

# Alaska City Folk Arts Classes

These are classes typically, but not always, offered. Class offerings depend upon student interest and faculty knowledge.

## Performance Groups

*Performance Groups are the heart of Alaska City Folk Arts Camp. Make your own music and play with friends. Most campers will perform in at least one group at the Friday Festival. Contact us if you have questions, or select: "Not Sure, Choose for Me".*

### **Band:**

Play in a band! Your teacher will help you and your classmates find your sound, your voice, and guide you through choosing and arranging a piece to perform. The band genre will depend on your stated interests.

### **MC (Master of Ceremonies):**

Learn about organizing a show and how to become a Master of Ceremonies. Develop stage presence and keep the audience engaged and the show moving along! Help to organize Blackboard Concerts (after camp). Older students will help with the Wednesday evening Faculty Concert. All class members will participate in the Friday Festival.

### **Percussion ~ World Beats:**

Play ensemble grooves from around the world using numerous percussive instruments. Bring drums, claves, and shakers, if you have them.

### **Sound/Stage Managing:**

For students 14 years and older. Learn about basic audio theory and equipment including microphones, monitors, and soundboards. Receive hands-on experience setting up equipment and operating it for the daily Blackboard Concerts (after camp), the dances, and evening events. You may even do some sound recording. Expect to be available Wednesday and Thursday evenings, as well as Friday afternoon. Class size is limited.

### **Voice Ensemble:**

Your voice is an instrument you take with you wherever you go - tune it up, learn some new songs and how to sing with others. This group's performance is always memorable.

### **Not Sure, Choose for Me:**

Our director will place you in a Performance Group based on your interests, instrument, and skill level.

## Classes

*The rest of our classes listed below are categorized as either **Folk Arts** (arts other than strictly playing an instrument), **Sessions & Repertoire** (learning tunes and playing them on your instrument with others), or **Instrument Instruction** (learning how to play a specific instrument).*

## Folk Arts

These classes are intended to broaden your idea of "the Arts" and to provide variety, and in some cases, movement into your schedule. Please note: all new students between the ages of 8 and 11 are required to take our **Folk Arts Sampler** class.

### **Art ~ Printmaking:**

Roll up your sleeves and prepare for the wonders of printmaking! Students can expect to learn the processes of both collagraphy and monoprinting in this fun-filled week. Transform your drawings into a series of works, each a little different. Experiment with different materials such as yarn, glue, pasta, cardboard, leaves, and maybe even breakfast cereal!

### **Art ~ Watercolor Painting:**

Dive into a week of watercolor! Students will learn basic color theory, explore a variety of techniques, and be exposed to prominent watercolor artists throughout history. Experimentation is a must! Expect to use materials such as salt, glue, masking tape, plastic wrap, sugar, and more. Join us whether you're a first time painter, or a seasoned aquarelle artist!

### **Dance ~ Calling:**

Help call dances in the mornings before classes and on Thursday night at the camp dance. Learn some of the secrets to successful and fun dances. You might even get to create your very own dance!

### **Dance ~ Contra, Square:**

Learn the basics of square dancing and the ins and outs of contra dancing. Where does the "first couple" begin? What is a "grand right"? Trade-off dancing and playing in the band. This is a class, as opposed to the daily 9:30 am dance (before camp). *Beginning*, and *Experienced* skill levels.

### **Dance ~ Swing/Partner Dancing:**

Learn to swing dance with a partner. Other dances may include waltz, two-step, or polka. This is one of our most popular classes - and might even help you with your instrument playing and timing! Offered in two levels: *8-12 year old*, and *Teen*.

### **Folk Arts Sampler:**

For all first time students 8-11 years of age. You will be guided through an overview of the folk arts taught at our camp. Each day will be different. For two days you will learn about, hear, see and touch a variety of instruments. On other days you will experience dance and juggling.

### **Instrument Building:**

Build an instrument you can really play - all by yourself! Projects vary from year to year.

### **Juggling:**

Don't just stand there - learn how to juggle! It's fun and will help your coordination and musical timing! *Beginning*, and *Experienced* skill levels.

### **Knitting & Music Appreciation:**

No experience necessary. Make something while listening to music happening all around you. All levels are welcome - and it's relaxing!

### **The Science Behind Music:**

A hands-on exploration of the physics of sound and music. Great for science fans!

### **Songwriting:**

All levels of musicianship welcomed. Learn how to write lyrics and melodies with or without an instrument. Songwriters who have written numerous songs and wish to hone their craft should sign up for the *Experienced* class. *Beginning*, and *Experienced* skill levels.

