

Will the workshop be OK for me? Will I be able to keep up?

The Club exists to help players improve and enjoy themselves on the dulcimer. So whether you have barely touched the instrument or you have been playing for years, we try to provide something in our workshops to stimulate and even challenge you. But it's no fun if you find you really can't keep up or you're going over ground you covered long ago. So we produced these ***Playing Level Guides*** to help you understand what a tutor might expect you to know before you start a workshop. **N.B.** Do let us know if you are an absolute beginner. We can help you join in fully after a few starter sessions – and we'd love to see you!

1. Beginner HD	Familiarity with tuning a dulcimer, basic care & maintenance, using hammers comfortably (alternating). Some awareness of basic musical terms and rhythms can be helpful. Reasonable knowledge of HD note positions, esp. in popular keys (G & D). Ability to play simple scales and one or two simple tunes at a steady, even rhythm.
2.Beginner/Improver HD	ALL of #1, plus some of #3
3.Intermediate HD	Good knowledge of all note positions, esp. duplicated notes. Familiarity with popular rhythms. Ability/confidence to play in the 'common' keys (G, D, C, F & relative minors), play a tune in another octave or key and work out efficient hammering patterns. Understand simple chord structure, ornamentation, arpeggios, harmonies, and dynamics. Able to follow a workshop at a reasonable pace. Keenness to perfect techniques and become more adventurous!
4.Intermediate/Advanced HD	ALL of #1 and #3, plus some of #5
5.Advanced HD	Able to play with a good degree of fluency, understand the HD layout comfortably, find notes as required, keep a fair rhythm and pace during the workshop. Ability to play tunes by ear and join in with sessions confidently. Good knowledge of appropriate musical theory as it applies to the HD. Play varied repertoire and enjoy exploring music aspects such as style, phrasing, dynamics, accents, rhythms, harmony, ornamentation & technique. Able to make a substantial contribution to sessions etc. with other musicians.
1. Beginner MD	Familiarity with tuning a dulcimer to at least one tuning, basic care and maintenance, making clear and distinct notes and simple chord shapes, strumming in rhythm. Some awareness of basic musical terms and music tablature can be helpful. Able to play some simple tunes at a steady, even rhythm – at least one or two from memory.
2.Beginner/Improver MD	ALL of #1, plus some of #3
3.Intermediate MD	Ability to play in more than one tuning or mode. Familiarity with basic playing styles, chording, harmony, strumming and rhythm variations, plus capo use. Able to follow a workshop at a reasonable pace and play with reasonable speed and dexterity, including dynamics. Keenness to refine playing techniques and become more adventurous!
4.Intermediate/Advanced MD	ALL of #1 and #3, plus some of #5
5.Advanced MD	Ability to play with fluency, using more challenging chords, different tunings & modes. Familiarity with various embellishment and ornamentation techniques, e.g. hammer-ons, pull-offs, slides & harmonics. Knowledge of alternative finger-picking and/or picking styles. Good knowledge of appropriate musical theory as it applies to the MD. Able to play tunes by ear, work with other musicians and join in sessions confidently.