

Dancing Cat Records Hawaiian Slack Key Information Booklet, SECTION IV:

SUMMARY OF RECORDED TUNINGS

1. The following chart has 65 Slack Key tunings, 51 of which have been heard in use and/or can be found on recordings or in films, or will be heard on future releases. The other 12 are included because they are very closely related to tunings in use, and/or they are versatile for experimentation. (***SECTION VI-SUMMARY OF NON-RECORDED TUNINGS***) contains a chart of unrecorded tunings).

2. Some of the available recordings of songs in each tuning are listed in ***SECTION V – HAWAIIAN RECORDINGS IN THE SLACK KEY TUNINGS***. (Note, though, that the songs may not be exactly pitched in these keys, because they can be tuned up or down two or more pitches; also, the guitar can be capoed to sound in a higher key). The list below is not a complete list of tunings that have been used; rather, it lists the most used tunings that are available on recordings. Hawaiian Slack Key tunings are generally designed for the guitar to resonate naturally while being played. This list also includes two tunings, $(G-C-E-G-C-E) -(\#C-2)$ and $(G-C-D-G-B-D) -(\#C-6)$, which are slight alterations (with the two lowest pitched strings tuned up and reversed in pitch), and which invite experimentation.

3. Of the 51 tunings listed on the ***Tuning Chart*** that are in use, 36 of them are played virtually exclusively in Hawai`i (or for playing Hawaiian music). Although more are used, there are 13 tunings most commonly used today, and which have appeared most often on recordings and which are optimum for solo guitar playing. (These 13 do not include the often used Standard Tuning $[E-A-D-G-B-E -\#C-33]$).

Of the 13 listed here, the first 4 are most common:

1. Tuning #**G-1** $D-G-D-G-B-D$ Called "Taro Patch Tuning" or "Open G Tuning" or "Mokihana Tuning" or "Low Bass G Tuning" (and called "Spanish Tuning" In Mainland America, especially earlier in the 20th Century).

2. Tuning #**C-5** *C-G-D-G-B-D* Called "Dropped C Tuning" or "Leonard's C Tuning" or "Taro Patch C Tuning."
 3. Tuning #**G-4** *D-G-D-F#-B-D* Called "Double Slack Tuning" or "G Slack Tuning" or "Auntie Alice Namakelua's G Tuning" or "Flatted G Tuning" or "F# Tuning."
 4. Tuning #**C-22** *C-G-E-G-A-E* Sometimes called "Gabby's C Tuning" or "Ki Melia Tuning" on the Island of Ni`ihau.
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Eight other tunings are used fairly often, including:

5. Tuning #**G-6** *D-G-D-D-G-D* Sometimes tuned up as high as the key of A.
6. Tuning #**C-1** *C-G-E-G-C-E* Called "Atta's C Tuning"; can also be played solo effectively in the keys of F and G.
7. Tuning #**C-7** *C-G-D-G-B-E* Called "Keola's C Tuning" (and called "Dropped C Tuning" in Mainland America); can also be played solo effectively in the keys of G and F.
8. Tuning #**D-4** *D-A-D-F#-A-C#* Called "D Wahine Tuning."
9. Tuning #**D-1** *D-A-D-F#-A-D* Called "Open D Tuning" (and called "Vestapol Tuning" in Mainland America, especially earlier in the 20th Century).
10. Tuning #**F-3** *C-F-C-G-C-E* Called "Leonard's F Tuning" or "F Tuning"; can also be played effectively in the key of C.
11. Tuning #**Bb-23** *F-Bb-D-F-G-D* Tuning #Bb-21 is also often tuned up to the key of C, yielding *G-C-E-G-A-E* -(#C-21).
12. Tuning #**G-13** *D-G-D-G-B-E* Called "G Sixth Tuning" (and called "Dropped G Tuning" in Mainland America).

Two other tunings are used a little less often, including:

13. Tuning #**C-11** *C-G-E-G-B-E* Called "Gabby's Hi`ilawe C Tuning" or "Hi`ilawe Tuning" or "Wahine C Tuning."
14. Tuning #**F-2** *F-C-E-G-C-E* Called "Gabby's F Wahine Tuning."

These thirteen other tunings are also optimum for solo guitar playing:

