

HOW TO READ MY MUSIC NOTATION

There are three types of notation on each page of music:

1. **standard music notation**
2. **tablature**
3. **chords** for guitar/banjo or other accompanists

Standard notation is for players who know how to read music. There are some anomalies because the Finale Notepad software I use does not allow absolutely correct writing and I've had to improvise. For example:

1. _____ above the notes at the end of a section indicates a **first ending**, which then repeats :|| back to the beginning of that section, marked by ||:
2. _____ above the notes at the end of a section indicates the **second ending** (after the second time playing through that part of the tune). You need to remember to SKIP OVER the first ending to get to that measure. Then you continue on to the following section.

Play the first half of the tune twice through and the second half twice through unless otherwise indicated.

Tablature is for fiddlers, mandolinists and tenor banjo players (all that tune their strings to G-D-A-E) who do not read music. The letters and numbers, written below the standard notes, indicate *which fingers to use* and *where to place them* on *which string*, e. g. G3 means to use your third finger (ring finger) at the correct position on the G string (see *What are the Correct Finger Positions for G, D and A Major Scales - Cheat Sheet*).

I have simplified the tablature by only adding the letter when a string change occurs, so if you see "G1 - 2 - 3," then all those fingerings are on the G string. If you see "G1 - 3 - A0 - 3" then the fingerings are actually "G1 -G3 - A0 - A3."

The #3 finger (e. g. D3) is the **octave note** and should match pitch with the string below (D3 = G0, A3 = D0, E3 = A0); just be higher in tone¹. This is important for fiddle intonation. For mandolin and other fretted instruments, the #3 finger position should be the first dot on the fretboard.

Chords are written above the music notation staff for the use of accompanying instrumentalists. Standardizing the chords prevents the 'hot mess' that occurs when beginning backup musicians are "guessing" or more experienced players have an esoteric interpretation for a tune. At Open Session we try to limit to one accompanist at a time to give each some scope.

¹ Think "...some - WHERE (over the rainbow...). "some" and "where" are the same note, one low and one high. So, G0 would be "some" and D3 would be "WHERE."