

Secret Code: FID/MEL

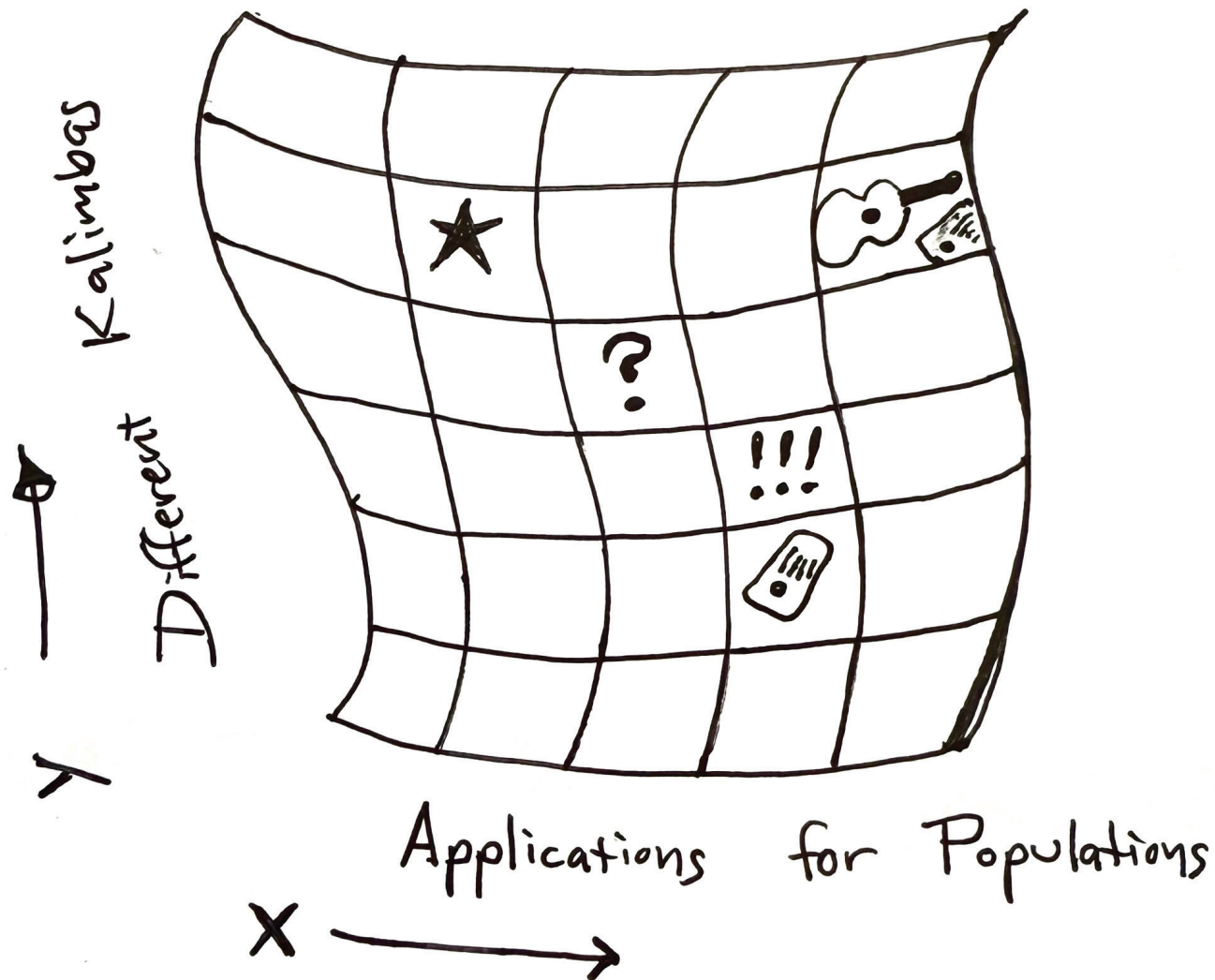
Kalimba Magic

I'm Mark Holdaway, I ran KM since 2005.

(I retired in 2024 and sold my business...
but here I am working for the new owner,
Anthony Ghimenti)

WRAMTA 2025 // Tempe, AZ // April 5, 2025

Here is the shape of our game today:



Test: suggest three different kalimbas for three different music therapy applications

But WHY Kalimba?

- * symmetric bilateral stimulation,
and rapid eye movement
- * connects to ancient African heritage
- * simple tunings tilt the odds toward success
- * like Orff instruments, you
can limit sonic complexity
- * quiet, beautiful voice, speaks to a
quiet, joyful place in my heart
- * the kalimba is actually a fairly powerful
instrument, capable of much music
- * I'm ASD, and kalimba gave ME a focus!

Where did the Kalimba come from?

3000 years ago, in Cameroon Africa:
Bamboo and Palm Fronds

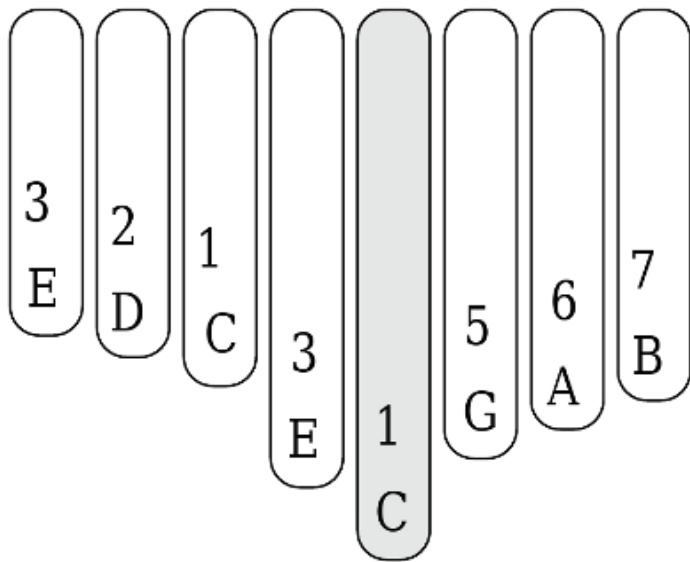


Where did the Kalimba come from?

1300 years ago, Tanzania, 8-Notes, Iron!



“Original Mbira” 8-Note Tuning:



You can play old
songs on new
“Student Karimba”

