

Mark Hanson's

# Fingerstyle Christmas Guitar



12 Beautiful Songs & Carols  
for Solo Guitar

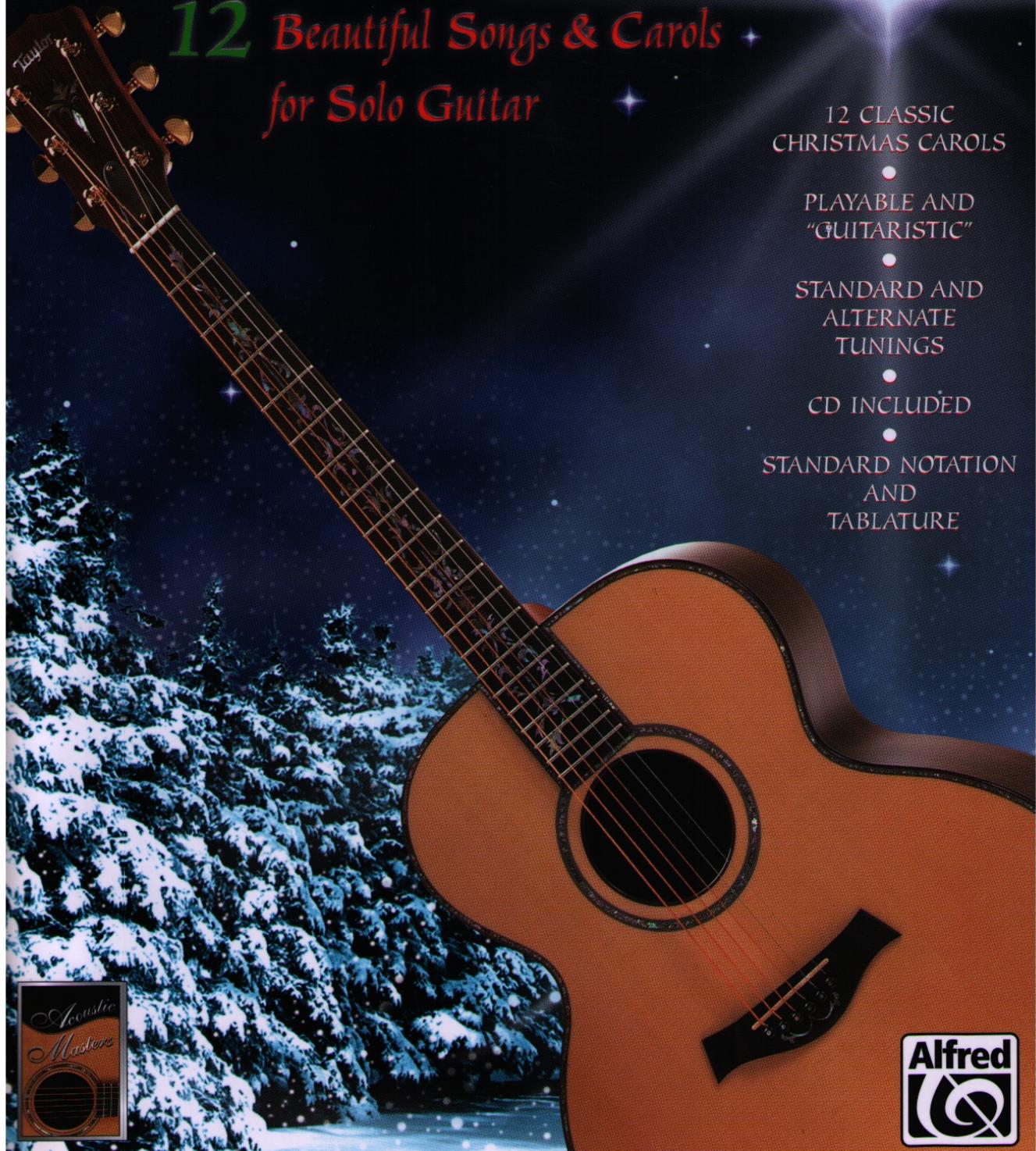
12 CLASSIC  
CHRISTMAS CAROLS

•  
PLAYABLE AND  
"GUITARISTIC"

•  
STANDARD AND  
ALTERNATE  
TUNINGS

•  
CD INCLUDED

•  
STANDARD NOTATION  
AND  
TABLATURE



Mark Hanson's

# Fingerstyle Christmas Guitar

12 Beautiful Songs & Carols  
for Solo Guitar

Project Manager: Aaron Stang  
Art Layout and Cover Design: Debbie Johns Lipton

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# Introduction

Welcome to *Fingerstyle Christmas Guitar*.

In this book and accompanying recording, I have included 12 solo guitar arrangements of some of the best-loved Christmas carols from both the sacred and secular repertoire.

You will find a wide variety of tunes here, ranging from the venerable classics "Silent Night" and "The First Noel" to the modern-day standards "Winter Wonderland" and "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas."

Among other tunes, you will also find a well-known gospel carol, "Go Tell It On The Mountain," and a lively German children's carol, "O Come Little Children." Other equally engaging carols arranged in this book include the haunting "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" and "In Dulci Jubilo."

## *The Arrangements*

Most of these arrangements are in the theme-and-variation style. In most of the tunes, the first stanza is arranged in a relatively easy manner, with each succeeding stanza becoming more technically demanding. This approach allows all fingerpickers to play the tunes at their own level.

## *How to Use the Book*

The carols are grouped by the degree of difficulty of the most challenging sections of their arrangements.

Most players will find the arrangements of the first group of carols quite easy to play. This group includes "The First Noel," "O Come, Little Children," "It Came Upon The Midnight Clear," and "Silent Night." For beginning and intermediate-level players, these arrangements will prove very satisfying, requiring a modest amount of effort to make them musical. More advanced players can use these arrangements as templates for devising or improvising more involved versions of the tunes.

The intermediate-level carols add to the technical requirements. They are designed to be playable by intermediate- and higher-level fingerpickers.

The more challenging carols, while technically demanding and musically rich, are designed to be as playable as possible. Few outlandish stretches or jumps are required. If the tempos are reasonable, these arrangements should be attainable by upper intermediate-level players who play with good hand position and technique.



## Techniques Used

These arrangements are written for the way I play: using the thumb and three fingers to pick and, on occasion, fretting the sixth string with the thumb. It is not necessary to play exactly this way to succeed with these arrangements, but it helps.

If you pick with only your thumb and one finger at this point, consider getting another finger or two involved. Picking with the thumb and less than three fingers will work, but oftentimes an important harmony note in the chord will disappear if only two or three notes are plucked instead of four. "Sweeping" or strumming several strings with a finger will help produce a fuller chord. There can be problems with this approach, however. There are several instances in the arrangements where four notes are plucked simultaneously, but with a single string omitted in the middle of the voicing. Measure 17 of "O Come, Little Children" is a good example. This is a relatively easy technique for players who pick with several fingers, but not so easy for thumb-and-one-finger pickers.

If the omitted string is a note of the chord, strumming with a finger can produce a satisfactory sound, as in the example from "O Come, Little Children." However, if the omitted string is an errant note, strumming will produce a sound you don't want. In this case, it would be better to pick only the melody and bass notes, leaving out the inner notes.

The best solution: learn to pick with the thumb and three fingers! Picking with the thumb and three fingers may enhance your playing more than you imagine, with richer chords and easier access to more notes.

Fretting the bass string with the thumb is simply impossible for many people. For those folks, barre chords usually are the alternative. Another possibility: consider using the open fifth string (an A note) as the lowest bass note of F chords and some D chords.

## The Guitar Tunings

Although most of the arrangements in this book use standard tuning, several use alternate tunings.

Drop-D tuning, Open-D, Open-G, and Gmajor7th—or "G Wahine" as it is called in the Hawaiian slack key tradition—are represented as well.

## Video Versions

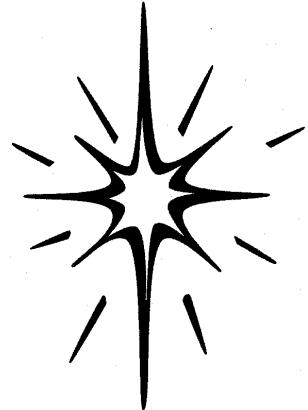
Eight of these 12 arrangements are also available in video format from Warner Brothers: *Fingerstyle Christmas Guitar Vols. 1 & 2* (REH894 & REH895). The arrangement of "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas" included in this book is considerably expanded from the video version.

Have a great time working through these carols. I hope they help you more fully enjoy this holiday season and many holiday seasons to come.

—Mark Hanson



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# It Came Upon The Midnight Clear

This beautiful nineteenth-century carol lends itself very well to an easy guitar arrangement in standard tuning in the key of C.

## First Stanza

Likely the only technical problem that you may encounter in the first stanza (measures 1–31) is fretting the sixth string. Except for the G chords in measures 14, 21, 23, and 30, I fret all of the sixth-string fretted notes with my thumb. If you are able to accomplish that, great. If not, you will need to fret them with a finger or eliminate the sixth string from the chord. Ex. 1 is a substitute for measures 5–7.

**Ex. 1:**

In the first measure of Ex. 1, eliminate the low F note from the F chord, and substitute the open fifth string, an A note. You can eliminate the low F from the F chords in measures 26 and 29 in stanza 1 as well.

In the second measure of Ex. 1, fret the sixth string of the D7/F# chord with your middle finger and the third string with your ring finger. That fingering will set up the fingering for the moving melody on the second string.

Finally, in the third measure of Ex. 1, slide your middle finger to the third fret of the bass string, and fret the other two strings with your ring and little fingers.

## Second Stanza

The melody is in the bass in the second stanza, measures 32–64. The fingerings are quite easy except for measure 38, a D7/C chord.

