

HOW TO SELECT YOUR CLASS

With the evaluation sheets that are completed each year, the most common observation is the skill level difference of students in the same class. The instructors will valiantly try to handle the wide range but if a bit more time was taken to select the best class for you, this situation would be solved.

Choosing the correct level of instruction is so important to maximize your music camp experience. We will be glad to assist you if you need more information on the class outline or which class is the best fit for you. Please feel free to call Tracy Lalonde at 306-370-7360. Remember, it is just as disruptive to others if you are too advanced in a beginner/intermediate class as it is to be a beginner in an advanced class.



Beginner

You are relatively new to your instrument. You have been teaching yourself or learning from a book and are looking for a solid base to be established. You want to know about correct posture, how to hold the pick or bow, what strings to use, tips on tuning and intonation, etc. You need to be introduced to good study/practice habits, how to read music or tablature, and developing excellent technique.

Intermediate

You are progressing on your instrument. You are ready to start to play with other musicians and you can already play a few tunes from memory. You can play along with a CD if it is at medium speed.

You are feeling that you need a booster to get you moving toward the next level. You have a solid grasp of all the basic techniques for your instrument and may be able to read tablature or music.

Advanced

You are looking for fine tuning tips on how to improve your playing. You can jam with others, improvise fairly well on new tunes and are (or want to) play in a organized band. Your tab/music reading skills are great. You know some scales and how to use them in improvisation situations.

Your speed is improving as you use your metronome. You have an arsenal of tunes you can play from memory. You play your instrument or practice almost every day.

BANJO

Beginner/Intermediate/Advanced 5–String Banjo Boot Camp

This class will further develop both the left and right hand techniques. Learn some great licks and some variations on rolls as you explore the dusty regions of your banjo neck.

You will certainly learn a lot more than just a tune or two!! You will learn what makes a banjo sound good, how to set one up, how to tune the head of a banjo, how to practice and get better fast....

”About the last thing I'm going to be showing anyone is how to play “Cripple Creek”...

This is a banjo boot camp that will be about everything banjo. It's much more fun than learning to play a tune, and very challenging for beginners and long time players alike...”

--Robert Earl Davis--

Required Skill Level: You should know the tuning of your banjo, be able to play some basic rolls, and the ability to read tablature would be an asset, but not necessary.

OLD TIME (CLAWHAMMER STYLE) BANJO

This class is for beginner to intermediate players who love the old time sound. Unlike Bluegrass or “Scruggs Style” banjo rolls, all notes are produced with a downward strumming or ‘clawhammer’ motion of the right hand. Learn this highly rhythmic method of playing, concentrating on common chords and right hand technique.

Required Skill Level: You should know the tuning of your 5-string banjo, and knowing a few common chords would be an asset.

MANDOLIN

Beginner Mandolin

Learn how to fine tune your instrument, choose the right strings & picks and get started. Develop a good study habit as you practice some basic tunes. Learn the history and the role of the mandolin in a traditional bluegrass band.

Required Skill Level: You are somewhat familiar with the mandolin, how it is strung, and the basic chord positions.

Intermediate/Advanced Mandolin

This class will focus on learning how to maximize your bluegrass mandolin “chop” and explore how to incorporate different styles such as cross-picking into your picking. Learn some cool scales & licks and when they can and should be used.

Required Skill Level: You should know a few tunes from memory and be able to chord/chop easily. You are looking to play faster and cleaner and to improve your improvisation skills.

FIDDLE

Beginner Fiddle

This class will focus on learning several simple fiddle tunes. You will also learn how to support the melody by playing some chord fills.

Required Skill Level: You are somewhat familiar with the fiddle, how it is strung, and know a few tunes and basic scales.

Intermediate/Advanced Fiddle

This class will teach improvisational fiddle styles such as bluegrass, swing and old time. You will be guided through a series of skills that range from ornamenting the melody to playing over chord changes.

Required Skill Level: You play comfortably in a group and have a number of fiddle tunes in your repertoire. You are looking for ways to fine tune your improvisational skills.

GUITAR

Beginner Guitar

This class will really get you progressing on the guitar. Learn some basic chords and perhaps even some better ways of playing some of the chords you already know. Develop your muscle memory as you learn how to play in time, in tune and accompany yourself or others. Practice some new rhythm patterns and variations of strumming.

Required Skill Level: You know how to tune your instrument and can play a few chords and strum patterns.

Intermediate Guitar

This class will spend time on Timing, Tone, Technique and the role of a rhythm guitarist. You will learn how to properly support the song / band with dynamics and explore some Runs, Intros and Endings.

Required Skill Level: You know how to play a few tunes already. You are comfortable playing basic chords and are looking to improve your tone and speed. You are interested in base runs and more advanced chording opportunities.

Advanced Rhythm Guitar

This class will help you to develop strong and useful right hand techniques, fast and "cheater" chord changes, bass note walk-ups and general advanced level mayhem. You will also learn how to develop a song repertoire, back up a lead player and how to add some special spice to your rhythm playing using the techniques of the pros!

Required Skill Level: You are a solid rhythm player and are quite comfortable playing in most keys (well maybe not F#) and are looking to improve your improvisational skills for lead breaks. You have a good quantity of tunes you already play well and are looking for more challenges. You enjoy flat-picking the guitar and want to improve your style and learn more tunes to flat pick.

OLD TIME PIANO

This class is for intermediate to advanced players. We will work with tunes to explore chording patterns, developing/expanding your abilities to create interesting accompaniments. Learn to expand upon basic chording variations like I, IV, V to add colour and depth to your chording.

Required Skill Level: Should have a minimum Grade 6 level or equivalent. should understand chord names and chord structures. A familiarity with chord charts is an asset.

RESOPHONIC GUITAR (DOBRO)

Learn how to play the dobro, bluegrass style. Develop your right and left hand skills as you explore the G tuning. Learn some standard licks and improve your overall technique. Hear some classic intros and fills. Develop your right hand picking skills and your left hand bar skills

Required Skill Level: You know how to tune your instrument. You know some chords and are looking to fine tune your skills. Knowledge of tablature would be an asset, but is not necessary.

UPRIGHT BASS

This class will teach you how to play in all the most common keys used in bluegrass and old time music. Special emphasis will be on proper posture and bass ergonomics so that you can maximize your comfort level as you play this physically demanding instrument. Basic music theory and playing in time & in tune will be covered. You will learn relaxation, rhythm and intonation. Other topics covered will be bass line construction, note length, playing bluegrass standards, instrument setup, and slapping!

Required Skill Level: You know how to tune your instrument and can play along with others.

Note – there may opportunity to register in this class if you play a guitar-style bass.

VOCAL HARMONY

Learn proper breathing and posture as you sing. Practice some warm-up exercises for your vocal calisthenics. Explore the full range of bluegrass harmony singing and learn stage microphone techniques. This class will focus on finding the tenor and baritone parts for that tight, bluegrass harmony sound. You will also explore duet singing, a tradition in old time music.

Learn proper microphone control, breathing, and how to develop your listening skills to get right on pitch every time. Pick up some tips on relaxing and rehearsing your voice.

Required Skill Level: You should be able to match a note and sing unison with it. (i.e. sing on key) and have a keen interest in learning how 3 voices can blend.

SONGWRITING

Learn the fundamentals of good songwriting, especially as they relate to Bluegrass and Old Time music. Classes will consist of songwriting exercises (working on melodies, lyrics, rhyming exercises, phrasing, and rewriting/editing exercises) and some bluegrass/old-time song analysis. You will also explore co-writing and will have the opportunity to perform your brand new song with some first class accompaniment!