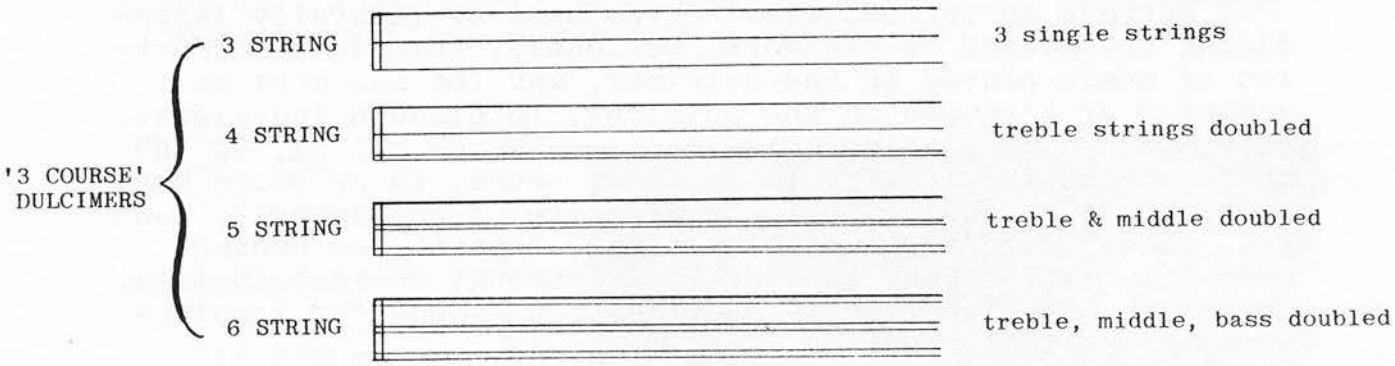
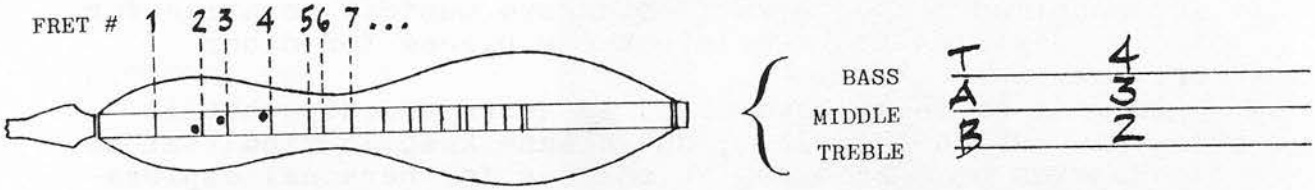
DESCRIPTION OF TABLATURE

The dulcimer tablature used in this book requires little knowledge of written music. A three line staff is employed representing the 3 strings, or courses of strings, on the dulcimer. A course is two or more strings tuned in unison or in octaves and played together as one string. Common configurations are as follows:



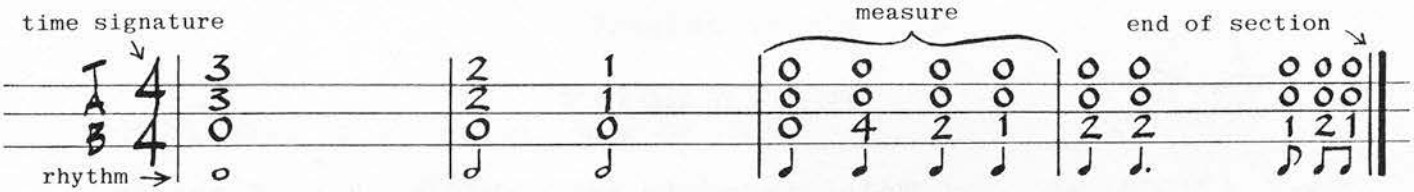
The 3 lines of the tablature staff appear in the same order as the strings (or courses) of the dulcimer when held in playing position, as seen by the player:



Numbers placed immediately above each line indicate the positions at which the strings are to be fretted or "stopped" by the fingers of the left hand. For example, the 2-3-4 shown above means that the treble string is to be pushed down immediately to the left of the 2nd fret, the middle string to the left of the 3rd fret, and the bass string to the left of the 4th fret.

The time signature appears only at the beginning of each piece, on the tablature staff, except when a change in meter occurs within the body of the piece.

Measures are delineated by vertical bar lines on the tablature staff; a heavy double-bar marks the ending (and sometimes the beginning) of a thematic section or "part".



Directly under the tablature staff (and corresponding to the fret positions therein) appears a line of musical notes indicating the rhythm of the tune; timing cues for the right hand. In the case of instrumental tab accompanied by music notation the extra rhythm notation is sometimes omitted.

A NOTE ABOUT ZEROES:

In all of the tunes that are to be strummed (ie, full strokes, back and forth, across all strings) it is to be assumed that all open strings are to be played whether or not they are noted as "O" on the tablature. For clarity's sake we have omitted all the zeroes except those that are melody notes on the pieces that are strummed. In the event that an open string is expressly not to be sounded, this will be indicated by the use of an "X" in the appropriate place on the tablature. Any exceptions will be stated where they occur.