There are two secrets to making this D7/C a manageable fingering: 1) sustain the C note (second string, first fret) with the index finger from the middle of measure 37 into measure 38; and 2) finger the low C in measure 37 (the third fret of the fifth string) with your ring finger, sustaining that into measure 38. With those two fingers in place (think of them as 2/3 of a first-position C chord), it is not too difficult to add the little finger on the fourth string and the middle finger on the second.

**Ex. 2:**



# It Came Upon The Midnight Clear



## Third Stanza

The melody reverts back to the treble in stanza 3 (measures 64–96). To add interest, I harmonized the melody a third below.



Again, to facilitate the F chords in measures 66, 69, 74, 77, 90, and 93, you may eliminate the sixth-string notes and substitute the open fifth string.



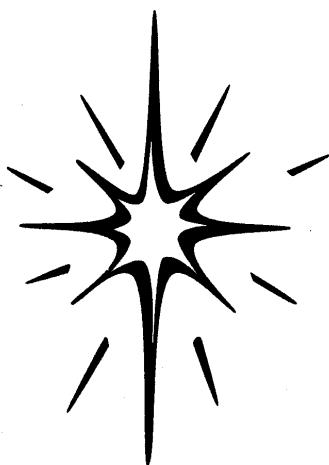
In measure 70, you may release the sixth string on the second beat as the treble notes travel up the neck a bit. You may want to barre the G chord in measures 71 and 72.



The fingering in measure 82 starts with the index and ring fingers on the first-beat notes, adding the little finger on the second beat. The fingerings are diagrammed in Ex. 3.

**Ex. 3:**

The diagram shows three guitar chord diagrams above a musical staff. The first chord is labeled E/G# and has a 3 1 fingering. The second chord has a 3 4 fingering. The third chord is labeled E and has a 0 0 0 0 0 1 fingering. Below the staff, there are two sets of horizontal lines representing the strings. The top set is labeled T, A, and B. The bottom set is labeled 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. Above the staff, the first note has a 3 # P below it, and the second note has a 4 # above it. The measure number 82 is at the bottom.



# It Came Upon The Midnight Clear

Words by  
EDMUND H. SEARS

Music by  
RICHARD S. WILLIS  
Arranged by Mark Hanson

Standard Tuning

$J = 120$

C                    F6                    C

T 0                T 1                T 0                T 0                T 0  
A 0                A 2                A 3                A 2                A 2  
B 3                B 1                B 2                B 3                B 3

1                    2                    3                    4

F                    D7/F#                    G

T 2                T 0                T 3                T 0  
A 3                A 2                A 0                A 0  
B 1                B 2                B 3                B 3

5                    6                    7                    8

C                    F6                    C

T 1                T 0                T 0                T 0  
A 0                A 2                A 3                A 2  
B 3                B 1                B 2                B 3

9                    10                    11                    12

F                    G                    C

T 2                T 0                T 1                T 0  
A 3                A 2                A 0                A 2  
B 1                B 3                B 0                B 3

13                    14                    15                    16

**E**                   **C6**                   **G/B**                   **Am**  
  
**(G/B      Am      G      D/F#      Em      D/F#)      G**  
  
**C**                   **F6**                   **C**  
  
**F**                   **G**                   **Csus**                   **C**  
  
**Dm7**                   **C/G**

F/A                    D7/C                    Dm11                    G

T  
A  
B

37                    38                    39                    40

C                    Dm7                    C/G

T  
A  
B

41                    42                    43                    44

F/A                    G                    C

T  
A  
B

45                    46                    47                    48

E                    Am                    C6

T  
A  
B

49                    50                    51                    52

G                    D7                    G                    G7

T  
A  
B

53                    54                    55                    56

Musical score for guitar, measures 57-59. The top staff shows a melody in C major. The middle staff shows a bass line. The bottom staff shows a guitar part with chords C, Dm7, and C/G. Measure 57 ends with a C chord. Measure 58 begins with a Dm7 chord. Measure 59 begins with a C/G chord.

57      58      59

Musical score for guitar, measures 60-62. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of F/A, and a G chord. The bottom staff shows the guitar neck with fingerings: T 0, A 1, B 3 at measure 60; T 0, A 3, B 0 at measure 61; and T 1, A 0, B 2 at measure 62.

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is for the piano, starting with a C major chord (C, E, G) followed by an F6 chord (F, A, C, E). The bottom staff is for the guitar, showing fingerings (T, A, B), string numbers (0, 1, 2, 3), and fret positions (e.g., 0, 1, 2, 3) across four measures (63-66).

**Piano Chords:**

- Measure 63: C major
- Measure 64: F6
- Measure 65: F6
- Measure 66: F6

**Guitar Fingerings:**

Measure	Fret 1	Fret 2	Fret 3	Fret 4
63	0	1	2	3
64	0	1	2	3
65	0	0	2	3
66	0	1	2	3

Musical score for Gsus, G, C, and F6 chords. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The bottom staff shows a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The score consists of four measures: Gsus (71), G (72), C (73), and F6 (74). The bass line is labeled with T, A, and B above the notes.

C F G

T A B  
75 76 77 78

Csus C E E/G# E

T A B  
79 80 81 82

C6 Am (G/B Am G D/F# Em D/F#)

T A B  
83 84 85 86

G C F6 C

T A B  
87 88 89 90 91

F G Csus C

T A B  
92 93 94 95 96

# The First Noel



No one knows how old this anonymous English carol is. According to the editors of the *New Century* hymnal of the UCC, "The First Noel" first appeared in print in the 1800s. The word Noel, which is also spelled Nowell, is derived from the Latin word *novellae*, which means news.

This quite easy arrangement is in standard tuning, twice through, in the key of G.



## First Stanza

As in "It Came Upon The Midnight Clear," the only technical problems you are likely to have with the first stanza (measures 1–25) are with fingerings that require a fretted sixth string.

In measure 2, I highly recommend that you fret the bass string of the G chord with the ring finger. This foundation provides easy access with the other fingers to all of the G major scale notes *while* you sustain the bass note.

The D/F# chord in measure 3 is best fingered with the middle finger fretting the bass string and the ring finger fretting the third string. This foundation allows the index and little fingers freedom to fret all of the notes on the first and second strings that may be used as melody notes. You will find this fingering throughout the first stanza.

The exception to this G chord fingering rule is when you move from a D/F# chord to a G. In that case, the middle finger usually slides up the bass string. You will find the D/F#-to-G chord progression in several places in "The First Noel," notably as you move from measure 4 to measure 5. When the middle finger frets the bass string on a G chord as in measure 5, use your ring and little fingers to fret the second and third strings, respectively. These chords are diagrammed in Ex. 4.

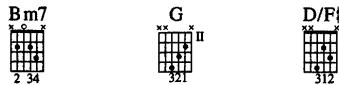
**Ex. 4:**



Finger the Bm7 in measure 19 with the middle, ring, and little fingers. This technique allows you to sustain the last note of measure 18 with the index finger as you fret the Bm7. Sustaining melody notes in this way makes for a beautifully flowing melody with no breaks or "hiccup" in it.

Both chords in measure 21 should be fingered with the index, middle, and ring fingers. Ex. 5 shows the chords from measures 19 and 21.

**Ex. 5:**



# The First Noel



## Second Stanza

The melody is in the bass during stanza two (measures 25–41). Play the melody notes with your thumb, making them louder than the accompanying treble notes. This technique will take some practice, since most fingerpickers work at making a treble melody stand out over a bassline.



Making a lower-voice melody note stand out when pinching treble notes simultaneously is not an easy technique. One way to make this technique work is to arpeggiate the pinches: pick them quickly one note at a time from the bass to the treble. In this way, it is easier to pick more loudly with the thumb and more quietly with the fingers.



The only fingering in stanza two that might cause some difficulty is the last chord of measures 29 and 37. Finger the lower note (an E) with the index finger, and the higher note (a C) with the little. The last note of each measure, an F#, should be fingered with the ring finger, which in turn slides up one fret for the subsequent G chord in measures 30 and 38.



For the refrain after stanza two, the melody returns to the treble voice (measures 41–49).

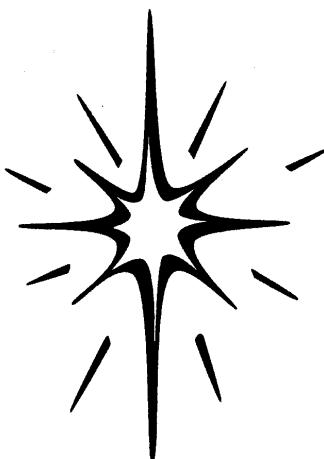
## The Coda



After completing measure 49, play measures 1–19 before jumping to the coda.

The coda, or ending, includes the variation of the melody where it reaches its highest pitch, a high B note in this key. This occurs in measures 50–51.

I suggest you finger the final two chords in measure 50 with the index and little fingers. They are the ones you need on those strings for the G chord at the beginning of measure 51. For that G chord, add the ring finger on the seventh fret of the third string.



