

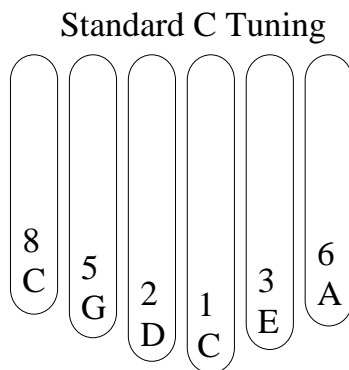
# The Catania 6-Note Pentatonic Kalimba

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[www.KalimbaMagic.com](http://www.KalimbaMagic.com)

This kalimba is perfect for beginners of all ages, but is especially good for kids 4-10. This instructional booklet shows you how to play several familiar songs on the new Catania 6-Note Pentatonic Kalimba using a numbers-based approach.

The standard C tuning for the 6-Note kalimba is shown below. The lowest note is in the center, and the higher notes are on the sides, both left and right. The first part of this guide has songs for the standard tuning, the second part has songs in an F or G tuning.



*To make playing the songs in this book easier, I suggest you write the numbers onto the kalimba tines with a Sharpie marker.*

You may be surprised by the numbers above: where are 4 and 7? These notes are missing from the pentatonic scale! It might seem simpler if the numbers went 1,2,3,4,5,6, but instead we use the numbers

1,2,3,5,6,8 because they map into the regular diatonic major scale. 1=Do, 2=Re, 3=Mis, 4=Fa (missing from the pentatonic scale), Sol=5, La=6, Ti=7 (also missing), 8=Do (one octave above the starting Do). This is a universal system, and people who know music can hear the interval from 1 to 3 (the major 3rd) or from 1 to 5 (the 5th) in their heads. In other words, by using this numbering system, the tiny little 6-Note kalimba can be a doorway into the wonderful and fascinating world of music - this little instrument can launch you into the piano, the guitar, or any number of instruments, and learning with this system can help you or your child with ear training.

The kalimba comes precision-tuned, but you will probably find that you need to adjust the tuning after a few months of good playing. Also, if you want to play the songs in the second half of this guide, you will need to change the tuning a bit. Borrow someone's electronic chromatic guitar tuner, or buy your own for \$20. If you want to see a video showing you how to tune the kalimba, search YouTube for "tune kalimba."

In the songs that follow, we write out the words to the song, and above the words we write out the number of the note to be played. The rhythm is not notated in any way, but if you know the song, you will be able to play an appropriate rhythm.

Standard C Tuning

## Bought me a cat

8 8 8 5 5 5 8 8 5 5 8 6 5 5 5 3 1 2  
Bought me a cat and the cat pleased me, I fed my cat un-der yon-der tree.

1 1 3 3 2 1  
Cat goes fid-dle-i-fee.

8 8 8 5 5 5 8 8 5 5 8 6 5 5 5 3 1 2  
Bought me a hen and the hen pleased me, I fed my hen un-der yon-der tree.

1 1 3 3 5 3 3 5 1 1 3 3 2 1  
Hen goes chim-mi-chuck, chim-mi-chuck, Cat goes fid-dle-i-fee.

## Camptown Races - Stephen Foster

5 5 3 5 6 5 3 3 2 3 2  
Camp-town la-dies sing dis song, Doo-dah! doo-dah!

5 5 3 5 6 5 3 2 3 2 1  
Camp-town race-track five miles long, Oh, doo-dah day!

1 1 3 5 8 6 6 8 6 5  
Goin to run all night Goin to run all day

5 5 5 3 3 5 5 6 5 3  
I'll bet my mon-ey on de bob-tail nag

2 2 2 3 3 2 1  
Some-bo-dy bet on de bay

## Dvorak's "Going Home" Theme - no words

3 5 5 3 2 1

2 3 5 3 2

3 5 5 3 2 1

2 3 2 1 1

Standard C Tuning

**Five Foot Two** - Lewis, Young, Henderson

3 5 3 3 6 3  
Five foot two, eyes of blue

3 6 3 6 3 6 3  
Oh, what those five feet could do

6 8 6 8 6 5 6 3  
Has an-y-bod-y seen my gal?

