

# John Brown's March

Traditional

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Guitar tablature for "John Brown's March". The piece is in 4/4 time and features a mix of open strings and fretted notes. Chord changes are indicated by letters above the staff: G, Em, D7, C, and G. The notation includes various techniques such as slides (Sl), bends (B), and hammer-ons (H). The piece is divided into two systems, each with a first and second ending. The first system covers measures 1-7, and the second system covers measures 8-16. Measure numbers 5, 8, 11, and 14 are placed at the beginning of their respective lines. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots in measure 16.

2. G

20

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

Em G

23

0 2 2 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

D7 1. G

26

0 2 0 0 | 0 2 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

2. G Em C

29

0 0 0 2 | 0 2 0 0 | 5 7 7 0

G Em

32

0 7 0 5 | 0 2 0 2 | 0 2 0 0

C G D7 1. G

35

5 7 7 0 | 0 7 0 5 | 0 2 0 2

2. G

38

0 H 0 2 0 0 0 0 14 17 16 14 9

Em G

41

12 0 0 12 14 12 0 9 9 0 0 9 12 0 14

1. G

44

17 16 14 9 12 0 0 12 14 12 0 0 0 0

2. G Em C

47

0 0 0 17 17 16 14 17 14 17 16 17 14

G Em


50

17 0 0 14 0 17 17 16 17 17 17 16 14 17

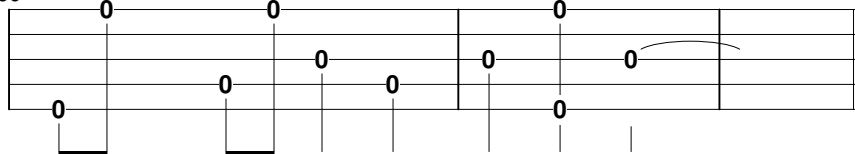
C G D7 1. G

53

17 19 17 14 17 16 14 14 0 0 0 17

2. G  G

56



Doing some web browsing, I ran across an old Harper's Weekly lithograph from a University of Virginia website with the caption "Marching On!- the Fifty-Fifth Massachusetts Colored Regiment singing John Brown's March in the Streets of Charleston, February 21, 1865." The Fifty-Fifth was a sister regiment of the Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts, made famous in the movie "Glory," and had an equally distinguished record, proving to a skeptical nation, North and South, that black troops would, indeed, fight to the death for the Union cause.

John Brown's March is often played in medley with John Brown's Dream, although I can't do that myself, because I use two different tunings. I first ran across this tune in a little book called "Welling's Hartford Tunebook," published by New England fiddler Bill Welling in 1974. The tune is played by Dwight Diller, Norman Blake, and Dan Levenson, to name a few.

Remember that the ghost notes, the notes in parentheses, are not actually played. They are inserted so that the earlier notes continue ringing in the MIDI playback, in order to make the MIDI have the proper dynamic.

The guitar track includes a finger style guitar lead, which I think often sounds great with three finger style banjo. When I was in Wry Whiskey, guitarist Brian Clancey and I often did arrangements using guitar finger picking. Listen to our version of Cindy in the Pickin' the Banj'r section of the Banj'r CD.