the backup picking pattern. Take it very slow and try to envision the first note of the next chord before going to it! (They're circled.)

G

T	5	5	9	9	12	12	9	9	5
A	4	4	7	7	12	12	7	7	3
B	5	5	9	9	12	12	9	9	4

T M T M T M
T T T

C

T	5	5	10	10	14	14	10	10	5
A	5	5	9	9	13	13	9	9	3
B	5	5	10	10	14	14	10	10	5

D

T	4	4	7	7	12	12	7	7	4
A	2	2	7	7	10	10	7	7	3
B	4	4	7	7	12	12	7	7	2

Lesson 24 Chord Melody



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Many pieces in this book (and just about everywhere else) have melodies and chords. In music it's common to have someone play the chords (backup) while another player takes the melody or solo. In a chord melody arrangement, however, you play both the chords and the melody at the same time! Much has been written about chord melody for jazz guitar. The art of playing and arranging in this style has much to do with selecting a chord that sounds right with the melody while selecting notes from the chord that both imply its quality (major, minor, etc.) and support the melody. Common notes used are the root, 3rd, 5th, 6th, and 7th notes of the given chord. Conveniently, you need not (and could not) play the entire chord—just your well-selected notes from it. The chord melody approach gives the music a full sound and enables the banjoist to play unaccompanied. An entire book could be written on this subject!



Track 192

Auld Lang Syne

Chord progression: G, Em, Am, D, B7, Em, G7

Should auld ac-quin-tance be for-got, and ne-ver brought to

Chord progression: C, C#°, G, Em, Am, D, B7

mind? Should auld ac-quin-tance be for-got, and

Chord progression: Em, D, G, C, G, Em, Am, D, Bb°

days of auld lang syne? For auld lang syne, my dear, for

Chord progression: G, G7, C, C#°, G, Em

auld lang syne, we'll take a cup of

Chord progression: Am, D, B7, Em, D, G (1st ending), G (2nd ending)

kind-ness yet, for auld lang syne!

Play Banjo Today!

The **ULTIMATE** self-teaching method designed to offer quality instruction, terrific songs, 194 professional-quality full-demo tracks, and video lessons.

This banjo method can be used by students who want to teach themselves, or by teachers for private or group instruction. Simply follow the tips and lessons in the book as you listen to the teacher and watch the video.

A Complete Guide to the Basics

- Songs, Chords, and Melodies
- Picking and Strumming
- Playing Tips and Techniques
- Music Notation

LEARN AT YOUR OWN PACE with **OVER 140 GREAT SONGS AND EXAMPLES!**



Includes video lessons with Colin O'Brien

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