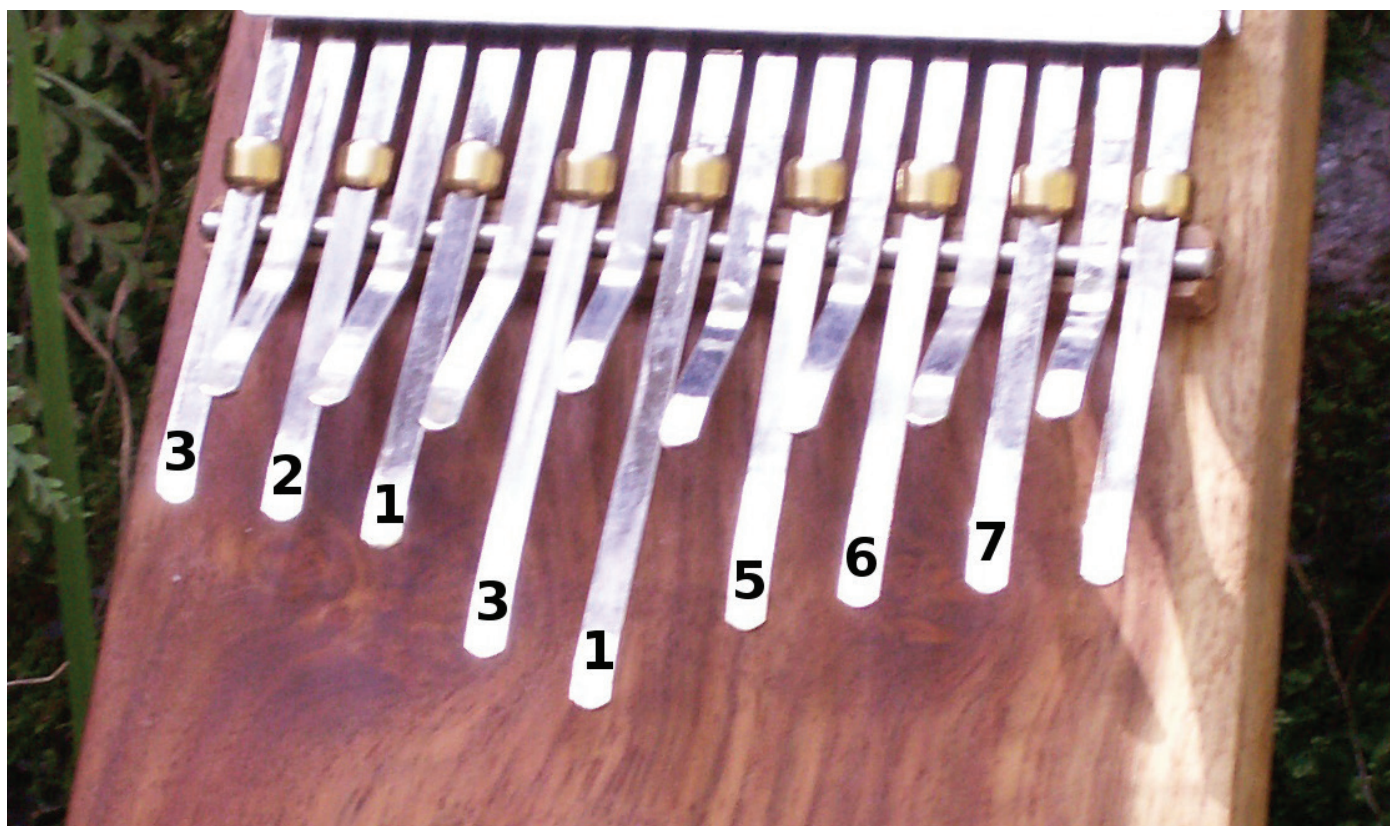
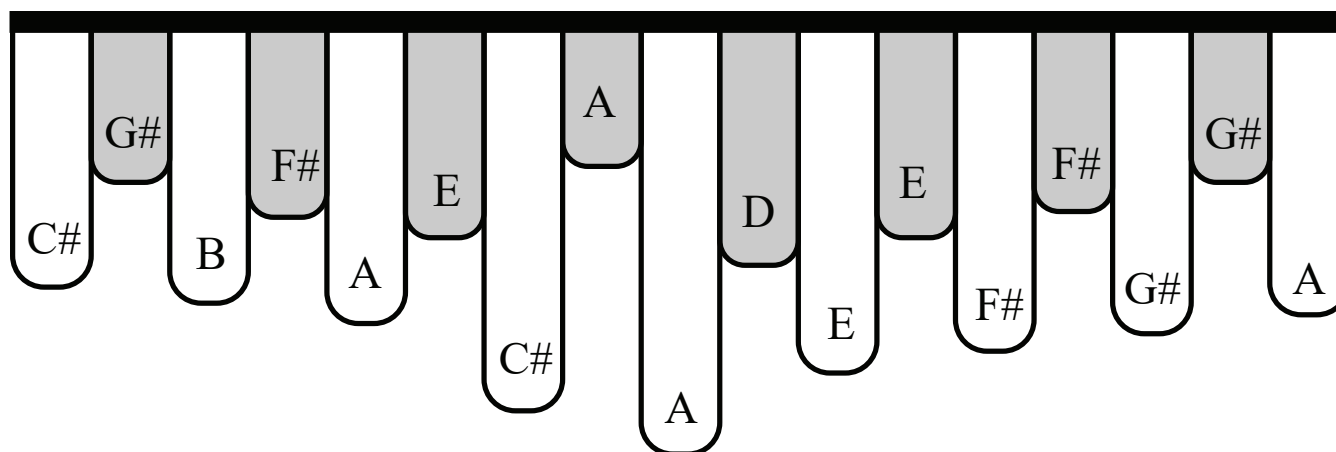


Where did the Kalimba come from?

Karimba or Mbira Nyunga Nyunga



African Tuned Karimba, 17-Note Tuning:



Where did the Kalimba come from?

Mbira Dzavadzimu

~700 years ago, in Zimbabwe



Where did the Kalimba come from?

Hugh Tracey - alternating diatonic scale!
1954 in South Africa

Since 2016, the
Chinese kalimba
makers have come
to dominate the
world market.



Kalimba was used in African Storytelling

Here is a story of “Ellie” the Elevator Kalimba (population: people with anxiety)

I use the kalimba when I
have anxiety, but my friend
has a better story about
kalimba and anxiety!



TIPS: When you pick up a new kalimba:

- * Play every note
- * Can you discern one or more “root notes”?
- * Is the kalimba in tune?

Keeping your kalimba in tune is the most important thing to sound good!

kalimbamagic.com/tuning

- * Are there any buzzes? *You can fix them!*

kalimbamagic.com/buzz

- * Are the tines evenly spaced? *You can fix that!*

==> You can become your own kalimba mechanic!

