

Workshops Listed by Level – MDMF 2025

DULCIMER BASICS – NEW PLAYER / BEGINNER

- 1. Let's Get Acquainted (with Your Dulcimer)** *Nina Zanetti* Fri. 1:30 – 2:30
Even before your first “how to” class, this workshop will use fun and easy “explore- and -experiment” activities to help you become familiar with your dulcimer (and how you interact with it!), in a way that will set the stage for playing with ease and enjoyment. DAA New Player
- 8. Dulcimer 101 – Let's Begin!** *Norm Williams* Fri. 2:45 – 3:45
Learn how to understand your instrument, how to hold your dulcimer, hold the pick, hand positioning, how to strum, and how to get started playing simple melodies by ear and by tab. Work through several simple tunes – “Twinkle, Twinkle,” “Bile them Cabbage” & “Aunt Rhody.” DAA New Player
- 15. Dulcimer 102 –The Next Step** *Bonnie Leigh* Fri. 4:00 – 5:00
Continue learning to smooth out your playing and have more confidence while learning some new songs. You will be improving your basic skills while practicing playing together as a group. DAA New Player/Beginner
- 22. Dulcimer 103 – Moving Right Along** *Lori Keddell* Sat. 9:15 – 10:15
Learn how to switch from DAA to DAD and back to DAA, and play some DAD tunes with a few easy chords. This workshop will discuss why & when you might use these alternate “D” tunings. Come tuned to DAA New Player / Beginner
- 36. Care and Feeding of your Dulcimer** *David Fox* Sat. 1:15 – 2:15
A course in simple basic care techniques for keeping your instrument happy and smiling. New Player / Beginner

BEGINNER and Up

- 2. Easy Chords: How to Play 1,000 Songs** *Sam Edelston* Fri. 1:30 – 2:30
Yes, really! When you're comfortable playing just a few basic chords, you can do tons of songs. No tab or music notation required for this class – we'll use pictures. DAD tuning. Beginner
- 43. Easy Tunes for Beginners** *Bonnie Leigh* Sat. 10:30 – 11:45
Expand your repertoire with several new tunes that are fun and easy to play. Come tuned to DAD. Beginner
- 9. Stressless Strumming** *Ellen Pratt* Fri. 2:45 – 3:45
Want to even out your strumming hand so your songs sound and feel more natural? We will explore several strumming patterns and ways to practice in order to smooth out that right hand. DAD Beginner
- 23. The Noter and the Feather** *Bonnie Leigh* Sat. 9:15 -10:15
Learn how to hold the noter and get a good sound with its sliding. Also learn how to hold and strum with a turkey quill (both will be supplied) while learning some fun tunes from the 1800's. DAD Beginner / Novice
- 16. Jam Training Wheels** *Melanie Johnston* Fri. 4:00 – 5:00
Playing music with others is one of the most fun things you can do! At first it can be difficult to keep up and learn so many new tunes when attending clubs or festivals. In this workshop we will give you some tools and tunes to get you started! DAD Beginner/Novice
- 29. Mountain Duct Tape** *Norm Williams* Sat. 2:30-3:30
In this workshop, we'll put what you've been learning together, play a few simple tunes, and have fun! We'll also take time to talk about practicing and troubleshoot any questions you might have. DAD Beginner-Novice

ADVANCED BEGINNER and Up

- 30. Ice Cream Truck Songs** *Carol Walker* Sat. 10:30 – 11:30
As the Good Humor truck traveled through Carol's neighborhood, she realized that the music it played, which sounded like a tinkly, out-of-tune toy piano, was actually a continuous loop of dozens of familiar songs, one after another. She grabbed her notebook and jotted down every title, and has turned these tunes into a fun medley for beginning dulcimer players. DAD Adv. Beginner - Novice

37. Learning by Ear, “Knee to Knee” – Play Without tab? *Norm Williams* Sat. 1:15 – 2:15
For many, playing by ear is a daunting task. We’ll demystify this idea and discuss and practice ways to play tunes you don’t have music for “by ear” using the time-honored tradition of repetition, repetition, repetition. (Arlo Guthrie calls it “the Bor-In Method”.) We’ll start with a few simple & familiar tunes and then try a couple that you probably have not heard before. We will record this session. DAD Advanced Beginner/Novice

17. Hammers, Pull offs, and Slides *Lucy Joan Sollogub* Fri. 4:00 – 5:00
These wonderful left-hand techniques help to bring variety in the sounds of our playing, create a flow of our melodies, and are helpful at any tempo. We will learn and strengthen these techniques through playing several traditional tunes. DAD Advanced Beginner-Novice Plus