### **Stringed Instrument Care & Feeding:**

Learn to tune and adjust your instrument. Change strings, and make minor repairs. Get tips on buying an instrument, what to look for, and what to look out for!

### **Tune-writing:**

For fiddlers, mandolin players, and other melodic instrument players who want to learn how to write a tune. Dissect fiddle tunes to find out what makes them tick. Turn a small phrase into a fiddle tune. Learn how to open up to those magic bits of inspiration! We will work on writing a new tune together.

### **Voice ~ Vocal Ensemble:**

Learn new songs and make beautiful vocal music with your fellow campers. Students 13 and older will work on developing and finding harmonies in songs that will be performed at the Friday Festival. Be part of an ensemble, and learn arrangement and performance techniques. *8-12 year old*, and *Teen* levels.

## **Sessions & Repertoire**

*These classes focus on learning tunes to play with others. Some styles use specific, traditional instruments, other styles are open to all instruments.*

### **Arranging for Ensembles (stringed instruments):**

Instruments in hand, we'll explore techniques to create different sounds and textures. We will listen to all of our ideas and arrange a tune together using our new collaborative strategies as an ensemble.

### **Bluegrass Tunes:**

For fiddle, mandolin, guitar, and other lead instruments. Learn classic bluegrass tunes, become bluegrass savvy, improve your playing, and make your band sound better! The focus will be on lead playing, but expect to learn rhythm too. All skill levels.

### **Fiddle Tunes (all styles & instruments):**

We call them "fiddle tunes" because they are easily played on fiddles and usually are written for the fiddle, but any instrument can play a fiddle tune - including flute, guitar, mandolin, and cello! All instruments, styles, and abilities.

### **Fiddling Around the World:**

Explore fiddle traditions from all around the world, and learn tunes, rhythms, and ornamentation unique to them. All skill levels.

### **Folk Arts Session:**

Jam every day. Learn the protocol and repertoire for bluegrass, old time, Celtic, swing, folk music and more. Learn when to play, sing, take leads etc. All instruments - just like Folk Arts Saturdays at Mary's studio! All skill levels.

### **Improvisation (all instruments):**

Improvisation is playing and creating music without writing it down or learning it in advance. It requires listening, understanding the key, instrument, and genre you are in or using.

*Beginners* ~ No improvisational experience and you are relatively new to your instrument.

*Intermediate* ~ Some improvisational experience and some knowledge of chord structure and scales. You are at an intermediate or advanced skill level on your instrument.

*Advanced* ~ Advanced skills and some improvisation experience outside of the classroom. For Folk Arts Camp veterans who want to go beyond technique and have an understanding of chord theory and multiple scale proficiency. Reading music is helpful, but not required if you have improvisation experience.

### **Irish/Scottish Repertoire:**

Learn reels, jigs, polkas, hornpipes, strathspeys, airs, marches and other types of tunes from the Celtic tradition. We will cover rhythmic devices and variations including grace notes, ornamentation, rolls, and double stops. You should know a handful of tunes by heart. The focus will be on learning tunes. Instruments: fiddle, guitar, piano, bodhrán, flute, pennywhistle, accordion, mandolin and tenor banjo. Other stringed instruments please inquire. All skill levels.

### **Klezmer Tunes:**

Klezmer is a mix of centuries-old traditional Jewish tunes, influenced by Eastern European folk music, early jazz, and French Café music. It's meant for dancing and celebrating joyous occasions. *Intermediate* or *Advanced* skill level.

### **Percussion ~ Rhythm and Grooves:**

Explore sounds, rhythms and grooves from various traditions, and use all kinds of instruments - including your own body and voice! Bring drums, claves, or shakers if you have them. All skill levels.

### **Play in a Dance Band:**

All of our camp dance classes have live bands for you to dance to. These bands are led by one or more members of our faculty. If you'd like to play alongside some great musicians and learn classic tunes, this is the class for you! For proficient players.

### **Voice ~ Folk Song Repertoire and Harmony Singing:**

Learn as many folk songs as you can in one week! Find the harmonies to the melodies, and enjoy singing traditional songs with friends, and making beautiful sounds.

## **Instrument Instruction**

*These classes show students how to play specific instruments.*

### **Accordion:**

Basic technique, various genres. *Intermediate*, and *Advanced* skill levels.

**Banjo ~ Bluegrass:**

Three-finger (Scruggs) style playing technique. Basic rolls, chords, rhythm, and repertoire. *Beginning*, and *Experienced* skill levels.