3 5 3 3 6 3  
Turned up nose, turned down hose,

3 6 3 6 3 6 3  
All dressed up in fan-cy clothes,

6 8 6 8 6 5 6 8  
Has an-y-bod-y seen my gal?

**Joy to the World (Jeremiah Was a Bullfrog)** - Axton, Hoyt

6 5 5 3 5 3 5 3 6 6 5 5 5 3  
Jer-e-mi-ah was a bull-frog, was a good friend of mine.

1 6 6 5 5 3 2 1 1 3 2 1 1 1 3 3 2 2 1  
I ne-ver un-der-stood a sin-gle word he said but I helped him drink his wine.

1 1 3 3 2 1 2 1 1 1  
And he al-ways had some migh-ty fine wine.

3 2 1 1 5 5 3 2 1  
Joy to the world... all the boys and girls

3 5 5 6 5 3 1 3 2 1  
Joy to the fish-ies in the deep blue sea

3 1 2 2 1  
Joy to you and me.

Standard C Tuning

## Little Liza Jane

3 1 2 1 3 1 2 1 3 5 6 5  
I gotta house in Bal-ti-more---, Little Li-za Jane,

3 1 2 1 3 1 2 1 3 3 2 1  
Street cars run-ning by my door---, Little Li-za Jane.

1 8 5 6 5 3 5 6 5  
(clap) Oh, E-li-za, Little Li-za Jane,

1 8 5 6 5 3 3 2 1  
(clap) Oh, E-li-za, Little Li-za Jane

## Oh! Susanna

1 2 3 5 5 6 5 3 1 2 3 3 2 1 2  
Oh I come from Al-a-ba-ma with a ban-jo on my knee

1 2 3 5 5 6 5 3 1 2 3 3 2 2 1  
I'm a going to Loui-si-a-na my- true love for to see

## Shortnin Bread

8 8 6 5 6 8 6 5 8 6 5 5 5 3 3 2 1  
Three lit-tle chil-dren, Lyin' in bed Two were sick and the oth-er 'most dead

8 8 6 5 5 6 6 8 6 5 8 6 5 5 5 3 2 1  
Sent for the doc-tor and the doc-tor said, "Give those chil-dren some Short'nin' bread."

1 1 6 6 5 5 6 1 6 5 6 8 8 6 6 5 5 6 3 2 1  
Ma-ma's lit-tle ba-by loves Short'nin', short'nin', Ma-ma's lit-tle ba-by loves Short'nin' bread,

1 1 6 6 5 5 6 1 6 5 6 8 8 6 6 5 5 6 3 2 1  
Ma-ma's lit-tle ba-by loves Short'nin', short'nin', Ma-ma's lit-tle ba-by loves Short'nin' bread,

Standard C Tuning

## Swanee River - Stephen Foster

3 2 1 3 2 1 8 6 8 5 3 1 2  
Way down up-on the Swa-nee Riv-er, far, far a-way,

3 2 1 3 2 1 8 6 8 5 3 1 2 2 1  
There's where my heart is turn-ing ev-er, There's where the old folks stay.

## Sunshine on a Cloudy Day

1 2 3 5 6 8 1 2 3 5 6 8

**Just twiddling your thumbs - repeat each of these patterns  
8 or 16 times or more. Invent your own rhythms!**

||: 1 2 3 5 3 2 :||

||: 1 8 3 5 3 8 :||

||: 1 8 3 5 6 8 3 5 :||

||: 1 8 3 5 6 2 3 5 :||

||: 1 8 6 5 6 5 3 5 :||

||: 1 2 3 5 3 2 | 1 5 3 2 3 5 :||

## Retuning to a 5 Tuning

If you are under 12 years old, you should probably consult an adult to help you retune your kalimba. Why do you even need to retune?

First, after playing for several weeks or months, your kalimba will go slightly out of tune. If a tine wiggles out, the vibrating length will be longer, and the pitch will be lower. If a tine is jammed in, the vibrating length will be shorter, and the pitch will be higher. When your kalimba starts sounding odd, it might be time to check the tuning.

