



Building a Traditional Tune Repertoire

by Wendy Anthony

Flop-Eared Mule

(Key of G/D)

The Tune:

Flop-Eared Mule is a popular OldTime fiddle tune, also known as (aka) *Lop-Eared Mule*. This tune adds a bit of challenge as it changes key between Parts A & B. While most Old Time musicians who play with fiddlers will play in G/D (as I have notated in this column), some guitar (& Dulcimer & Celtic-oriented players) will want to play in D/A, others prefer A/E, & apparently some Banjo players like to play in C! Mules, which historically played a patient, vigorous work-role in rural areas, are a hybrid cross between a male donkey & a female horse, usually infertile, with large, up-right ears.

Flop-Eared Mule

Traditional Old-Time

Transcribed by Wendy Anthony

A Key of G

B Key of D

Listen to Midi (High & Low Octaves - see Variation 1): [120 bpm](#) & [160 bpm](#)

Techniques:

- **Overview of Tune:** Make sure your playing partners know which key you will play in. (G/D vs D/A or even play in A/E or C/G! - see Variation 2). Parts A & B are each played in a different key.
- **Chords:** In Part A, the main chord is G (I) with D (V) added in measures 3 & 7. In Part B, the key changes to D (I) with A (V) added in measures 12 & 16.

Part A: ||: G | G | D | G | G | G | D | G :||

Part B: ||: D | D | A | D | D | D | A | D :||

- **Pick Strokes & Fingering:** Pick all 1/4 notes with Downstrokes & all paired 1/8 notes with Down/Upstrokes. The first measure of Part A starts on the E strings using the pinky finger (4th) on the high B (7th fret) moving to the middle finger (2nd) on the G (3rd fret).

Variations:

1. Play One Octave Lower:

Flop-Eared Mule
Traditional Old-Time

Transcribed by Wendy Anthony

A Key of G

B Key of D

2. **Play In A Different Key:** When not playing OldTime style, many folks will play this tune in a different key. Use your ear to pick out the same melody, starting on a different note, in a different key.

Key of G/D: (as notated above)

Starting Note: Part A-start on B; Part B-start on A

Part A Chords: ||: G | G | D | G | G | G | D | G :||

Part B Chords: ||: D | D | A | D | D | D | A | D :||

Key of D/A:

Starting Note: Part A-start on F#; Part B-start on E

Part A Chords: ||: D | D | A | D | D | D | A | D :||

Part B Chords: ||: A | A | E | A | A | A | E | A :||

Key of A/E:

Starting Note: Part A-start on C#; Part B-start on B

Part A Chords: ||: A | A | E | A | A | A | E | A :||

Part B Chords: ||: E | E | B | E | E | E | B | E :||

Key of C/G:

Starting Note: Part A-start on E; Part B-start on D

Part A Chords: ||: C | C | G | C | C | C | G | C :||

Part B Chords: ||: G | G | D | G | G | G | D | G :||

Comments or Suggestions?

Keepin' tuned ...
Wendy Anthony

o2b.pickin@gmail.com