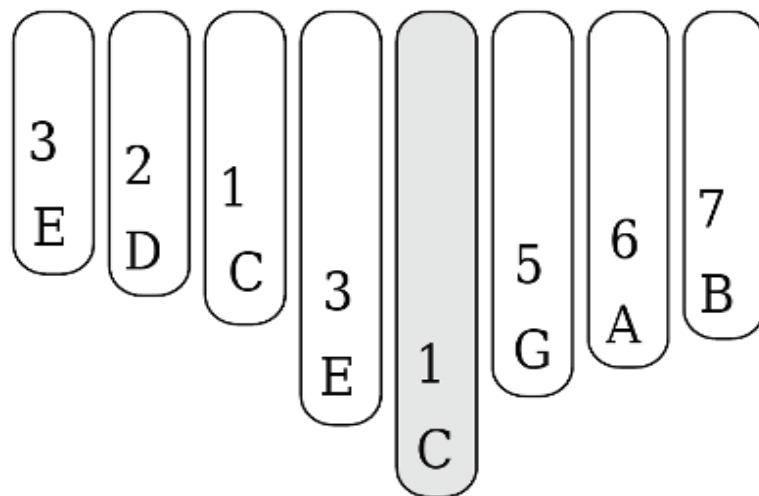
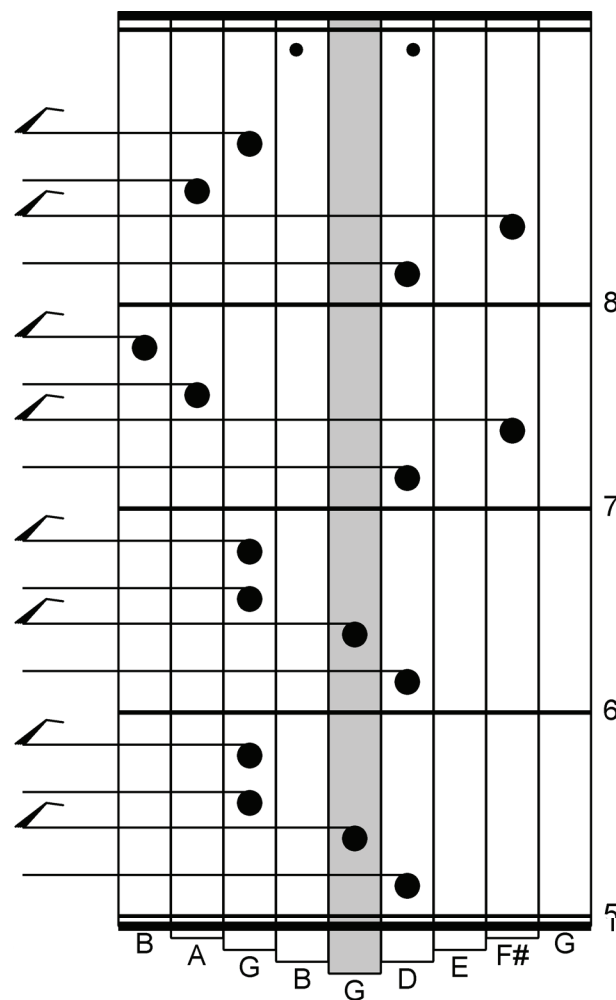
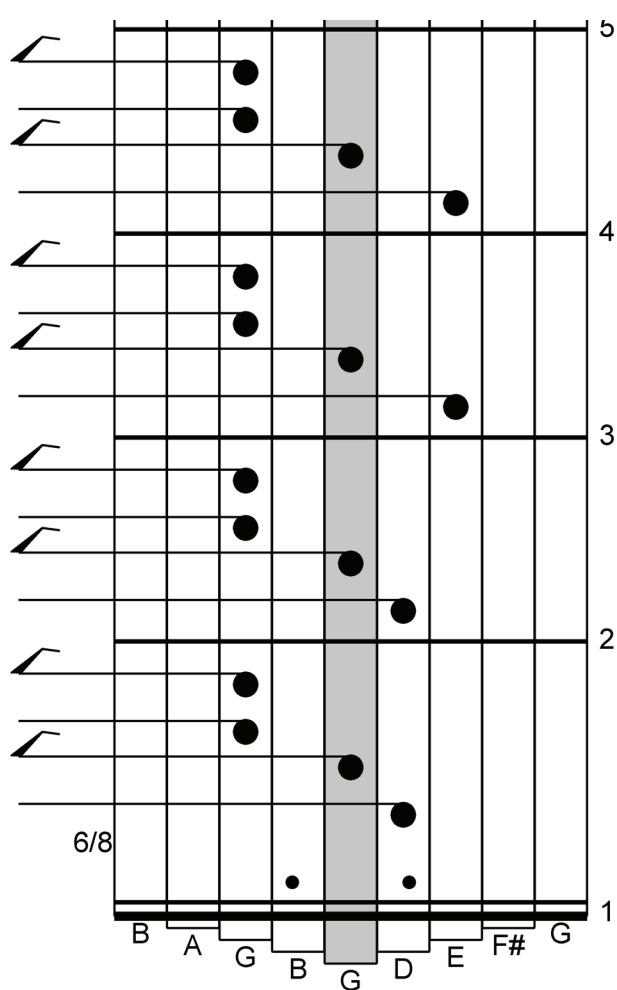
Hands-On Student Karimba 1: Traditional Karimba Music (Cultural/spiritual connection with Africa)

The image displays two Karimba fretboard diagrams and a key diagram. The left diagram is a 6/8 time signature piece with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The right diagram is a 6/8 time signature piece with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Both diagrams show the fretboard layout with a central shaded column representing the root notes. The key diagram on the right shows the notes C, D, E, F, G, A, B arranged in a circle, with the central column highlighted in grey.

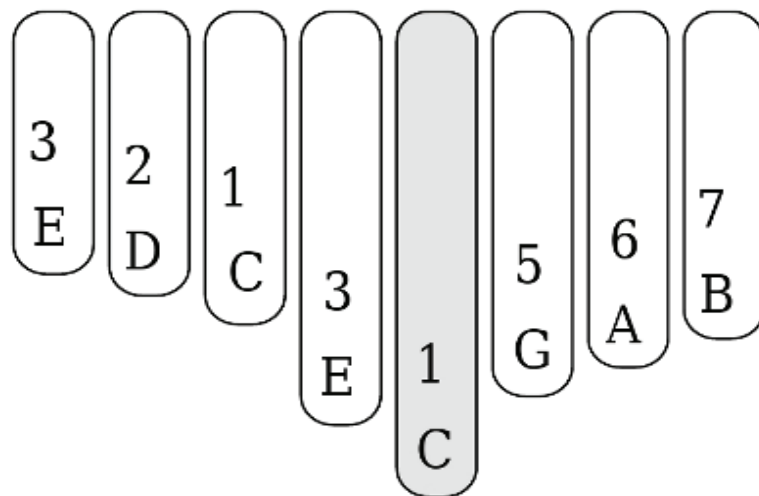
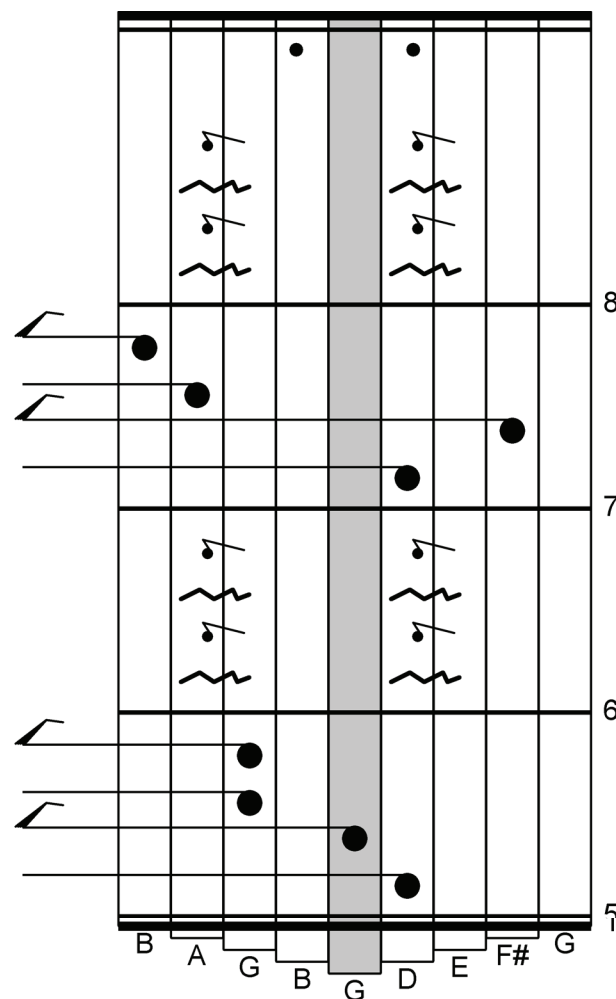
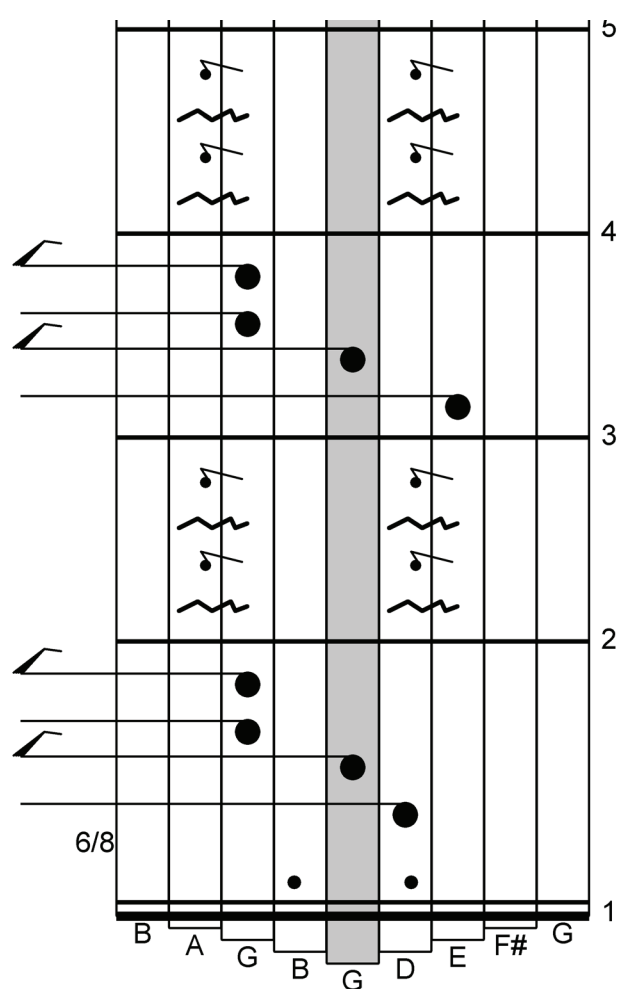
Cyclic music!

