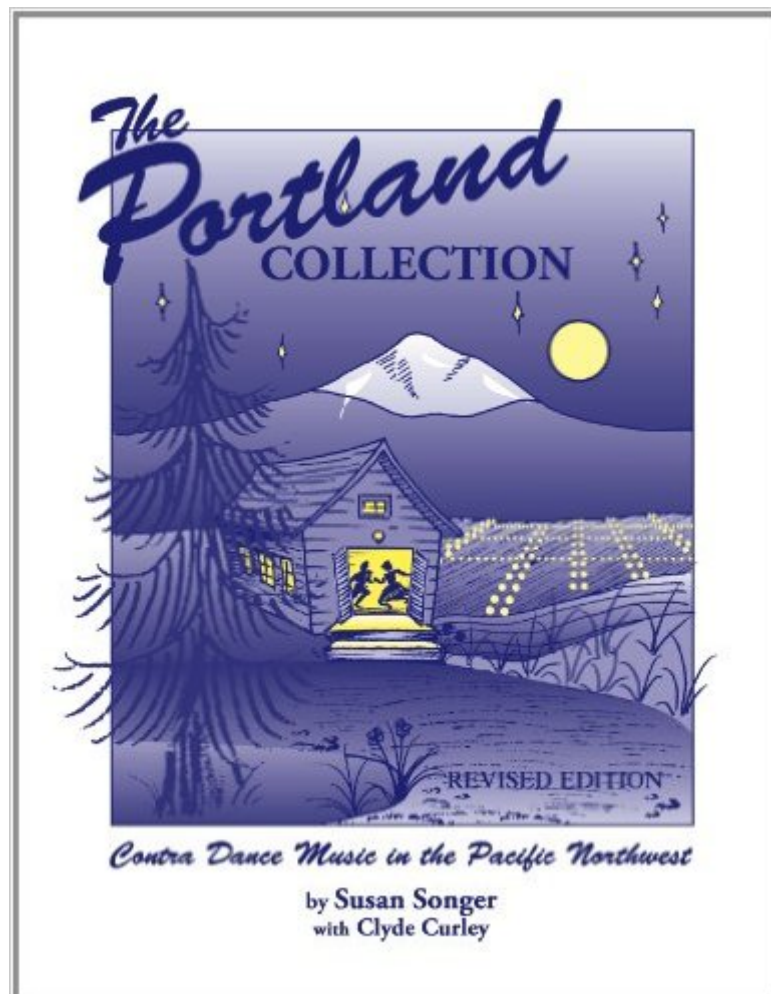


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# The Portland Collection: Contra Dance Music In The Pacific Northwest, Revised Edition



## **Synopsis**

For this ninth printing of *The Portland Collection*, the electronic files were completely recreated to make them compatible with today's computers. While there are no changes to the music in the book (other than the correction of a few notation mistakes), this update provided the opportunity to make some improvements in formatting. There are 7 titles changes (incorrect in prior printings). Alternate tune settings and chords are now on the same page as the original tune rather than in the Notes on the Tunes section in the back of the book. As a result of these two changes, the order of the tunes and pagination is different from earlier printings. The basic information about the book remains the same and follows below. *The Portland Collection: Contra Dance Music in the Pacific Northwest* is a collection of 318 traditional and recently composed jigs and reels played for dances in Portland, Oregon. National standards and local favorites are included. The music derives from New England, Irish, Scottish, Quebecois, Appalachian, and English sources, all of which are included in the book. Chord suggestions are provided. There is an extensive commentary on each tune. Discography, bibliography, indices, and more are included. Since its original publication in 1997, *The Portland Collection* has become the standard for contra dance musicians all across the United States and has also become popular among fiddlers of many other genres. The book is praised for its clear, readable format; its sturdy covers and binding; its informative, entertaining commentary; and especially for the repertoire itself. This music is suitable for any acoustic instrument. Beginners and accomplished musicians alike will find tunes that match their skill levels in this book. There are two companion recordings for this book. *On A Portland Selection 2* editors Susan Songer and Clyde Curley, joined by fiddler George Penk, play a representative cross section of the music in the book using a variety of tempos, harmonies, and other variations on the music. *A Portland Play Along Selection* is a 2-disc album of 97 tunes from both of the *Portland Collection* books engineered for ease of playing along. Fiddler Betsy Branch joins Clyde and Susan on this recording. Both of these recordings are for sale elsewhere on [.com](http://www.portlandcollection.com).