# The First Noel

TRADITIONAL ENGLISH CAROL  
Arranged by Mark Hanson

Standard Tuning

**J=96**

**G** D/F# C/E D2/F# G C

T 0 2 | 0 2 0 1 | 3 2 | 0 2 | 3 2 | 0 2  
A 2 | 3 | 0 0 2 | 0 0 2 | 0 0 2 | 0 0 2  
B 3 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 2

1 2 3 4 5

G/B C G/B C D7 G G/B D/F# G D/F#

T 3 2 0 | 3 1 2 | 3 0 2 | 3 0 2 | 3 0 2 | 3 0 2  
A 3 0 0 | 0 0 2 | 0 0 2 | 0 0 2 | 0 0 2 | 0 0 2  
B 2 3 | 2 3 | 2 3 | 3 0 2 | 3 0 2 | 3 0 2

6 7 8 9

G D/F# C/E D2/F# G C

T 0 0 2 0 1 | 3 2 | 0 2 | 3 2 | 0 2 | 3 0 2  
A 0 0 2 0 1 | 3 2 | 0 2 | 3 2 | 0 2 | 3 0 2  
B 3 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 2

10 11 12 13

G/B C G/B C D7 G G/B D/F# G

T 3 2 0 | 3 1 2 | 3 0 2 | 3 0 2 | 3 0 2 | 3 0 2  
A 3 0 0 | 0 0 2 | 0 0 2 | 0 0 2 | 0 0 2 | 0 0 2  
B 2 3 | 2 3 | 2 3 | 3 0 2 | 3 0 2 | 3 0 2

14 15 16 17

G G/B G C G D

18 19 20 21

Em D6 C G/B C D7 G G/B D/F# G

22 23 24 25

D G C G (C)

26 27 28 29

(G D C/E G C D) G D G

30 31 32 33

D G C (G C)

34 35 36 37

G D C G C D G D G D6/F#  
 T A B  
 38 39 40 41

G D7/F# G C G D  
 T A B  
 42 43 44 45

Em D6 C G/B C D7 G G/B D/F# G D.S. al Coda  
 T A B  
 46 47 48 49

♪ Coda C G D Em D6 C  
 T A B  
 50 51 52

G/B C D7 G G/B D G  
 T A B  
 53 54 55

# O Come, Little Children



This song is a traditional German children's carol titled "O Kinderlein Kommet" in the original language. I have arranged the tune in standard tuning, three times through, with increasing amounts of technical difficulty.

## First Stanza

The first stanza (measures 1–16) consists largely of basic C, F, and G chords, but often with a note other than the root note in the bass (called a chord "inversion").



For example, the first chord in measure 1 is a C chord with E in the bass (C/E). The F/A in measure 3 requires you to fret only the two treble strings. On this F/A, make sure you pick only the strings that are called for! The G/B in measure 3 should be fretted with the middle and little fingers. These three chords are diagrammed in Ex. 6.



### Ex. 6:

<b>C/E</b>	<b>F/A</b>	<b>G/B</b>

The F chord in measure 12 is fingered with the index, ring, and little fingers. If you can't manage that, fret and pick only the first and fourth strings of the chord. Or you can fret a simple end-of-the-neck D-chord fingering at the fifth and sixth frets, plucking only the three treble strings. That technique provides an F sound as well, with the correct melody note in the treble. Measure 12 possibilities are diagrammed in Ex. 7.



### Ex. 7:

<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>

I suspect that measures 14–15 contain the only phrase that will present any real technical challenges for most players in the first stanza.

To finger the C/E in measure 14, slide the little finger up the first string from the third fret (measure 13) to the eighth fret (measure 14). Simultaneously, fret the fifth string with the index finger. Now the ring and middle fingers are available to fret the C chord in the second half of measure 14.

The Dm7 in measure 15 can be fingered as a normal end-of-the-neck D chord. On this Dm7, mute the open first string with the fretting hand by fretting the D chord fingering or by touching the string with the ring finger of the picking hand as you pluck the other strings.

On the G chord in measure 15, I fret the sixth string with my thumb, and the second and third strings with my index and middle, respectively. It can also be fretted with either the index or middle on the bass string. If you can't manage any of those, pick the open fourth string as the bass note, and don't bother to fret the sixth string. Ex. 8 shows all of these possibilities.

### Ex. 8:

<b>C/E</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>Dm7</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>G</b>
1 4 VIII	2 3 VIII	1 5 V	1 2 1	1 3 2

# O Come, Little Children



## Second Stanza

The second stanza (measures 17–32) uses mostly the same chords as the first stanza, but adds a moving bassline (to imitate the running children).



I have a few suggestions for you when you add a walking bassline to a fingerstyle arrangement. First, sustain as much of the chord as you can while you fret the new bass notes. This technique is especially important for the melody notes.



Second, continue to “think” the melody, or sing the lyrics in your head as you play. If you worry or think about the bassline too much, the melody won’t stand out as it should. Maintaining a good balance of melody to bass when the bass gets busy takes practice.



Chord fingerings you may not know are found in measures 17 (C), 19 (Dm7), 25 (Dm/F), 29 (C), and 30 (Am). These fingerings are diagrammed in Ex. 9.

### Ex. 9:

--	--	--	--	--

Measure 30 is a bit tricky. First, fret the Am as a barre over four strings at the fifth fret, with the little finger fretting the high C note at the eighth fret. Next, release the partial barre—but sustain the eighth-fret note on the first string—as the middle finger frets the bass string at the seventh fret. This move leads easily to the subsequent C chord, fretted with the middle and ring fingers at the eighth fret.

## Third Stanza

Travis picking (alternating-bass fingerpicking) characterizes the third and final stanza of this arrangement (measures 33–51). Make sure the thumb of your picking hand is plucking all of the bass notes that occur on the beat. There is no need for your index finger to pick any of those notes. The thumb can handle it all.

There are many syncopated (between beats) melody notes in the third stanza, notably in measures 34–36 and 38–40. Practice these passages slowly to make sure your rhythm is correct before you speed them up.

A new chord appears in measure 45, an F6. It is a barre over four strings at the third fret, and is diagrammed in Ex. 10.

### Ex. 10:

	III
--	-----

# O Come, Little Children

Standard Tuning

By  
CHRISTOPH VON SCHMIDT  
and J.A.P. SCHULZ  
Arranged by Mark Hanson

**J = 96**

**C** F/A G/B C

**F/A** G/B C

**G/B** G7 C F

**C/E** C Dm7 G C

1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16

C

Dm7      G/B      G7      C

T 3 0 3 | 3 0 3 | 1 3 0 | 0 3  
A 1 . | 1 2 0 | 2 0 2 | 0 0 2  
B 2 0 2 | 2 0 2 | 0 3 2 | 3 0 2

17      18      19      20

Dm7      G/B      G7      C      Dm/F

T 3 0 3 | 3 0 3 | 1 3 0 | 0 3 0 | 3 3 3  
A 2 0 2 | 2 0 2 | 0 3 2 | 0 2 0 | 0 2 0  
B 3 0 2 | 3 0 2 | 3 2 3 | 3 2 0 | 3 2 0

21      22      23      24      25

G7/B      G7      C      F      C

T 1 1 1 | 0 0 0 | 5 5 5 | 3 3 3 | 5 5 5  
A 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 | 5 0 2 | 5 0 2 | 5 0 2  
B 2 0 3 | 3 0 2 | 3 2 3 | 3 2 0 | 3 2 0

26      27      28      29

Am      C      Dm7      G/B      G      1. C      2. C

T 5 8 0 | 6 3 0 | 1 2 3 | 3 1 3 | 1 0 1  
A 5 5 0 | 5 5 0 | 6 2 3 | 6 2 3 | 0 2 3  
B 0 7 8 | 0 7 8 | 3 3 3 | 3 3 3 | 3 3 3

30      31      32      33

C                      Dm7      G/B      G7      C

34                    35                    36                    37

Dm7      G/B      G7      C

38                    39                    40                    41

G/B      G7      C      F6      2/3 III      C      G/B

42                    43                    44                    45                    46

Am7      Em      Dm7      G/B      G      C

2/3 V - -

47                    48                    49                    50                    51

# Silent Night



The story behind the composition of this world-famous Austrian tune is well known but worth repeating.



Shortly before Christmas in 1818 in a small Austrian village, the church organ had quit working. Without an organ, the village priest and the organist felt a compelling need to produce a new and special piece of music for the Christmas services. They put their heads together and came up with this timeless tune.

In those humble surroundings, Joseph Mohr and Franz Gruber had composed what has become perhaps the most famous Christmas carol of all. For guitarists, the story of the creation of "Silent Night" is especially interesting, since the tune was composed and first performed with guitar accompaniment.

## First Stanza

This arrangement of "Silent Night" is in standard tuning in the key of G. The first time through is very straightforward, with the melody harmonized with block chords, or at the interval of a tenth (measures 5 and 7, for example).

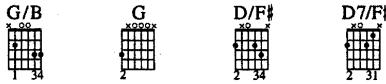
The initial G chord must be fingered either with the middle finger or the thumb fretting the bass string. I suggest using the middle finger. This fingering not only allows for a relatively easy fingering of the G chord in stanza one, but also allows for the descending bassline that winds through that G chord in measures 13–14 of the second stanza. Ex. 11 diagrams this G fingering.

**Ex. 11:**



In measure 11, finger the initial G/B chord with the index, ring, and little fingers. Finger the third chord of the measure (a G chord) with the middle finger on the bass string. Slide the middle finger to the second fret for the subsequent D/F# chord. This fingering will allow you to sustain the low bass note while the melody moves from the third to first fret on the second string. Ex. 12 diagrams the fingerings for the chords in measure 11.

**Ex. 12:**



## *Second Stanza*

The second stanza (measures 13–24) uses the same chord positions as the first stanza, but adds some moving lines where the melody is static.

For instance, in measures 13, 14, and 20, the bassline walks down on the fourth string in the last half of the measure. It is very important to finger these G chords properly, with the middle finger on the sixth string. Proper fingering allows you to sustain the bass note as the upper line moves.

# Silent Night

Finger the fourth-string notes with the little and index fingers, as shown in Ex. 13. Make sure that you include the open fourth string, a D note, in the first chord of measures 14, 15, and 21. This note is the logical conclusion of the descending bassline that precedes it.

