

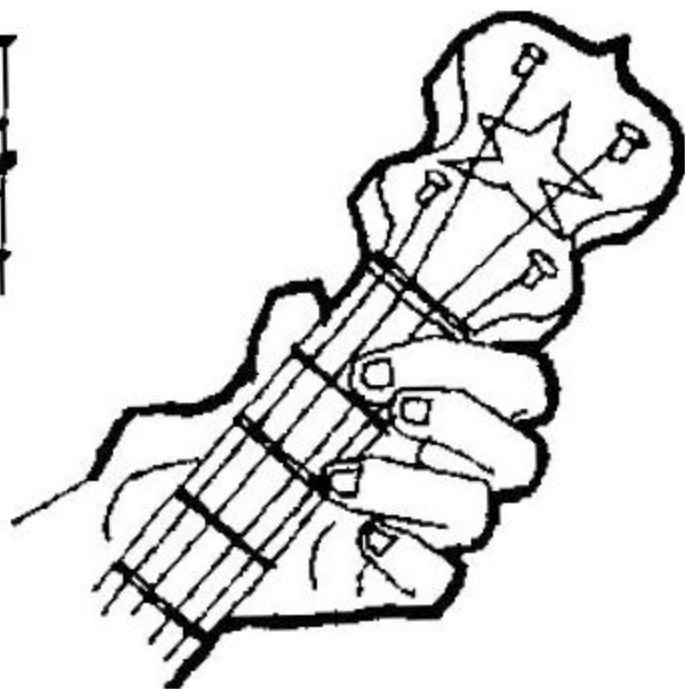
**HOW TO PLAY THE**  
**5-STRING BANJO**



by Peter Seeger

With your left hand make the following "chord". Your fingers should come down where the dots are, not directly on the fret.

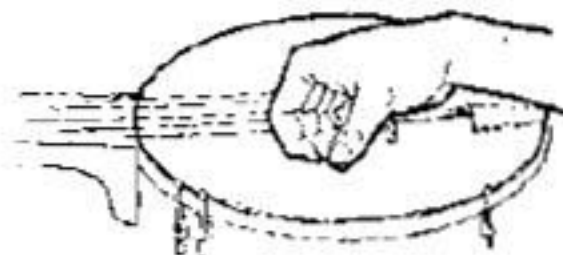
C



## THE BASIC STRUM

With your right hand do as follows: the index finger should pluck up, sounding the 1st string only. Then with the other three fingers (ignore the thumb for the moment) brush down across all five strings. Use the whole wrist, so it's not just a finger motion.

Try doing this regularly in march time: up, down, up down; one, two, one, two. This is the basic strum.

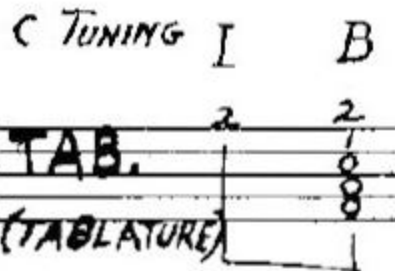


## HOW TO READ TABLATURE

The letter "I" stands for the index finger of the right hand plucking up.

The letter "B" stands for the right hand brushing down across all strings. In actual practice I find myself using mostly my third "ring finger" for this.

Other banjo players tend to use mostly the fingernail of their middle finger, or their index finger, as they brush down and across the strings. . You will have to experiment for yourself, and decide which effect you prefer. In any case, the whole wrist turns, not just the finger.



## THE 5th STRING

Say "bumm-titty, bumm-titty,"  
over and over to yourself; that  
is the rhythm you're aiming at.

2  
4

1 B T 1 B T T=Thumb

TAB 2  
4

# DOUBLE THUMBING

SKIP TO MY LOU

C TUNING

1 B T 1 B T 1 T 1 T 1 B T

TAB. 2 2 1 2 2 5 5

1 T 1 T 1 B T 1 T 1 T 1 T 1 T

TAB. 2 2 3 2 3 2 2

1 T 1 T 1 B T 1 T 1 T 1 B T

TAB. 2 2 2 2 2 5 5

1 T 1 T 1 T 1 T 1 B T 1

TAB. 2 2 2 2 2 2

## DOUBLE THUMBING

Play these four notes over and over till they go smoothly. After a while your speed will increase so you can go from straight strumming into double thumbing without a drop in rhythm.

The image shows a musical exercise for guitar. It consists of two staves. The top staff is a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. It contains a four-note melodic line: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), and C5 (quarter). The notes are connected by a slur. Below the staff are the rhythmic notations: 'I T I T', where 'I' stands for a downbeat and 'T' for an upbeat. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature staff labeled 'TAB.' on the left. It shows the fretting for the notes: the first note is on the 1st fret of the 2nd string, the second on the 2nd fret of the 2nd string, the third on the 2nd fret of the 3rd string, and the fourth is an open string (0) on the 3rd string. The tablature is aligned with the notes above it.

