

Kantele

Playing and Tuning notes

Zither Pins provide a pretty stable tuning solution with steel strings, but you need to take care when tuning your strings with the Key. Its very easy to turn the wrong pin and snap a string, so it is important to pluck the string to confirm you have the right string while turning the key with the smallest movements possible.

To help you, imagine the tuning pin is a clock and try to turn the pin from 12 to 1 o'clock, 1 to 2 o'clock etc.

If you have a penny whistle in the key of D the lowest 5 notes of this are the same as the Kantele with D major tuning, D E F# G a and can be used to tune the instrument.

Many other tunings are available, which are fully explored in Lani K. Thompsons book. The only alternative tuning I will mention for now is created by tuning your middle string to F natural, this tuning gives you a sad sounding minor key, which can be heard in the tune “melkutus”

Holding the Instrument

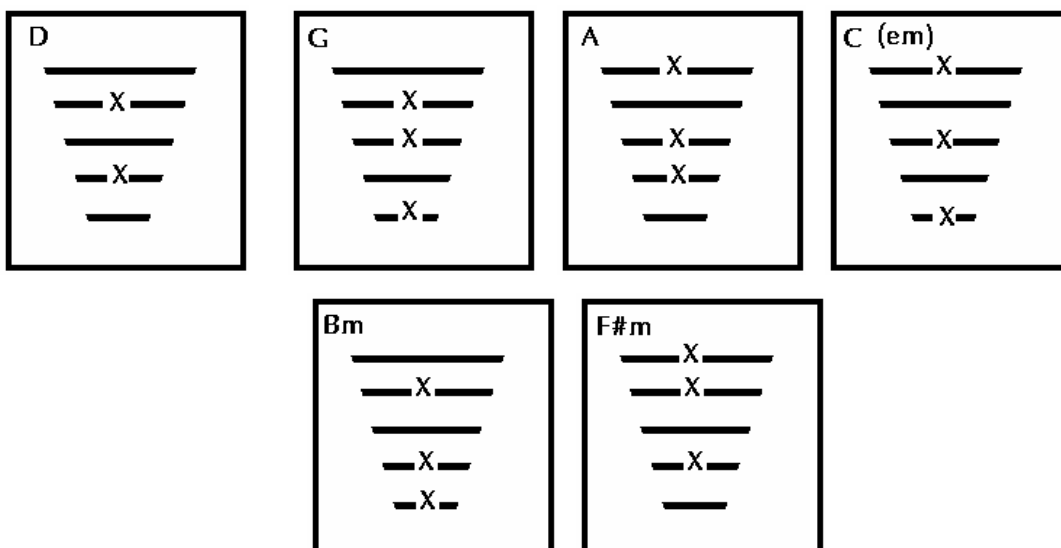
With your palm of your right hand resting on the tailpiece (called Ponsi in Finland) Rest the instrument on your lap angling it away from you across your left knee.

Chording a 5 String in D

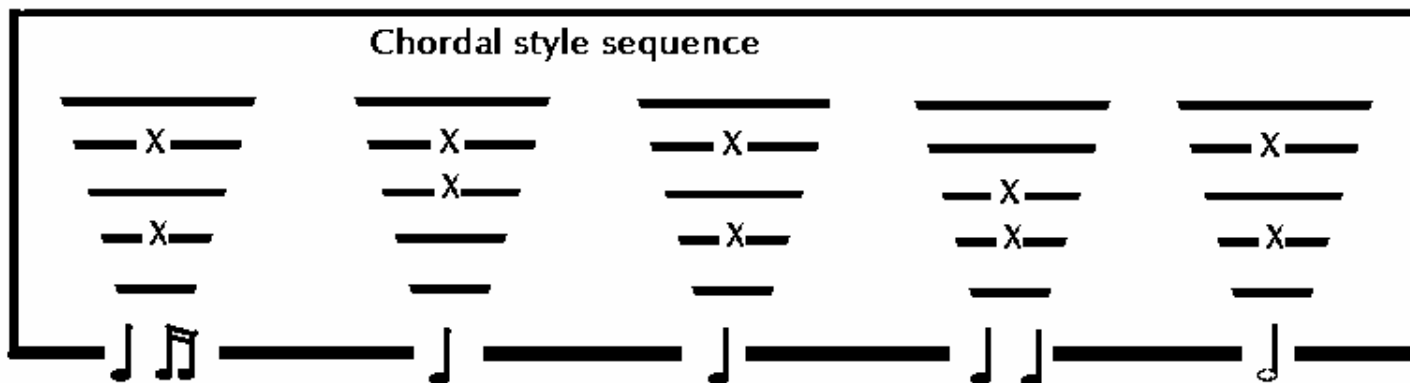
Chording is a very simple and effective way of playing these instruments.

