

Little Birdie *closed single string solo*

Here are two solos on one of my favorite traditional songs, “Little Birdie.” The first “Little Birdie” solo is made up of mostly continuous down–up 1/8 notes. The second solo, on page 30, includes some double stops. The first is written in a closed position, all the notes are fretted, and it uses a closed G major scale position. The root or first note of the scale is played on the third string, fifth fret, with the first finger. Here’s what that scale looks like:

1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 3 2 1 4 | 3 2 1

T
A
B 5 7 9 10 | 5 7 9 10 | 9 7 5 10 | 9 7 5

Since most of the songs in the bluegrass-old-time-country-folk repertoire are vocals, the range of notes they use are generally limited to a single octave plus a note or two above and below that octave. This scale shows some of the most likely notes above and below the scale. Obviously there are a few more, especially below the third string, fifth fret root. What are they? Fretting finger numbers are between the music and tablature staves in *italic* type and scale note numbers are above the music staff in **bold** type.

5 6 | 1 2 | 3 4 | 5 6 | 7 8/1 | 2 3 | 4 5

2 3 | 1 2 | 3 4 | 1 2 | 3 4 | 1 2 | 3 4 | 1 2 | 3 4

T
A
B 7 9 | 5 7 | 9 10 | 5 7 | 9 10 | 5 7 | 8 10

It makes sense then that if you learn where the scales are located you should be able to find the notes to just about any melody. By moving the scale position around to different root notes you’ll be able to play a melody in any key. That’s an awesome skill to develop.

This particular G major scale can be identified by which finger you use to play the root of the scale, in this case the first finger. Each different root/finger combination defines a different position where the major scale is played. You should also explore major scales where the root is played by the second, third, and fourth fingers. Once you can play a G major scale starting with the first finger, be sure to move that scale up, down, and across the fingerboard to as many different keys as you can find. Don’t expect to master this in a week or a few months. Plan on spending a lot of time and eventually the knowledge and skill will kick in. **Key of G.**



Tracks 22 & 23

Little Birdie

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Musical notation for measures 1-9. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), 2/4 time signature. Chords G and D are indicated above the staff. Fingering numbers (2, 3, 1, 3, 2, 1, 3, 2) are placed below the notes. The tablature below shows fret numbers (7, 9, 5, 9, 9, 9, 9, 7, 7, 7, 7, 4, 9, 7, 7, 7, 9, 7, 7, 7) and includes stem diagrams for the fretted notes.

Musical notation for measures 10-18. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), 2/4 time signature. Chord G is indicated above the staff. Fingering numbers (2, 3, 1, 1, 2, 1, 4, 2, 1, 3, 2) are placed below the notes. The tablature below shows fret numbers (7, 9, 4, 5, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 5, 5, 9, 9, 9, 9, 7, 9, 7, 4, 5, 10, 7, 5, 10, 7, 9, 5, 7, 7, 7, 7, 9, 7) and includes stem diagrams for the fretted notes.

Musical notation for measures 19-26. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), 2/4 time signature. Chord D is indicated above the staff. Fingering numbers (1, 3, 1, 2, 3, 2, 3, 1, 2, 2, 3, 1, 1) are placed below the notes. The tablature below shows fret numbers (5, 5, 5, 5, 9, 9, 9, 9, 5, 7, 5, 9, 5, 7, 5, 9, 7, 9, 7, 4, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 9, 4, 5) and includes stem diagrams for the fretted notes.

Musical notation for measures 27-34. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), 2/4 time signature. Chord G is indicated above the staff. Fingering numbers (2, 1, 3, 2, 3, 1, 1, 3, 1, 3, 2, 1) are placed below the notes. The tablature below shows fret numbers (7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 5, 5, 9, 9, 9, 9, 7, 9, 7, 4, 5, 5, 5, 9, 5, 9, 7, 5) and includes stem diagrams for the fretted notes.