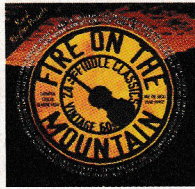


Fire on the Mountain

Traditional, arranged by Joe Miller



“Fire on the Mountain” is a familiar fiddle tune that has been played by Bill Monroe, the Kentucky Colonels, and many others. The original author is unknown; the earliest version I could find was a brief, unattributed version published in 1814, in a book of sheet music titled *Riley’s Flute Melodies*. That version was so brief it took up only eight measures—and the title was “Free on the Mountains.”

The version here is played “harp style,” a somewhat unusual technique in which no two consecutive melody notes are played on the same string. This produces a pretty, sustaining effect and is also a good way to play fast. Guitarists like Chet Atkins, Lenny Breau, and Jerry Reed have all used harp style—especially for intros, hot licks, and endings. The Jerry Reed tunes “Stumpwater” and “Jerry’s Breakdown” are two examples.

As you learn this tune, try to maintain pressure on the fretted notes as long as possible so that the notes ring into each other. Also be careful not to use any

SEE VIDEO OF JOE MILLER playing “Fire on the Mountain” at www.acousticguitar.com/fire
Password: resonator

picking-hand finger twice in a row, so that you can play as fast as possible. Many of the right-hand patterns are simple: the banjo player’s forward roll (*p-i-m*) and backward roll (*m-i-p*) as well as alternating thumb-and-index passages (*p-i-p-i*).

Because of the stretches required of the left hand, it is helpful to capo at the fifth fret (although this takes the tune out of its original key). I like to omit the bass notes in the first eight measures so that the piece builds momentum when bass notes are added in the repeat of the first part. I also recommend using a thumbpick to keep the rhythm crisp.

—JOE MILLER

The musical score is arranged in three systems. Each system contains a treble clef staff with a melody line and a bass clef staff with a bass line. Chord diagrams (A, D, E) are placed above the treble staff. Picking patterns (p, i, m) are written below the treble staff. Fingering numbers (1-4) are placed above notes. The score includes a first ending and a second ending.

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