

Needlecase

Traditional

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The image displays a guitar tablature for the song "Needlecase". It is arranged in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piece is in the key of D major, with a D major chord at the beginning. The tablature is organized into systems, each with a measure number (5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20) and a key signature indicator (D, A7, G). The notation includes fret numbers (0-12), accidentals (sharps), and articulation marks (accents, slurs, and breath marks). There are two first endings (1.) and two second endings (2.). The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

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

29 2. D G

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

32 D A7 D

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

35 G A7 1. D

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

38 2. D

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

41 D A7 D

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

G A7 1. D

44

2. D G

47

D A7 D

50

G A7 1. D

53

2. D ⊕ D

56

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.