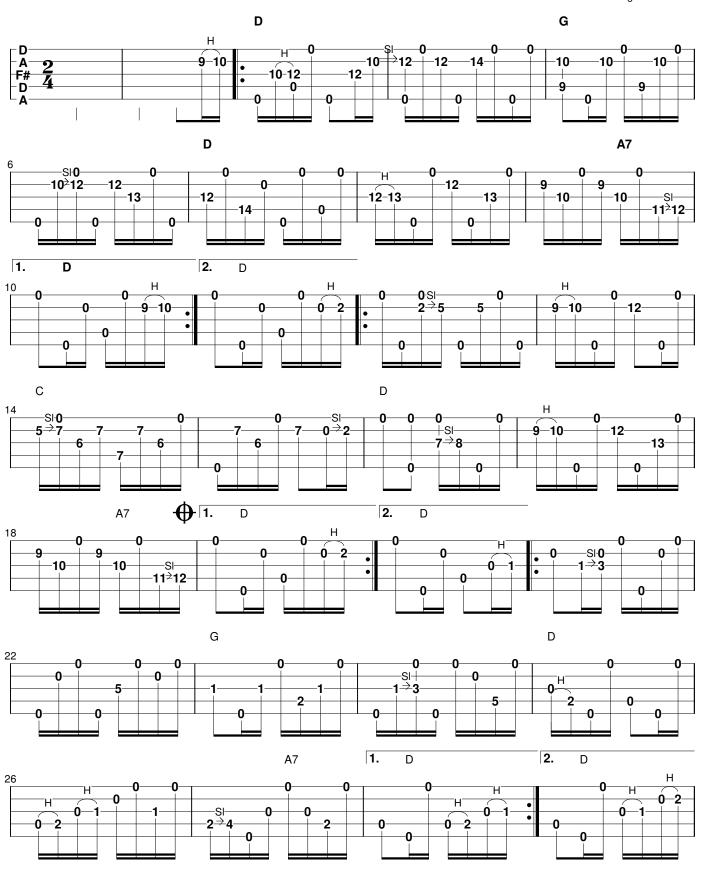
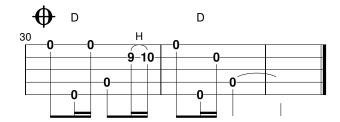
Mississippi Sawyer

Traditional

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Mississippi Sawyer is an old time tune known throughout the southern and western states, generally played in the key of D. This version uses the natural seventh chord, the C, in the B part, in measure 14. Other versions follow a melody built on the dominant chord. I don't know if one is more "authentic" than the other.

I've worked up a lot of different versions of this tune, but lately I've settled on this one, which I like a lot. It takes what can be an uninspired melody, and comes up with an almost chant-like, mystical sound. I've accented that by coming up with a clawhammer harmony part, but even without that, it has a light but ghostly quality to it. Note that throughout the entire "up the neck" version, the first string remains open, as does the fourth, for the majority of time. Almost all of the melody is obtained on the second and third strings. This allows the open strings to continue ringing after they've been picked, and to ring in sympathy, while the melody notes are being played.

Note that at the beginning of measure 7, the note at the third string twelfth fret is held to ring. You don't actually have to unstop the string until the middle of the next fret, after you've hammered onto the thirteenth fret, and move the finger over to the second string.

In measure 25, there is a hammer on the second fret, fourth string, even though the string has not been sounded. In order to hear the note in the MIDI playback, I have inserted a ghost note just before it. Don't play that note.