The technique used is known as Block and strum. With the instrument on your lap you gently place your left hand fingers on the strings, no force or pressure is required as you are not fretting the note as on a guitar. Your right hand can now strum all the strings with only the notes of the chord you want sounding

5 String in D basic Chord Patterns examples



You can combine and change these chordal patterns to make an interesting sequence:

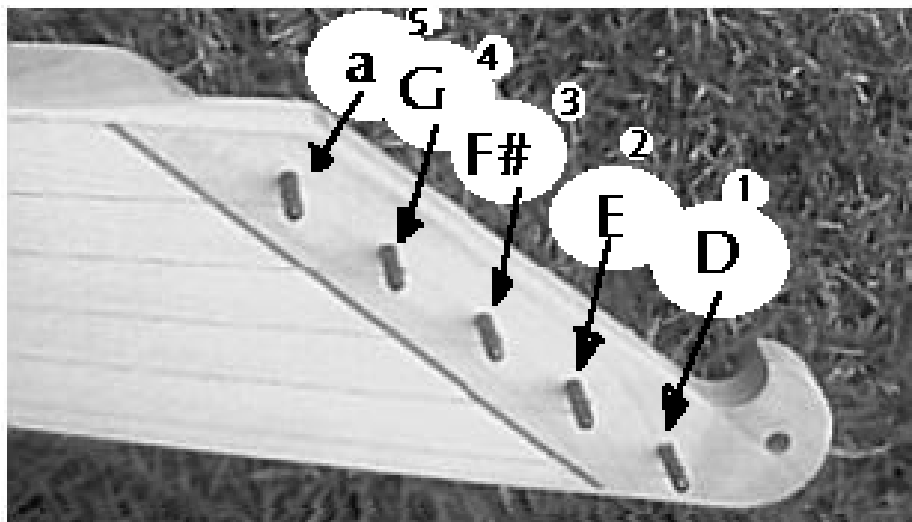


Fingering

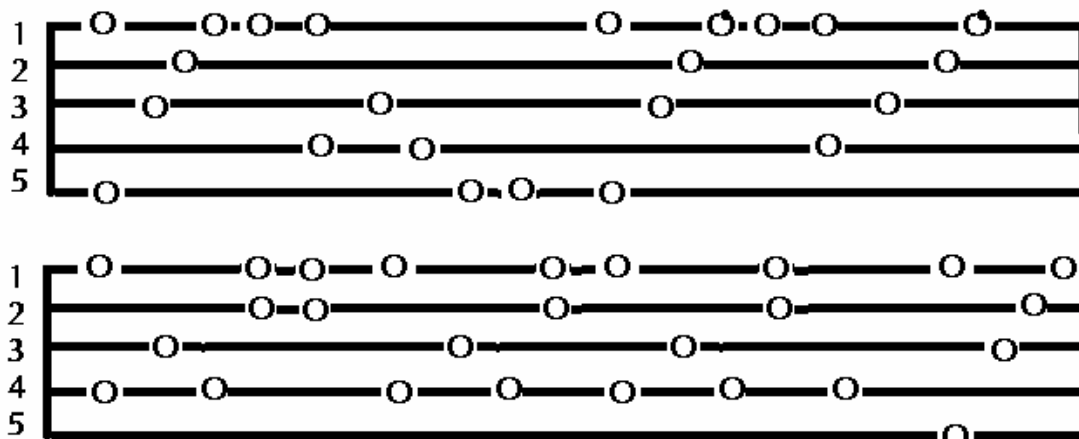
In the leaflet for 5 string by the Kansanmusiikki Institute 3 hand positions are listed: And it is the 3rd position I will describe:

Your left hand fingers 2, 3, 4 cover the middle 3 strings with the right hand thumb and first finger covering the low and high string. By using set fingering you can build up speed. If you want to play with a plectrum you can but there are limitations.

Here is a little example



O = open string plucked, the string 1 is the longest string



10 String Kantele in D Chord examples

There are many tunings for this instrument that can give you most chord combinations. Here is the standard tuning in D

A, B, C#, D, E, F#, G, a, b and d.

