

that. To someone with perfect pitch, it's a slightly sharp D...so why not?

We're going to describe our notation system for tuning. All you have to do is recognize tones an octave apart. This system has only a few rules, and by following them you will be able to tune successfully and play your dulcimer in every mode. Don't be afraid of breaking strings...You have to start somewhere.

Tune the first of the unison strings to the D above middle C, or to any note you like, until the string is fairly taut and you can play it without it sounding watery. It should be a reasonably high note, and we'll call this note—X. Now tune the second string of the unisons to this first string. Try to get it very close if not exactly the same. Because this string is to be the same as the first, it's X too.

Next, count four frets up the scale beginning with the first fret nearest the nut—large space, large space, small space, large space—and to the left of the fourth fret, about an eighth of an inch in back of the fret, depress the unison strings with the middle finger of your left hand.

With the index finger of your right hand pluck the fretted unisons. The tone you hear is that to which you want to tune the middle string, but you want to tune the middle string an octave lower than the note you produce when you fret the unisons on the fourth fret.

When you fret the unisons on the fourth fret, you produce the fifth tone. Our notation for tuning the middle string to this fifth tone is X+4, and because the middle string is to be an octave-fifth lower than the unisons, we circle the notation. Thus, (X+4) is the notation for tuning the middle string.

FRETTING THE UNISONS AT THE  
FOURTH FRET TO TUNE THE  
MIDDLE STRING

