

Walk Chalk Chicken

Traditional

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The sheet music is arranged in six systems, each with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The music is written for a four-string ukulele. Chords are indicated by letters above the staff: G (A), C (D), D7 (E7), and Extra beat. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 on the strings. Slurs and accents are used to indicate phrasing. A repeat sign is present at the end of the first system. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

System 1: G (A) C (D). Notes: 2, 4, 2, 3, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 4, 5, 5.

System 2: G (A) D7 (E7) G (A) D7 (E7). Notes: 0, 0, 0, 0, 5, 5, 4, 4, 4, 5, 2, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0.

System 3: G (A) D7 (E7) G (A) Extra beat. Notes: 0, 0, 0, 0, 2, 4, 3, 2, 0, 2, 4, 0, 0, 0, 2, 3, 2, 4, 0, 0, 0.

System 4: C (D) G (A) D7 (E7). Notes: 0, 0, 0, 0, 2, 4, 5, 5, 0, 0, 0, 0, 5, 5, 4, 0, 0, 0, 7, 5, 4.

System 5: D7 (E7) G (A) Extra beat. Notes: 4, 5, 0, 2, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 2, 4.

System 6: Notes: 0, 0, 0, 0, 2, 4, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 4, 2, 0, 2, 4, 0.

D7 (E7)

The image shows two staves of banjo tablature. The first staff contains the first two measures of the A part, with fret numbers 0, 2, 2, 4, 2, 4, 0, 0, 0, 5, 8, 0, 0, 2, 4, 2, 0, 0. Above the staff are letters H, Sl, Sl, Sl, Sl, and fret numbers 5, 8. The second staff contains the second two measures of the A part, with fret numbers 0, 0, 2, 4, 0, 0, 0, 0, 2, 3, 0, 0, 2, 4, 0, 0. Above the staff are letters Po, H, H, Po, H. Below the first staff, the first measure is labeled '1-2' with chords G (A), D7 (E7), G (A), and 'Extra beat'. The second measure is labeled '3.' with chords D7 (E7), G (A), and 'Extra beat'. The second staff has a 3/4 time signature above the first measure.

A diagram of a four-string banjo chord. The strings are numbered 2 and 4 from top to bottom. The 2nd string has a fret number of 2, and the 4th string has a fret number of 4. The 1st and 3rd strings are open.

This tune comes from old-time fiddler Melvin Wine (1909 - 2003) of Braxton County, West Virginia. The tune has an AAB structure, with the B part, the course part, played only once through each time. Both parts have an extra beat at the end, and both parts begin with anticipation, i.e. with the opening note played ahead of the beat, at the end of the previous measure. I have tried to build that into the banjo arrangement.

Wine's also sometimes called the tune by a longer title, Walk Chalk Chicken with a Necktie On. The tune likely gets its name from the Chalk Line Walk, which was an early, anti-bellum version of the African American Cake-Walk. in which slaves performed an exaggerated parody of the formal dances of their slave masters.