Another good reason for retuning your kalimba is that it can open the door to new songs that are not available to you in the standard tuning. For example, the song Amazing Grace starts on the 5 and goes up to the 8 and then even higher - that is, it goes above the range of your kalimba in standard tuning, but it does not use any notes below the 5. One way to retune would be to bring the lowest note - the C, or 1 - up to G, or the 5 note. Of course, you would have to bring all of the notes up. That is a lot of work.

We suggest a very simple retuning instead. In the F tuning, the lowest note is still a C, but in the key of F, the C plays the role of the 5 note. The D is the 6 note. In the pentatonic scale, there is no 7, so we don't need an E. Just tune the E up to F, which is not very much work at all. All the other notes stay exactly the same. EASY!

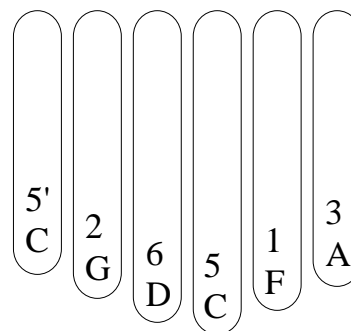
I call this a **5 Tuning** because the low and the high notes are now 5. Which leads us to a problem - there are TWO 5 NOTES!

To distinguish between these two different notes, low 5 is just **5**, and the high 5 is **5'**.

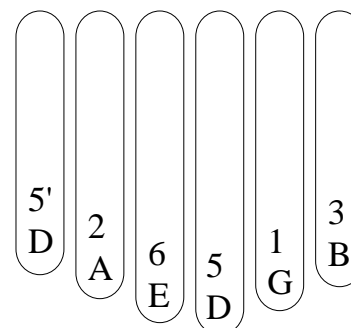
If you have numbers 1,2,3,5,6,8 written on the tines already, rubbing alcohol will remove those numbers. Then use a Sharpee marker to write the new system: 5,6,1,2,3,5'.

Another 5 Tuning that you may want to use is in the key of G. Either the F Tuning or the G Tuning below can read any of the songs in the second part of this book. To put your 6-Note Catania from F Tuning into G Tuning, you need to tune every note up a whole step higher, which is a lot of work. Why would you want to do this? There are a lot of kinds of kalimbas that are tuned to G already, and if you tune up to G, you can play the 6-Note along with any of those G kalimbas.

F Tuning



G Tuning



5 Tuning (F or G)

## All God's Critters Got a Place in the Choir - Bill Staines

3 3 3 2 3 2 3 2 1 1  
All God's crit-ters got a place in the choir

2 2 2 3 5' 3 2  
Some sing low, some sing high-er

1 6 1 1 1 1 6 5 5 5  
Some sing out loud on the tel-e-phone wire

5 5 5 3 2 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1  
And some just clap their hands, or paws or an-y-thing they got.

## Amazing Grace - John Newton

5 1 3 1 3 2 1 6 5 5 1 3 1 3 2 3 5'  
A-maz-ing-- grace how sweet the sound that saved a--- wretch like-- me

3 5' 3 5' 3 1 5 6 1 1 6 5 5 1 3 1 3 2 1  
I once-- was-- lost, but now-- I'm-- found, was blind but-- now I see.

## As I Went Down to the River to Pray - Robert Douglas Metgar

5 5 6 1 1 1 1 1 6 1 2 2 2 3 2 1 3 2 1  
As I went down to the riv-er to pray won-der-ing a-bout that good old way

6 5 5 5 6 1 1 3 3 2 1 1 6 1  
And who shall wear the star-y crown, good Lord show me the way

2 2 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1 1 6 1 1 1 6 5  
Come on sis-ters lets go down, lets go down, don't you want to come down

2 2 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 2 1 1 6 5  
Come on sis-ters lets go down, down in the riv-er to pray

## Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen

3 5 6 1 2 3 3 3 3 3 5 6 1 1 6 5  
No-bo-dy knows the troub-le I've seen No-bo-dy knows but Je-sus

3 5 6 1 2 3 3 3 3 5' 3 2 3 1  
No-bo-dy knows the troub-le I've seen Glor-y Hal-le-lu

## This Little Light of Mine

5 6 1 6 1 3 3 3 2 1  
This lit-tle light of mine I'm gon-na let it shine!

