

HOEDOWNER Tune of the Month

Special Thanks to
David Altman
of District 7
for providing
Tune of the Month
for October

Here are some common fiddle tunes in the key of **G** which are great for putting a beat under the feet of the dancers. Many fiddle traditions aren't about playing a single song alone but approach the music about what would be a good combination of tunes. Sometimes, I like the combination of these two together where the thought was to stay in the same key.

The first is from the Shetland Islands usually with the title **Jack Broke Da Prison Door** which you can find on page 141 of **The Fiddler's Fakebook**. Supposedly, the tune was composed in the 18th century by a renowned fiddler named **John Gaudie** who went by the name of Jack. This fiddler had an accident when a large hammer fell on his head. Once he recovered, most accounts claim he was an even better fiddler, but he was then prone to drinking a bit too much and therefore was thrown in prison for being too rowdy. When this supposedly happened, he smashed the door down and just left the prison to compose the tune. Here's one video of two

great fiddlers with **Fairport Convention** playing the tune with words they wrote about the exploits of [John Gaudie](#).

Swinging on a Gate is claimed by many different old-time fiddling traditions. No one really knows where it comes from originally, which is true of many fiddle tunes. This second tune can also be found in **The Fiddler's Fakebook** on page 272. Here are two videos, one recorded in Michigan by [Chris Walden](#) as backup for a contra dance and another recorded by the Irish fiddler [Fergal Scahill](#) who was actually swinging on a hammock when he made the recording.

Jack Broke da Prison Door

G Major

A G (Em) (Am) D G (Em)

1. (Am) D (D) 2. D B G

D G (Em) 1. (Am) D (D) 2. (Am) D (D)

Swinging on a Gate

G Major

A G Am G D

G Am D G

B G Em Am D G C Am 1. D G 2. D G