

"KEEP ON THE SUNNY SIDE"

This popular American song originally written in 1899 by Ada Blenkhorn (1858–1927) with music by J. Howard Entwisle (1866–1903). The song was popularized in a 1928 recording by the Carter Family. A recording of the song with The Whites was featured in the 2000 movie *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*

In 1899 Ada was inspired to write this hymn by a phrase used by her nephew. Her nephew was disabled and always wanted his wheelchair pushed down "the sunny side" of the street. The Carter Family learned of the song from A. P. Carter's uncle who was a music teacher, and they recorded the song in Camden, New Jersey in 1928. "Keep on the Sunny Side" became their theme song on the radio in later years. A.P. Carter's tombstone has a gold record of the song embedded in it.

Performance Notes:

1. There is a good example of this tune on YouTube with Maybelle and the Carter sisters. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3qEhj-rQSAU&feature=related>. Their arrangement is in the Key of C. I used the same key since it also fit my vocalist's range. I've seen it performed in other keys, such as D and higher. The key you chose will ultimately depend on the vocal range of your singer(s).
2. There are two bass arrangements. The first is a standard backup pattern with bass runs separating the Verse and Chorus sections.
3. Bass arrangement 2 begins at measure 42. The main difference between these two arrangements is the chromatic bass runs connecting the chord roots.
4. At measure 65, I've included an extended chromatic bass walk of five measures. It begins on the root of the V chord (dominant, G), lands on the root of the (I) chord (Tonic) and continues onto the root of the IV chord (subdominant, F). This type of chromatic run from the dominant, tonic to subdominant adds extra excitement to the overall arrangement. I rarely see bass players play this style, even top professionals. However, it is very effective and the technique can be used on thousands of other songs with this same, familiar chord progression.

Keep On The Sunny Side

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A. Blenkhorn (Lyrics)
J. Entwisle (Music) - 1899
Arrangement by Jay Buckey

Intro:

1

Bass Line 1:

The first system of music consists of three staves. The top staff is a blank bass clef staff with a 4/4 time signature, intended for an introduction. The middle staff is a bass clef staff with a 4/4 time signature, containing a bass line starting with a whole rest followed by a sequence of eighth notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. The bottom staff is a guitar staff with a 4/4 time signature, containing a bass line with triplets of eighth notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1.

5

C

F

There's a dark and a trou - bled side of
Oh, the storm and it's fu - ry broke to -
Let us green with a song of hope each

The second system of music consists of three staves. The top staff is a bass clef staff with a 4/4 time signature, containing a vocal line with lyrics. The middle staff is a bass clef staff with a 4/4 time signature, containing a bass line. The bottom staff is a guitar staff with a 4/4 time signature, containing a bass line with triplets of eighth notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1.

8 C

life, There's a bright and a
day. Crush - ing hopes that we
day. Though the mo - ment be

The third system of music consists of three staves. The top staff is a bass clef staff with a 4/4 time signature, containing a vocal line with lyrics. The middle staff is a bass clef staff with a 4/4 time signature, containing a bass line. The bottom staff is a guitar staff with a 4/4 time signature, containing a bass line with triplets of eighth notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1.

11

G

sun - ny side too; Though you
cher - ish so dear. Clouds and
cloud - y or fair. Let us

14

C

meet with the dark - ness and strife The
storms will in time pass a - way, The
trust in our Sa - vior a - way, Who

18 G

C

sun - ny side may al - so find you.
sun a - gain will shine bright and clear.
keep - eth ev - 'ry one keep in His care.

F

Keep on the sun - ny side al - ways on the sun - ny side

G

keep on the sun - ny side of life. It will

F

help us ev - 'ry day, it will bright - en all the

33 C

C

F

C

G

way, if we Keep on the Sun - ny Side of

T
A 3
B 3

36 C

Life.

T
A 3
B 3

39

T
A 3
B 3

The complete arrangement for “Keep on the Sunny Side”, including:

- Bass arrangements 1 and 2.
- multiple play along mp3s at slow, medium and faster tempos,
 - with or without the Bass
 - with or without the lead and/or harmony vocals

are on this page: http://jaybuckey.com/music_pages/downloads/isd/isd.htm