

# The Possum's Tail Is Bare

D

Tradicional

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Musical notation for measures 1-6. The staff shows a sequence of notes with fingerings (0, 2, 1, 2, 1, 3, 5) and techniques like 'Po' (pull-off) and 'Sl' (slide). Chords D, A, F#, and A are indicated above the staff.

Musical notation for measures 7-11. Includes a double bar line with first and second endings. Chords G, A7, and D are indicated. Techniques include 'H' (hammer-on) and 'Po' (pull-off).

Musical notation for measures 12-16. Includes the instruction 'Ghost hammer, see notes' above measures 12 and 16. Chords D and A7 are indicated. Techniques include 'H' (hammer-on) and 'Po' (pull-off).

Musical notation for measures 17-21. Includes a double bar line with first and second endings. Chords G, A7, and D are indicated. Techniques include 'H' (hammer-on) and 'Up the neck break' above measure 21.

Musical notation for measures 22-26. Chords C, G, D, and G are indicated. Techniques include 'H' (hammer-on) and 'Sl' (slide).

Musical notation for measures 27-31. Includes a double bar line with first and second endings. Chords A7, D, and G are indicated. Techniques include 'H' (hammer-on) and 'Sl' (slide).

D A7 D G A7

32

37

1. D 2. D

This tune comes from West Virginia fiddler Melvin Wine (1909-2003). The B part sounds pretty much like Bile That Cabbage Down, an old time breakdown that is usually played in A or G. The fiddle, at the beginning of the Bile part, plays a series of syncopated slides from E to F#. In the low break, after messing with a bunch of possibilities, I ended up settling on an easy forward roll with a ghost hammer onto the 4th string, 2nd fret. Sometimes simple sounds best. A ghost hammer is is a situation where you hammer onto the string without plucking it. The ghost note shown in the tablature, the note in parantheses just before the hammer, is only inserted so that the hammer will sound in the MIDI playback, it should not actually be played. The up the neck break for the B part, starting in measure 30, more closely follows the fiddle.

There are some lyrics often sung with the tune:

The squirrel has got a bushy tail, rabbit's got the hair,  
The old coon's tail is ringed all around, but the possum's tail is bare.

Oh the possum's tail is bare, oh, the possum's tail is bare,  
The old coon's tail has rings all around, but the possum's tail is bare.

Take an old possum by the tail, then we'll skin him on a rail,  
Never ever more will he be there, grinning at the moon.

Grinnin' at the moon, grinning at the moon,  
Never ever more will he be seen, grinning at the moon.