Ex. 13:

The musical example consists of four chord diagrams at the top: G (with a 2 over the 4th string), G major 7 (with a 2 over the 4th string), G6 (with a 2 over the 1st string), and G (with a 2 over the 4th string). Below these are two staves of music. The top staff is in treble clef and has a sharp sign indicating a key signature of one sharp. It contains several eighth-note groups. The bottom staff is in bass clef and shows a bass line. The bass line starts at the 3rd fret of the A string in measure 13, goes up to the 4th fret of the A string, then down to the 3rd fret of the A string, then up to the 4th fret of the A string, and finally down to the 3rd fret of the A string in measure 14. The measure numbers 13 and 14 are written below the staff.

In measures 13 and 21, finger the initial D7 chord as a three-string barre at the fifth fret, with the ring finger fretting the second string. Let go of the barre for the last half of the measure, but sustain the F# note (seventh fret of the second string). This F# should continue to ring as the descending line on the third string moves below it in measure 13, and as the outer voices move around it in measure 21.

The first chord in measure 23 is a full barre chord at the third fret. That moves to a D/F# chord, which should be fingered with the middle finger fretting the bass string.

## The “Tag”

The second stanza normally would end on a G chord at measure 24. But I introduced what is called a “deceptive cadence” at that point—a chord that the listener is not expecting. The purpose of a deceptive cadence is to keep the musical phrase from ending, which it would have done had I landed on a G chord. But the Em chord makes the phrase sound like it wants to continue.

Following the Em chord in measure 24 is a C# half-diminished chord (similar to an A7; actually, it's an A9 with no A in it). Mute the sixth string in the bass—either with the side of the thumb of the picking hand or with one of the fingers of the fretting hand—as you begin the C# half-diminished arpeggio.

In measure 26, fret the bass note of the G chord with the ring finger. With that fingering you can sustain the bass note as you add the C and E notes on the fourth and second strings, respectively.

# Silent Night

Standard Tuning

Words and Music by  
JOSEPH MOHR and  
FRANZ GRUBER  
Arranged by Mark Hanson

$\text{D} = 96$

G



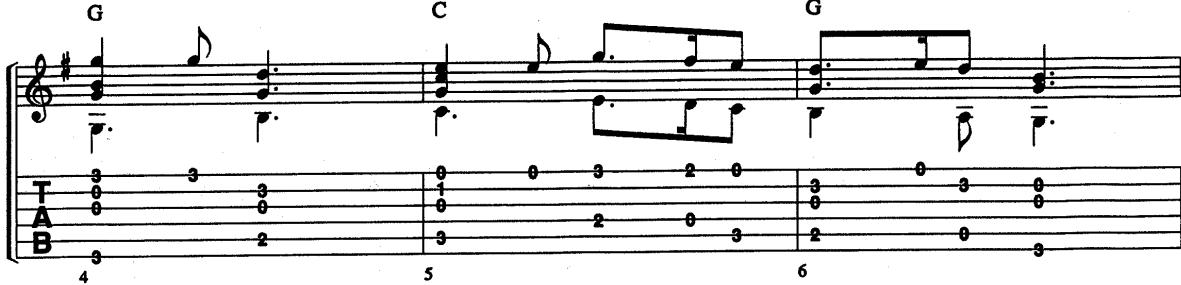
D D7



G

C

G



C

G

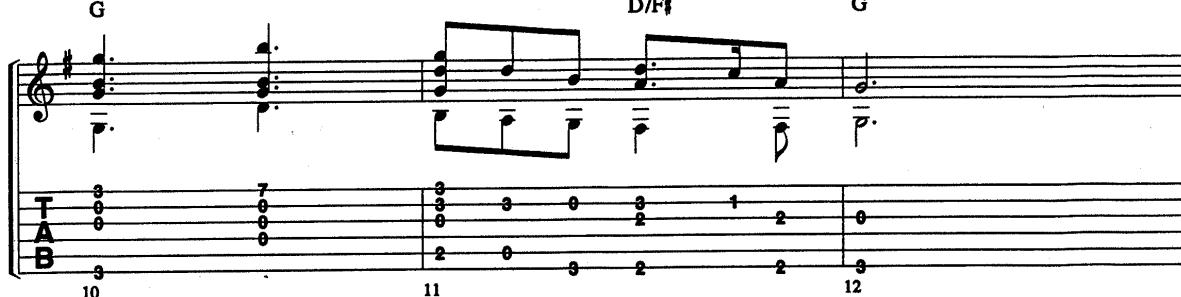
D7



G

D/F#

G



G

T A B

13 14 15 16

C G C

T A B

17 18 19

G D7 G D/F#

T A B

20 21 22 23

Em G D/F# G

T A B

24 25 26

# Go Tell It On The Mountain

"Go Tell It On the Mountain" is a well-known African-American spiritual. I have arranged it in the key of D, in Drop-D tuning (sixth string tuned down to D).

The song is in two parts: the refrain, with its repeated "Go Tell It On The Mountain" lyric, and the stanza, which contains the lyrics that tell the Christmas story. I have arranged and re-arranged both of these sections several times.

The rhythm of the tune is "swing eighths," meaning that each beat is divided into three parts with the notes played most often on the first and third subdivisions of the beat. This rhythm is the characteristic rhythm of most blues, jazz, and gospel music.

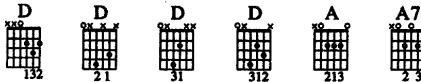
## First and Second Refrains

I play the refrain twice through at the beginning. The first time through (measures 1–8), I maintain a quarter-note and half-note bassline, with all of the notes that are picked by the thumb landing squarely on the beat. There is some alternating-bass (measures 1, 5, 6) as well as some monotonic bass (measure 7). Measure 3 contains both.

The second time through (measures 9–16), I syncopate the bassline continually. This syncopation occurs before the second beat in measures 9, 10, 13, and 14. It occurs before the first beat of the next measures 9 and 10. This rhythmic "kick" gives the rhythm a forward impetus that can be very powerful.

The chords used in the refrain are diagrammed in Ex. 14.

**Ex. 14:**



Muting open bass strings is important for the overall sound of this section. Certainly you want to mute the open D strings (sixth and fourth) when you move from a D chord to an A chord. For instance, at the beginning of measure 3, you can mute the sixth string with the thumb of either hand. For the fretting hand, bring the thumb up over the top of the neck and lightly touch the bass string as you pick the rest of the A-chord notes. For the picking hand, lower your hand position enough so that the side of your thumb touches and mutes the sixth string as it picks the fifth string.

Muting treble strings is also important. On the fourth beat of measure 1, mute the open first string with your fretting hand as you fret the third- and fourth-fret D chord. You can accomplish this by lowering the angle of attack of the index finger so that it touches the first string as it frets the second.

If you haven't done that technique before, it takes some getting used to because it requires changing your hand position slightly. But what a difference it can make in the overall sound! It will sound much cleaner with those resonating notes gone.

## First Stanza

The stanza is only four measures long, but it is very important. If you are singing the tune, the stanzas contain all of the story lyrics. If you are playing the song instrumentally, the stanza contains a new melody and chord progression.

# Go Tell It On The Mountain

Again, the bassline is largely alternating-bass, but is irregular. I switch between a single melody line over the alternating-bass (measures 17 and 19) and block chords (measures 18 and 20). The chords for the stanzas are diagrammed in Ex. 15.

Ex. 15:



In the final measure of the stanzas (measures 20 and 32), I have incorporated a *ritardando* into the arrangement. This means to slow down gradually and come to a stop at the *fermata*, the “hold” sign at the end of those measures. I also switch to a straight-eighth-note rhythm for those two measures, meaning all of the eighth notes in the measures are evenly divided rhythmically. Except for the slight slow-down (the ritardando), all of the notes in those two measures last an equal amount of time.

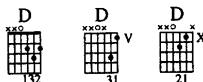
## Third Refrain

The first half of the third refrain (measures 21–24) is a repeat of earlier material until measure 24. Here I use three different positions of a D chord to move the melody up an octave for measures 25–28.

In measure 24, slide on the second string with your ring finger to the seventh fret. This move sets up the D chord in that area of the neck. Then slide with your middle finger on the third string to the eleventh fret. This move sets up the third fingering of a D chord in that measure. Hammer-on the second string with your ring finger, then move your index finger to the first string. Don’t bother to barre here.

Ex. 16 diagrams the three D fingerings of measure 24.

Ex. 16:



Measures 25–28 contain the melody an octave higher than previously, mostly harmonized a sixth below on the third string.

## The Second Stanza

Measures 29–32 are very similar to the first stanza. Please notice the hammer-on pull-off combination in measure 32, plus the walking bassline in measure 32. Again, play the final measure of this stanza with a straight rhythm and a ritardando.

# Go Tell It On The Mountain



## The Final Refrains

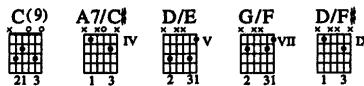
The arrangement ends with three times through the refrain, leading to a deceptive cadence (like "Silent Night") and a tag at the very end.

In measure 33, the arrangement switches into a double-time section with a straight-eighth-note rhythm; the swing rhythm disappears until measure 65. The thumb is picking an alternating-bass pattern, but with several deviations. Listen to the recording to get the feel of the changes to the rhythm and tempo.



Through measure 37, the chord fingerings are not new. At measure 38, an ascending bassline follows the melody up the neck. The chords for measures 38–40 are diagrammed in Ex. 17.

**Ex. 17:**



Another variation begins at measure 49. This one actually throws the melody away, substituting descending parallel thirds (measures 50–51), parallel sixths (measures 57–60), and block chords (measures 53–56).



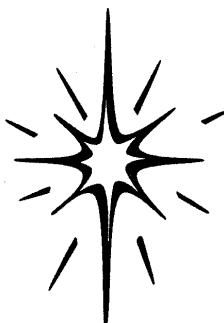
Finger the parallel thirds with the index and ring or index and middle until measure 52. Finger the first chord in measure 52 with the ring and little fingers. Try to sustain that fingering all the way across the measure. Think of the chords in measure 56 as a common end-of-the-neck D7 fingering, preceded by a D7sus4 fingering.

