



Building a Traditional Tune Repertoire

by Wendy Anthony

Blackberry Blossom

(Key of G)

The Tune:

Blackberry Blossom is known as a breakdown, and is popular in both Bluegrass & Old-Time traditions. Some parkin'-lot-pickers will use this tune as an opportunity to show off their speed, but don't let that intimidate you from learning the basic melody and playing this tune!

Blackberry Blossom

Traditional

Arrangement by Wendy Anthony

1. D G Em

2. D G Em

B7 Em

1. D G 2. D G

Listen to the Midi: [120 bpm](#) & [160 bpm](#)

Techniques:

- **Overview of Tune:** In Part A, notice a pattern of note runs. The note played on the 1st & 3rd beat of the first 2 measures are the first 4 notes of the descending scale of G. Each of these notes is the beginning of a 3-note run, returning to this base note, before moving on to the next note in the G scale. The chords in Part A start in the tune's key of G major & Part B in Em, the relative minor of G.
- **Chords:** In Part A, starting in G, the chords change are busy, with 2 different chords within each measure. In Part B, starting & staying in Em, the relative minor of G, change to B7 in the 14th measure, then back to a few Em chords, before finishing off as in Part A.

Part A: ||:G/D|C/G|C/G|A/D|G/D|C/G|C/G|D/G:||

Part B: ||:Em///Em///Em///B7///Em///Em///C/G|D/G/:||

- **Fingering:** Use the 4th (pinky) finger for the high D on E strings (7th fret) in Measures 2, 6 & 14.
- **Pick Strokes:** Pick all 1/4 notes with Downstrokes & all paired 1/8 notes with Down/Upstrokes.

Variations:

1. **Part A:** Change the intro notes or timing; use a Descending (vs Ascending) 3-note scale segment (Measures: 2 & 3); Substitute another phrase; vary the octave for the 2nd repetition of Part A, or for the full Part A for the 2nd time through the tune, though you will have to be creative with the lower notes

Part A - Variations

Intro Measures 2 & 3 Measure 5 Low Octave: Measure 2

2. **Part B:** Substitute another phrase; use slides - in the example use your 3rd (ring finger) to slide to 6th fret