NOVICE

3. Bread and Butter Jam Tunes *Ellen Pratt* Fri. 1:30 – 2:30
Do you want to play in a jam but don’t know the songs? If this is the case, this class is for you! We will learn basic ways to play several jam tunes, plus learn chords to play with other jam tunes that we don’t know. You’ll leave with a good collection of beginner jam tunes to play! DAD Novice

31. Partner Songs *Lori Keddell* Sat. 10:30 – 11:45
Let’s try a new way to make harmony – playing two songs together at the same time as “partner songs”. Partner songs are melodies which fit together in such a way that they sound good when performed together. We’ll try several pairs of songs that can be played in this way, and just have fun! Start in DAD Novice

38. Best Fingering for Clean Chords *Susan Trump* Sat. 1:15 – 2:15
Want to play smoother and prettier? You’ll learn about 3-finger chord shapes, and a few exercises to help your fingers go where you want them to! Then we’ll learn a British Morris Dance and one other tune to apply your new skills. DAD Novice

45. Intro to DGD Tuning *Pam Weeks* Sat. 2:30 – 3:30
An introduction to this easy way to play in the key of G and related keys. We’ll start by learning to tune in DGD, and then learn a couple simple tunes with an easy way to add instant harmony. DGD Novice

NOVICE and Up

4. Play Us a Story *Carolyn Brodginiski* Fri. 1:30 – 2:30
Who doesn’t love a good story? Put one to music and it becomes a ballad. Learn about the history of ballads, different types of ballads, and what makes a song a ballad. Then play some good juicy stories. Lyrics will be included for those who want to sing along. Bring a capo. DAD Novice and up

24. Singing With the Dulcimer *Carolyn Brodginiski* Sat. 9:15 – 10:15
Why is it that so many people don’t sing when they play the dulcimer? Maybe because it has its own beautiful voice? Maybe because the key of D is not in your vocal range? This workshop will focus on using the dulcimer as a rhythm instrument while you do the singing, playing chords rather than melody, and for those who don’t like singing in the key of D, we’ll learn how to transpose some of your favorite roots tunes to a key that suits your vocal range. Bring a capo. DAD Novice and up

18. Becoming a Better Sight-Reader *Carol Walker* Fri. 4:00 – 5:00
Imagine saving HOURS of practice time because you are able to read and play through a piece of music as easily as you are reading this paragraph! Using tab samples you’ve never seen before, you’ll learn how to apply the tried and-true methods Carol has developed that will put you well on your way towards becoming a super sight-reader! DAD tuning/capo required Novice and up

46. My Favorite Practice Strategies *Nina Zanetti* Sat. 2:30 – 3:30
Ever wish you could master that challenging tune or just progress to a more advanced level of playing, but practicing seems boring and ineffective? In this workshop, you’ll learn about some of Nina’s favorite practice strategies and have a chance to try them out. These practice strategies work well for all instruments and for all levels of expertise. DAD Novice and up

11. Shape Note Hymns Ensemble *Mack Johnston* Fri. 2:45 – 3:45

This will be a playing class. We will play several hymns from The Sacred Harp, one of the major sources for Shape Note singing. Students will have opportunities to play more than one of the harmonic parts. DAD Novice and above

5. Whiskey ... All Over Your Dulcimer! *Norm Williams* Fri. 1:30 – 2:30

Using the tune, “*Whiskey Before Breakfast*,” you will gain an understanding of the use of the capo, alternate tunings, and playing across the fretboard. You’ll come away knowing this tune, how and when to use a capo, better understand the fretboard, *and* strengthen your rhythm. This class is designed to give you an understanding of the breadth of this “simple” instrument. Starting in DAD Novice – Intermediate

INTERMEDIATE

19. Find ALL the Chords on Your Dulcimer *Sam Edelston* Fri. 4:00 – 5:00

If you ever wonder whether you’ve got a particular chord in a certain part of the fretboard, I’ve got a user-friendly answer sheet that shows you where to find it – and I’ll teach you how to use it. DAD Intermediate

32. 1½ Fret, for Have-Nots *Sam Edelston* Sat. 10:30 – 11:45

Do you have a 1 1/2 fret (also called 1+ fret) that you're trying to get comfortable with? Considering getting one? Wondering why any sane dulcimer player would want one? Do you have friends who play the guitar? We’ll look at what a 1+ fret helps you do, people’s common concerns, and how to adjust to an added fret. Then, using a capo, you’ll experience what it’s actually like to have a 1 1/2 fret. DAD, capo Intermediate

26. Italian Folk Songs *Nina Zanetti* Sat. 9:15 – 10:15

Learn some charming folk tunes from sunny Italy! Selections will come from the folk song tradition, and may include a lullaby, a children’s song, and/or a patriotic tune. DAD Intermediate

