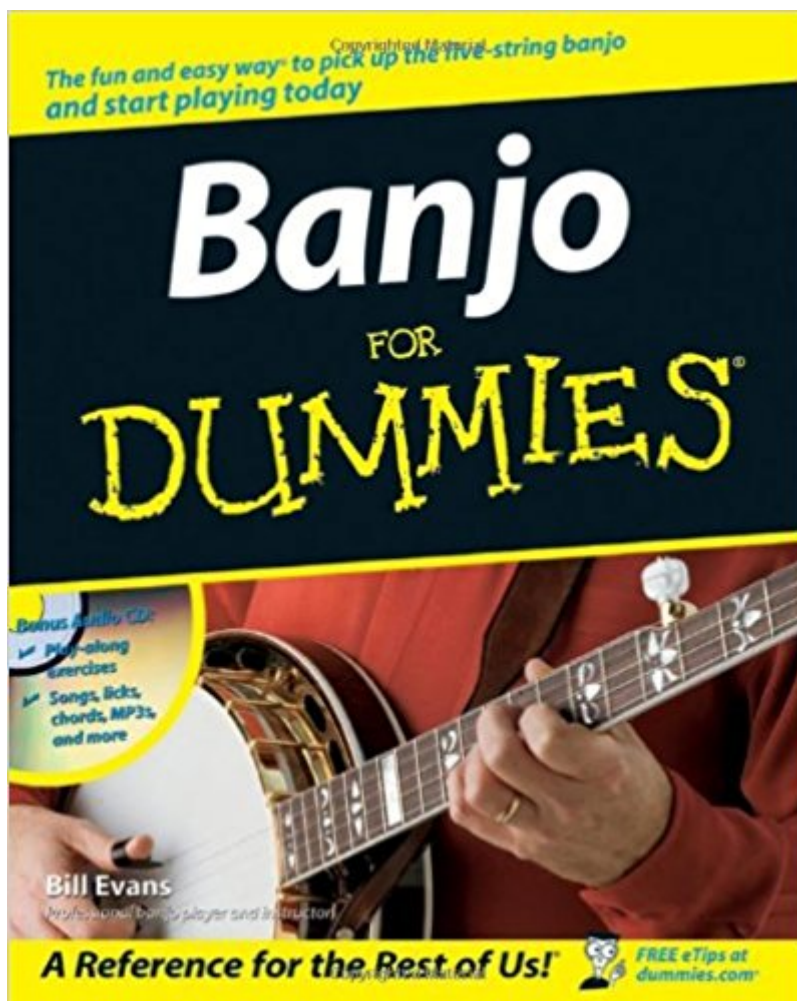


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# Banjo For Dummies



## Synopsis

A complete guide to the world of the five-string banjo written for both beginners and more experienced players. Packed with over 120 how-to photos and 130 musical examples. 94 track CD included - hear and play along with every exercise and song. The only book to offer instruction in clawhammer, bluegrass, melodic, single-string, minstrel and classic styles. From Earl Scruggs' driving bluegrass picking to the genre-busting jazz fusion of Bela Fleck and the multi-million selling movie soundtrack *O Brother Where Are Thou?*, the five-string banjo can be heard just about everywhere in American music these days. *Banjo For Dummies* is the most complete guide to the five-string banjo ever written. It covers everything you need to get into the banjo: including how to choose, tune and care for your instrument, developing a good playing posture, fretting your first chords and getting comfortable with the left and right hand picking patterns used for clawhammer and bluegrass playing techniques. You'll then add the left hand, spicing up your playing with slides, hammer-ons, pull-offs, and chokes for an authentic five-string banjo sound. From there, you'll move on to play 19th century minstrel style, early 20th century classic style as well as try your hand at more advanced examples of bluegrass style. An in-depth chapter on bluegrass music explores Scruggs licks and techniques as well as melodic and single-string styles, with song examples. Also included is a banjo buyer's guide, a section on music theory as applied to bluegrass and old-time music, an accessories guide (advice on cases, picks, straps, metronomes, computer aids and much more), information on how to find a good teacher, banjo camp or festival, chord charts, bios of twelve influential players, practice tips and much, much more! *Banjo For Dummies* is accessible and fun to read and it's easy to locate just what you're interested in playing. Included are 20 songs including several new compositions written by the author just for this book, including *Reno Rag* (single-string style), *Winston's Jig* (Irish three-finger), and *Everyday Breakdown* (Scruggs style). All musical examples are played slowly on the accompanying CD, many with guitar and mandolin accompaniment. Bill Evans is one of the world's most celebrated banjo players and teachers. He has taught thousands of people to play the five-string banjo in private lessons and group workshops literally all over the world. In addition to leading the Bill Evans String Summit, Bill has performed with Dry Branch Fire Squad, David Grisman, Peter Rowan, Tony Trischka and many others and he hosts his own acclaimed banjo camp, the NashCamp Fall Banjo Retreat in the Nashville area. As an American music historian, he has taught at San Francisco State University, the University of Virginia and Duke University. He has written a popular instructional column for *Banjo Newsletter* magazine for the last fifteen years and hosts three

