

"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 also used the Key of C 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. The first arrangement is the vocal line. It's straight forward and a good start for the beginning Fiddler to get familiar with melody in the C major scale.
3. The recording begins with a kickoff with twin fiddles. This is based on the last four measures of the Fiddle solo. This is good technique to remember if you need to start off a song with a short kick off; just play the last 4 measures of the solo or vocal line.
4. The Fiddle backup begins at measure 34. For the verse, I chose to use the long bow style backup. These are mainly smoothly connected notes placed between the pauses when the vocalist takes a breath.
5. When the vocalist takes a pause for a breath, the note is one of the three main notes of a chords triad. Try to play your backup so that your final note in the phrase is different. This way, your long bow backup will harmonize and compliment the vocals; not compete.

6. More details about this backup technique are found in the publication, "Essential Music Theory for Fiddle". This is available on my web site, www.jaybuckey.com
7. The Fiddle solo could be played with either one or two fiddles. The second fiddle part will be enjoyable for teachers to play along with their students. If you don't have a teacher or fiddle friend to play the second part, you can use the matching play along mp3s and I'll play the missing parts with you.

Keep On The Sunny Side

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

Fiddle 1:

1 C F C

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

6 G

bright and a sun - ny side too; Though you
hopes that we cher - ish so dear. Clouds and
mo - ment be cloud - y or fair. Let us

10 C V

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

14 G C

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

18

F



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

22

C

G



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

26

C

F

C



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

30

C

F

C

G

C



Keep on the Sun - ny Side of Life.

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

- Fiddle arrangements for the vocal line, twin fiddle solos and backup.
- multiple play along mp3s at slow, medium and faster tempos,
 - with or without the Fiddle
 - with or without the lead and/or harmony vocals

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