At measure 65, the rhythm returns to the triplet "swing" feel, incorporating a Chet Atkins-style descending scale. This technique intersperses open and fretted notes with harmonics. It is a great effect, and well worth mastering.

The deceptive cadence occurs at measure 72: a Bm instead of the expected D chord. This compositional technique keeps the arrangement going and allows for the tag that follows. Make sure you fret the D/F<sup>#</sup> chord at the beginning of measure 73 as a barre chord over three strings!

## Summary

This arrangement has a little bit of everything in it. Have fun working through all of it.



# Go Tell It On The Mountain

TRADITIONAL SPIRITUAL  
Arranged by Mark Hanson

Drop D Tuning (6) - D

Swing rhythm

The sheet music consists of four staves, each containing a treble clef staff above a guitar tablature staff. The tabs are labeled with letters T, A, and B, corresponding to the strings of a guitar. Measure numbers 1 through 16 are indicated below the tabs. The music is arranged in four sections, each starting with a D chord. The first section covers measures 1-4, the second from 5-8, the third from 9-12, and the fourth from 13-16. The tabs show various strumming and fingering techniques, including open strings and muted notes.

Musical score for guitar, measures 17-20. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The bottom staff is a six-string guitar tablature. Measure 17 starts with a D chord (D, F#, A) followed by a descending eighth-note pattern. Measure 18 begins with a G6 chord (G, B, D, E, G, B). Measure 19 starts with a G/A chord (G, B, D, E, A) followed by a descending eighth-note pattern. Measure 20 starts with a D chord (D, F#, A). The tablature shows the following fingerings: measure 17 (T: 7, A: 5, B: 5); measure 18 (T: 5, A: 7, B: 3); measure 19 (T: 0, A: 3, B: 5); measure 20 (T: 2, A: 3, B: 2).

Musical score for guitar, measures 21 to 24. The top staff shows a melodic line with various note heads and rests. The bottom staff is a tablature for three strings (T, A, B) across four frets. Measure 21 starts with a rest followed by a eighth note on string T at fret 7. Measure 22 starts with a rest followed by a eighth note on string A at fret 0. Measure 23 starts with a rest followed by a eighth note on string B at fret 5. Measure 24 starts with a rest followed by a eighth note on string T at fret 2, followed by a eighth note on string A at fret 11.

Guitar tablature for measures 29 through 32. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff is a six-string guitar neck. Measure 29 starts with a D chord (A, D, G) at the 14th fret on the B string. Measure 30 begins with an A7 chord (E, A, C#, G) at the 14th fret on the B string. Measure 31 starts with a D chord (A, D, G) at the 14th fret on the B string. Measure 32 ends with a D chord (A, D, G) at the 14th fret on the B string.

**Stanza**

G6      G/A      D

T 7 5 5 7 5  
A 0 0 0  
B 0 0 0

33      34      35      36

G6      G/B      A/C♯      A7

rit.

T 7 5 5 7 5  
A 0 0 0  
B 0 0 0

37      38      39      40

**Double time ( $J = \text{♩}$ ) Straight eighths**

D

p p i a p i p i p i

T 11 0 0  
A 0 0 0  
B 0 0 0

41      42      43      44

A7      G6/B      C(9)      A7/C♯      D      D/E      G7/F      D/F♯

p i m a P

T 0 0 0  
A 2 2 3  
B 0 2 0

45      46      47      48

D

T  
A  
B

49 50 51 52

A7 D

T  
A  
B

53 54 55 56

T  
A  
B

57 58 59 60

A7 A9 2/3 V D A7sus A7

T  
A  
B

61 62 63 64

D

T A B  
10 10 10 9 7 5 2 0 2 3  
11 0 11 0 11 9 7 6 2 0 2 4  
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

65 66 67 68

A7 D

T A B  
7 0 7 0 3 0 3 3 3  
7 0 7 0 0 4 4 5 5 4 4  
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

69 70 71 72

**A tempo (J = J) Swing eighths**

D A7 G/B A/C# D G D

T A B  
10 11 0 0 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 0  
11 0 0 0 0 4 2 0 4 2 1 0 2 4 0  
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

73 74 75 76 77

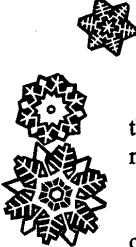
G6 D/A A7sus A7 D G6 D/F# A7 D

1/2 II ---

T A B  
0 3 0 2 2 0 3 2 0 3 0 2 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 0  
4 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

78 79 80 81 82

# Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence



As it is sung today, "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" is a combination of a Greek hymn from the Liturgy of St. James of Jerusalem, circa 400 AD, and a seventeenth-century French folk tune. The D natural-minor melody lends a somber tone that befits the lyrics.

This arrangement uses Drop-D tuning. It is written in 4/4 time, but should be counted in two in order to produce the correct flow. In other words, if you need to count as you learn this piece, count two half notes per measure.



## First Stanza



The first stanza has the melody in the high octave, and uses harmonics interspersed with fretted and open notes. The intended effect is to produce a sound akin to what you might hear in a cathedral: plenty of sustain for as many notes as possible.



## Second Stanza

The melody is an octave lower for the second stanza (measures 21–40). The low D bass note is also introduced for the first time.

In measures 22, 34, and 36, try to mute the low D note on the sixth string when you pick the next chord. Do this by lightly touching the bass string with the thumb of the fretting hand as you pick the next chord. Or mute the sixth string with the side of the picking-hand thumb as it picks the fifth string.

## Third Stanza

I modulate to the key of A minor for the third stanza. In measures 47–49, try to sustain the D note (second string, third fret) as much as you are able. As you go from measure 46 to 47, sustain it with the little finger. Moving into measure 49, sustain it with the index. That note enriches these chords substantially.

As in the second stanza, mute the open sixth string on the first beat of measure 55.

The ring finger needs to barre again in measure 57. Barre four strings for the first chord but only three strings for the second chord.

Play stanza 3 twice, adhering to the repeat sign in measure 60. Once you have finished the second ending (measure 64), go back to the beginning of the piece and play measures 1–20.

# **Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence**

## Drop D Tuning ⑥ = D

**TRADITIONAL FRENCH CAROL**  
*Arranged by Mark Hanson*

Dm  $\text{J} = 76$  A Dm G

1 2 3 4 5

Asus A Dm F A Dm 1/2X

6 7 8 9 10

G A Dm 1/2X G 1/2 III Dm

11 12 13 14 15

Dm7 F/B♭ Em7(b5) A Dm

16 17 18 19 20

Fine

A                    Dm                    G

TAB (A, B strings)

A	0	2	3	0	2	2	0	2	2	3	5
B	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

21                  22                  23                  24                  25

A                    G                    F                    A                    Dm

TAB (A, B strings)

A	2	0	0	2	2	0	2	7	7	2	2
B	0	1	2	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	0

26                  27                  28                  29                  30

Gm                    A                    Dm                    Gm/B♭                    Dm

2/3 II

TAB (A, B strings)

A	3	5	3	2	2	2	3	0	3	3	2
B	0	5	2	5	2	0	0	1	3	5	3

31                  32                  33                  34                  35

C                    B♭maj7            G(9)/B            Csus            A/C♯            Dm                    E

TAB (A, B strings)

A	2	2	3	2	0	2	3	0	0	2	2
B	3	1	2	3	4	4	3	0	0	2	2

36                  37                  38                  39                  40

Am Dm9 Am Dm7

T A B : 0 1 3 0 0 0 0 6 0 6 0  
41 42 43 44 45

E7sus F C(9) G6 Am11 Am

T A B : 0 0 1 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 6 8  
46 47 48 49 50

Dm7 E7sus E7 Am Dm Am

T A B : 0 0 7 7 6 10 0 3 1 2 5 0 5  
51 52 53 54 55

G(9)

1. C/F D9/F# 2/3 V --- 1/2 V --- G E/G# A5

T A B : 0 5 5 5 5 3 0 5 2  
56 57 58 59 60

2. C/F 2/3 V --- Esus II --- E Am

D.C. al Fine

T A B : 5 5 5 3 0 5 7  
61 62 63 64

# Joy To The World



This classic carol from George Frideric Handel and Isaac Watts is arranged in Open-G tuning, D G D G B D, lowest pitch to highest. The two stanzas have very different rhythms. The first is similar to what you might hear on a church organ. The second is double timed, using the alternating-bass style of fingerpicking.



## First Stanza

The first stanza is quite easy technically. Mostly it uses a parallel-third line to harmonize the melody over G, C, and D chords.



Even though the notes are easy to play, paying attention to several techniques will make the overall sound more appealing. Do your best to mute the open fifth and sixth strings when they should not be ringing. In measure 3, for example, the open fifth string (a G note) should be muted when the D chord is plucked on the second beat of the measure.



You can accomplish this muting by touching the fifth string lightly with the fingernail of the ring finger, which is fretting the fourth string. This technique might require aiming at the fourth string slightly differently than you normally do with that fingertip. Aiming just a bit past the fourth string with the ring finger allows enough of that finger to protrude toward the fifth string to mute it. As you can imagine, this technique is more difficult on wide-neck guitars.

Also, on the first beat of measure 4, mute the open sixth string with your fretting-hand thumb or with the side of the picking-hand thumb as you pluck the fifth string.

Muting the fifth and sixth strings also should occur in measures 6, 7, 15, 17, 19, and 20.

## Second Stanza

The picking hand is busier in the second stanza (measures 21–59). The thumb plays an alternating-bass pattern throughout. The fingers pick the melody, along with a rhythmically offset harmony line, mostly a sixth below the melody.

Again, mute the open fifth and sixth strings when they otherwise would ring into a subsequent chord. This muting should occur at the beginning of measures 26 and 27, 37 and 38, 41 and 42, 47, 51, 55, and 57.