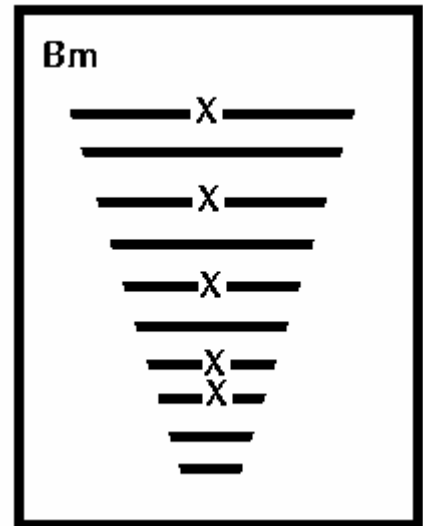
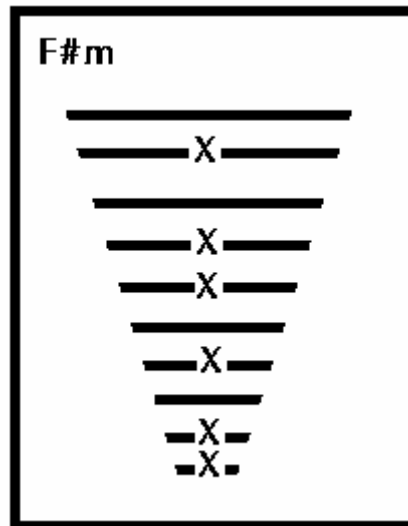
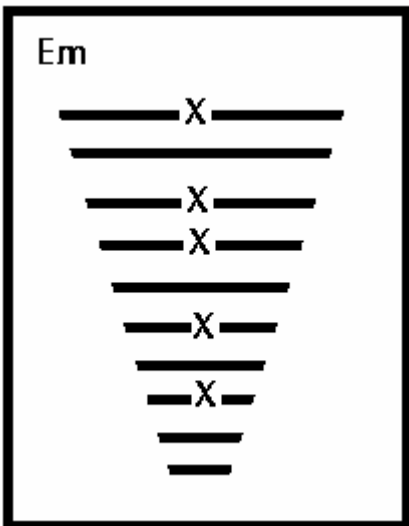
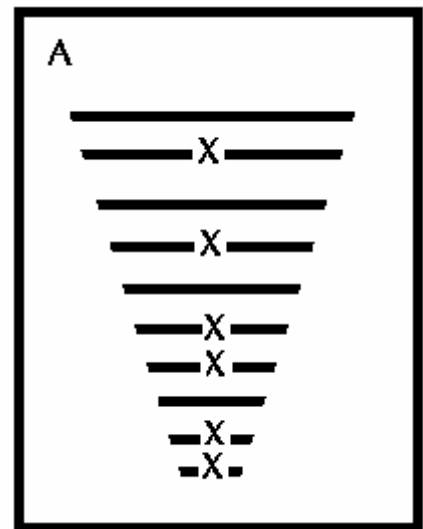
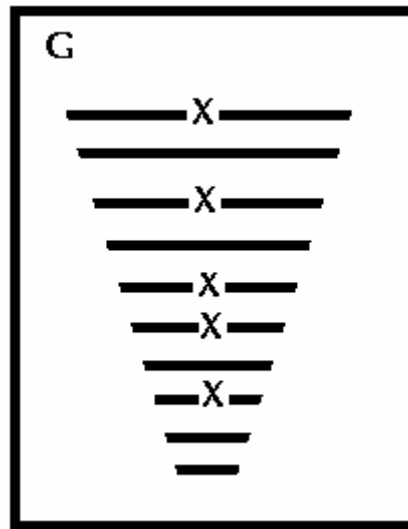
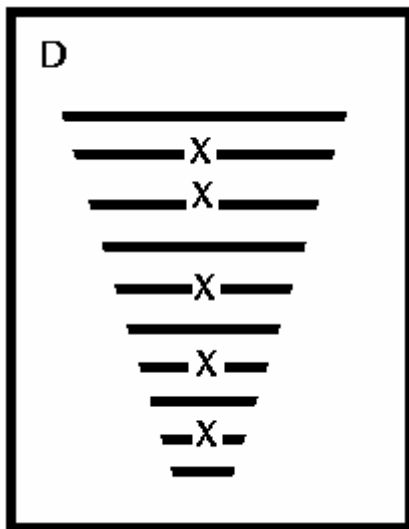
You can play all the 5 string music on the middle strings plus a lot more

