

CLAWHAMMER BANJO EMBELLISHMENTS

A. KEIM

OK banjo friend- you have been playing for a while now and things have been going pretty well. You can "bum ditty" easily and have learned some simple tunes. It sounds like you are ready for the next step: embellishing these tunes so they sound like more professional arrangements.

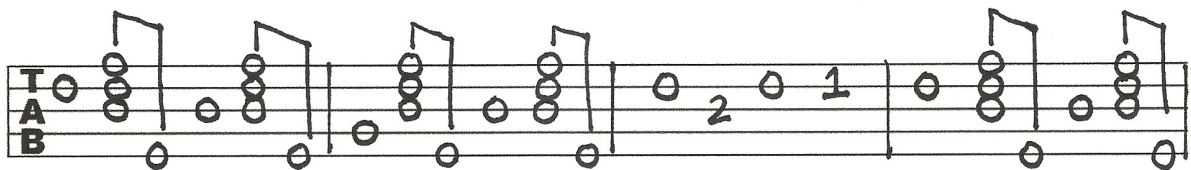
We will cover five ways to embellish the tune:

- 1) Hammer on ("h")
- 2) pull off ("p")
- 3) slide ("s")
- 4) double thumb
- 5) drop thumb

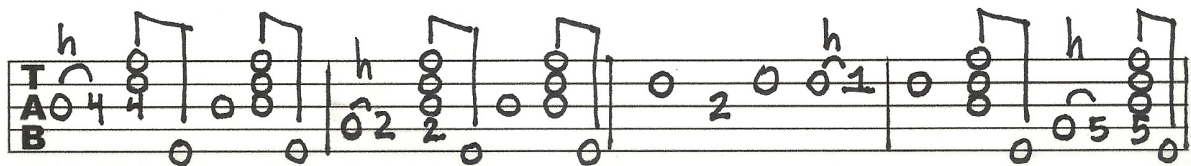


1) A **hammer on** is when you strike a string normally with your right hand, (the "bum" in the "bum ditty") but before you go on to the brush and thumb (the "ditty") you fret a new note with the left hand. This takes your melody note and adds a 2nd note after it without having to re-strike the string.

* A SIMPLE TUNE WITHOUT HAMMER ONS:

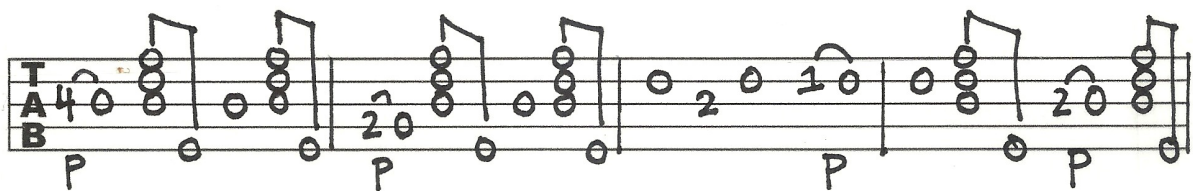


* NOW WITH HAMMER ONS:

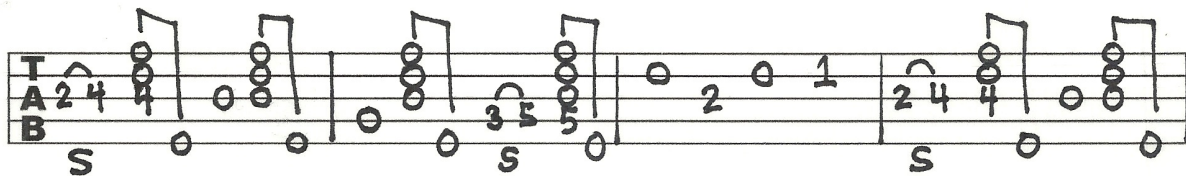


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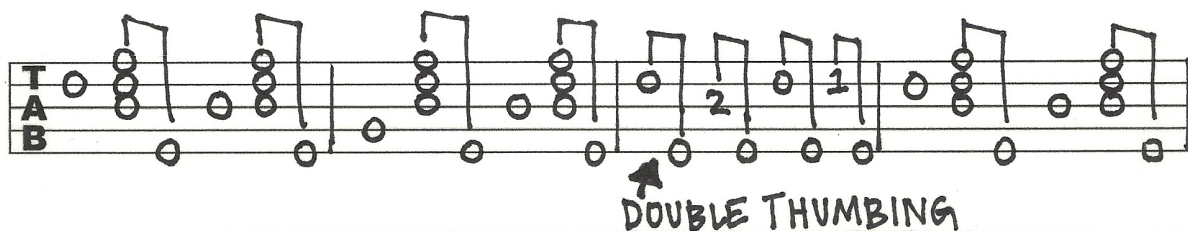
2) A **pull off** is the opposite of a hammer on. First, you strike a fretted string and then you pull your left hand away so it plucks the string. For example:



3) **Slides** are fun too! For a slide, fret a note lower than the one you intend, strike the string and slide up to the right note.

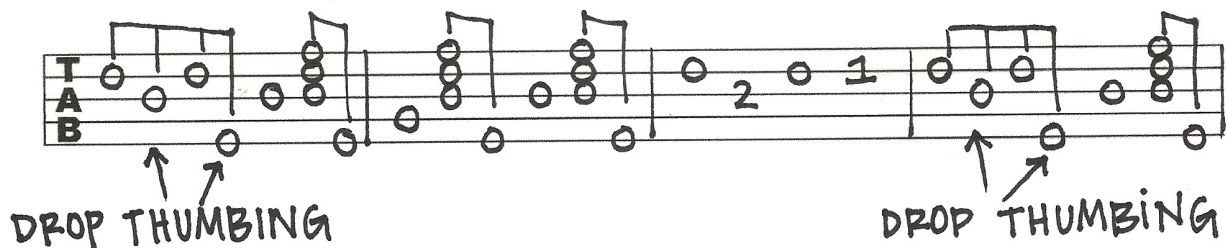


4) Next we will add some **double thumbing**. This is where you add a thumb note on the fifth string after a melody note.



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5) Last is drop thumbing. This is where you "drop" your thumb to play another string instead of the fifth string.



* If you think about it, every note of this little tune has been embellished multiple ways. Pro banjo players are always doing different embellishments without really thinking about it. That is part of what makes old time banjo fun and interesting!

You Tube Link: <http://tinyurl.com/k9237ur>

Our website: www.quietamericanmusic.com