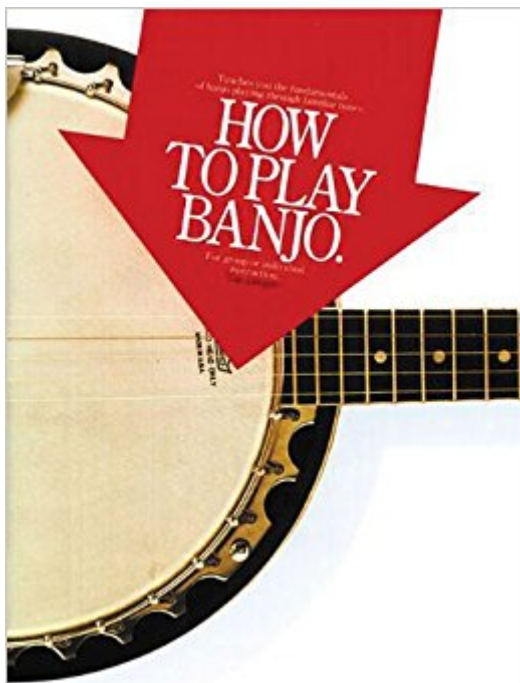


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# How To Play Banjo



## Synopsis

(Music Sales America). This book teaches the fundamentals of banjo playing through familiar tunes, including: Buffalo Gals \* Down in the Valley \* Blue-tail Fly \* and many more.

## Book Information

Series: Banjo

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

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## Customer Reviews

Best written tab book on the market. I have been teaching banjo for 40 years and the songs in the bluegrass section are the best approach for beginners. email me at [jmichaelpope@gmail.com](mailto:jmichaelpope@gmail.com) for educational recording of piecers. Thanks Tim for the great book. The book contains a concise tutorial of other banjo styles as well.

This music book is a must have for beginning banjo players. Over 20 years ago I bought this book to start with an instructor, learned the basics, but moved out of state to finish college. I didn't start again until last year, twenty five years later. Yes, I was very rusty but starting back with the banjo was much easier with this book.

very good, well written book, has been very helpful. I would recommend to beginner's. The use of song's to teach progression's was my favorite thing.

Great for beginners; just what I needed

So, there I was. A thirty-something workaholic looking for a new hobby to unwind a bit, but with very little in the way of musical experience. Nonetheless, inspired by a local Allison Kraus concert, I found a hot deal on a great used banjo on E-bay and I was off and running! What fun! I'm hooked on the 5-string twang!! About 3 months or so at 30-minutes a day (give or take) and I can play well enough to entertain myself - and my wife and the cat can at least stay in the same room! Not many banjo instructors in New England, so I thought I'd go in for a few good teach-yourself manuals. I bought four. In order of usefulness they were - Revised Banjo Primer by Geoff Hohwald - First Lessons Banjo by Jack Hatfield - How to Play the 5-string Banjo by Pete Seeger - How to Play Banjo by Tim Jumper. The Banjo Primer was the best of the lot. I was able to make good progress with about 30 minutes practice each day. The instructions were clear and the tunes were fun to play (Cripple Creek, Boil 'em Cabbage Down, Worried Man Blues). It was VERY helpful that the book came with a CD. Some lessons I just couldn't get until I heard them played, then they came easily. Each lesson is played at three speeds, but I've pretty much given up EVER matching the insanely fast top speed. First Lessons was next best. It also came with a useful CD with multiple speeds and I think I've at least got a shot at the top speed. It also includes tracks with only the backup musicians so you can jam on your own (I haven't reached that point yet). The choice of music wasn't as good - the intro claims that well-known songs are easier to learn, but I found them to be cliché and boring (Tom Dooley, Old Time Religion, Good Night Ladies). It was much more fun to learn a song I didn't know and finding myself actually playing something that sounds like bluegrass after the long struggle! Both books cover roughly the same techniques and both focus exclusively on Scruggs Style picking (all plucking, almost no chord strumming). It's turning into my favorite style. But my goal is to play well enough to sit in on a local bluegrass jam, so I've also started to learn other styles (e.g. frailing) that will let me strum on chords in the background to build confidence. For that I need other books, but so far I haven't found a good one. By all accounts, Pete Seeger's book seems to be the classic in the field. It started as a set of hand copied notes and it really is lots of fun to read. I hope that once I improve a bit more I'll be able to get more out of it. My guess is that it's the book you'd want if you already had a community of pickers around to lend advice and guidance. As a teach-yourself manual though, I'm finding it tough going. How to Play Banjo is the worst of the lot. To my untrained eye it seems more like a guitar book than a bluegrass banjo book. The focus is on chords and strumming (which is good for my next step I suppose), but it's just boring. The instruction is minimal and the music uninteresting, at least to me. I tried several times to get into it but found myself quickly going back to the other manuals when I realized I was no longer looking

forward to my practice times. I finally threw in the towel on this one when I used it to try to learn "frailing". I like to think I'm a smart guy, but I just didn't get it. And I don't think it was me. Maybe if it came with a CD that I could listen to I could work it out. I'm now in the market for an alternative, but in the meantime I'll keep pickin' with the Scruggs Style. One last bit of advice. I highly recommend getting at least two books. I found myself much more motivated jumping back and forth between the Primer and First Lessons - when one got too hard or too boring, I'd work on the other for a few days. A great trick to keep from getting stuck. I'm in the market for some "intermediate" books next and I'll probably take the same approach. Happy Picking!!

I first used this book as a student in 1976. Since that time, I have taught more than 100 students Bluegrass banjo using this book with 100% success. The book allows me to teach a basic style of strumming and left hand technique, preparatory to learning standard roles and licks associated with three finger style. By the time my students reach the introduction to Scruggs Style, they have already mastered or are on their way to mastering hammer-ons, pull-offs, and slides; not to mention several cords. This evolution allows me to concentrate on right hand technique (rolls). When all is said and done, the student emerges from the book with at least two styles of banjo playing. I have found the techniques related to claw hammer banjo, as presented in the first section of this book, an invaluable addition to my repertoire. In fact, I primarily use claw hammer as a means of playing accompaniment. In conclusion, anyone serious about effective banjo instruction should seriously consider this book for his or her students.

This book is awesome. I started playing banjo about a year ago and I tell you that this is the best beginning level banjo book I've seen, it's way better than any of the Mel Bay books (I own a couple). The problem with most other beginning level books is that they act like bluegrass is the only way to play banjo. This book starts you off with an old-timey up-picking style, then moves to frailing and clawhammer and then to bluegrass. I was playing banjo with a guy I know who is insanely fast at bluegrass style, when he heard me playing in up-picking style he asked "What is that?" He'd been playing banjo for 5 years and had never heard of up-picking, which is a style that preceeds bluegrass. The best thing about this book is that you can learn to play songs in an easy style that sounds good, while you are learning bluegrass style (which is hard- I'm still far from being a master). It provides a good overview of several banjo playing styles and is presented in a clear and straightforward manner.

The content of the book is good, as it provides a comfortable progression from basic to complicated playing styles. However, there isn't an accompanying CD or tape. If you don't read music; or you are unable to figure out the timing of a song from the tablature, it's difficult to know what the music and exercises are supposed to sound like. This goes for all banjo instruction books. Do not buy any without an accompanying CD, unless you have a more advanced player or instructor who knows the songs.

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