

The Cowboy Waltz

Traditional

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D String bend and release, see notes

Musical notation for measures 1-4. Chords: D, A, F#, D, A. Includes string bends and releases.

G

D

String bend and release, see notes

Musical notation for measures 5-8. Chords: G, D. Includes string bends and releases.

E7

A7

D

String bend and release, see notes

Musical notation for measures 9-12. Chords: E7, A7, D. Includes string bends and releases.

G

D

A7

D

G

Musical notation for measures 13-16. Chords: G, D, A7, D. Includes string bends and releases.

D See notes

A7

D

G

Musical notation for measures 17-20. Chords: D, G. Includes string bends and releases.

A7

D

G

Musical notation for measures 21-24. Chords: A7, D, G. Includes string bends and releases.

A7

25

0 0 Sl Po 0 0 0 0 FPo 0 0 0 0 FPo 0 0 0 0

0 0 7 1 2 1 2 1 0 7 0 0 7 9 7 0 0 0 0 0 0 7 9 7 0

5 7 5 0

3 3 3 3

I worked up my banjo version of this classic country waltz from a 1944 recording of Woody Guthrie playing the fiddle. Like others I play, this setting makes use of the string bends throughout. String bends are handled a little strangely in the Tabledit program, and so the tablature display needs some explanation. At the very beginning of measure 3, really the first measure of the tune, the second string is fretted at the 8th fret, and choked upwards an entire half step, so that it reaches the pitch of the next fret. It is held in that choked position, and played again as the third note in the measure. The tab shows the string being fretted at the 9th fret, but that is only to ensure that the MIDI playback is at the correct pitch. The note is still actually fretted at 8. Once it has been played in the bent position, it is released quickly, and as soundlessly as possible, so that it can be picked again at rest halfway through the measure, and choked back up again one-half step. Again, the string is picked again while being held in the bent position, but this time, it continues to be held until the beginning of measure 4, when it is immediately but gently released after it is picked, so that the pitch is lowered back to the normal pitch of the string at the 8th fret. This is done again in the measures 7-8, and again in measures 11-12, except that at the beginning of measure 11, a slide on the first string from the 3rd to the 4th fret is substituted for the 2nd string bend. That is done to accommodate the position of the hand at the end of a long downward run in measure 10.

At the end of the A part, in measure 17, I have changed the fiddle melody slightly by using a "yodeling" lick to resolve to the tonic. This is a tip of the hat to Slim Whitman's yodeling on his classic recording of Cattle Call, the old country song that more or less uses the melody of The Cowboy Waltz. The lick sounds really great on my semi-fretless Tubaphone.