

Holding the Instrument

The performer should sit upright in a chair without arms. Rest the rim on the right leg, about four inches from the body, keeping it in place by a moderate pressure of the body on the upper part of the rim.

The arm of the banjo should be raised so that the pegs are in line with the chin. Support the arm at the nut in the hollow between the thumb and largest joint of the first finger of the left hand, the thumb being on the upper side of the arm at the nut, with the first and second fingers arched directly over the first and second strings.

Method of Using the Plectrum (or Pick)

Place the plectrum between the thumb and first finger near the end of the finger. Keep the thumb almost straight. Strike the strings with the flat surface of the plectrum, never with the edge.

Rest the forearm on the rim about four inches from the tailpiece. Arch the wrist and strike the strings from above, not across them, except in playing chords.

Begin by playing softly, using down and up strokes alternately. Practice these until able to play them rapidly, producing the Tremolo, which is the method of sustaining notes on all plectrum instruments.