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| 1. Tuning # C-2 | <i>G-C-E-G-C-E</i> | Can be tuned down as low as the key of <u>B\flat</u> , yielding <i>F-B\flat-D-F-B\flat-D</i> -(#B \flat -2). |
| 2. Tuning # C-4 | <i>F-G-C-G-C-E</i> | Called "Samoan C Major Tuning." |
| 3. Tuning # C-6 | <i>G-C-D-G-B-D</i> | Tuning #C-6 is similar to #C-5 (<i>C-G-D-G-B-D</i>), with the two lowest pitched strings tuned up and reversed in pitch. |
| 4. Tuning # C-8 | <i>G-C-D-G-B-E</i> | Tuning #C-8 is similar to #C-7 (<i>C-G-D-G-B-E</i>), with the two lowest pitched strings tuned up and reversed in pitch. |
| 5. Tuning # B\flat-8 | <i>F-B\flat-C-F-A-D</i> | Tuning #B \flat -8 is the same as #C-8 (<i>G-C-D-G-B-E</i>), with the whole guitar tuned down to the key of <u>B\flat</u> . |
| 6. Tuning # G-14 | <i>D-G-C-G-B-E</i> | Called "Kilauea Tuning", and is similar to #C-8 (<i>G-C-D-G-B-E</i>) and #C-7 (<i>C-G-D-G-B-E</i>) "Keola's C Tuning", except the three lowest pitched strings are tuned differently; and it is also similar to the Standard Tuning (<i>E-A-D-G-B-E</i>) -(#C-30), except with the three lowest pitched strings tuned down two half steps. |
| 7. Tuning # C-12 | <i>G-C-E-G-B-E</i> | Tuning #C-12 is similar to #C-11 (<i>C-G-E-G-B-E</i>), with the two lowest pitched strings tuned up and reversed in pitch. |
| 8. Tuning # B\flat-12 | <i>F-B\flat-D-F-A-D</i> | Tuning #B \flat -12 is the same as #C-12 (<i>G-C-E-G-B-E</i>), with the whole guitar tuned down to the key of <u>B\flat</u> . |
| 9. Tuning # C-16 | <i>F-G-C-G-B-D</i> | Could be called "Samoan C Wahine Tuning." |
| 10. Tuning # C-24 | <i>C-G-C-G-A-E</i> | Can also be played solo effectively in the key of <u>G</u> . |
| 11. Tuning # C-25 | <i>F-G-C-G-A-E</i> | Called "Samoan C Mauna Loa Tuning"; can also be played effectively in the key of <u>E</u> . |
| 12. Tuning # D-8 | <i>D-A-D-G-B-E</i> | A slight variation of Standard Tuning (<i>E-A-D-G-B-E</i>) -(#C-30), which is sometimes called "Dropped D Tuning"; can also be played effectively in the key of <u>G</u> . |
| 13. Tuning # A-1 | <i>E-A-E-E-F\sharp-C\sharp</i> | Sometimes tuned down to the keys of <u>A\flat</u> , <u>G</u> , <u>F\sharp</u> , or <u>E</u> ; and sometimes tuned <u>up</u> to the key of <u>B\flat</u> . |

Tunings common in both Hawai`i and other places are sometimes coincidental up to this time (2004), as the guitar simply lends itself to sounding good when tuned different ways.

In Mainland America and Europe the following Hawaiian tunings are common:

1. $(D-G-D-G-B-D) - (\#G-1)$
2. $(C-G-C-G-C-E) - (\#C-3)$
3. $(D-A-D-F\#-A-D) - (\#D-1)$
4. $(D-A-D-G-B-E) - (\#D-8)$

And these Hawaiian tunings are also fairly common in Mainland America:

1. $(D-G-D-G-B-E) - (\#G-13)$
2. $(C-G-D-G-B-D) - (\#C-5)$
3. $(C-G-D-G-B-E) - (\#C-7)$
4. $(C-G-D-G-A-D) - (\#C-26)$

Other Hawaiian tunings occasionally used outside of Hawai`i are:

1. $(D-A-D-F\#-A-C\#) - (\#D-4)$, sometimes pitched up to the key of \underline{E} , is occasionally used by mainland guitarist Alex De Grassi.
2. $(D-A-D-F\#-B-E) - (\#D-8)$ has been used occasionally by mainland guitarist Daniel Hecht, and also occasionally in the classical and flamenco guitar traditions.
3. $(D-G-D-G-G-D) - (\#G-8)$, called "G Modal Tuning". It is played occasionally by folk guitarists in Mainland America and Europe, and it is used for the drone quality, with the second and third strings being tuned to the same note; and also for the modal quality of this tuning, which makes it possible to play in the G Major and the G minor keys, since there is no Major third (the B note) or minor third (the Bb note) in the tuning.

Additionally, the steel guitar C Sixth Tuning $(C-E-G-A-C-E)$, which is somewhat similar to the C Mauna Loa Tuning $(C-G-E-G-A-E) - (\#C-22)$, is the tuning used most often by Hawaiian steel guitarists such as Barney Isaacs (this tuning is also often called "A minor Seventh Tuning" – the A minor Seventh chord has the same notes as a C Sixth chord).

A seven string steel version of this tuning is Bb-C-E-G-A-C-E, and an 8 string version of this tuning is G-Bb-C-E-G-A-C-E.

C Sixth tunings are also often used by Mainland American Country & Western ten string pedal steel guitarists, with the tuning C-F-A-C-E-G-A-C-D-E (here strings 7,6,5,4,3, and 1 are the same notes as the Hawaiian six string steel guitar C Sixth [or A minor Seventh] Tuning).

The nine most popular tunings in general use in the world are:

1. Standard Tuning - (E-A-D-G-B-E) - (#C-33)
2. Dropped D Tuning - (D-A-D-G-B-E) - (#D-8)
3. G Major "Taro Patch" Tuning - (E-A-D-G-B-E) - (#G-1)
4. D Major Tuning - (D-A-D-F#-A-D) - (#D-1)
5. Dad Gad Tuning - (D-A-D-G-A-D) - [(not used for Slack Key)]
6. Dropped G Tuning - (D-G-D-G-B-E) - (#G-13)
7. Dropped C Tuning - (C-G-D-G-B-E) - (#C-7)
8. C Major Tuning (C-G-C-G-C-E) - (#C-3)
9. C Wahine Tuning - (C-G-D-G-B-D) - (#C-5)

This booklet lists many of the most important and available songs in each tuning. If you would like help with finding a song or a tuning not listed here, you can contact us at ***or write to Dancing Cat Productions, P.O. Box 4287, Santa Cruz, CA 95063***, and we will try to assist you.