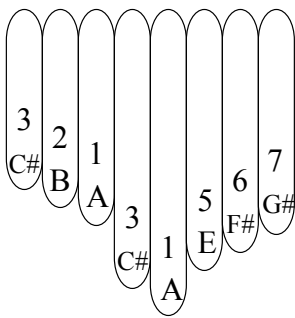


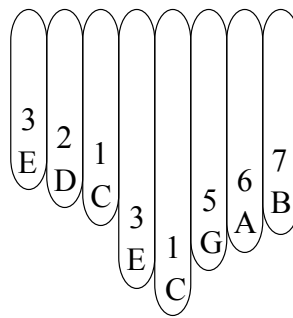
Traditional African Karimba Collection for the 8-Note Student Karimba transcribed by Mark Holdaway

The 8-Note Kalimba is one of the most ubiquitous forms of kalimba. Most of them are tuned to the “Do Re Mi Fa So La Ti Do” scale, with the notes alternating right to left. However, most of these instruments can be retuned to form what is thought to be the most ancient tuning of all - the eight central notes of the karimba. Ten different traditional songs are available for the karimba, and all but one of them have a basic part which is played using only the core eight notes present in the tuning below. I call this a student karimba, because it can be made from the 8-Note kalimba, often used by students, and because this is a good way to start to learn the songs for the full karimba. However, this instrument is likely very similar to one of the first metal-tined thumb pianos made in Africa about 1300 years ago, so playing songs on this instrument has some historical value as well. The music in this collection also has all the variations that make musical sense on this 8-Note karimba.

8-Note Student Karimba in A



8-Note Student Karimba in C



The Catania 8-Note kalimba have longer tines and can be tuned to either the A or the C karimba. The Hugh Tracey Karimba is in the key of A, so you can play alongside the Hugh Tracey with an A student karimba. The Hugh Tracey 8-Note kalimba will have a hard time getting down to A, so you may want to tune it to C instead.

Note that the variations can be repeated many times before you move on to the next variation. Typically each song is made up by starting with the basic pattern and passing through all the variations and then retracing the steps backwards to end with the basic pattern, but you can arrange the song any way you wish. You can even make up your own variations. Most of the variations require some of the higher karimba notes which are missing on the student karimba, so most of the variations presented here will not be complete.

Below is the README text for the Full Karimba Collection:

Welcome to the new (Dec 2008) collection of Traditional African tunes for the Hugh Tracey Karimba. These ten songs come from two sources: five are from the insert page written by Andrew Tracey which comes with the Hugh Tracey African-tuned karimba, and five come from the appendix of Paul F. Berliner’s book “The Soul of Mbira”. In turn, some of Paul F. Berliner’s songs came from a paper authored by Andrew Tracey. At any rate, most of these songs go back to the Shona karimba master Jege Taperera. Jege Taperera was discovered by Andrew Tracey in 1960 when Hugh and Andrew Tracey were visiting in Rhodesia to help set up the Kwanongoma College of Music.

Note that this collection will not work for the Alto or Treble kalimbas, but only for the Hugh Tracey version of the traditional karimba, also known as the *mbira nyunga nyunga*. Unlike the 15 note instrument in Berliner’s book, this collection is designed for the 17 note Hugh Tracey instrument which puts the upper octave tines to the right of the lower tines (on the right half of the instrument), rather than to the left. We have also translated these tunes to the Hugh Tracey Alto kalimba, though they are more difficult to play on that instrument.

What makes this collection of karimba tunes valuable? How is it an improvement on the songs in Andrew Tracey’s insert and Paul F. Berliner’s book? First, this collection has been transcribed into an easy-to-read tablature which has all of the tines drawn out, but using standard western rhythmic notation. Together, the visual tablature and the rhythmic notation make this tablature much easier to read than the more symbolic numbers-based

systems used by the other authors. But the feature of the tablature in this collection which makes it really useful is the fact that it comes in both PDF and KTabS (Kalimba Tablature Software) format. The KTabS computer program for Windows lets you play the KTabS files for each song. KTabS will display the tablature on the screen and play the sound for the song, highlighting the notes as they are played. So, you can hear exactly what the song is supposed to sound like. KTabS is the Guitar Hero of kalimba. The KTabS Player is \$5, the full KTabS Program, which lets you write your own music or modify THIS music, is \$30.

If you don't have KTabS, you can get it at: <http://ktabs.theirhouse.org>

Please note that the KTabS files are write-enabled. I urge you to stash away the KTabS files as you downloaded them in a safe place (don't worry - KTabS files are tiny), and then copy them to a working directory. When you get them in the working directory, feel free to edit them in any way. If you get the full KTabS program, you can change the number of repeats for a given section. You can cut and paste to change the order of the variations. You can remove a variation entirely. You can modify variations, or create your own variations. You can change the tempo - this is especially useful when you are just learning the piece. Anyway, I am a big fan of KTabS, because I never learned these pieces from the Tracey or Berliner tablature alone - it was only after I put these pieces into KTabS that I could see and hear how they went, and it was then that I began to learn these beautiful pieces of music. SO, go out and at least get the KTabS reader, and YOU will see how these songs go, too.

If you need some help, please contact me at: mark@kalimbamagic.com

You can learn more about the karimba at: <http://www.kalimbamagic.com/karimba>

Blessings through love and music.

-Mark Holdaway
Stockton, CA
March 29 2009

Songs:

Andrew Tracey:
Kana_Ndoda
Meria
Shumba_panzira
Wa_Kalulu
(note that Chikunda did not work for the 8-Note karimba)

Paul F. Berliner:
Bunga_Utete
Bustu MTandari
Chemutengure
RovaNgomaMtawasa
SadzaMadyaHere