Repeat Signs!

Hands-On Student Karimba 2: Kalimba to Support Vocalization (connect with your voice)



Hands-On Student Karimba 3: Supporting Improvisation (connect with your playfulness)



Hands-On Student Karimba 4:

Using the Student Karimba, invent a transition song to help a hyper-focused ASD kid:

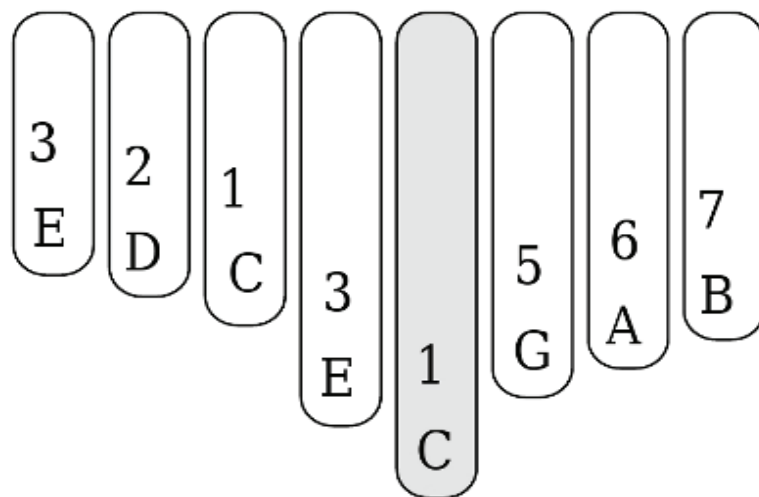
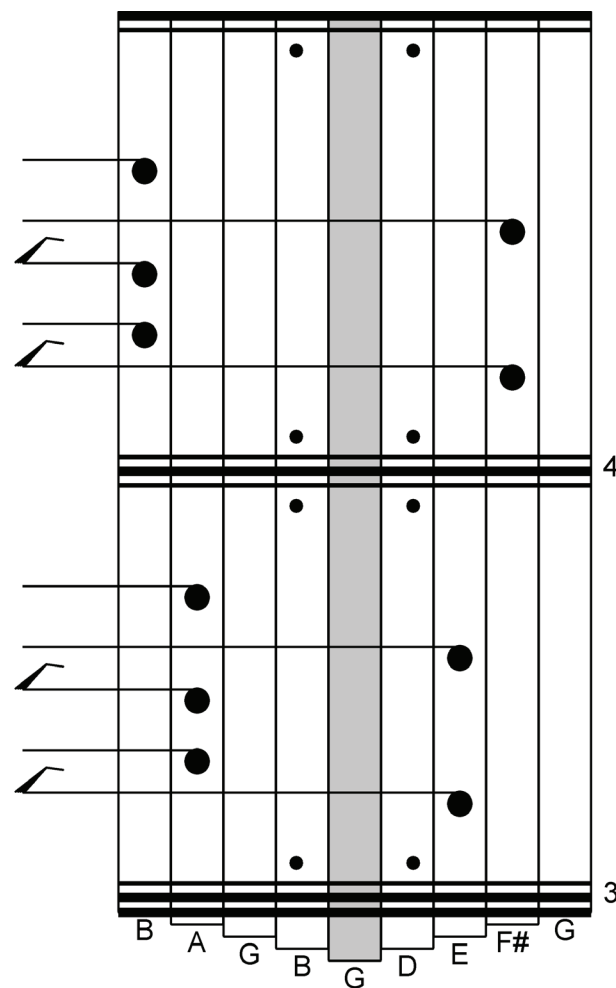
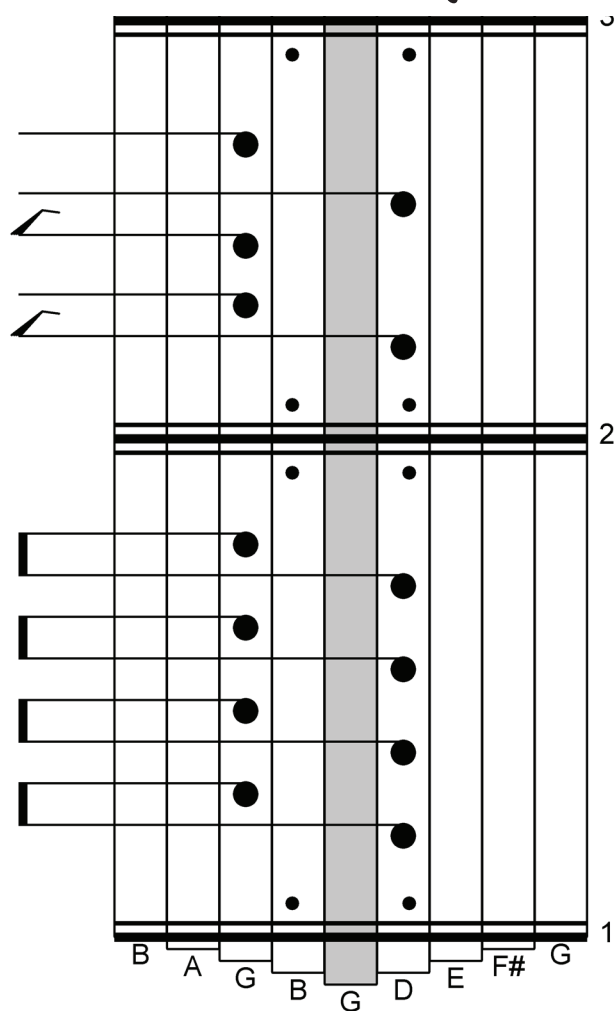
- * transition to get ready to ride in car**
- * transition to get ready for dinner**
- * transition to get ready to play**
- *what else?**

Hands-On Student Karimba 5:

Left <--> Right “Bouncing Energy”

Strictly alternating R-L...

