

The Darktown Strutters' Ball

(Larger tab # is the melody)

Words and Music by
Shelton Brooks, 1917
Arr. MH Samuels, 2025

The musical score is written for a dulcimer in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. It consists of five systems of music, each with a vocal line and a corresponding dulcimer line. The dulcimer line includes a standard musical staff with notes and a tablature line with fret numbers (0-10) and fretted notes. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

System 1: I'll be down to get you in a Tax-i hon-ey You bet-ter be read - y a - bout half past eight,
 0 0 0 5 5 5-5 5
 0 0 0 5 5 4 4 6+ 4
 2 1 0 2 4 4 5 4 7 5 4 X 5 5 5 6+ 7 6+ 5 5

System 2: Now dear - ie, don't be late, I want to be there when the band starts play-ing, Re -
 4 0 0 0 0 5 5
 4 0 0 0 0 5 5
 4 5 6+ 7 6+ 5 5 4 5 6+ 7 5 7 5 7 6+ 5 4

System 3: memb - er when we get there, Hon-ey The two steps I'm goin' to have 'em all, Goin' to
 0 0 0 5 5 5 5
 0 0 0 5 5 4 6+ 4
 2 6+ X X 5 6+ 6+ 7 6+ 5 5 7 10

System 4: dance out both my shoes, When they play the "Jel - ly Roll Blues" To
 8 6+ 7 5
 8 6+ 7 5
 X 6+ X 7 6+ 7 6+ 5 4

System 5: mor - row night, at the Dark-town Strut-ters' Ball. I'll be
 0 6+ 6+ 5 0 0
 6 0 0 0 5 5
 5 6+ 6+ 5 6+ 5 6+ 7 7 2 1 7

1. 2.