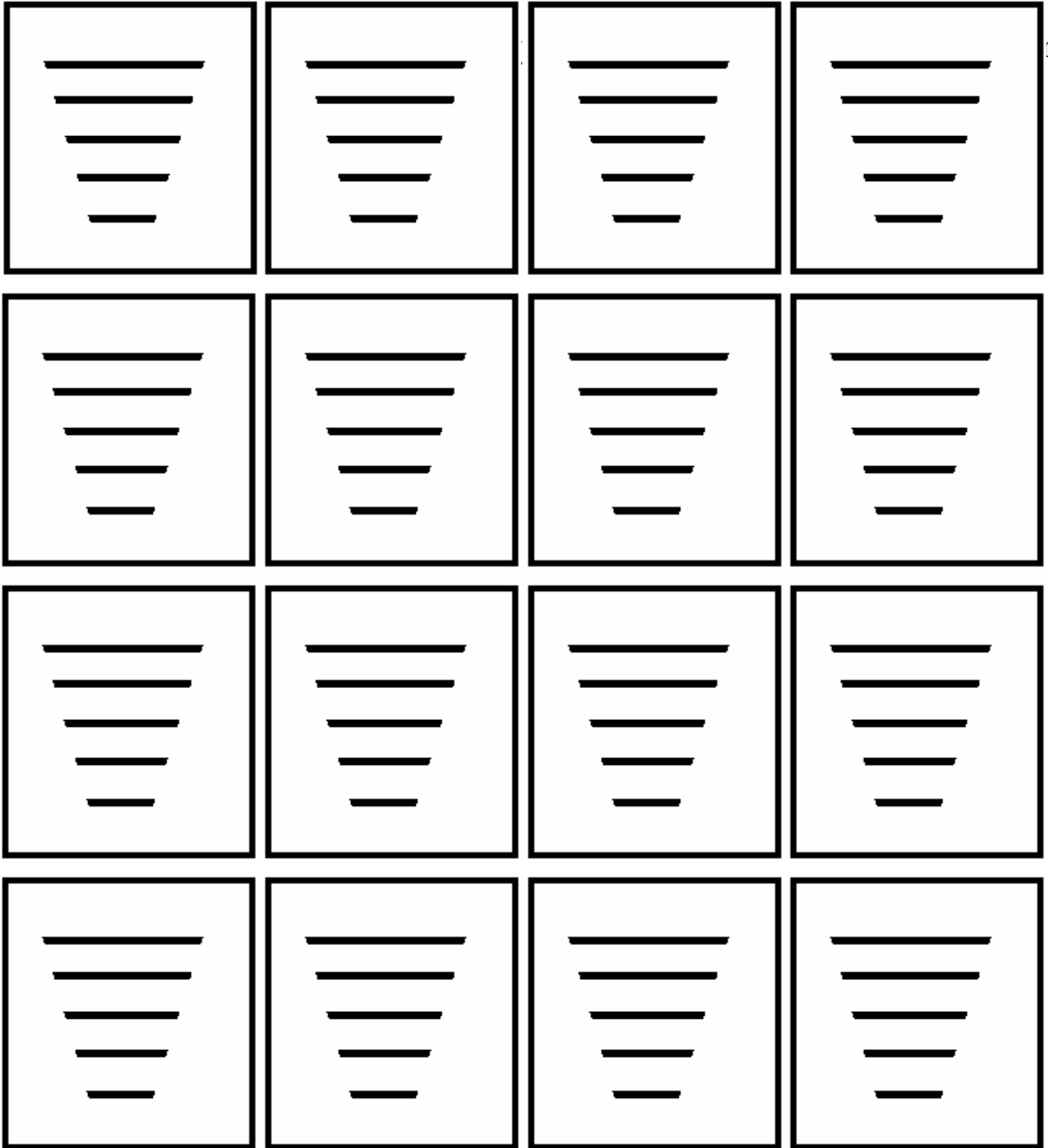
X= stopped strings. Please Note: You don't have to stop and strum them all, I find the lower 6 sound best.

