

Flatpicking Guitar Magazine
Free Monthly Lesson
May 2017

Redwing

arranged by Mickey Abraham

Hello and welcome once again to Flatpicking Magazine's free lesson portion of our monthly newsletter. This month's tune is the 1907 classic "Redwing." Although "Redwing" has lyrics, it is often played as a flatpicking instrumental. The form is very similar to your typical fiddle tune and the melody is perfectly hummable -- perhaps this is why folks have been picking on this song for over a hundred years!

This lesson arrangement sticks very close to the song's vocal melody. Once you get the tune under your fingers you will have more success incorporating more licks and runs into your playing. The idea here is to really master the melodic content of this epic standard.

I especially enjoy the use of the A7 chord at measure 7. This chord while not in the key of G is often used in G songs as a cool transition to the D chord. Typically, the only chords used for bluegrass are the I, IV, and V (G, C, and D). In classical music theory if there was to be an A chord it would most likely be an Am! In this case, the A7 is actually momentarily acting as the V chord of the key of D (D, G, and A). Listen to the change as you play it and see if you can hear how the A7 is pulling towards the D in such a great way!

The B section to "Redwing" is just so beautiful. I can really see why people in 1907 loved this song. The B section begins with a chromatic melody line into the IV chord (C). What follows is one of the simplest and yet addictive melodies I've ever heard! Take a listen to the included lesson mp3 to hear the chords and melody in action.

I hope you enjoy learning "Redwing" and adding to your constantly growing list of picking songs. Should you have any comments or questions on this e-lesson just drop me a line at michabraham@comcast.net

Red Wing

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1 **G C G**

TAB

6 **D G A7 D**

TAB

10 **G C G**

TAB

14 **D G A7 D G**

TAB

18 **C G**

TAB

Red Wing (con't)

22 **D** **G**

3 2 2 3 0 3 | 3 0 3 | 3 0 | 3 3 2 1

26 **C** **G**

0 s 0 s | 0 0 2 3 2 0 | 3 4 4 3 0 3 | 3 0 3

30 **D** **G**

3 2 0 | 1 3 1 0 2 0 4 2 0 | 0 1 2 0 2 0 0 | 3 3 3 0 0 0 3 3