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Track 1

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Track 1

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LESSON 3: READ SOME TAB, PLAY SOME TUNES

Now that we've covered the basics, it's time to play!

TABLATURE

Mandolin *tablature*, called TAB for short, is a system of writing music just for the mandolin. It tells you what fret to play, and what course to play it on.

The long horizontal lines represent the four string courses. The top line is the 1st course (E) and the bottom line is the 4th course (G). The numbers indicate which fret to play. Try fingering the notes indicated using any left-hand finger.

	1st String, 5th Fret	2nd String, 2nd Fret	3rd String, 4th Fret	4th String, 3rd Fret
1st String	T 5			
	A	2		
4th String	B		4	
				3

SECRETS OF THE MASTERS

The dots, or fret markers, on your mandolin neck will help you keep track of the frets. The dots are usually on frets 3, 5, 7, 10 and 12. Look at your mandolin and familiarize yourself with where the dots are. Often there is a “double dot” at the 12th fret.

TAB is often attached to written music, so the player will know how long the notes last and when they occur. As you become accustomed to reading standard music notation (see Chapter 2), this will be more and more helpful. The following examples show TAB and standard music notation. If you do not yet read music, *do not panic*. If you like, you can look ahead to Chapter 2 (page 19) for information about reading standard notation. Or, just play the frets and strings indicated in the TAB in a slow, steady rhythm, giving each note an equal amount of time. The numbers under the TAB indicate the left-hand fingers (see page 9).



Track 2

RIVER'S UP, CAN'T GO ACROSS

The image shows a musical score for the song "River's Up, Can't Go Across". It consists of a standard musical staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef, and a corresponding mandolin tablature below it. The tablature has four lines representing the strings (T, A, B, G from top to bottom). The notes in the tablature are: T-5, A-2, B-4, G-3. The left-hand fingers are indicated below the tablature as 1, 2, 0, 0, 2, 0, 1, 1, 3, 1, 0, 2, 1, 1, 0, 0.

Left-hand fingers: 1 2 0 0 2 0 1 1 3 1 0 2 1 1 0 0

LESSON 4: DOUBLE STOPS—6THS

A WORLD TURNED UPSIDE-DOWN

A 6th is the inversion of a 3rd (for more on intervals and inversions, see pages 83–88). In other words, a 6th is a 3rd turned upside-down. For example, G to B is a major 3rd, while B to G is a minor 6th. When an interval is inverted, its quality (major or minor) is changed. So, keep in mind that *major* 3rds invert to *minor* 6ths, and *minor* 3rds invert to *major* 6ths. Here are fingerings for major 6ths (M6) and minor 6ths (m6).

Major 6ths (M6)

Minor 6ths (m6)

Below is a G Major scale harmonized in 6ths. The cycle still relates to the diatonic cycle. Now the roots are in the top voice, and the harmony is in the lower voice.

49

Melody
Harmony

m6 M6 M6 m6 m6 M6 M6 m6

T 3 5 7 8 10 12 14 15
A 2 3 5 7 9 10 12 14
B

2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2
| | | | | | | |

Harmonized 6ths have a more open, spread out sound than 3rds. Here is a move using 6ths that you can apply to any major chord. This is a very common sound on the mandolin. It is reminiscent of the guitar lick used in the intro to Van Morrison’s “Brown Eyed Girl.” Here it is shown for a G, C and D chord (I, IV and V in the key of G).

50

G C D

T 3 5 7 5 3 3 5 7 5 3 5 7 9 7 5
A 2 3 5 3 2 2 3 5 3 2 4 5 7 5 4
B

2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Now that you have some familiarity with pentatonic scales and understand how they can be used, here is a great tune for you to try. This tune is composed solely from the notes contained in the G Major Pentatonic scale and provides a perfect example of how the scale can not only sound pleasing over different chords in a key but can be crafted into a very nice sounding tune too.



SPOOTISKERRY REEL

Track 33

Swing 8ths

Musical score for "Spootiskerry Reel" in G Major, 4/4 time, Swing 8ths. The score consists of six systems, each with a treble clef staff and a mandolin tablature staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

System 1 (Measures 1-4): Chords G, C, D. Tablature: 0 1 3 0 1 3 0 1 3 | 0 1 3 0 1 0 1 3 | 0 1 3 0 1 3 | 0 2 0 3 1 0 1

System 2 (Measures 5-8): Chords G, C, D, G. Tablature: 5 0 2 5 0 2 5 | 0 2 5 3 0 0 5 0 | 2 5 5 0 2 | 2 5 5 0

System 3 (Measures 9-12): Chords Emin, G, C, D. Tablature: 3 0 5 0 5 2 | 2 0 2 5 2 0 2 | 5 0 2 5 0 3 0 5 | 2 0 0 5 0

System 4 (Measures 13-16): Chords Emin, G, C, G, D. Tablature: 3 0 5 0 5 2 | 2 0 2 5 2 0 2 | 5 0 2 5 0 3 0 5 | 2 5 5 5

System 5 (Measures 17-20): Chords Emin, G, C, G, D. Tablature: 3 0 5 0 5 2 | 2 0 2 5 2 0 2 | 5 0 2 5 0 3 0 5 | 2 0 0 0 2

System 6 (Measures 21-24): Chords G, C, D, G. Tablature: 5 0 2 5 0 2 5 | 0 2 5 0 2 0 2 | 3 0 5 5 2 0 | 2 5 5