# BASIC STRUM

C TUNING

SKIP TO MY LOU

1 BT 1 BT 1 BT 1 BT

TAB. 2 2 1 2 2 2 5 5

The first system of music consists of two measures. The first measure contains two chords, and the second measure contains two chords. The guitar tablature below shows the fretting for each chord: the first two chords are both 2-2 (D major), and the last two chords are 5-5 (G major).

1 BT 1 BT 1 BT 1 BT

TAB. 0 0 0 0 3 3

The second system of music consists of two measures. The first measure contains two chords, and the second measure contains two chords. The guitar tablature below shows the fretting for each chord: the first two chords are 0-0 (C major), and the last two chords are 3-3 (F major).

1 BT 1 BT : BT 1 BT

TAB. 2 2 1 2 2 2 5 5

The third system of music consists of two measures. The first measure contains two chords, and the second measure contains two chords. The guitar tablature below shows the fretting for each chord: the first two chords are 2-2 (D major), and the last two chords are 5-5 (G major).

1 BT 1 BT 1 BT 1 BT

TAB. 0 0 1 2 1 2

The fourth system of music consists of two measures. The first measure contains two chords, and the second measure contains two chords. The guitar tablature below shows the fretting for each chord: the first two chords are 0-0 (C major), and the last two chords are 1-2 (F major).



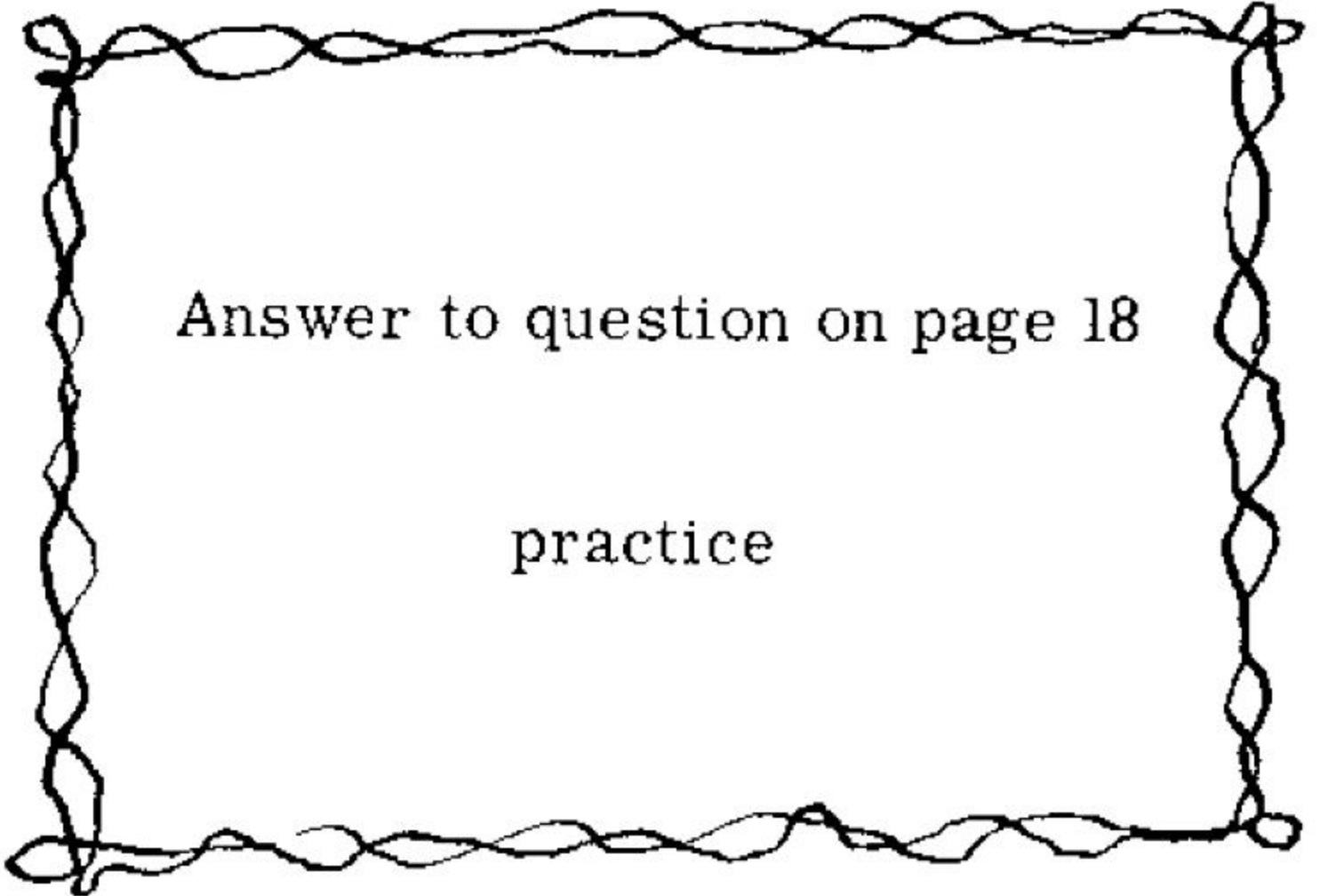


The secret of

**THAT CLEAN CRISP TONE**

How do you get it?

(Answer on page 30).



Answer to question on page 18

practice