For further information on tunings, chords and music there is a book:

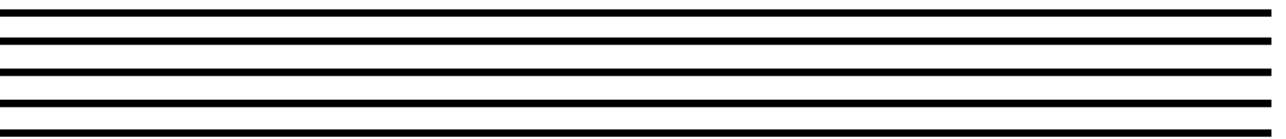
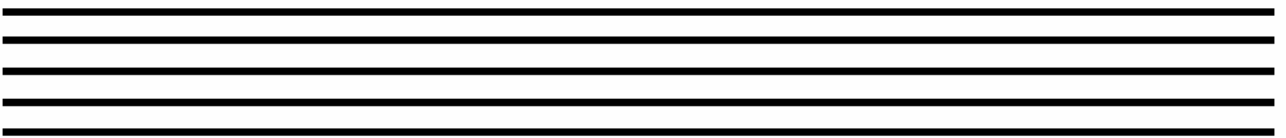
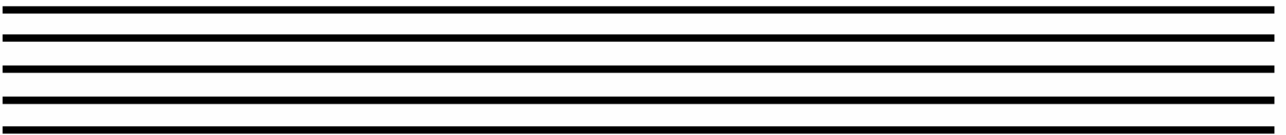
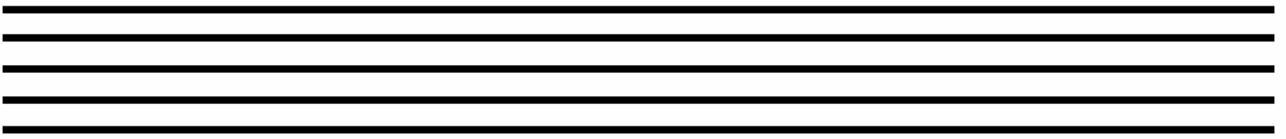
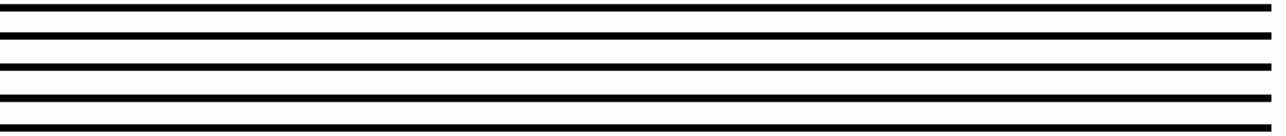
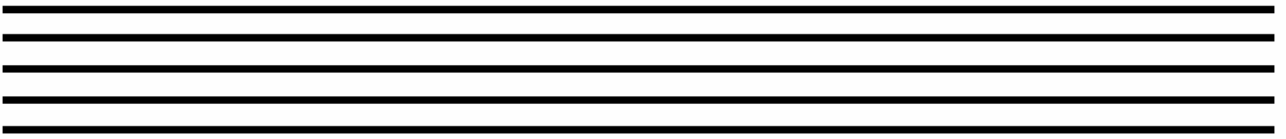
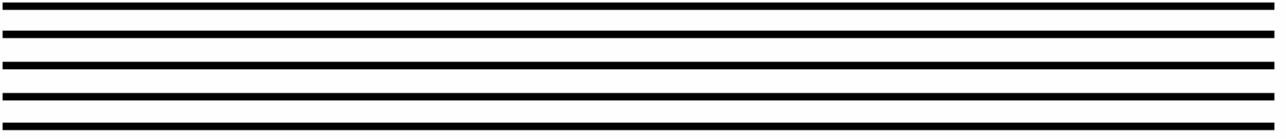
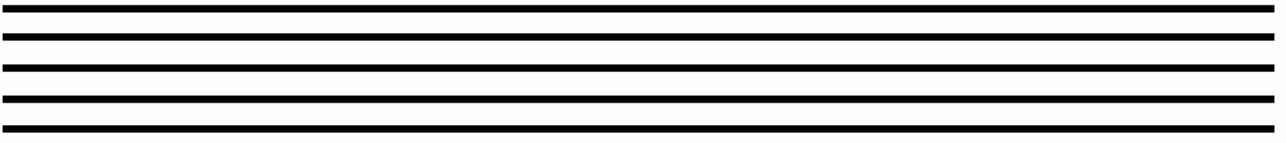
COMPLETE CHORDS for the Kantele by Lani K Thompson

Available from www.kantelemusic.com





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