In measures 25, 27, 29, and 31, a hammer-on occurs in the treble simultaneously with a plucked bass note. If you have trouble with this technique, think of the picking-hand thumb and the hammer-on finger as a team. Practice striking them simultaneously. Since they are on different strings, this technique can be confusing for your hands. But by isolating the two notes—the hammer-on and simultaneous bass note—in your practicing, you will be able to master the technique.

Another technique that may be new to you is the “roll” (a quick arpeggio) in measures 47 and 49. Use the thumb, index, and middle fingers to play the three-note roll in measure 47. Use the thumb, index, middle, and ring fingers in measure 49. Listen to the recording to hear how the notes fit into the rhythm.

Again, isolating these passages and practicing them individually—without the surrounding notes—will help you master them.

# Joy To The World

Words by  
ISAAC WATTS

Open G Tuning - DGDGBD

Music by  
GEORGE F. HANDEL  
Arranged by Mark Hanson

$\text{J} = 88$

G D G D G C

T A B T A B

1 2 3 4 5

D7 G

T A B T A B

6 7 8 9 10

D

T A B T A B

11 12 13 14 15

G D

T A B T A B

16 17 18 19 20

$\text{J} = 176$

### **Double time - Alternating Bass**

**G D/G**

C/G

D/G

C/G

Musical score and tablature for guitar, measures 21-24. The score shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a time signature of common time. The tablature shows the strings (T, A, B) and the frets (0-7) for each measure. Measure 21: T(0), A(0), B(0). Measure 22: T(0), A(0), B(0). Measure 23: T(7), A(0), B(0). Measure 24: T(5), A(0), B(0). Measures 21-24: T(3), A(0), B(0). Measures 21-24: T(3), A(0), B(0). Measures 21-24: T(0), A(0), B(1).

Sheet music for guitar showing measures 25-28. The top staff shows a G chord followed by a D chord, then a G chord with a grace note and a sixteenth-note run. The bottom staff shows the corresponding fingerings: T-A-B (25), T-A-B (26), T-A-B (27), and T-A-B (28).

A musical score for guitar. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a time signature of common time. The bottom staff is a tablature showing the six strings of the guitar. Measure 33 starts with a G note on the first string. Measures 34 and 35 show a sequence of notes on the first string, with measure 35 ending on a D/G chord. Measures 36 and 37 show a sequence of notes on the first string, with measure 37 ending on a D/G chord. The tablature below shows the fingerings for each note.

G

D/G C/G D/G

T 8 9 8 9 9 9

A 9 9 9 9 9 9

B 9 9 9 9 9 9

33 34 35 36

D C/D G D/G C/G D/G

T 3 1 0 8 7 5 3  
A 4 0 2 0 0 7 5 4  
B 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

37 38 39 40

D C/D G C/G

41 42 43 44

D/G C/G G D

45 46 47 48

D7 G

49 50 51

C/G G C/G G/D

52 53 54 55

D G 1. 2.

56 57 58 59

# Angels We Have Heard On High



"Angels We Have Heard On High" is arranged in Gmaj7 tuning: D G D F# B D, lowest pitch to highest. This is the same tuning as Open-G, except that the third string is lowered one half-step to F#.

Gmaj7 tuning is popular among Hawaiian slack key guitarists. They call it G Wahine. In the last section of this arrangement, I have tried to incorporate some of the sounds of that lovely style.



## Muting Open Strings

As in other arrangements in this book, it is important to be aware of open strings that may sustain too long, muddying the harmony of the subsequent chord. In this arrangement, this is especially true of the open fifth and sixth strings.

The open fifth string, a G note, does not belong in a D chord, so it must be muted. This occurs on the first beat of measures 2, 4, and 8, among other places. In spots like these in this arrangement, lightly mute the fifth string with the tip of your middle finger as you pluck the open strings.

In turn, a G chord in this tuning is clearer sounding if the open sixth string (a D note) is not ringing underneath it. You will find this in several places, including the third beat of measures 2, 4, and 8. Mute it by lightly touching it with the fretting-hand thumb, or with the side of the picking-hand thumb.

In muting strings, use your ear as a guide. Your playing will be cleaner and clearer if you mute notes that don't belong in a new chord.

## New Fretting Techniques

There are several fretting techniques in this arrangement that may be new to you. The first involves muting a string with a finger as it frets an adjacent string.

A good example of this technique is found on the third beat of measure 9. The harmony moves from a G to an E minor chord. The E minor voicing sounds clearer if the low G note (open fifth string) is gone. Mute the open fifth string with the middle finger as it reaches to fret the sixth string at the second fret. You may need to lower the angle of attack of the middle finger on the sixth string for it to lightly touch and mute the fifth.

Another good example is found on the third beat of measure 20. Here the open fifth string must disappear. As you fret the third and fifth frets, try placing your ring finger on the fourth string in such a way that it can lightly touch the fifth to mute it.

Fretting two strings with one fingertip without barring or bending the knuckle backward is another important fretting-hand technique for this arrangement. To really make this arrangement sing, in certain places you will be required not only to fret two strings with one fingertip, but also to sustain one while rolling part of the fingertip off the other. This will allow you to sustain an upper voice melody note as a middle voice moves.

The first two beats of measure 16 provide a great example of this. You must finger the first chord of the measure with four fingers. Since the second-string melody note sustains for two full beats, you may not lift the index finger to fret the first-fret note on the third string as it arrives after beat two. The only way to do this smoothly is to have the index finger fret both the second and third strings at the

# Angels We Have Heard On High



first fret on the first beat of the measure. While sustaining the second string, roll the index fingertip off the third string. This allows you to pick the open third string on beat two. Then roll the fingertip back onto the third string for the next note, still sustaining the second string.

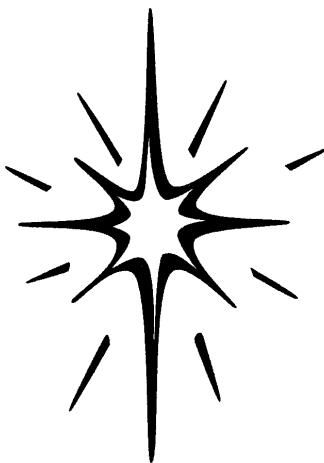
This may seem like a lot of work, but it makes the melody flow in a way that it can't if you lift your index finger.



## Let Your Ears Be the Guide



Again, let your ears guide you in determining what should be muted and sustained. Learning a little music theory so you know what notes fit in what chords wouldn't hurt either.



# Angels We Have Heard On High

TRADITIONAL FRENCH CAROL  
Arranged by Mark Hanson

DGDF#BD Tuning

$J = 112$

Sheet music for the first four measures. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The melody starts on G, followed by D6, G, D6, and G. The guitar tab shows chords T-A-B (1), (2), (3), (4).

Sheet music for the fifth through eighth measures. The melody continues with Em, D6, G, D6, and G. The guitar tab shows chords T-A-B (5), (6), (7), (8).

Sheet music for the ninth through twelfth measures. The melody includes G maj7, Em, Am7, D, G(9), C6/G, and D. The guitar tab shows chords T-A-B (9), (10), (11), (12).

Sheet music for the thirteenth through sixteenth measures. The melody includes G, D, G, C, G(9), D, G(9), Em, Am, and D. The guitar tab shows chords T-A-B (13), (14), (15), (16).

G(9) C6/G D G D G C G(9) Dsus

17 18 19 20

G G D6 G

21 22 23 24

D6 G D6 G

25 26 27 28

D6 G G(9) Em Am D6 G maj7 C6/G

29 30 31 32

D G D G C G Dsus G(9) Em7

33 34 35 36

Am D6 G C6/G D G

37 38 39

G D G C G D4-3 G Fine

40 41 42

D/G D C/D Gsus

43 44

D7 1. G 2. D.S. Gsus al Fine Gsus G

45 46 47

# O Little Town Of Bethlehem

This arrangement of "O Little Town Of Bethlehem" is in Open-D tuning, D A D F# A D, lowest pitch to highest.

## First Stanza

The first stanza has the melody in the upper voice with either a parallel sixth harmony below it or a block chord accompaniment.

There are a number of harmonically rich chords in the first stanza. Most of these chords have added ninths, which means that the ninth note of the scale above the root note is added to the normal first, third, and fifth notes of the scale to make the chord. You will find these notes in measures 2, 10, 11, 12, and 14.

A technique that may enhance these lush chords even more is a picking-hand arpeggio, bass to treble, instead of a simultaneous "pinch" of all the chord tones. Listen to the recording for good examples of how this arpeggio sounds.

## Second Stanza

In the second stanza, the melody on occasion is in the lower voice, in measures 17–20 for example. In order for the melody to be heard clearly, the higher-pitched accompanying notes must be softer than the lower-pitched melody notes.

To make a low-pitched melody note stand out in a pinched block chord (measure 18, for example), I suggest you arpeggiate the chord instead of pinching the notes simultaneously. This technique makes it easier for the picking hand to pluck the lowest note more loudly than the upper notes.

After the low-pitched passage in measure 27, fret a full barre for the first beat of measure 28. Release the barre before the final note of measure 28. Fingering the final note of measure 28 with a fingertip instead of the barre sets up the required fingering for measure 29.

On the third beat of measure 31, pick the open third and fifth strings strongly. Allow the open third string (the melody note) to ring over the top of the next two harmony notes, an E and a C#. The moving melody returns during the final two plucks in this phrase, so at that point resume the volume you are using for the melody.

To play along with the recording, play measures 1–32, then repeat to the beginning and play until measure 16.

