




To transcribe “Tripping Up the Stairs,” I first notated the basic skeleton of the tune as I originally learned it. (Yes, I know that my musical notation looks like the work of a sleepy 1<sup>st</sup> grader, and I don’t hold my treble clef symbols up for public ridicule. Sorry about that!) Then, I marked up that basic tune with red ink to show you how I adapted the basic tune. (Here is where our ½ speed version of the tune came in handy!)



**Please don’t worry if this notation stuff makes little sense to you now. I want to break all this down in a series of SHORT, simple videos, but someone asked for it now, so here it is.**



Also, please realize that this particular performance is like a snapshot—only one of a myriad of ways that you or I could play this tune. Hopefully, a year from now, I’ll be able to play this tune much better than I did a few days ago. Still, within this performance, there are **several concepts that can apply to jig playing in general.**

The notation symbols are primarily based on Grey Larsen’s system for notating traditional Irish music. I say “primarily” because I don’t want anyone to blame Mr. Larsen for my poor use or understanding of his fine system, which he presents in his excellent book, The Essential Guide to Irish Flute and Tin Whistle.

In keeping with Mr. Larsen’s system, cuts are represented by this symbol ( / ) over the articulated note, and strikes by this symbol ( √ ).

Usually long rolls in jigs are notated thusly: (  ). However, I wanted you to be able to see rolls in relation to the basic tune, so I chose to indicate most of the cuts and strikes. As a result, most of my rolls look like this (  ) or this (  ). (Also, I really didn’t want to hand write a completely different version of each time through the jig. With my limited music notation skills, can you blame me?)

This is the symbol for a short roll (  ). With that said, many of my short rolls look like this (  ), but this type of short roll feels more like an “ascending long roll” when you play it. In other words, instead of all three notes being of the same pitch as in a long roll, the first of the three notes is lower in pitch than the following two.


All breaths are marked with this symbol (  ). You’ll notice that it is standard practice in traditional Irish dance music for woodwind players to create breathing room by eliminating a “non-essential” note, i.e., a note that doesn’t fall on the primary or secondary pulse. *When done well*, taking breaths should seem like a natural part of musical phrasing and variation. In fact, pipers, accordionists, fiddle players, etc, often use a similar type of variation even though they can breathe more freely and don’t have an immediate need to suck in a quick breath to keep from keeling over. In double jigs like this one, you can sometimes replace this note (  ) with a quick breath.

All tonguing points are represented by this symbol ( • ) over the tongued note. If I don’t place a tonguing mark over a particular note, that indicates that the note is slurred or played under one breath with surrounding notes. Since I marked all tonguing points, you’ll notice that I have left out phrasing marks.

By the way, it is sometimes tough to indicate tonguing when you transcribe somebody else’s tune because it can be difficult to say whether they throated, pulsed their breath, tongued, brought their fingers down percussively onto the toneholes, or merely burped in a musical way. ☺ In this case, I had the advantage of knowing me and my playing style personally, and it’s only been a few days since I recorded the song.

By the way, much of my tonguing is double or triple tonguing, for example: tuh kuh tuh or tuh kuh duh; or -- kuh tuh, -- kuh duh, or -- guh duh. I use single tonguing (tuh or duh) for tongued cuts or to start a phrase or a roll. Also, in places such as the 1<sup>st</sup> measure of B1, the 2<sup>nd</sup> time through the jig, I single tongue the notes preceding the cut notes with a tuh or duh. I plan to address tonguing in a future video.

There are a couple of places where I have strayed slightly from the way Mr. Larsen presents his material. In the first place, as mentioned above, I scribbled in my variations from the skeleton tune with stemless notes in red ink, and I lightly crossed out the replaced notes. Don’t bother to look for the ligatures because I left them out in most cases.

Secondly, I notated tongued cuts as follows: (  ).

Again, given time and **interest on your part**, I hope to explain all of this simply and in greater detail, so please don’t worry for a second if it doesn’t make sense to you now. Little by little, we’ll go a long way!

Warmest wishes,

Karl



# 1st time Tripping Up the Stairs

Handwritten musical notation for a piece titled "1st time Tripping Up the Stairs". The notation is written on six staves, each beginning with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a time signature of 6/8. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals, along with red annotations including dots, vertical lines, and 'V' marks, likely indicating specific performance techniques or corrections. The notation is organized into sections labeled A1, A2, B1, and B2.

**A1**

**A2**

**B1**

**B2**



# 2nd time Tripping Up the Stairs

**A1**

**A2**

**B1**

**B2**



# 3rd time Tripping Up the Stairs

A1

A2

B1

B2

