

The Cuckoo

(The Cuckoo is a Pretty Bird)

Driving ♩ = 180
Intro

Traditional English/American

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of 180 beats per minute. It consists of six staves of music. The first two staves are an instrumental introduction. The following four staves contain the main melody with lyrics. Chords are indicated above the notes. The lyrics are: "Oh! The cuckoo! She's a pretty bird. And she warbles as she flies. But she never has a sad word, till the Fourth day of July. She just sucks on pretty flowers, just to keep her voice so clear. And she never holds 'cuckoo' till the last day of the year."

"The Cuckoo" is a traditional English and Appalachian American song that has various titles, all involving "Cuckoo" and a variety of sets of lyrics. You can find more lyrics on the Internet, and several versions on YouTube, with variations on the melody and even more variation in the introduction. Our favorite is by the 1960s-1970s rock/ethnic band "Kaleidoscope".

Feel free to experiment with both the tune and the intro. We like doing it with guitar and hammered dulcimer, and sometimes hold the whole notes in the intro out for 8 beats instead of four, throwing some guitar runs under the final A in the intro. If you play it through several times, try repeating the intro each time; and try using the intro as a long tag at the end.