

Sixteen Tons

Merle Travis

Dm C Bb A
Now some people say a man's made out of mud
Dm C Bb A
But a poor man's made outta muscle and blood
Dm F Gm Bb
Muscle and blood an' skin and bone
Dm Dm A Dm
A mind that's weak and a back that's strong

Every chord is two beats. In the Tennessee Ernie Ford version, which was the most popular, he held the pickup word to each verse for 4 extra counts not shown.

Dm C Bb A
You load sixteen tons and what do you get?
Dm C Bb A
You get another day older and deeper in debt
Dm F Gm Bb
St. Peter, don't you call me 'cause I can't go
Dm Dm A Dm C Bb A Dm C Bb A
I owe my soul to the company store

Dm C Bb A
Well, I was born one mornin' when the sun didn't shine
Dm C Bb A
I picked up my shovel and I walked to the mines
Dm F Gm Bb
Loaded sixteen tons of number nine coal
Dm Dm A Dm
And the straw boss a-hollered "Well, bless my soul!"

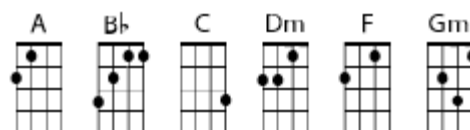
This key was specifically chosen so you could play the Dm on the 5th fret and walk down the first four chords, which will sound an awful lot like Stray Cat Strut (and others)!

Dm C Bb A
I was born one mornin', it was drizzlin' rain
Dm C Bb A
Fightin' and trouble is my middle name
Dm F Gm Bb
I was raised in the bottom by a mama hound
Dm Dm A Dm
I'm as mean as a dog but as gentle as a lamb

<Chorus>

<Chorus>

Dm C Bb A
Well, if you see me comin' you better step aside
Dm C Bb A
A lotta men didn't and a lotta men died
Dm F Gm Bb
I got a fist of iron and a fist of steel
Dm Dm A Dm
If the right one don't get you then the left one will



<Chorus>