# O Little Town Of Bethlehem

Words by  
PHILLIS BROOKS

Music by  
LEWIS H. REDNER  
Arranged by Mark Hanson

Open D Tuning - DADG#AD

$J=96$

TAB: 1 4 4 3 4 | 7 5 | 0 0 4 0 7 | 7 7 |

D B7 Em11

TAB: 0 0 0 0 7 | 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 |

D A6 D Em

TAB: 0 0 0 0 7 | 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 |

F#(9) Bm A G(9) F#(9)

TAB: 4 4 4 | 2 4 5 7 | 4 4 4 | 4 4 4 | 4 4 4 | 4 4 4 |

D                    G                    D                    A6                    D *Fine*

T 4 4 3 4 | 7 5 9 | 7 9 7 0 | 0  
A 3 3 2 3 | 5 5 5 | 0 0 0 | 0  
B 0 0 0 | 5 | 0 0 0 | 0

13 14 15 16

G                    D

T 0 0 | 5 0 1 | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0  
A 4 0 4 3 4 | 7 5 2 | 0 0 2 | 0 5 0 0  
B 0 0 0 | 2 | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0

17 18 19 20

E9    B7    Em11            D

T 0 0 2 0 | 0 1 | 0 0 0 | 0  
A 0 0 3 2 | 2 1 | 0 2 0 | 0 0 0  
B 0 0 0 | 2 | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0

21 22 23 24

Em                    F#m                    G    A    G    Em7                    F#

T 0 0 0 2 0 | 0 0 0 | 2 0 0 2 0 | 4 4 5 4 4 4  
A 0 0 4 0 2 0 | 2 0 | 4 4 4 2 4 0 4 4 4  
B 0 0 4 2 3 0 | 4 | 4 4 4 2 4 0 4 4 4

25 26 27 28

D                    C                    D(9)                    A                    D                    D.C. al Fine

T 0 0 0 5 | 5 2 0 | 0 0 0 2 0 2 0 0  
A 4 0 4 3 4 | 7 5 2 | 0 0 2 4 0 0 0  
B 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

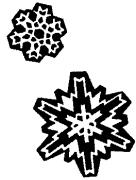
29 30 31 32

# Winter Wonderland



"Winter Wonderland" will be a finger buster for many players. It includes many barre chords, quick switches in position, and a nearly constantly walking bass line. But if you can master it, you will have a great sounding arrangement under your belt.

One suggestion before you get started: As you practice the challenging fingerings, don't fret them for too long a period of time. You don't want to hurt yourself. If you have a lightly strung guitar, you might practice the arrangement on that. Then switch over to your normal guitar once you have developed some rhythmic flow with the piece.



## AABA Form



This piece is in typical "Tin Pan Alley" song form: AABA. That means the first melodic phrase lasts eight measures; is repeated; then is followed by a new eight-measure section (the "bridge"); and concludes with another repeat of the first eight measures. The A sections are in the key of C. The bridge starts out in E, modulates to G, then returns to C for the final eight measures.



This tune uses "swing" rhythm, meaning that the basic rhythm is triplet eighth notes rather than straight eighth notes. If you aren't familiar with the term "swing" rhythm, listen to the recording to get the feel.



## Measures 1–16

The first eight measures of the arrangement saunter along nicely, with the only real challenges being the five-note chord in measure 1 (strum it, or arpeggiate it with five fingers) and the Em7 fingering in measure 6. Finger the Em7 with the index finger on the fourth string; the middle and ring on the second and first strings, respectively; and the little finger on the third string.

In measure 9, the walking bass begins. As a general rule in this style of playing, sustain as much of the chord in the upper voices as you can as you switch fingerings to accommodate the required notes in the bass. For instance, you must sustain the melody note on the first string in measure 9 as the fretting fingers change in the bass. Otherwise the melody will become very choppy.

Measures 13–16 are a repeat of measures 5–8.

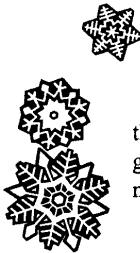
## Measures 17–20

This is the beginning of the bridge section. It switches abruptly to the key of E, starting with an Eadd9 chord. If you can't reach the fourth fret with your little finger, simply fret the second fret instead. This will produce a normal E major chord. It won't sound as rich, but it will suffice.

The second chord in measure 17 is a G<sup>#</sup>m, simply a barre at the fourth fret. The third chord is an A, which I suggest you finger with your middle and ring fingers. The final chord of the measure is an A chord with B in the bass, a B9sus4 chord. I suggest you finger this with the ring finger on the sixth string, the middle on the third, and the index barring the two treble strings.

If you want a workout on the B9sus4, try fingering it as I do: the index barres the two treble strings, the middle frets the third, the ring finger sustains the fourth string from the prior chord, and the thumb frets the sixth string at the seventh fret. This technique requires a large stretch of the fretting hand, but nicely sets up the fingering for the first chord in measure 18.

# Winter Wonderland



The trick to measure 18 is to let the open first-string melody note ring from the second beat through the fourth. To produce this sound I fret the second *and* third strings with the tip of my index finger on the last two chords of the measure. This technique is difficult if you have small fingers or a wide-neck guitar, but worth experimenting with.

There are two other possibilities for beats three and four of measure 18: fret the chords with the middle finger on the second string, index on the third, and little on the fourth, or barre three strings with the index finger, which mutes the melody note on the open first string.

Measure 19 is a repeat of 17. Barre three strings for measure 20.



## Measures 21–24

At measure 21, the music jumps to the key of G. Fret the chords on beats two and three as barre chords. Fret the final chord of the measure like an end-of-the-neck D7 fingering. This is a D7 (flat-9) chord in this position.

You may find measure 22 the most challenging for your fretting hand. The first chord is a Gmaj7. Fret this as a full barre, with the little finger fretting the fifth string. That fingering requires good hand position: a low thumb and low wrist in the fretting hand.

Maintain the barre for the next chord, a Gmaj7 with an F# in the bass. Lift the ring finger off the fifth string for the next bass note. To get the subsequent open fourth-string bass note, lift only the barre, maintaining the melody note on the second string. Drop the full barre right back on for the last chord in measure 22.

In measure 23, consider fretting the final chord as a full barre at the third fret so that the index finger is in position for the first chord in measure 24. The final notes of measure 24 should be fretted with the ring finger, which sets up the Cmajor9 chord at the beginning of measure 25.

## Measures 25–36

The fingerings in measures 25–26 should be anchored by the middle finger fretting the sixth string and the ring finger fretting the second. The index and little fingers then move back and forth between the third and fourth strings.

In measure 27, I fret all of the sixth-string notes with my thumb while I sustain the other notes with my index, ring, and little fingers. Most players don't have big enough hands to do this. If you are one of them, use your middle finger to fret the sixth string, and release the third and fourth strings for the last two beats of the measure. You still need the melody note on the second string: fret it with your little finger.

Measures 29–36 are largely a repeat of what came earlier in the arrangement.

## The TAG—Measures 37–46

The ending consists of a reharmonized melody with a chromatically descending inner voice on the fourth string.

In this section, try to sustain the melody notes on the second string to their full duration. In order to do this on the minor-seventh barre chords in measure 39, simply slide the ring finger one fret lower on the fourth string while sustaining the remainder of the fingering.



# **Winter Wonderland**

Words by  
**DICK SMITH**

Music by  
**FELIX BERNARD**  
Arranged by *Mark Hanson*

## Standard Tuning - Swing feel

E(9) Gm A A/B Emaj 7 E(9) Gm A A/B

T A B  
0 4 4 6 6 6 6 7 0 0 0 4 4 6 6 6 6 7 0  
17 18 19

E(9) Gmaj 7 C/D D7(b9) Gmaj 7

T A B  
7 6 5 4 5 4 2 3 3 7 7 5 5 5 5 7 8 8 7 8 7 0 7  
20 21 22

A<sup>δ</sup> D9 A<sup>b7(b5)</sup> G7sus G C maj9

T A B  
7 7 0 0 5 5 3 3 3 5 3 3 4 8 8 8 7 9 9 7 7 7 7  
23 24 25

Dm11 G9

T A B  
0 8 8 8 8 10 10 10 10 0 7 0 0 2 2 2 2 1 3 1 0 3  
26 27 28

G F Em7 Dm7 A9 D7 G7

1. Csus C

T 7 7 7 5 3 3 3 1 0 0 0 0 3 3 3 3 1 3 3  
A 7 5 4 2 0 0 0 5 4 3 3 0 3 3 0 2  
B 5 3 2 0 4 0 5 3 3 3 0 2

29 30 31 32

Dsus G9

T 3 3 3 1 0 0 3 3 3 3 1 3 3 1 0 3 0  
A 2 0 2 0 1 0 2 0 2 3 2 0 3 1 0 2  
B 3 3 3 2 0 1 0 3 2 3 2 0 3 1 0 3

33 34 35 36

2. Csus C G Fmaj7 Em7 Em7(b5) Dm7 Dm7(b5) A9 A(b9) Bm7(b5) Bb7

T 1 12 12 12 10 8 8 8 6 5 5 5 5 3 3 3 3  
A 0 9 11 10 9 9 8 7 5 4 5 5 3 2 3 3  
B 3 3 10 8 7 7 5 6 4 4 4 3 2 1

37 38 39 40

Am7 Fm7(b5) F6 Dm7(b5) G(15)

T 1 1 0 1 1 1 4 4 4 4  
A 0 2 2 3 3 2 1 4 4 4  
B 0 2 2 3 3 0 3 3 3

41 42 43

C9 (G7) C9(11)

T 3 8 7 10 8 7 8 8 10 8 10 8 10 6 9 10 2  
A 2 9 8 10 8 7 8 8 10 8 10 8 10 6 9 10 2  
B 3 3 2 2 1 1 0 3 3 3 2 2 1 1 0 3 3 2

44 45 46

# Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas

This is one of the most satisfying Christmas arrangements in my repertoire. It is a beautiful song to begin with, and it fits magnificently on the guitar in the key of C.

