

The Fancy Arrangements

Here the fun really begins: The chord-melody arrangements. We'll still focus on melodies, but we'll bring in more notes from the associated chords to get a fuller sound. **Every note in a melody belongs to some chord or other.** Actually, these arrangements are easier to play than you might expect, and can be simplified even further from what's here.

Mostly you'll find two- and three-note chords, but there are some four-note jobs as well. But here's the deal: If a chord is too hard to get to in time, or too hard to finger, or if you hit any kind of wall that you cannot surmount, drop the lowest note in the chord and move on. You can even dump a second note if it helps you make it through a passage without losing the beat. The whole point of this process is to please yourself and others.

Tab Diagrams. The melody lines on the Plain and the Fancy sides are the same except in cases where a slight alteration could improve on the harmonies or simplify the fingerings. ("Harmony" refers to any note that's not the melody but lives in the underlying chord.)

Melody notes will be shown in larger and bolder fonts than harmony notes, and they usually appear **on top** of the harmonies so they don't get swallowed up inside the chords. (Higher-pitched notes are more audible, and we need to be sure to hear the melodies.)

Notes in parentheses in the Tab Diagrams are optional. I know I just said that practically all notes except for the melody notes are optional, but I want you to think twice before dropping **these**, because, while they might be more trouble, they are more integral to the passage. And an "x" in the Tabs asks you to lean on a string to mute it.

Chord Diagrams. Be sure to watch the fingerings. If a fingering **differs** from the one you are used to playing, it's probably to help you move from chord to chord more easily.

You'll see the occasional **gray note** in a Chord Diagram. This is a note that comes **right after** the black notes, and I want to give you a heads-up. If the **only** note in the diagram is gray, then the 1st note is an open string, which you'll see in the Tab.

Prep means prepare, usually by moving a finger into position before you actually need it. **Escape** means leave the current chord during an open string to reach the next fingering in time. Open strings are your best friends; they provide cover when you are in transit between notes.

Always check to see, from one chord to the next, if you can salvage something. Maybe you can keep a finger **anchored** on the same note while other notes are changing around it, or you can stay on the same string and **guide** your finger up or down with a sliding motion.

As a General Rule of Playing, it's better to **hold a note** for as long as you can before moving on to the next note. This can require some **rapid finger shifting**, but if you want to achieve the smoothest, most polished overall sound,

KEEP THE STRINGS RINGING!.... for as long as possible.

Often when a passage repeats, I'll give you several alternate (okay, **harder**) notes or combinations of notes, but you can feel free to use either version either time.