

# Needlecase

Traditional

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The image displays a guitar tablature for the song "Needlecase". It consists of eight systems of music, each with a staff of six lines representing the guitar strings. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tablature includes various fret numbers (0-17), accidentals (sharps, naturals), and articulation marks such as slurs, accents, and breath marks (H). Chord diagrams for D, A7, and G are placed above the staffs. The piece features two first endings and two second endings. The first ending starts at measure 8 and ends at measure 10, leading to a double bar line. The second ending starts at measure 11 and ends at measure 13, also leading to a double bar line. The second ending is marked with a circled cross symbol. The piece concludes with a final double bar line at measure 20.

23 D A7 D

19 17 17 16 17 0 12 14 0 19 17 19 17 17 16 17

26 G A7 1. D

14 14 0 14 12 14 0 19 16 19 19 17 17

2. D G

29

19 19 17 0 10 12 0 12 14 14 0 14

D A7 D

32

0 10 12 0 12 10 10 11 10 0 10 12 0 12

G A7 1. D

35

14 14 0 14 12 14 0 19 16 19 19 17 17

2. D G

38

19 19 17 0 2 0 5 0 1 1 0 1 1

D A7 D

41

0 2 0 5 0 0 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 5 0

44

G A7 1. D

47

2. D G

50

D A7 D

53

G A7 1. D

56

2. D

Country guitar pioneer Sam McGee played this tune on five string banjo, in an old time three finger style of picking. He picked it in standard C tuning, if I remember right. I used to teach it to my bluegrass students, as part of their exposure to pre-bluegrass three finger picking. I have set it here in open D, but I have still tried to retain some of the feel of McGee's parlor style. McGee played with his brother Kirk, and fiddlin' Arthur Smith, and together they often backed up Uncle Dave Macon, who also supplemented his frailing with some occasional three finger picking.