...with syncopation made by skipping notes



Hands-On Chordal Kalimba Choirs 1:

In **different tunings**, **take turns**, **echo!**

(developmentally delayed kids who need to take turns)

Each 5-Note kalimba is
tuned to a different chord



G and D (I and V)

G and A7 (IV and V)

G and Bb (I and bIII)

A7 and Bb (V7 and bVI)

D and Db7 (???)

Hokema makes these 5-Note Kalimbas,
Kalimba Magic will tune them... but the
amplification horns are no longer made.

Hands-On Chordal Kalimba Choirs 2: Self Directed Turn Taking Music, 3 chords! (students of western harmony and pop songs)

G, Bb, D

D, E, G

A7, Bb, Db7



Hokema makes these 5-Note Kalimbas, Kalimba Magic will tune them... but the amplification horns are no longer made.

Hands-On Chordal Kalimba Choirs 3:

Turn Taking Music, 4 chords!

(take turns “conducting”)

D, E, G, A7 (I II IV V7)

G, E, A7, D (I VI II7 V)

D, Db7, E, A7

D, Db7, Bb, A7



Hokema makes these 5-Note Kalimbas, Kalimba Magic will tune them... but the amplification horns are no longer made.

10-Note Kalimba in C, Hands-On 1:

Free form music with guitar backing

(people who just need harmonic / rhythmic support)

Chords in C:

C, Dm, Em, F, G, Am, Bdim

Try:

||: C | G7 :||

||: C F | G7 :||

||: Am F | C G :||

||: C G | Am Em | F C | F G :||

random chords?



TIPS for Reading Kalimba Tablature

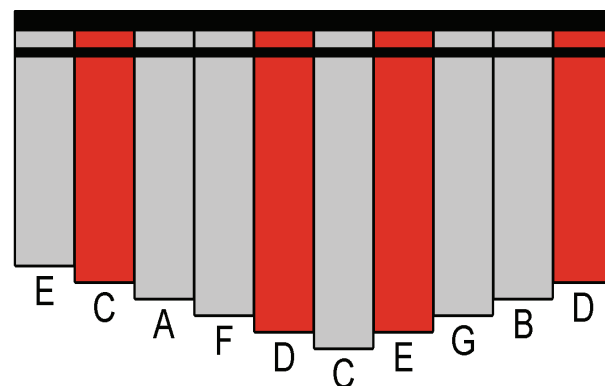
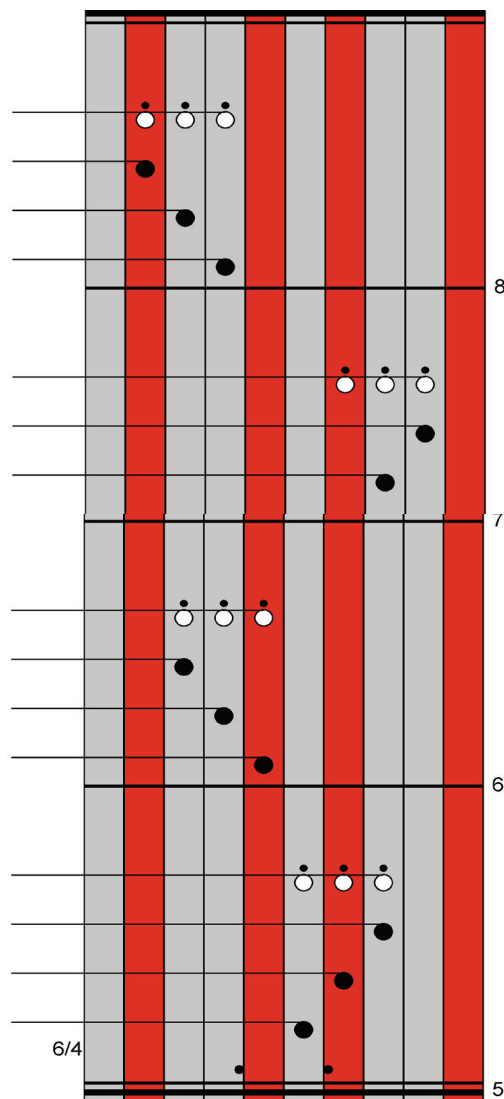
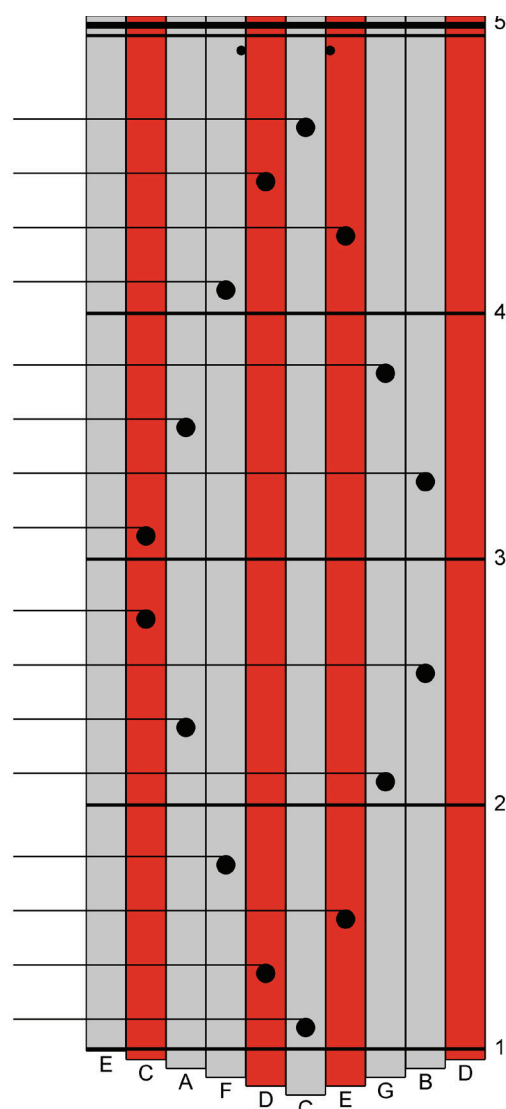
- * Dance Dance Revolution?
- * Packman?
- * Understand: colored or shaded tines
- * Check: is this the right tabs for kalimba?
- * Go through the tabs without a kalimba...
just tap out the R and L motions
- * Go through the tabs: where do you alternate sides? Where are chords?
- * Go as slowly as you need.