6 1 1 6 1 1 1 1 6 5  
This lit-tle light of mine I'm gon-na let it shine!

5 6 1 6 1 3 3 3 2 1  
This lit-tle light of mine I'm gon-na let it shine!

1 2 3 3 3 2 1 3 2 1  
Let it shine! Let it shi-ine! Let it shine!

## She'll Be Comin Round the Mountain When She Comes

5 6 1 1 1 1 6 5 5 6 1  
She'll be com-in round the moun-tain when she comes

1 2 3 3 3 3 5' 3 2 1 2  
She'll be com-in round the moun-tain when she comes

5' 5' 3 3 3 3 2 1 1 1 6 6 6 6 2 1  
She'll be com-in round the moun-tain She'll be com-in round the moun-tain

1 6 5 5 5 5 3 2 6 5 1  
She'll be com-in round the moun-tain when she comes

## Standin In The Need of Prayer

3 2 3 5' 3 2 3 5' 3 2 3 2 1  
Not my bro-ther, not my sis-ter, but it's me oh Lord

1 1 1 1 2 2 3  
Stand-ing in the need of prayer

3 2 3 5' 3 2 3 5' 3 2 3 2 1  
Not my bro-ther, not my sis-ter, but it's me oh Lord

1 1 1 1 2 2 3  
Stand-ing in the need of prayer

1 3 5 1 2 3 2 1      1 1 1 1 2 2 3  
It's me, it's me, it's me, oh Lord      Stand-ing in the need of prayer

1 3 5 1 2 3 2 1      1 1 1 1 2 2 1  
It's me, it's me, it's me, oh Lord      Stand-ing in the need of prayer

## Old McDonald Had a Farm

1 1 1 5 6 6 5      3 3 2 2 1  
Old Mc-Don-ald had a farm      E - I - E - I - O

5 1 1 1 5 6 6      5      3 3 2 2 1  
And on this farm he had some chicks      E - I - E - I - O

5 5 1 1 1 5 5 1 1 1  
With a chick chick here and a chick chick there

1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 6 5  
Here a chick there a chick ev-ery-where a chick chick

1 1 1 5 6 6 5      3 3 2 2 1  
Old Mc-Don-ald had a farm      E - I - E - I - O

## Swing Low, Sweet Chariot

3 1 3 1 1 6 5 1 1 1 1 3 3 5' 5'  
Swing low, sweet char-i-ot --- com-in for to car-ry me home

5' 3 5' 1 1 6 5 1 1 1 2 3 3 2 1  
Swing low, sweet char-i-ot --- com-in for to car-ry me home

3 5' 1 6 1 1 6 1 1 1 6 5 1 1 1 1 3 3 5' 5'  
I looked o-ver Jor-dan and what did I see--- com-in for to car-ry me home

5' 5' 5' 3 2 1 1 1 1 1 6 5 1 1 1 2 3 3 2 1  
A band of Ang-els com-in aft-er me-- com-in for to car-ry me home

## Theres a Hole in My Bucket

1 2 3 1 5 6 1 5 6 1 5 6 1  
There's a hole in my buck-et dear Li-za dear Li-za

1 2 3 1 5 6 1 5 6 1 2 1  
There's a hole in my buck-et dear Li-za a hole

## Will The Circle Be Unbroken

5 6 1 1 3 2 1 3 3 2 1 2 1 6 5  
Will the cir-cle be un-bro-ken by and by Lord by and by

5 6 1 1 3 5' 5' 3 1 2 3 3 2 2 1  
Theres a bet-ter home a wait-in in the sky Lord in the sky

