

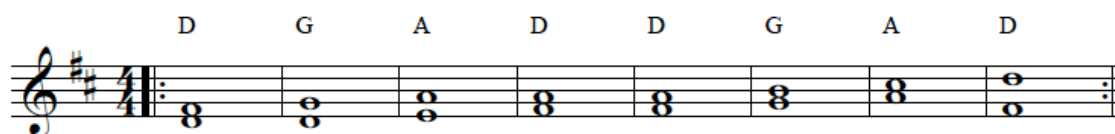


CHORDS IN CLOSE POSITIONS

Playing chords in close positions means choosing notes of a chord that are near (or maybe the same as) the notes of the last chord played. This gives a smoothness to your back-up in contrast to the piano style of back-up. For example, the chord progression used in Viola's Favorite and the B part of St. Anne's Reel is

D_G_A_D_
: D_G_A_D_.

This could be played as follows:



There are many variations you can find by choosing two of the three notes in a chord. It is not always necessary to play the tonic note of a chord but it is desirable to play the tonic note at the end of the A and B parts. The hammer dulcimer is well suited to this type of back-up because you can simply move up and down one side of a bridge while playing thirds or fourths to find most of the chords you will need. Try to make arrangements that have a nice flow of their own and they will make a good counter melody with the tune. Playing in octaves above and below the melody is a good way to add variety with this technique.

Try playing the simple two note chords only when the chord changes. For most tunes (not the example above) this will give an interesting rhythm. For example, Cold Frosty Morning: *Rick Fogel*

