

Cluck Old Hen

Key of A Dorian

Traditional American Old-Time

Transcribed by Mary Jane Howie



ABOUT THIS SONG

An old-time fiddle tune with words, in print by 1886 and on record since 1925. Public domain, so this page is yours to copy and hand around. Jams play it in A. The tune sits in a modal A, so the melody keeps a natural C against an A chord, and that rub is the whole sound of the tune. Fiddlers often cross-tune to AEAE for the drone. Sing the verses over the first eight bars and the chorus over the last eight.

ALL VERSES

My old hen is a good old hen,
She lays eggs for the railroad men.
Sometimes one, sometimes two,
She lays eggs for the whole darn crew.

Chorus:
Cluck old hen, cluck and sing,
Ain't laid an egg since way last spring.
Cluck old hen, cluck and squall,
Ain't laid an egg since way last fall.

I had an old hen, she had a wooden leg,
Best old hen that never laid an egg.
Laid more eggs than any hen around the barn,
Another drink of whiskey wouldn't do ya any harm.

My old hen made a great big fuss,
Wake up mama, and it's making her cuss.
Pecks and squalls, cackles and struts,
I think everybody hates her guts.

Cluck old hen, cluck when I tell you,
Cluck old hen, or I'm gonna sell you.
Last time she cackled, cackled in the lot,
Next time she cackles, be cacklin' in the pot.

My old hen's a mean old hen,
Keep her locked in a barbwire pen.
Lost me work, cost me corn,
Scratching at dirt the whole day long.

My old hen, she won't do,
She lays eggs and taters too.
Sometimes nine, sometimes ten,
That's enough eggs for the railroad.