To play this arrangement exquisitely requires a formidable stable of barre chords plus the ability to sustain melody notes as other notes move underneath them. As in "Winter Wonderland," it will be a substantial undertaking for most guitarists, but well worth the effort.

## Necessary Techniques and Chords

The opening phrase is meant to imitate a harp. Sustain every note as long as possible, including the open strings. Finger the F in measure 2 (eighth fret, fourth string) with the index finger and the twelfth-fret harmonic with the little finger.

On the fourth beat of measure 3, mute the open fifth string with the tip of the fretting-hand index finger. In measure 4, I fret the sixth string with my thumb, which allows me to fret the final note of the measure without losing any of the other notes. Give it a try.

In measure 8, barre the chords that occur on the first three beats. The final chord in measure 13 is fingered like a first-position C chord. The first chord in measure 17 should be fingered with the little finger fretting the second string.

The final note in measure 18 should be lightly hammered-on with the index finger of the *picking* hand. Mute the open fifth string with part of the fingertip of your index finger as it hammers-on the sixth string. The fretting hand continues to sustain its notes during this hammer-on.

In measure 22, finger the bass notes with the index and middle fingers. That will allow you to stretch your little finger to the harmonics on the twelfth fret. These could also be played as right-hand (*picking-hand*) harmonics.

In measures 33–34, finger the second- and fifth-fret notes with the index and little fingers, respectively. This is a lovely passage. Sustain the open first and second strings as much as possible.

The first chord in measure 36 is a partial barre chord. Barre the second, third, and fourth strings with the index finger, bending it backward a bit to allow the first string to ring as an open string. If you can finger it this way, it provides a lovely harplike scale.

Measures 37–43 include the most challenging barre chords. Several of these require the middle finger to barre the second, third, and fourth strings.

The A-flat major7th chord in measure 48 may be a handful. I fret the sixth string with the thumb, barring the two treble strings with the index finger. If you can't manage that, delete the fourth-string note from the chord and fret the sixth string with the middle finger. You will still need to barre the two treble strings with the index finger if you use this substitute fingering.

The substitute fingering also can be used for the E-flat major7th chord on the second beat of measure 50. I prefer to fret the sixth string with my thumb, which allows me to sustain everything as I fret the 13th fret with my little finger.



C F Dsus D7/F# G9sus G C C/B Am7 Em7

13 14 15

Fmaj13 Dm7 E7 Am C+G# Am7 A6

16 17 18 \* R.H. hammer

F maj7 F maj7/G C maj7 Am7 F G9

19 20 21

C maj7 Am9 G11 Em

22 23 24

D6 G7 C C/B Am7 C/E

25 26 27

F F/G C F D7/F# G9sus

28 29 30

C G/B Am Em F E E7/G# Am9 E+/G#

31 32 33

Am/G Am/F# F maj7 C Dm9 1/2III ----- G9

34 35 36

F maj7      F maj7/G  
5/6X

Em7      Am9      Dm7      D $\flat$

T 12 12 10 13 8 10 0 8 7 5 7 8 6 7  
A 10 10 10 10 9 10 0 10 0 5 6 6 4  
B 8 9 10 12 12 12 0 10 0 0 6 6 4

37                    38                    39

C maj7      Am      E+/G $\sharp$       Am/G      Am/F $\sharp$       Em7  
2/3V

A7      5/6VII

T 7 3 5 0 5 5 0 5 5 5 5 7 5 8 10 12 3 5  
A 5 5 5 7 0 5 5 5 5 5 4 9 11 0 12 11 0  
B 3 0 7 0 0 7 6 5 4 7 9 12 0 12 11 0

40                    41                    42

2/3V

D9      (G)      C      C/B      Am7      C/E

T 7 8 10 0 5 0 9 12 3 3 1 0 3 1 0 3 0 1 0 3 0  
A 5 5 0 0 10 9 0 12 1 0 2 0 3 1 0 3 1 2 0 2 1 2  
B 5 9 0 9 0 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

43                    44                    45

F      F/G      C      A $\flat$ maj7      Gsus      G7

T 3 1 0 3 1 3 1 2 2 0 1 0 3 0 3 4 3 4 3 5 3 3 5 3 4 1  
A 2 3 3 3 3 2 2 1 0 0 0 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 4 1  
B 1 3 3 3 2 1 0 4 3 2 1 0 4 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 1

46                    47                    48

**D9**      **D7/F#**      **Fmaj9**      **Dm9**      **G9**

**T** 0 3 3 3 3 0      0 1 1 1 0 0  
**A** 5 5 5 5 5 0      0 0 2 2 0 0  
**B** 7 5 4 0 0 2      0 3 3 2 0 0

52      53      54

Musical score for guitar showing chords Am7, E+/G#, Am/G, Am/F#, and a sequence of notes. The score includes a treble clef, key signature, and a 12th fret position indicator. Below the staff is a six-string guitar neck diagram with fingerings and a box labeled '(RH)'.

Musical score and tablature for guitar. The score shows a melodic line on the top staff and a harmonic progression on the bottom staff. The tablature below shows the guitar strings with fingerings and a box indicating a bend at the 12th fret.

**Score:**

- Top staff: Melodic line with various note heads and stems.
- Bottom staff: Harmonic progression with diamond-shaped note heads.

**Tablature:**

- String 6: Fret 5 (downbow), Fret 6, Fret 0.
- String 5: Fret 7, Fret 5, Fret 7.
- String 4: Fret 0.
- String 3: Fret 0, Fret 0, Fret 3.
- String 2: Fret 0, Fret 3.
- String 1: Fret 12, Fret 12, Fret 12, Fret 12, Fret 12(5).

**Measure Numbers:** 59, 60, 61.

# In Dulci Jubilo



This fourteenth-century German tune is also known by the more recent titles “Good Christian Men Rejoice” and “Good Christian Friends Rejoice.” I have arranged it in standard tuning in the key of D.

As an experiment, I changed the mode of the tune from major to minor for the middle section. It works nicely.

## First Stanza



The first stanza (measures 1–16) largely is an exercise in muting open strings. When the A chord is fretted in the second half of measure 2, the open fourth-string note (a D) must be muted. I accomplish this by touching that string with my middle finger as it frets the third string. I mute the open fifth string on the first beat of measure 3 with the side of the thumb of my picking hand. Give those techniques a try. There are others that work as well.



Measure 6 is a tricky one for muting. Both the first and fifth strings must be muted for the B minor chord on the second beat. I mute the fifth string with the finger fretting the sixth. I mute the open first string by resting the ring finger of my picking hand on it as I pick the third and sixth string. Again, there are other ways to mute these notes.

Also, be sure to mute the open sixth string when you reach the D chord in measure 16.

## Second Stanza

Muting is very important in this stanza as well.

The barre chords in measures 19–20 go quickly from a half-barre to a full-barre and back to a half-barre as you move around the neck.

Be sure to pay close attention to the fingerings in measures 29–32.

## Third Stanza

The arrangement returns to Dmaj at measure 33. After four measures of the same rhythmic feel as stanza 1, the arrangement slows down for a more complex harmonic section (measures 37–52). This section is built on suspended chords, with the suspended note resolving after it is plucked. I suggest that you *not* arpeggiate the chords that include both fretted and harmonic notes. They sound better “pinched” simultaneously.

# In Dulci Jubilo

Standard Tuning

 TRADITIONAL  
*Arranged by Mark Hanson*

J. = 84

1      2      3      4

5      6      7      8

9      10      11      12

To Coda

13      14      15      16

Dm A 1/2 X III ----- 1/2 III -----  
 Dm Gm Em7(b5) A

17 18 19 20

Dm A Dm B♭ Gm6 A7(#5) Dm/F Dm

21 22 23 24

Dm A Dm B♭ Gm6 A7(#5) 3 Dm/F Dm

25 26 27 28

D.S. § al Coda

Gm A7 Dm A7(b9) Dm A7 Dm/F Dm

29 30 31 32

*Coda*

D

A

D

G

Asus

A

rit.

T A B

33 34 35 36

*Slower*

D

A7

D

Bm7

Em9

A7

Bm11

D

T A B

37 38 39 40

D

A7

D

Bm7

Em9

A7

Bm11

D7

T A B

41 42 43 44

G

A

Bm7

G

D/F#

Bm7 Em

A7 D

T A B

45 46 47 48

G

A

Bm7

G

D/F#

Bm7 Em

A7 D

R.H.

T A B

49 50 51 52

Mark Hanson's

ISBN 0-7390-0000-0  
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# Fingerstyle Christmas Guitar

Angels We Have Heard On High

The First Noel

Go Tell It On The Mountain

Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas

In Dulci Jubilo

It Came Upon The Midnight Clear

Joy To The World

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

O Come, Little Children

O Little Town Of Bethlehem

Silent Night

Winter Wonderland

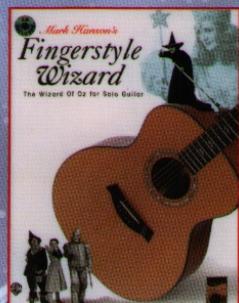
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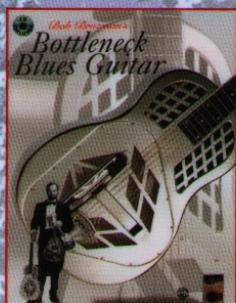
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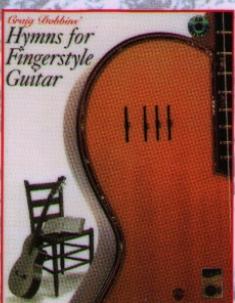
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P.O. Box 10003  
Van Nuys, CA 91410-0003  
[alfred.com](http://alfred.com)

ISBN 0-7390-0000-0  
9 780769 263663  
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