



7 WAYS TO PRACTISE A FIDDLE TUNE

1. Learn the notes (you can do this without an instrument! Great for bus trips!)

- ★ Find several recordings. Listen to the melody and try to sing along. This will work even if you do not feel like a confident/professional singer. Singing is the fast track to fixing mistakes and working out musical phrasing.
- ★ Here's what you can sing:
 - Sing the notes in the "vernacular" of the tradition (e.g. pretend you have the accent of the person who would play this tune)
 - Sing the fingering
 - Sing the bowing if you want to prepare a fixed bowing pattern
- ★ Gear: 'The Amazing Slow-Downer-App' especially good for those faster tunes! Bit expensive but there is a free trial, and honestly, this is a game changer.

2. Learn the notes with an instrument:

- ★  (long-short)
- ★  (short - long)
- ★ Use a metronome and practice at half of the final speed. Break up the tune into sections and play, going up 1bpm (for very tricky passages) or 5bpm until you reach the final speed. Make sure you are relaxed at every step.
- ★ Gear: *Tempo app (there is a free version that is quite good)*

3. Mime the Bow (while singing)

4. Harmonise

- ★ Know the chord progression
- ★ Play through the arpeggio (chord notes) of each of the chords
- ★ Add in a drone note of one of these notes while you play the tune
- ★ Add in a double stop for notes you want to emphasise

5. Free your bow: Play with different rhythms and shuffles

- ★ The Shuffle
- ★ The Georgia Shuffle
- ★ The 3 - 3 - 2 Shuffle
- ★ Gear: *Darol Anger's Online Course @ Artist Works*

6. Understand the dance

- ★ What dance is this tune based on? Where would the dancers be putting down their legs?
- ★ Where are the strong beats? Where are the weak beats? What happens if you emphasise the strong? What happens if you emphasise the weak?
- ★ Where is the tension? Where is the release?

7. Improvise

- ★ Fill in all of the notes in the spaces
- ★ Ask yourself 'what if' questions, be playful!
- ★ Sing. Play what you sing.
- ★ Gear: Christian Howes 'Creative Strings Online Course'