

Using the Piano Keyboard

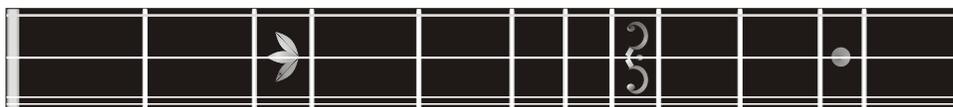
To illustrate several important aspects of music theory, I have incorporated the use of a piano keyboard numerous times within this text. Because the keyboard is laid out linearly, it is much easier to “see” these concepts first on the keyboard, then apply them to the dulcimer fretboard. Interestingly enough, all this music theory is right there in front of you in black and white; no pun intended!



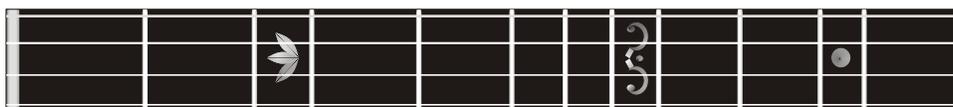
If you have access to a keyboard instrument, then I would like to strongly encourage you to use it as a tool to help you understand these subjects faster. It will help you to hear the text in ways that are very helpful in developing your ear. Although a keyboard is not required to learn music theory, it is the simplest means of audible illustration and will aid tremendously in your absorption of this material.

Using the Dulcimer Fretboard

Throughout this book I will refer to a dulcimer fretboard similar to the one illustrated below. This is the traditional diatonic scale arrangement, with the 6½ fret as the only added fret. When appropriate, I have included material for both the traditional 3-string arrangement, as well as for 4 equidistant strings. However, most of the material herein will apply equally well to both.



4 Equidistant Strings - Just one of the many aspects I love about the 4 equidistant string arrangement is that it gives you four individual notes to work with at the same time. As you will learn in this book, this allows you to more fully define many different chords. I believe it also greatly enhances the musical expression of this remarkable instrument without destroying its simplistic beauty.



If you have not yet experimented with 4 equidistant strings, perhaps now is the time. I want to encourage you to give it a try, as I’m sure you won’t be disappointed! But be careful; you may find, as I did, you may not ever want to go back to 3-strings!