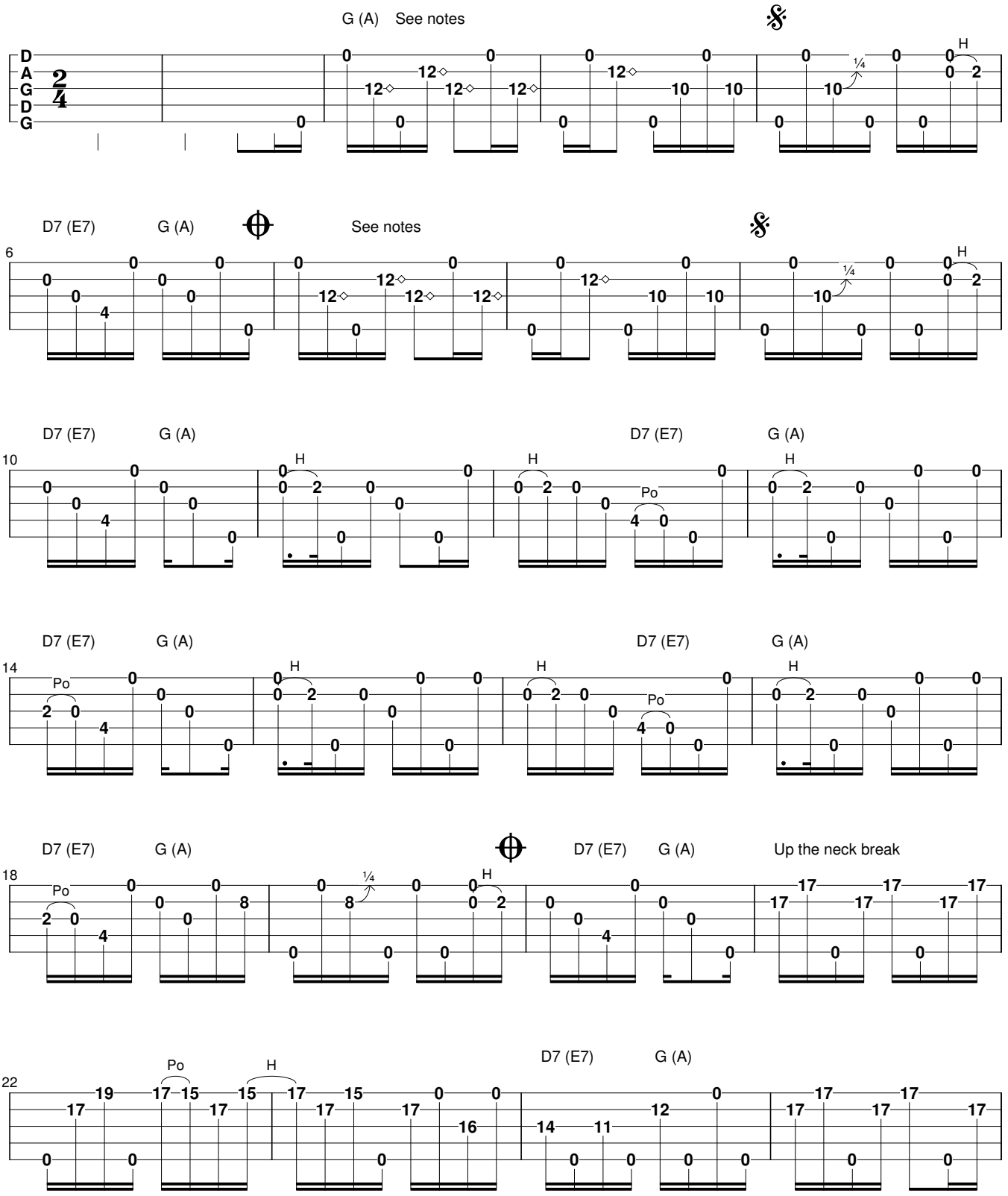
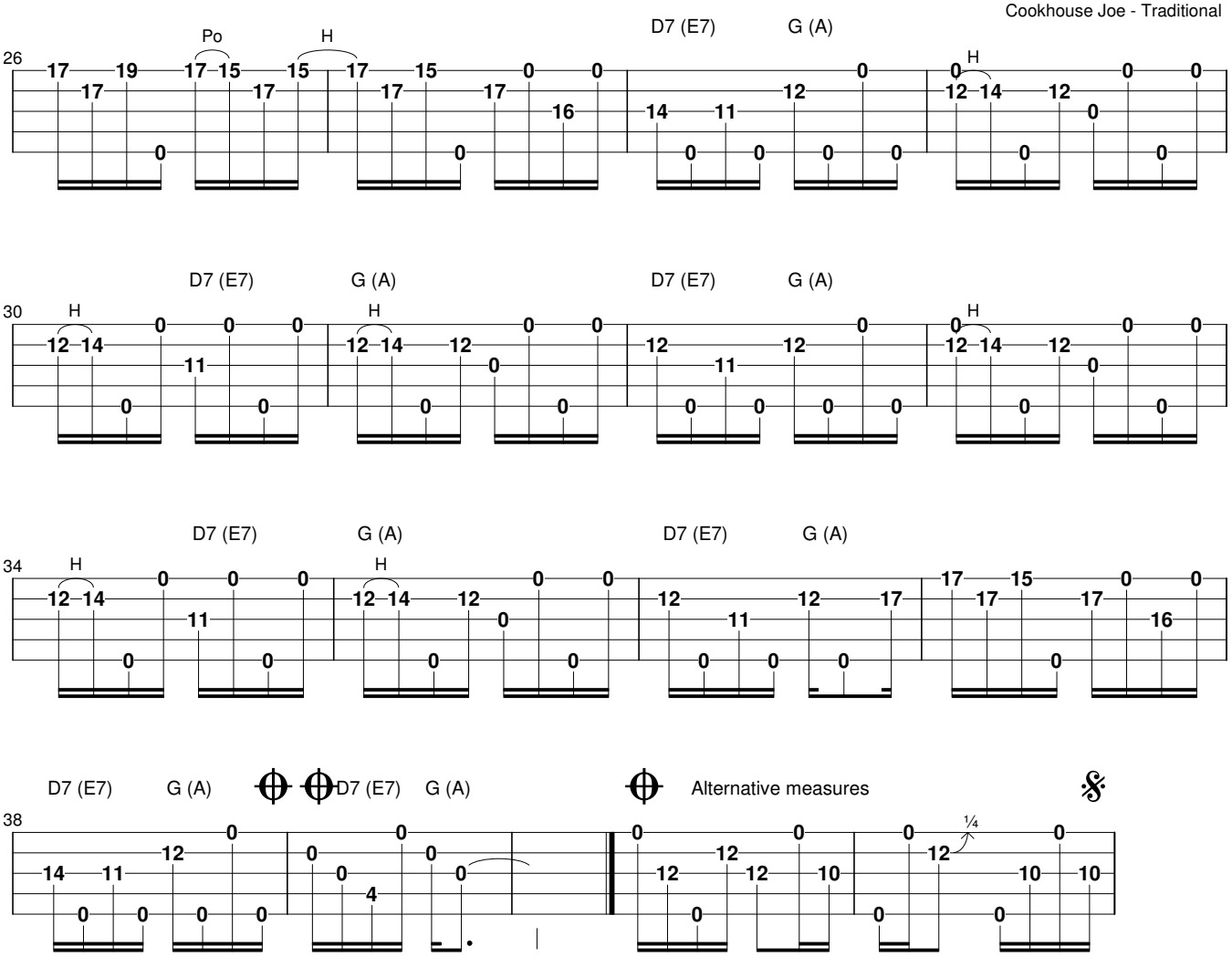
Cookhouse Joe

Traditional

Arrangement (c) copyright 2010 by Donald J. Borchelt





I learned this tune from Boston area clawhammer picker Tim Rowell, who got it from Walt Koken and Claire Milliner CD entitled "Just Tunes." Matt Brown has also recorded a fine version on his CD, "Lone Prairie." According to Jeff Titon, in his book "Old Time Kentucky Fiddle Tunes," the original source is a field recording of Estill Bingham, Pineville, Kentucky, made by Brice Greene. A recording with the title and Greene's reference number can be found on the website "Digital Library of Appalachia," but it doesn't match the transcription in Titon's book, and is probably a mislabeled file. I wish I could hear the original, because Titon's transcription shows the tune in A major, but the Koken and Brown (and Tim) versions employ a flatted 7th in the A part, making this modally ambiguous, leaning towards Mixolydian mode.

I use harmonics to get the opening phrases of the A part in the firt break, To do this, you will need to use the end of the finger, coming down at a slight angle, so that you can touch the 2nd and 3rd strings without dampening the 1st string. There are alternative measures at the end of the tab which don't use the harmonic, but otherwise are only slightly different.