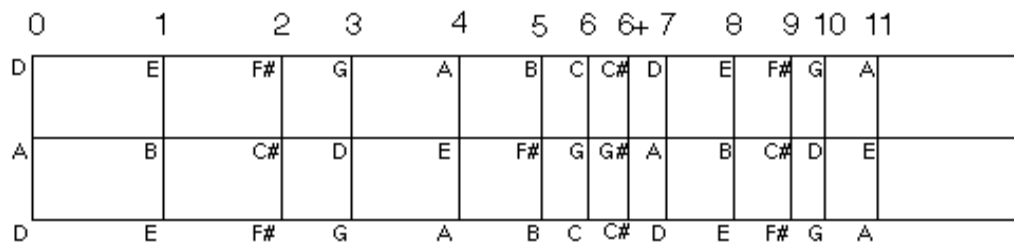


THE APPALACHIAN DULCIMER by Pete Shaw for Wild Heart Music

The dulcimer is an easy instrument to play. The fretboard looks like a guitar's, but less complicated. Or like a piano with almost no black notes.

Place it across your lap, or on a table in front of you, with the tuning knobs to your left. With your right hand you strum across all the strings, using a soft to medium guitar plectrum. In your left you hold a short piece of wood, called a 'Noter'. This could be a 2" to 3" pencil, and with it you press down on the nearest string to you (which is usually a double string), just to the left of a desired fret at the same time as strumming.



The above diagram shows a modern dulcimer - older ones do not have the extra fret marked '6+'. There are two common tunings, or 'Modes', called **Mixolydian & Ionian**. Mixolydian in the key of D is shown above. The furthest string from you (the upper one on the diagram) is the bass string. It and the middle string are called the drones. The nearest one to you is the melody string, usually a pair tuned the same as each other.

Mixolydian mode

<u>Key</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Bass</u>	<u>Mid</u>	<u>Melody</u>	<u>Scale starts</u>
D	Mixolydian	D	A	d	0

If you ignore the 6+ fret, start on the open melody string, playing each note up the scale in succession, you are playing the 'Mixolydian' scale of D-E-F#-G-A-B-C-D. The tune '*Old Joe Clark*' starts on A (4th fret), '*Three Blind Mice*' on F# (2nd fret).

Ionian mode

<u>Key</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Bass</u>	<u>Mid</u>	<u>Melody</u>	<u>Scale starts</u>
D	Ionian	D	A	A	3

To change to Ionian, retune your melody strings down to A (the same as the middle string). The melody string now has the same notes as the middle string in the diagram above. Again, ignore the 6+ fret, start on the 3rd fret on the melody string, playing each note up the scale in succession, you are playing the 'Ionian' scale of D-E-F#-G-A-B-C#-D. The tune '*British Grenadiers*' starts on A (open string).

Notice that if you use the 6+ fret instead of the normal 6th fret, you can play an Ionian scale in the Mixolydian tuning, starting on the open string

MORE ADVANCED STUFF

There are other Modes available to you, by retuning your dulcimer slightly. The following table shows the list and scales, using 6, not 6+. All in the key of D.

<u>Key</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Strings</u>	<u>Scale starts</u>	<u>Mode using 6+, not 6</u>
D	Mixolydian	DAd	0	Ionian
D	Aeolian	DAC	1	Dorian
D	Locrian	DABb	2	Phrygian
D	Ionian	DAA	3	Lydian
D	Dorian	DAG	4	Mixolydian
D	Phrygian	DAF	5	Aeolian
D	Lydian	DAE	6	Locrian

Here are some others used:

A	Mixolydian (1)	A'AA	0
A	Mixolydian (2)	EAA	0
Am	Dorian (1)	AAd	4
Am	Dorian (2)	EAd	4
G	Ionian (1)	G'Gd	3
G	Ionian (2)	DGd	3
G	Ionian (3)	G'dd	3
G	Ionian (4)	Ddd	3