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FOREWORD

THIS is a tenor banjo method for the beginner. It is a simple course of instruction that starts the pupil on the very necessary fundamentals of melody and chord playing. While it is sufficiently complete for the beginner, it does not pretend to cover the entire subject of tenor banjo playing.

The course is based upon a practical plan used by Mr. Hamilton in his personal instruction at his studios for the teaching and development of professional players.

The method teaches the playing of the tenor banjo in progressive steps in the correct sequence. The exercises follow the explanatory text matter and provide practice studies for the pupil. The author intends his course to be a "self instructor," but any pupil can improve his playing with the aid of competent personal instruction. In such cases the banjo teacher can use the method as a guide and study book for the pupil.

We recommend that you read the text carefully, practice faithfully in regular periods, and follow the lesson plan as it is outlined.

The rest is entirely up to you.

Published By

LUDWIG & LUDWIG

Makers of Professional Instruments

1611-27 North Lincoln Street, Chicago

This Instruction Method is Not Sold Separately

Care Of The Banjo

Keep the skin tightly stretched by tightening the tension bolts placed around the rim.

When tightening the skin give each nut about a quarter turn before proceeding to the next, then pass several times around the instrument until the skin is very tight.

Take care to protect the skin from moisture.

When the instrument is not in use keep it in the case.

Change the strings frequently.

Every few days wipe off the dirt that accumulates on the under part of the strings, this is done by taking a cloth, placing it under the strings and rubbing it up and down the fingerboard.

Keep your banjo clean. This not only adds to the appearance but also to the life of the finish.

How To Practice

Set aside a regular time each day for practice and allow nothing to interfere.

Get one thing well before attempting another.

Think of your practice period as a pleasure not as a drudge.

When you get to enjoy your practicing success is assured.

It is well for the beginner to check up on his position every fifteen or twenty minutes during the practice period, until it becomes a habit to play in good position.

A half hour of conscientious practice is worth more than two hours of careless practice.

Remember as you practice, you play.

Ensemble playing – duets, orchestra and banjo band practice – is very beneficial.

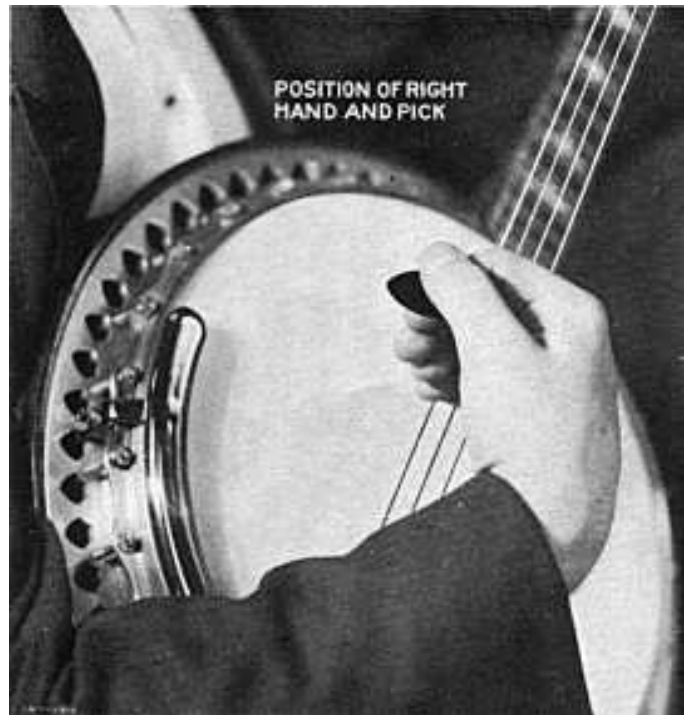
Sit erect while playing, try to look at ease.

Speed is not the beginners object, but accuracy is.

Keep your eyes on the music.

How to Hold the Pick

The pick is held in the right hand between the thumb and first finger. Hold the pick loose, don't pinch.



POSITION

The Banjo to be held in a good position must be held in as comfortable a manner as possible without interfering with the movements of the right or left hand; to do this sit in a chair that has no arms, (this allows more freedom of the body) set the resonator of the banjo on the right thigh against the body at a forty-five degree angle. Place it so that if a line were drawn from the knee to the shoulder it would cross the exact center of the banjo head. When this is done you will notice that the banjo is a little too low, that is, not close enough to your breast. To raise the instrument up just cross your right leg over your left leg. This you will notice raises the instrument about three inches. Now put the fleshy part of your right forearm (the part just below the elbow) on the arm rest. Then arch your wrist over the bridge at the first string. Now relax your wrist and imagine your arm is clamped to the arm rest which would prevent any movement of the arm. This leaves only the wrist to make the stroke with. Now stroke the strings by lifting up the hand (moving only at the wrist) and letting it fall back striking all the strings. To strike only one string keep the same position but, when lifting the hand aim the pick at the skin of the banjo, this enables the next string to stop the pick.

The neck of the banjo should be held on a slight angle and not too close to the body.

Hold the left hand in the position shown by diagram and place the thumb under the neck, with the thumb pointing toward the peg-head. Only the thumb and joint of the first finger touch the neck. Now place your first finger down on the second fret of the first string, then the second finger on the third fret of the first string

(still holding first finger down) then put the fourth finger down on the fifth fret of the first string (still holding first and second fingers down). When placing your fingers on the strings, place the tips of the fingers down just before the fret to be stopped; use a little pressure, also keep the fingers well arched. This is the fundamental position of holding the banjo.



A-1



A-2



B-1



B-2