10-Note Kalimba in C, Hands-On 2:

Scales Alternate; Chords Adjacent Tines

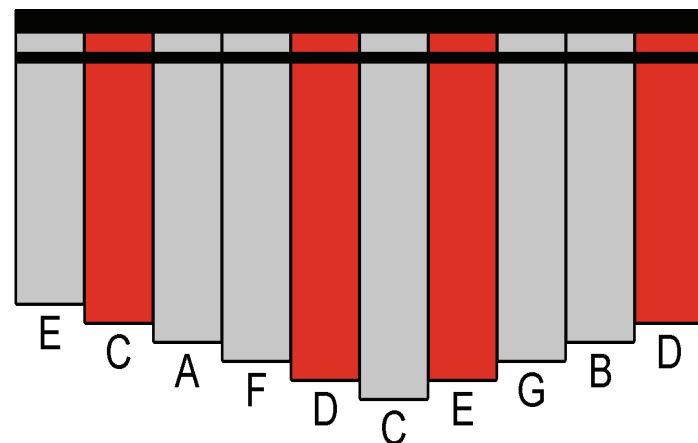
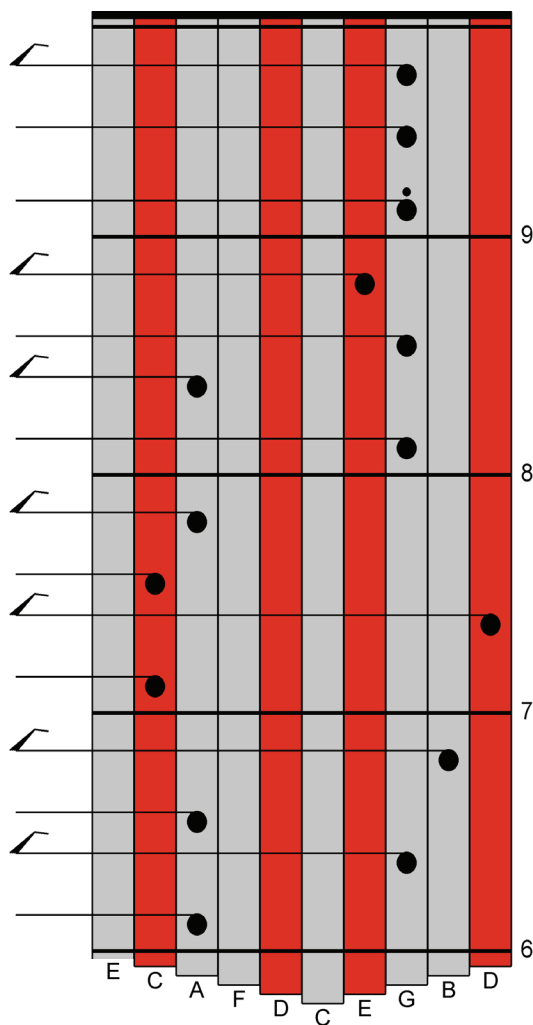
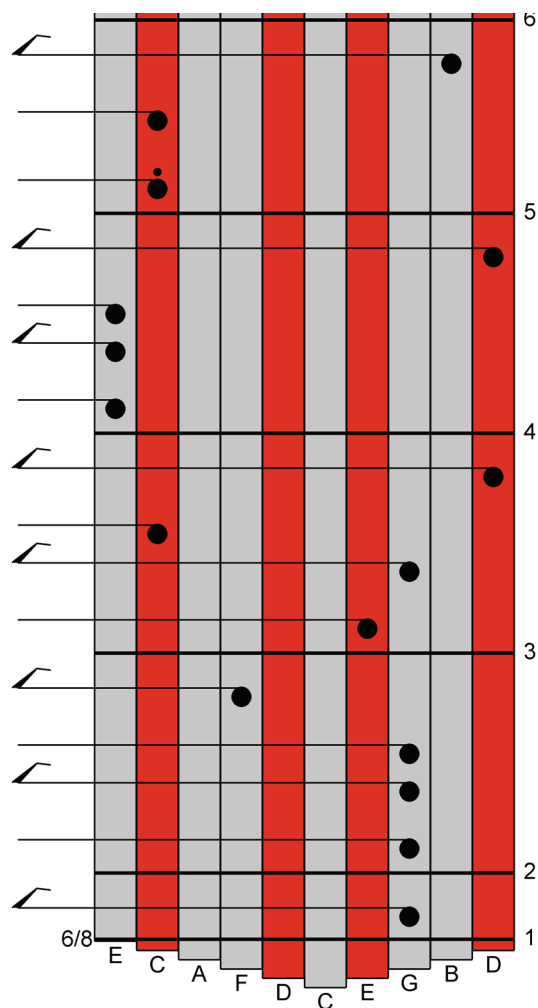
(the “science” of kalimba playing)



To strum a 3 note chord, slide your thumb nail in a sweeping “glissando”

10-Note Kalimba in C, Hands-On 3:

Lots of Songs for 10-Note (ASD high focus people)

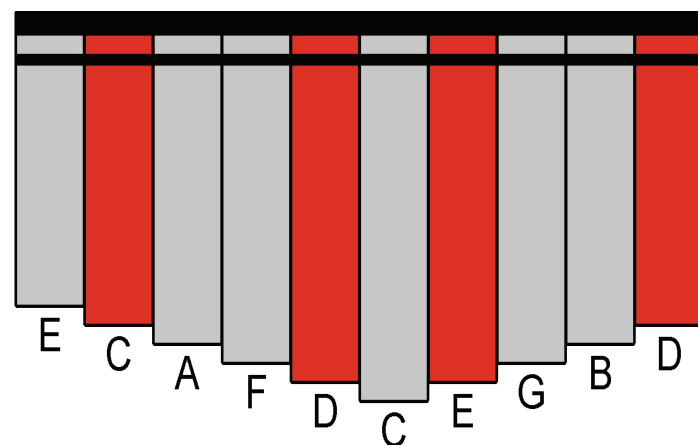
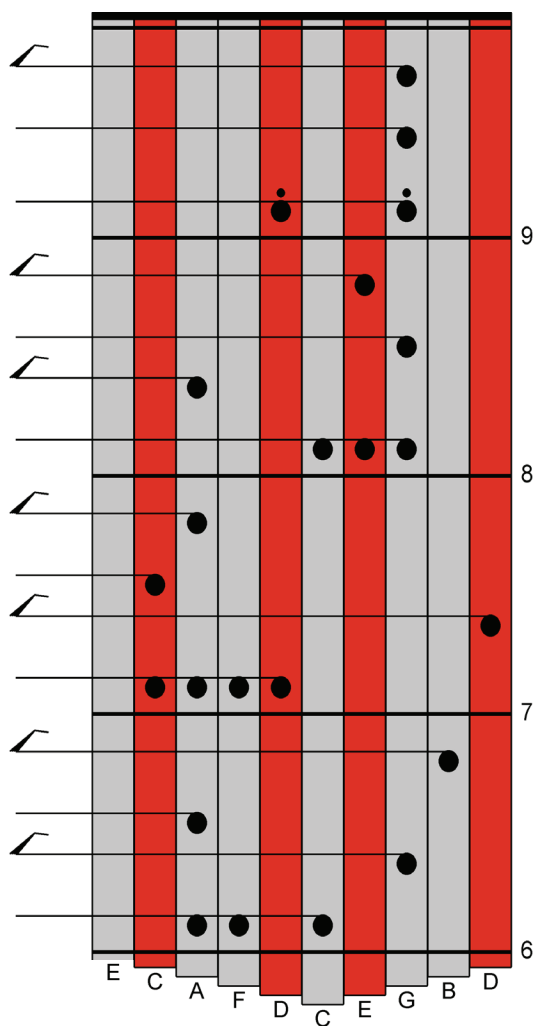
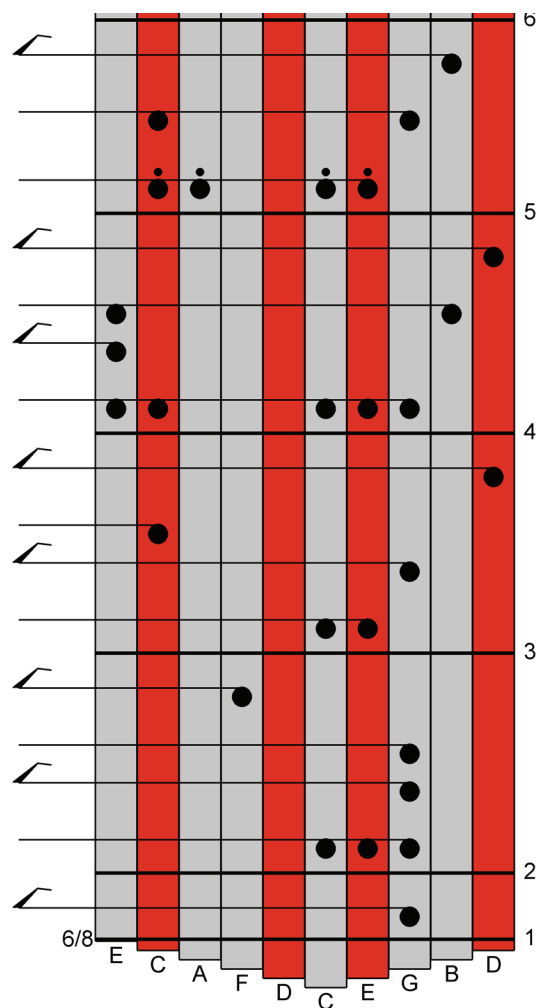


