

Guidelines for Workshop Levels



Beginning Level and Jam Workshops:

It's expected that to enroll in a workshop at the beginner level you must already be well on your way to having a firm grasp on the fundamentals of your instrument. You can strum, pick or bow, and change basic chords or scales slowly but have little experience playing with others. If you're playing an instrument for which bluegrass players use a flatpick or fingerpicks, you should come to camp with some degree of "pick" experience. Reading tablature will be helpful, and it will be helpful to know what a major scale is. **If you're brand new to playing an instrument, please get a few lessons or work with an instructional video before camp starts.** Having these basics down is essential to ensuring the quality of your experience at NimbleFingers.

Intermediate Level:

Bluegrass:

You are comfortable maintaining a good rhythm and/or taking breaks while jamming with others, even if the breaks don't always turn out the way you planned. For workshops on creating instrumental solos, you should know some major and minor scales and be able to put them to some practical use. Your workshop leader is likely to assume everyone knows the Nashville Number System. At this level you may be hoping to take your playing up to the next level of performing with a group or band.

Old time:

You are familiar with the old time repertoire, are comfortable playing in different tunings and have some old time bowing or frailing techniques. At this point, you are looking to improve your old time sound, increase your tune repertoire and build up your confidence in jams.

Advanced Level:

Bluegrass:

This is for players who already have extensive jamming and/or performance experience. You should be able to play solos and backup in a band or jam setting—in time and up to speed. You should know the chords that are common in several keys, the Nashville Number System, scales, etc. For harmony singing classes, you should be able to hear a note and match it with your voice—that is, hold a tune. At the advanced level you should also be familiar with many bluegrass and/or old-time tunes and songs commonly played in a jam setting.

Advanced Old time:

You are fully comfortable in different tunings and have a solid mastery of old time bowing or frailing. At this point, you are focusing on skills to improve nuance in your own playing and learning about the techniques used by different old time players.