BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO OLD TIME BANJO TUNINGS
-AARON KEIM

- STANDARD OR "G" TUNING

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5th 4th 3rd 2nd 1st
G  D  G  B  D
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The most common tuning. Good for most "G" songs and tunes. Capo 2nd fret for most "A" tunes.
Ex. "Cripple Creek"; "Cindy"; "Bill Cheatham"

- SAWMILL/MOUNTAIN MINOR/"G" MODAL TUNING

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5th 4th 3rd 2nd 1st
G  D  G  C  D
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The 2nd string is tuned up ½ step from standard tuning. Used for many modal songs and tunes. Capo 2nd fret for "A" modal.
Ex. "The Cuckoo"; "Little Maggie"; "Greasy Coat"

- DOUBLE C TUNING

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5th 4th 3rd 2nd 1st
G  C  G  C  D
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From standard tuning, tune the 4th string down a step and the 2nd string up a ½ step. This is used to play in the key of "C" or "D" if you capo the 2nd fret.
Ex. "Soldier's Joy"; "Over the Waterfall"; "Angeline the Baker"

- DROP C OR CLASSICAL TUNING

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5th 4th 3rd 2nd 1st
G  C  G  B  D
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This is a tuning popular with classical and finger style banjo players. When you remove the 5th string you have the tuning that jazz/plectrum players often use; this used to be more common for "C" tunes, but has sort of been replaced by Double C.

- THESE TUNINGS AND THEIR "CAPO-ED" VERSIONS ARE THE MOST COMMON AND WILL GET YOU THROUGH THE MAJORIY OF THE STANDARD OLD TIME REPERTOIRE. THERE ARE COUNTLESS OTHERS, BUT THIS IS A GOOD START.

YOUTUBE LINK: http://tinyurl.com/banjotunings