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

After the "Fiddler's Fakebook" this is the tune collection to own. Hundreds of reels and jigs in clear notation with, usually, good chord suggestions. Little, if any, overlap with the tunes in the FF. Very durable spiral binding, sits easy on a stand or table. Includes many recently composed tunes including my favorite, Erik Sessions' "It Ain't the Heat, It's the Humidity." Many hours of playing pleasure, fast becoming a standard collection.

If you are looking to purchase a fiddle book, this is definitely the best one to buy. This book contains about 400 tunes and the quality of the tunes is fantastic. Every single tune in this book sounds great and can be ornamentated dozens of ways with plenty of room to make the tune your own. One of the best features of this book is the spiral binding. The binding is great because you don't have to constantly bend your book to get it to stay open on the stand. Another great feature is that the book is organized alphabetically so you can find your tune quickly during a jam. There is also an index which organizes the tunes by key and type which makes it really easy to come up with your own sets. There are even detailed notes on each song. Some of the notes even give suggestions on how to add some ornamentation to the tune. Overall, this book is great, but there are two things which are worth noting.-The pages are quite thin and could tear easily.-The book is very thick but it's only about 8.5 inches tall. This could make it difficult for people with weak eyesight to see some of the tunes.

While the fiddler's fakebook has a greater quantity of songs, this particular collection has consistent quality of songs chosen. There are so many great tunes in here, jamming out would not be quite the same without it. My personal favorite is "Lady of the Lake". Yes, I know there are two of them... but they're both good! Go figure.

If you enjoy traditional music such as contra dances, the two-volume Portland Collection is a great book for you. The selection of Irish, Scottish, French Canadian and other songs is very well chosen.

Songs include musical score, chord annotations and a short history of the song, something not often found. The format is very convenient, with easily read pages and a size and spiral binding that makes it easy to use. We plays these songs mainly with melody on mandolin and chord accompaniment by guitar, but they also well extremely well with fiddle. Superb selection of music in either or both volumes of the Portland Collection. This is volume one - also see A Portland Selection, Vol. 2: Contra Dance Music in the Pacific Northwest

I play with a group of musicians that use Portland Collection I, II, and III. Simple, large and easy to read, with spiral binding. The only thing I really need is the book in digital format to use on my tablet.

This and its companion volume 2 have become the bible of contra dance bands across the country, hence their priciness. They are just the right size (and spiral-bound!) for a music stand or laying out on a fiddle case on the floor. The Fiddler's Fake Book gets its due, of course, and has some pieces that aren't in the Portland Collection. But where else can you find dance arrangements of such Old Time mountain classics as "Shove That Pig's Foot a Little Further in the Fire." String players who accompany the popular traditional English country dancing craze simply can't do without these charts.

I do not have the Revised Edition, and am not sure exactly when I bought my copy, but I have probably been using my unrevised edition for 15 years or so. I play and teach traditional fiddle and classical violin technique in Southern New Hampshire, and can tell you that this book is treasured through this region. At sessions, if you play a tune no one knows and say "it's in the Portland Collection" suddenly almost everyone in the circle bends down and grabs that book tucked under their chair! It has become the Bible of traditional music for New England as well as the Pacific Northwest. I use it extensively in teaching and it is the primary textbook for my students as soon as they are able to play anything more difficult than "Baa Baa Black Sheep". My band has a very thick set-book, and probably half the tunes came from The Portland Collection. If you could only buy one book about traditional fiddling, this would be the one.

In the PNW, this book is INDISPENSABLE, the bible for bands and jam groups. I especially PREFER it to "The Fiddler's Fakebook" for a number of reasons:the tunes are clearly marked out, without a thicket of notation -- the player can put in whatever ornamentation s/he likes.there is hardly any 'filler', the tunes are non-repetitive and uniformly of good quality.the book's form factor (in

contrast to "TFFB") is extremely convenient, fitting on a music stand or in a gig bag very nicely. This volume, plus The Portland Collection: Contra Dance Music in the Pacific Northwest and "New England Fiddler's Repertoire" are all 'must haves' in my opinion.

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