## Go Tell it on the Mountain

3 3 2 1 6 5 1  
Go tell it on the moun - tain

2 2 2 1 3 5' 5' 5'  
o - ver the hills and ev - ry - where

3 3 2 1 6 5 1  
Go tell it on the moun - tain

3 1 3 2 1  
Je - sus Christ is born

The 6-Note Kalimba was spearheaded by my friend Sarah. Sarah is in my Quaker Meeting, and I have known her since she was about 12. She plays a one-handed version of the 6-Note kalimba, as she has use of one hand. Her first kalimba was an 8-Note kalimba, but I quickly realized that this was too complex for her, so I took some notes out, and for two years she played a 5-Note version in a pentatonic tuning. Recently, we upgraded to six notes, and then a few months later Steve Catania came out with the Catania pentatonic 6-Note Kalimba, and we switched to this new instrument - with the notes arranged with the lowest on the right to the highest on the left, so it is ergonomically laid out for a left-handed person. (I would set up a kalimba in the opposite way - with low notes on the left and high notes on the right - for someone who only used their right hand.) With the advances Sarah has been making on this 6-Note instrument, I have started to think about the day that Sarah will advance to an 8-Note instrument.

The numbers-based system doesn't care how the notes are ordered, unlike tablature.

Sarah has always used the tuning with the 5 in the low note and the 1 in the middle - the F tuning that the second half of this download is devoted to. That is because the songs she loves to play and sing, like *Go tell it on The Mountain*, *Amazing Grace*, *This Little Light of Mine*, and *All God's Critters*, require this tuning.

Without Sarah, I would not have written this booklet, and it would not be in your hands. I take this lesson from Sarah: no matter what our abilities, no matter where we stand, we all have a part to play in this great unfolding drama called Life. Play your part joyfully!

## Wade in the Water

6 1 6 1 6 3 5' 3 3 5' 3 1  
Wade in the wa-ter Wade in the wa-ter chil-dren

6 1 6 1 6 1 1 6 6 5 6  
Wade in the wa-ter God's a gon-na troub-le the wa-ter

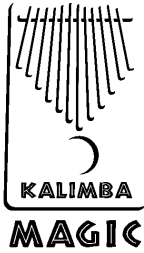
6 6 6 6 6 6 6 (seven 6's)  
Who're those chil-dren dressed in red

1 1 6 6 5 6  
God's a gon-na troub-le the wa-ter

6 6 6 6 6 6 6  
Must be the ones that Mos-es led

1 1 6 6 5 6  
God's a gon-na troub-le the wa-ter

This song actually requires one more note this kalimba doesn't have, the high 6' note. Instead, a 3 note is written because it harmonizes with the missing note - this occurs on the "wa" of the second "water" in the first line. If you sing the song, your voice can go to the high note there.



# What can you do when you are finished with this book?

There are so many kalimbas available these days that you have many paths you could take, and these are just a few of the things you could do next.

The numbers in this book, 1,2,3,5,6,8, will map onto the numbers of the 8-Note kalimba, 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8. You can play these exact same songs on the 8-Note kalimba, but adding the 4 and the 7 notes will put some of the kalimba tines in different places (the 5 and 6 notes will be on opposite sides from the 6-Note). Still, the 6-Note Pentatonic Kalimba will be a good introduction to the 8-Note Kalimba.

There are two octave, 11-Note Pentatonic Kalimbas made by Hugh Tracey and Catania, and the 6 notes of the 6-Note Kalimba will be just like the lower 6 notes of the 11-Note Kalimbas. Of course, adding an extra octave will open many doors and give you countless new possibilities. There are two tablature-based books available for the 11-Note Pentatonic Kalimba.

You can experiment with other new tunings. We have only presented three tunings in this booklet, but there are thousands of possible tunings, and probably hundreds of good tunings. Do be careful when retuning, use a tuner, and if you are under 18, do ask a parent if you need adult supervision for retuning.

But perhaps the most fun you can have is to just play around with this 6-Note Kalimba. Just because you have played all the songs in this booklet doesn't mean you have exhausted the music available to this kalimba. Go back through these songs and see if you can play these songs better. Change the rhythm, make it jazzy, add a note here or there. And in the key of C (or F or G), there will be many songs you hear on the radio that you can play along with. You probably don't have enough notes to play the entire melody, but you will find that you can invent parts that will work with many of the songs you hear on the radio. Or write your own songs! You can even write them down using the number notation.

Above all, have fun!

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