

Guidelines for Workshop Levels



Choosing the Right Workshop Level

Choosing a workshop level can feel tricky—and that's completely normal. These level descriptions are meant as helpful guides, not rigid rules. Everyone comes to NimbleFingers with different backgrounds, strengths, and goals, and many players fall somewhere between levels. The best choice is usually the level where you'll feel comfortable enough to participate fully, while still being gently challenged and inspired. If you're unsure, trust your instincts—and remember, our goal is for everyone to feel supported, welcomed, and excited to learn.

Beginning Level & Jam Workshops

This level is right for you if:

- You can strum, pick, or bow and change basic chords or scales
- You have some (or very little) experience playing with others
- You have basic pick or fingerpick skills (if applicable)
- You're ready to start jamming and building confidence

Still not sure?

If you've been playing on your own and are ready to try playing with others—but still feel new to jamming—this is likely the right fit.

If you are brand new to your instrument, we highly recommend a few lessons or working with instructional videos before the start of camp! Having the basics will help you feel comfortable at camp.

Intermediate—Bluegrass

This level is right for you if:

- You're comfortable playing rhythm and/or taking breaks in a jam
- You know some major and minor scales
- You're familiar with (or learning) the Nashville Number System
- You want to polish your group or band playing

Still not sure?

If you can jump into jams but want more confidence, clarity, and consistency in your playing, this level is a good choice.

Intermediate—Old-Time

This level is right for you if:

- You know common old-time tunes and repertoire
- You're comfortable in multiple tunings
- You have old-time bowing or frailing experience
- You want to deepen tone, groove, and confidence

Still not sure?

If you're at ease in an old-time jam but want to expand your repertoire and refine your sound, this level should feel comfortable.

Advanced—Bluegrass

This level is right for you if:

- You have strong jamming and/or performance experience
- You can play solos and backup confidently and up to speed
- You know common chord progressions in multiple keys
- You're ready to focus on nuance and ensemble playing

Still not sure?

If you're regularly performing or jamming at speed and looking to refine musical detail rather than fundamentals, this level is for you.

Advanced—Old-Time

This level is right for you if:

- You're fully comfortable in multiple tunings
- You have solid command of bowing or frailing techniques
- You're confident leading or supporting tunes in jams
- You want to refine style, groove, and personal voice

Still not sure?

If you're focused on tone, phrasing, and stylistic depth rather than learning basic tunes or techniques, this level is likely the best match.

Level Selection Disclaimer

Workshop levels are intended as *guidelines* to help participants choose the best fit for their experience and goals. If you're between levels or unsure where you belong, that's okay—many players are. We encourage choosing the level that feels most comfortable while still offering a bit of challenge.

If you have questions or need help deciding, feel free to reach out and we'll be happy to help.