Battle Hymn of the Republic

10-Note Kalimba in C, Hands-On 4:

Advanced Songs for 10-Note

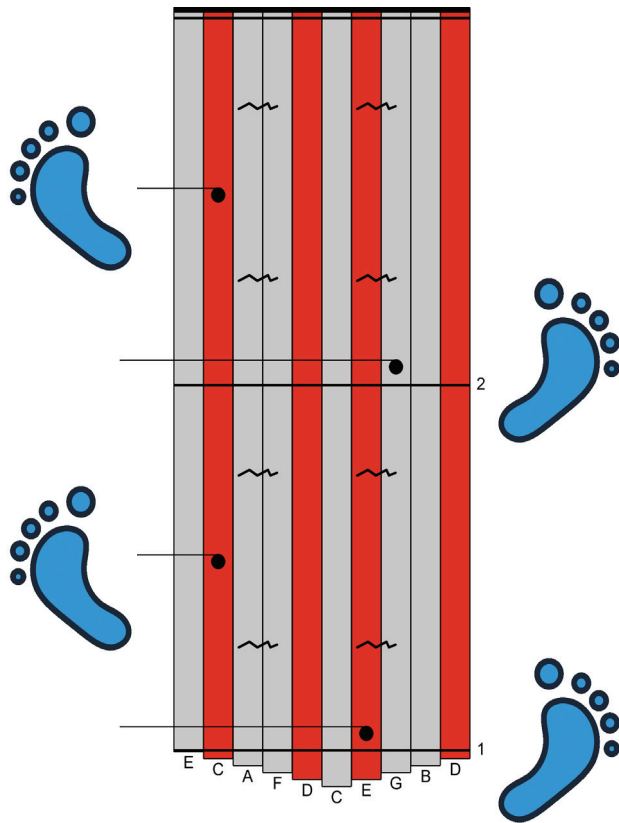
(Note: Chords on First Beat of each Measure)



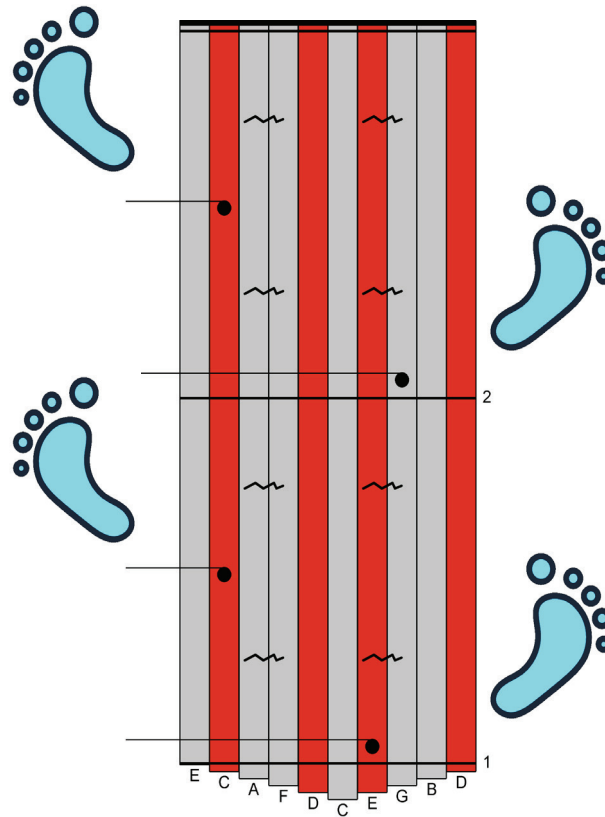
Battle Hymn of the Republic

10-Note Kalimba in C, Feet-On 5: Integrate Music with Walking Steps (Gait Challenged Individuals) (Make up your own tunes)

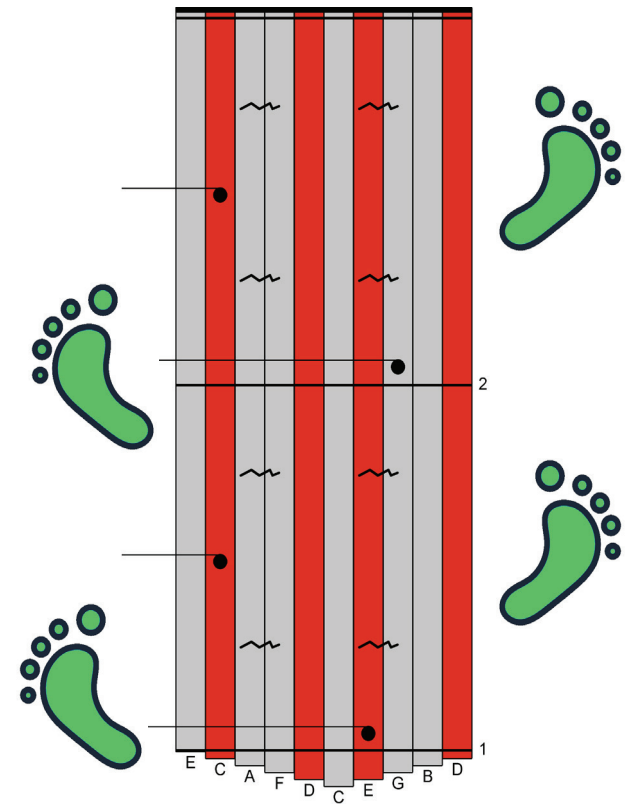
Parallel Steps



Step on Off Beats!

