

La Roche Banjo Workshop

**Improvising on 5-string banjo:
from bluegrass to newgrass, playing through swing!**

Taught by Gille Rézard of Zip Code 2025, Wondergrass

Required level:

- Regularly play banjo in bluegrass style (with finger picks and one or two fingers resting on skin) and play some songs by heart.
- Know all major and minor chords using 4 strings, in all three positions (reversals).
- Play regularly or occasionally with other musicians.



Module One (3h30): On your marks!

1. Improvising in general:

- Different styles (traditional or melodic bluegrass, newgrass, jazz) and the associated techniques

2. Main markers:

- The key of G: chords with 3 and 4 sounds
- Ideas for exploring the key of G with rolls and on single string
- Working with eyes and ears, memorising melodies and rhythms

Module Two (3h30): Chord sequences and structures

1. Sequence:

- The degrees within a key, standard sequences, the Nashville notation system

2. Structure :

- Parts, take over, bridges

3. Back-up :

- Role of the back-up, examples in different styles of music

Module Three (3h30): playing with other people

1. The jam session (marmalade or raspberry ...):

- General: listening on two levels, adapting, attitude
- Work with some standards from different styles (bluegrass, newgrass, blues, jazz). The chords of some tunes can be sent ahead to workshop participants (by email only in pdf form).