popular instructional DVDs for AcuTab Publications. To learn more about Bill, visit his homepage at [www.nativeandfine.com](http://www.nativeandfine.com). Note: A CD-ROM/DVD and other supplementary materials are not included as part of the e-book file, but are available for download after purchase.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Packed with how-to photos and musical examples From folk to bluegrass and beyond, play great banjo music – even if you've never played before! Ready to jump on the banjo bandwagon? This unique how-to guide gives you the latest tips on choosing and caring for a five-string banjo while covering both the popular clawhammer and bluegrass playing styles. You'll see how to fret your first chords, incorporate slides and pull-offs, understand rhythm, play popular banjo tunes, and survive your first jam session! Select the right banjo and accessories Develop correct hand position and posture Play basic chords and simple tunes Master bluegrass and clawhammer picking Tune and maintain your banjo

Banjo player Bill Evans is not to be confused with the deceased jazz piano legend or the very much living jazz saxophone player (or the Austin, Texas, real estate agent). This Bill Evans is a banjo player, performer, teacher, workshop leader, recording artist, composer, producer, record label owner, and American music historian. For a banjo player, Bill has an unusual amount of schooling. He earned his bachelor's degree in anthropology with a specialization in folklore from the University of Virginia as a DuPont Scholar and a master's degree in music with a specialization in ethnomusicology from the University of California, Berkeley. After completing

coursework for the PhD at Berkeley with a specialization in American music and the music of Japan, Bill taught courses in ethnomusicology and American music history at San Francisco State University, Duke University, and the University of Virginia and was the Associate Director of the International Bluegrass Music Museum in Owensboro, Kentucky. A recipient of a Brown Foreman-Smith Artist Fellowship from the Kentucky Arts Council, Bill has also served as a consultant to the National Endowment for the Arts. As a recording artist, Bill's CD Native and Fine (Rounder Records) earned an honorable mention for Acoustic Instrumental Recording of the Year from NAIRD. His CD Bill Evans Plays Banjo (Native and Fine Records), featuring all original instrumental compositions, was on many "best of" lists, including those of the Chicago Tribune and County Sales. Bill earned a nomination for "Recorded Event of the Year" from the International Bluegrass Music Association for his work as producer on Suzanne Thomas's CD Dear Friend and Gentle Hearts. As a performing artist, Bill has played with Dry Branch Fire Squad, Tony Trischka, David Grisman, Peter Rowan, Maria Muldaur, Jody Stecher, Kathy Kallick and Laurie Lewis, among others. He tours nationally with his solo show "The Banjo in America" in addition to leading his own band, the Bill Evans String Summit. Bill is a long-time contributor to Banjo Newsletter magazine and co-hosts an annual banjo camp, the Sonny Osborne NashCamp Banjo Retreat, held each fall outside of Nashville, Tennessee. In addition, Bill participates in workshops all over North America, hosts several popular instructional DVDs for AcuTab Publications, and maintains an active private teaching practice at his home in Albany, California. His former students include Chris Pandolfi, Greg Liszt, Jayme Stone, and Eric Yates. He is the co-author of Parking Lot Picker's Songbook: Banjo Edition from Mel Bay Publications.

EXCELLENT CONDITION FOR A USED COPY OF "BANJO FOR DUMMIES", ALSO THE CD IS PERFECT. THE BOOK LOOKS LIKE IT WAS NEVER EVEN USED. WELL WORTH THE MONEY. I AM A BASS PLAYER OF 28 YEARS, & I AM STILL LEARNING THANKS TO THESE BOOKS. I JUST STARTED PLAYING THE BANJO SO IM SURE I WILL BE READING INFORMATION THAT WILL BE MORE THAN USEFULL.

