

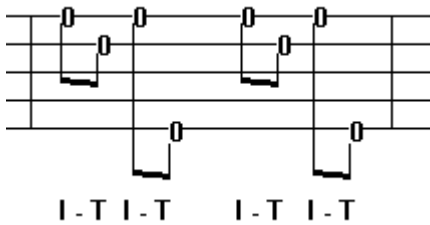
Old Time Banjo / Clawhammer Lesson #4

A. Double Drop-Thumb

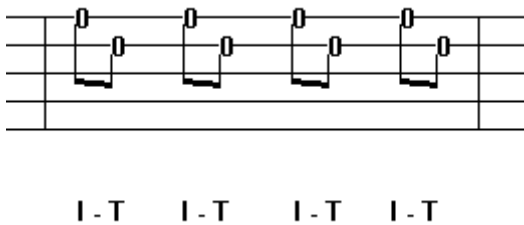
One of the more important parts of Clawhammer banjo playing, as you can see by now, is the use of the thumb dropped down to the inside strings. This allows some of the important melody notes to be played in faster more complicated tunes.

The technique we'll learn now is known as double drop-thumb: the thumb plays the inside main strings for both times in the index-thumb-index-thumb sequence, and doesn't hit the fifth string at all.

So...in double thumbing we had:



Now, in double drop-thumb we have:



B. Practice Double Drop-Thumbing

As you can see from the previous page, the normally thumbed fifth string has been substituted for a melody note on the inside second string. This pattern can be used on the other inside strings as well. Try these practices to get the idea further, then work on the tune on the following page.

The first practice exercise is written on a five-line staff with strings labeled E, D, A, D, A from top to bottom. It consists of four measures. The first measure has two notes on the A string (open and first fret) with 'I-T' below. The second measure has two notes on the D string (open and first fret) with 'I-T' below. The third measure has a triplet of three notes on the D string (open, first, and second fret) with 'I-T' below, followed by a note on the A string (open) with 'I-T' below. The fourth measure has a triplet of three notes on the D string (open, first, and second fret) with 'I-T' below, followed by a note on the A string (open) with 'I-T' below.

The second practice exercise is written on a five-line staff with strings labeled E, D, A, D, A from top to bottom. It consists of six measures. The first measure has two notes on the A string (open and first fret) with 'I-T' below. The second measure has two notes on the D string (open and first fret) with 'I-T' below. The third measure has a note on the D string (open) with 'I-T' below, followed by a note on the A string (second fret) with 'I-T' below. The fourth measure has a note on the D string (second fret) with 'I-T' below, followed by a note on the A string (open) with 'I-T' below. The fifth measure has a note on the D string (second fret) with 'I-T' below, followed by a note on the A string (first fret) with 'I-T' below. The sixth measure is empty with the text 'Etc.' written across it.



C. The Wind That Shakes The Barley

This beautiful Irish tune in the key of D (Double D tuning) fits the melodic Clawhammer style perfectly. Get the regular "A" part down solid before trying the variation. Note that the "A" part is repeated twice. And watch the ending in the "B" part; lots of double-thumb work there.

Part A:

I-H B-T I-T I-P I-H B-T I I-T I-H B-T I-T I-P I-T I-T I-T

Part B:

I B-T I B-T I B-T I-T I-P I B-T I B-T I-H I-T I-T

I-T I-T I-T I-T I-T I-T I-T I-P I-H I-T I-T I-T I-T I-T I-H I-T

Part A Variation:

I I-H I-T I-P I-H I-P I I-T I I-H I-T I-P I-T I-T I-T

This tune can go round and round forever; when you're ready to end it, do this:

I I-H I-T I-P B