25. Ballads and Broad sides *Ellen Pratt* Sat. 9:15 – 10:15

This class has songs that were popular hundreds of years ago, when news was spread through songs instead of the media. DAD Intermediate

47. Ensemble Music for Mountain Dulcimer *Ellen Pratt* Sat. 2:30 – 3:30

Do you love playing with others but you are tired of the same old jam tunes? In this class, you will learn to listen carefully to your own part as you play with others using multiple parts. DAD Intermediate

12. Hornpipes *Susan Trump* Fri. 2:45 – 3:45

Hornpipes are the dances that sailors used for exercise on those sailing ships. They have a lovely “step-hop” rhythm makes hornpipes some of my favorites to play (and they don’t go too fast!) Learn the right-hand technique you’ll need to enjoy them too. DAD Intermediate

33. Swedish Music *Pam Weeks* Sat. 10:30 – 11:45

In this workshop we learn the difference between hambos, schottisches, polskas, and waltzes (and play some!) and discuss a little of the historical background of this enchanting and passionate music. DAD, DGD Intermediate

39. Cajun Music *Pam Week* Sat. 1:15 – 2:15

In 1755 French people were expelled from Canada when the English gained control of Quebec and New Brunswick. Those who settled in Louisiana are the source of the vibrant, passionate Cajun music of today. We’ll learn a Cajun two-step and waltz, discuss the music and major players of it, and learn a little about the French culture it came from. DAD, DGD Intermediate

INTERMEDIATE and Up

40. Thinking About 4 Equi-Distant String Dulcimer? *Lucy Joan Sollogub* Sat. 1:15 – 2:15

Compare, play, discover and enjoy the 4 equi-distantly strung dulcimer. Lucy will bring the same music arranged for both 3 and 4 string instruments for players to compare and play and also a few 4 string instruments to share. We will experience the beauty and the challenges that the 4-string dulcimer has to offer. DAD Intermediate and up

13. Art of the Bass Dulcimer Carol Walker

Fri. 2:45 – 3:45

Carol has translated her experience as an upright bass player to bass dulcimer, and she will share those techniques with you. This is a “general” course for anyone who already has a little experience playing dulcimer. If you don’t yet have a bass, you can still practice these techniques on your standard dulcimer. DAD Intermediate and up (on standard dulcimer)

6. Two Waltzes by Peter Ostroushko Melanie Johnston

Fri. 1:30 – 2:30

Peter Ostroushko was a wonderful man and an Emmy Award winning composer. His primary instruments were violin and mandolin. In this class, we will work on two of his beautiful waltzes, Mallard Island Hymn and Heart of the Heartland. DAD Intermediate/Advanced

20. O’Carolan meets Neil Gow Susan Trump

Fri. 4:00 – 5:00

Niel Gow (1727–1807) was the most famous Scottish fiddler of the eighteenth century. Between him and his son Nathaniel, they composed approximately 300 lovely dance tunes. I think of him as the Scottish O’Carolan. We’ll learn one O’Carolan tune from my book, one “new” one, and a tune by Neil Gow. DAD, maybe a capo. Intermediate/Advanced

ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE and Up

27. Deep Diving into D-A-C tuning

Sat. 9:15 – 10:15

We will explore the relevance and beauty of this tuning while playing pieces in 1, 2, and 3 parts. (There is nothing better than “dulcimists” playing in harmony!) We will meet some of the chord shapes and progressions in this tuning and use right hand and left hand (strumming, cross-picking and finger-picking) techniques. D-A-C Advanced Intermediate

34. Bach Dulcimer Ensemble Mack Johnston

Sat. 10:30 – 11:45

Johann Sebastian Bach was one of the most prolific and creative composers ever, writing for most instruments, in most forms and styles of his time. In this workshop, we will work on ensemble arrangements for two of his musical gems: “Air on the G String” and “Sheep May Safely Graze.” For Standard, Bass or Baritone Dulcimer Advanced Intermediate – Advanced

ADVANCED

7. Bach Festival - More stellar tunes for your repertoire! Susan Trump Fri. 1:30 – 2:30

Learn “Arioso” (in G) and “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded,” (also used by Simon and Garfunkel for their song, “Because All Men Are Brothers”) . The complexity of Bach’s music, the phrasing, and interpretation make learning these pieces so rewarding! DAD Advanced

35. Chord Progressions and Capos in 3 Tunings Susan Trump Sat. 10:30 – 11:45

Using basic music theory, we’ll explore the major and minor chord patterns and how the capo can be used to play in different keys in DAD, DGD, EAA tunings. We’ll accompany a few songs you know and then play Scarborough Fair in each tuning! Lots to learn, and good music to enjoy! DAD Advanced