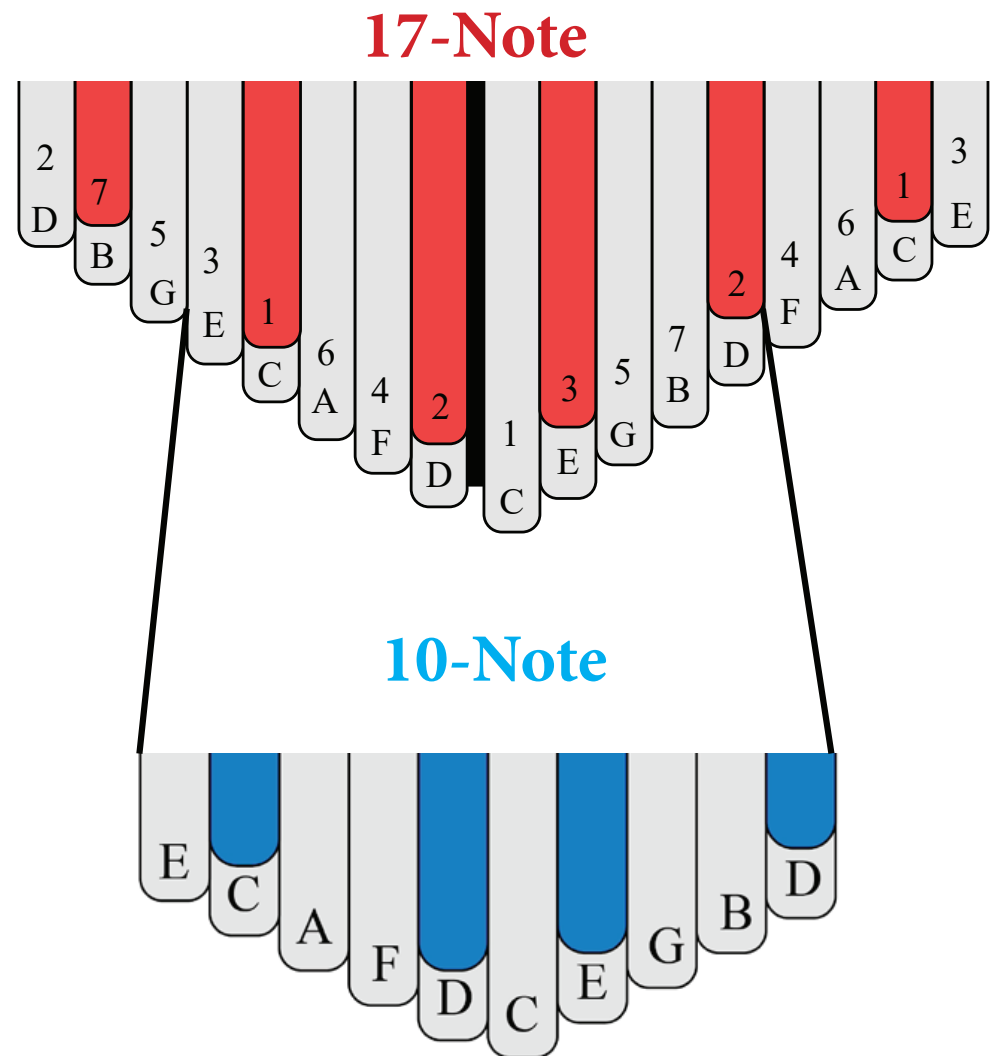


Anti-Parallel Steps



17-Note Kalimba in C, Hands-On 1:

Just play, and experience the M17 resonance
(People experiencing neuropathy are comforted)



17-Note Kalimba in C, Hands-On 2:

Two People, One Kalimba: one hand each

(Learn to work cooperatively)



- * Echo one another, one note at a time
- * Echo each other, two notes at a time.
- * Try playing notes at the same time!
- * Take turns “leading”
- * Switch sides
- * How else can you play?

17-Note Kalimba in C, Hands-On 3: Two People, Two Kalimbas, Facing (Learn to work cooperatively)

- * Face each other
- * Player 1 plays a 3-6 note SIMPLE PHRASE
- * Player 2 “repeats” the phrase, but in mirror image
- * Player 1: if Player 2 seemed to have trouble, try to repeat the initial phrase
- * When Player 2’s reply is “in focus”, Player 1 can change their phrase

17-Note Kalimba in C, Demonstration:

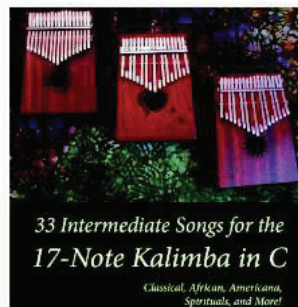
The kalimba is a pretty powerful instrument (Senior musicians who cannot play violin or tuba anymore)

Books for the 17-Note Kalimba in C



44 Beginner Songs for the
17-Note Kalimba in C

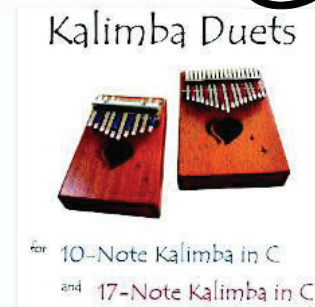
44 BEGINNER SONGS
DOWNLOAD FOR THE
17-NOTE KALIMBA IN C



33 Intermediate Songs for the
17-Note Kalimba in C

*Classical, African, Americana,
Spirituals, and More!*

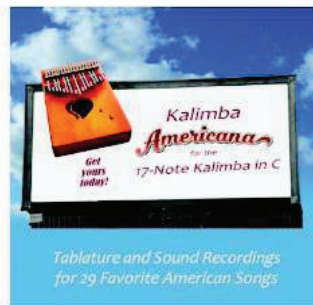
33 INTERMEDIATE
SONGS DOWNLOAD
FOR THE 17-NOTE
KALIMBA IN C



Kalimba Duets

for 10-Note Kalimba in C
and 17-Note Kalimba in C

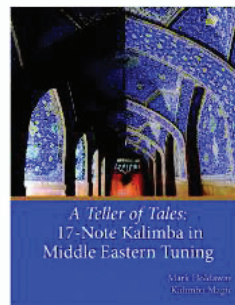
DUETS FOR 10-NOTE
AND 17-NOTE
KALIMBAS (EBOOK)



Kalimba
Americana
for the
17-Note Kalimba in C

*Tablature and Sound Recordings
for 29 Favorite American Songs*

KALIMBA AMERICANA
FOR 17-NOTE KALIMBA
IN C



A Teller of Tales:
17-Note Kalimba in
Middle Eastern Tuning

*Mark Hollmann
Kalimba Magic*

EBOOK FOR MIDDLE
EASTERN TUNED 17-
NOTE KALIMBA



Easy Christmas Carols
on the 17-Note Kalimba

EASY CHRISTMAS
CAROLS ON THE 17-
NOTE KALIMBA IN C

Different Kalimba Tunings:

Why? What music do you gain?

- * Before tunings: understand the modes:

C Major, D Dorian, G Mixolydian, A Aeolian

- * BUT, on a C major kalimba with C as low note, you have to hunt for A minor... C minor presents itself.

- * The central (usually lowest) note is psychologically powerful

- * Each tuning will make different music

Any Kalimba, Rhythm Jam: What works?

(Learn to work cooperatively - all populations!)

- * Multiple Kalimbas? Compatible Tunings**
- * If multiple tunings, take turns**
- * Volume Issues:**
 - play with shakers & claves instead of djembes?**
 - play on a drum to double the kalimba volume**
 - use a gourd amplifier (a deze)**
 - get a kalimba with a pickup, and plug in**
 - OR: sensitive jam facilitators control drum volume**
- * Do the low drums have a “root note”? Do you have that?**



“Hey, it would be great to give a kalimba to a client, and have them take it on. However, this is really about YOUR journey with the kalimba.

If you have a relationship with the kalimba, that will rub off on some of your clients.

It starts with you!”

- Mark Holdaway

Secret Code: FID/MEL

Test: Write down three different kalimba types, describe an activity for each, and suggest a population that will benefit.

KalimbaMagic.com

Now run by Anthony Ghimenti

And I'm Mark Holdaway