I am about in the middle of this book. When I was in college, I tried to learn the banjo. I had a book, it didn't work for me. I had an instructor, it didn't work for me. I sold my banjo. That worked for me because I never learned. I bought this book. It works for me. Bill lays it out, step by step. After getting through all the right hand rolls and techniques for three finger picking, which is my interest,

hey --- I can do it. I actually hear what sounds like music coming from my banjo when I play. I learned enough from the start to buy a decent learning banjo and keep it in playing condition as well as in tune. The book is layed out to encourage a new learner. I read the review from the guy who had a minor criticism that the tab was small and hard to read for us OFs. I solved that by enlarging scans and using them to get the techniques down pat. For me it was mostly reading which finger to use when doing the rolls. All in all its a great book and I will add or write another review when I finish the left hand techniques and melodic playing. In the mean time ---- THANKS BILL!!!!

I was really looking forward to receiving this book and was very pleased when it arrived a day early. However, looking through the book just now I see a major problem. All of the photos are dark and hard to see. The smaller photos, the ones showing the positions of holding the banjo, etc are especailly bad. It may just be the particular copy that I have that has this issue. If I am dependent on these photos for information, this will be a big hindrance. I can only give it 2 stars at this time because of this. I am truly disappointed. It is too soon for me to rate the book as far as the information contained and how well it will help me with my lessons.

Great book! I bought an entry level Banjo and used this book. I bought the kindle version. The approach combined with the CD tracks (which you can download) are great! I slowly worked my way through the book mastering each section as best I could, which the CD tracks made possible. I used other resources as well but this is a great book to start with. One thing I would like to see more of is the general best practices for positioning the right hand, but again there is no real right way. There are a few things to avoid, but there is no one way to do it so maybe that's why there isn't a direct statement on it.

"Banjo for Dummies" by Bill Evans is full of information about all things Banjo. What makes this book so unique is that it teaches the basics of BOTH clawhammer and Bluegrass styles, and gives examples of other techniques such as minstrel. This lets new pickers get a taste for the different styles before they decide which they like best. (Most instructional books are dedicated to only clawhammer or Scruggs Bluegrass) The CD that comes with it is the perfect learning tool, since a person needs an audio reference to really be sure they're getting the exercises and songs the correct way. And it's great for playing along with tunes after you learn them. Another cool thing is that the book starts you off on two particular songs, "Red River Valley" and "Boil Them Cabbage Down", first on easy strums, then with basic clawhammer and bluegrass methods, and later shows

advanced arrangements of these two classics with hammer-ons and slides. It was fun to play the easy version the day I got the book and progress to the hard versions. Aside from a very nice collection of tabbed songs, Mr. Evans gives detailed instructions for such things as choosing and changing strings, basic care of the instrument, and an interesting history of the Banjo. I highly recommend this book for first time banjo players, for pickers who want to experiment with new styles, or for the know-it-all who wants to learn even more. :)

I bought this book for my boy (just for the record) to go with his new banjo. I have been reading it, though, and I plan to limber up the paws again very soon. It is laid out in a very clear and concise manner, and anyone that loves banjos and wants to play one could learn to with the included information. The chapter on rolls is worth the price of the book!

I bought my wife a banjo. Then it dawned on me, she's never played a banjo before. She's not going to enjoy just a banjo. So I also got her some finger picks, an electronic tuner, and this book. She found everything she has needed in this book so far. The banjo needed some assembly, some things tightened/adjusted, and a lot of tuning. All of that was clearly explained in this book. She says there is also a section about choosing a banjo. I wished I'd thought about that before I bought the banjo but it turns out that the banjo I picked was a good one for her and the book confirmed that. If you are starting in banjo, start with this book. Actually, get this book before you even buy the banjo.

Great book for beginners and advanced beginners.

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Method - Book 2: For 5-String Banjo MINSTREL BANJO BRIGGS BANJO INSTRUCTOR The Banjo Player's Songbook: Over 200 great songs arranged for the five-string banjo Country - Banjo Play-Along Vol. 2 (Book/CD) (Hal Leonard Banjo Play-Along) The Best Banjo Book: 25 Songs That Will Teach You The Banjo Basics Banjo Chord Finder: Easy-to-Use Guide to Over 2,800 Banjo Chords Dixieland Jazz Banjo: Authentic Lead Sheets With Chord Diagrams for Tenor & Plectrum Banjo

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