41. Manx “Dulcifiddle” Tunes Carol Walker

Sat. 1:15 – 2:15

If you have taken any of my previous Manx workshops (Tailless Tunes) featuring my arrangements of music from the Isle of Man, you’ll enjoy this workshop that contains many new tunes never previously taught. We’ll be in “bagpipe” tuning the whole time, and you’ll love the way you sound! DGD tuning to start. Advanced

28. Quebecois Music Pam Weeks

Sat. 9:15 – 10:15

Maine is the only state that is bordered by only one other state (NH). The rest of our border is with Canada (and the ocean), and our music reflects the close relationship we have with Quebec and New Brunswick. In this class we will play melodies from that repertoire and work on flat picking and left-hand techniques to fit all the notes in! DAD, DGD, Capo may be used. Advanced

14. Variations on “Greensleeves” Nina Zanetti

Fri. 2:45 – 3:45

Learn several versions of this beautiful 16th century melody (a.k.a “What Child is This”). We’ll begin with a very simple version then will progress to increasingly complex variations that will give you ideas for how to enhance a tune for performance or simply for making a tune your own. DAD Advanced

21. Beginnings, Endings, and Interludes *Nina Zanetti* Fri. 4:00 – 5:00

Advanced arrangements can be enhanced by adding an intro, an ending, and interludes between “verses”. We’ll explore general approaches for designing introductions, endings, and interludes, and then will learn an advanced arrangement with these components. Participants will also have an opportunity to try designing their own beginning, ending, or interlude. DAD Advanced

48. Rock & Roll Dulcimer *Sam Edelston* Sat. 2:30 – 3:30

The dulcimer isn't just for folk songs and fiddle tunes. It's a natural rock & roll instrument, too! Power chords, classic rock riffs, and other things that sound like they came off a record. Impress your friends! Astonish your kids (or grandkids)! DAD Advanced

GENERAL

10. Stretch and Strengthen *Maggie Brown & Margie Litwin* Fri. 2:45 – 3:45

Loosen your muscles before you tighten your strings, it may help you play some beautiful things. No matter what instrument you play or at what level, flexibility and improved range of motion will increase your comfort and enjoyment. Learn simple stretches for your neck, back, arms and hands and strengthening exercises for your hands. No instruments necessary; just bring yourself. All

42. How to Get the Best From Your Dulcimer *Dwain Wilder* Sat. 1:15 – 2:15

Bring your problem dulcimers to the workshop. We will cover how to care for the finish, repair dings and scratches, how to deal with odd buzzes, make sure floating bridges are intonated correctly, how to diagnose any peculiar or problematic sounds your dulcimer makes, and anything else that keeps your dulcimer from sounding and looking as good as new. I'll arrive with sample materials for repairs, and a brief description of what we will cover. All

49. Music – The Real Medicine *Carolyn Brodgerski* Sat. 2:30 – 3:30

Since the beginning of time, music has been used to communicate, motivate, educate, soothe, incite, excite, entertain...and heal. Learn about the different ways music is used in clinical settings to heal, and what it means to heal. A therapeutic musician since 2016, Carolyn will share her knowledge of music and healing, discuss details of her certification, and share her experiences playing at the bedside at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford, CT. All

44. Put that Tab in your Tablet *Melanie Johnston* Sat. 2:30 – 3:30

In this class we will specifically work with a popular program – *forScore* - *specific to iPad*. Class will cover getting your music into your tablet, annotating, creating setlists and using some of the other tools forScore offers. It will change your musical life! No dulcimers required for class. *Optional* - Bring your iPad with forScore installed. All levels

JAMS

50. Slow Jam *Norm Williams* Fri. 9:30 PM (after the concert)

Come, join in, and add the voice of your dulcimer (and add your own, too, if you like) as we play some easy and familiar tunes and songs. We’ll keep it slow and simple, and untimidating, so that everyone will be able to enjoy it. Come tuned to D. All

51. Open Jam (Experienced Jammers) *Melanie & Mack Johnston* Fri. 9:30 PM (after the concert)

What better way end the first day of the festival than by playing songs and tunes together! Bring your favorites to share, and expect everything to be played at a "normal" tempo for the music. All instruments welcome! Come tuned to D.

52. Folk Revival Jam *Sam Edelston* Fri. 9:30 PM (after the concert)

Let's bring back some of those wonderful songs from the '50s and '60s that you, or your parents, or your grandparents grew up loving. Bring your dulcimers, other instruments, and voices! ‘This jam is your jam, this jam is my jam. This jam is made for you and me. All aboard!’ Come tuned to D. All