**Banjo ~ Old Time:**

Learn to frail/clawhammer the 5-string banjo. We will cover the chords, scales, tunings, and right-hand essentials needed to get that old time sound! *Beginning*, and *Experienced* skill levels.

**Bass:**

Learn chord theory, basic chords, scales, and the role of the bass in a band. All skill levels.

**Bowed Stringed Instruments from Scratch:**

This is a beginning class, for students with no fiddling experience. Beginning viola and cello players are welcome. Learn how to hold the instrument and the bow, and take off from there.

**Cello:**

Learn various techniques and explore several genres and styles. This year we are very fortunate to have Joy Adams, Cellist Extraordinaire, as one of our guest artists. Experienced cello players will certainly want to take a class from her! *Intermediate*, and *Advanced* skill levels. *Beginners* should take the "Bowed Stringed Instruments from Scratch" class.

**Chopping/Strum Bowing:**

Tracy Silverman's Strum Bowing method encompasses all of the alternative bow techniques - shuffles, ghost notes, and chops - by targeting the common thread linking grooves in all styles: the subdivision of the beat. Guest artist, Andy Reiner, will take you on a strum bowing journey - get ready to groove!

**Fiddle:**

*Intermediate* students have played for a few years, know a number of tunes by heart, and want to learn ornamentation and new tunes. *Advanced* fiddlers will expand their repertoires and improvisational techniques. *Beginners* should take the "Bowed Stringed Instruments from Scratch" class.

**Fiddle ~ Bluegrass:**

Learn classic Bluegrass tunes, how to take a fiddle break, and how to play back up. *Intermediate* students have played for a few years, know a number of Bluegrass tunes by heart and want to learn a few more. *Advanced* fiddlers will expand their repertoire, learn new bowing patterns, and improvisational techniques on breaks.

**Fiddle ~ Irish/Scottish:**

*Intermediate* students have played for a few years, know a number of Celtic tunes by heart, and want to learn new tunes. *Advanced* fiddlers will expand their repertoires, learn different bowing patterns and techniques, and various ornamentations.

**Fiddle ~ Twin Fiddling:**

*Intermediate* students have played for a few years, know a number of tunes by heart, and want to learn to play tunes with another fiddler. *Advanced* fiddlers will expand their repertoires and techniques for making that sweet twin fiddle sound.

### **Fiddle ~ Violin Techniques for Fiddlers:**

A chance for fiddlers to learn technique tips from an Anchorage Symphony violinist. She will help you look at how you are playing and help you to get a cleaner, more confident sound and improve your intonation. You may also work on upper positions, vibrato exercises, and bow control.

### **Flute:**

This wind instrument has a place in folk, Irish, jazz music - and more! Plan to learn multiple genres. For *experienced* flute players.

### **Guitar:**

*Beginner* ~ No experience necessary. Learn basic open chords and traditional folk style strums. Learn beginning chord theory and how to play with your own vocal accompaniment, or with other folk instruments.

*Intermediate* ~ You must be proficient in all open chords and be able to play in different rhythms. Learn flat-picking and uses for barre chords.

*Advanced* ~ If you have the skills for Intermediate Guitar and are ready for more challenges, Advanced Guitar is the class for you!

### **Mandolin:**

*Beginner* ~ Guitar or fiddle experience is helpful, but not required. Learn to hold and tune a mandolin. Work on basic chords, scales, melodies, picking and strumming and learn some tunes. Please let us know if you have experience with other instruments, or if this is your first instrument.

*Intermediate* ~ You have experience with the mandolin and know chords and some solos. You will further your knowledge of the mandolin.

*Advanced* ~ Pick up where the Intermediate class left off. Unsure of your skill level - contact us.

### **Pennywhistle:**

This little instrument adds a lot to Celtic and other genres of folk music - and it's easy to take along wherever you go. Bring a "D" whistle and learn some tunes!

*Beginning* ~ No experience necessary. Learn scales, and easy, familiar tunes.

*Experienced* ~ You've been playing for several years and are looking for challenges!

### **Percussion:**

Explore the possibilities of rhythm, beat, syncopation, and percussive sounds. Bring your own drums, claves, or shakers if you can. All skill levels.

### **Piano ~ Playing with Bands & Vocalists:**

You need at least two years of piano instruction. Play with a band, approaching the piano from a chords perspective rather than from note reading. Learn when to carry the melody, and when to supply rhythm and percussion. When accompanying vocalists learn how to support the singer and the song! *Intermediate*, and *Advanced* skill levels.

### **Ukulele:**

In recent years this small, four-stringed Hawaiian instrument has found its way into many musical genres and repertoires. It has a sweet sound AND it's portable! All skill levels.