

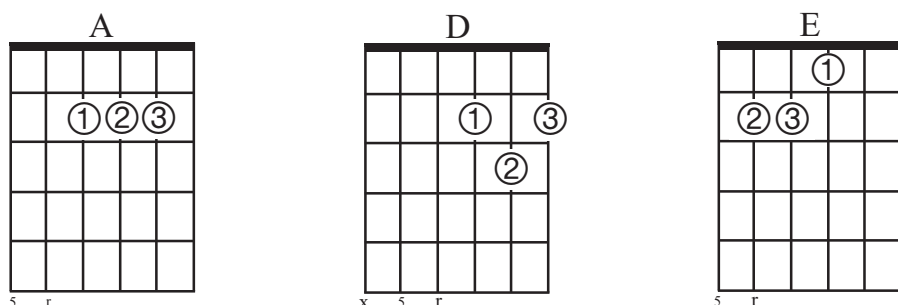
# Cripple Creek *key of A, capo 2*

“Cripple Creek” is an instrumental that everyone seems to play. It’s a well-known banjo feature tune and is one of the first instrumentals banjo players learn. “Cripple Creek” does have lyrics, which are in *The Parking Lot Pickers’ Songbook*, but here we’ll concentrate on the instrumental aspect of the song.

Guitarists and banjo players usually play “Cripple Creek” out of the key of G capoed at fret 2. And, even though it’s primarily a banjo tune, it behooves you as a guitarist to know how to back it up and play a solo on it.

We’ll play both rhythm and lead out of the key of G, capoed at fret 2. There’s no reason in the whole world *not* to play “Cripple Creek” rhythm and lead out of open A. I hope you’ll try that after you’ve mastered the capoed G version. For tips on how to do it, consult the “Scale, Chord, and Transposition Chart” on page 9.

The diagrams for the chords in the key of A, showing the locations of the bass notes, are below.



The solo is fairly easy and very melodic. Each part is four measures long and each is repeated.

Since this is known primarily as a banjo tune, you’ll get to practice backing up Bill on the last solo of the regular speed track. Bill is a good friend of mine and is currently the hardest working man in show business. He works all the time. Be sure to practice this song. He may need a guitarist some day!

The ending of both tracks has the banjo playing a typical ending tag referred to as “shave and a haircut.” It’s a light and somewhat comic little musical figure that somewhere along the line had lyrics added to it: “Shave and a haircut, two bits.” Instruments accompanying it usually don’t play during the “shave and a haircut” part, but do play a V chord, in this case an uncapoed E (capoed D) behind the lyric “two,” and a I chord, here an uncapoed A (capoed G) behind the lyric “bits.”

“Cripple Creek,” though mainly known as an instrumental and probably dating from the late 1800s, has great and somewhat racy lyrics, at least for the time.