VALLEY BANJO WORKS

Saving the world, one banjo at a time.

1929 Style 3 - Personal Setup Profile

Before and After Setup Measurements

A concise record of the setup changes and why they were needed.

Measurement	Before work	Why it needed attention	After work
Head Tension	192 Hz	This is too low for traditional bluegrass banjo style; this archtop responds best around 215 Hz.	215 Hz
Head Condition	Fairly new head, but unevenly tensioned.	Head tension was not even around the tension hoop.	The head was evenly tightened and tuned to 215 Hz.
Neck Relief	0.27 mm	Too much relief was contributing to buzzing in the middle of the neck.	0.14 mm, with clean response across the neck.
Nut Slot - 1st String	0.32 mm	Too low, causing open-string buzzing.	0.60 mm; comfortable play with accurate intonation.
Nut Slot - 2nd String	0.53 mm	Acceptable for light playing, but the slot was incorrectly cut.	0.60 mm; comfortable play with accurate intonation.
Nut Slot - 3rd String	0.83 mm	Too high, making the banjo uncomfortable to play and affecting intonation.	0.65 mm; comfortable play with accurate intonation.
Nut Slot - 4th String	0.46 mm	Too low, causing open-string buzzing and weak fourth-string response.	0.75 mm; comfortable play with accurate intonation.
5th-String Pip	Pip cut off center	The pip slot was cut off center.	New pip installed.
5th-String Spikes	Too large and sharp	Large, sharp spikes could catch the player's fingers.	Smaller and more comfortable.
Action at the 12th Fret	0.080"	Too low for an aggressive playing style.	0.110"; still comfortable, with more room for a strong attack.
Fret Condition	Several unseated and uneven frets with uneven crowns.	Low action and uneven fretwork resulted in a buzzy neck.	Frets seated, leveled, crowned, and polished; no more buzzing.
Tailpiece	Period Presto	No immediate action was needed, but the tailpiece joint should be monitored.	15-degree break angle from the bridge for clear response and balanced bass.
Resonator Fit	No issues	No action needed at this time.	No action taken.
Tone Ring or Hoop Fit	Good fit	No action needed at this time.	No action taken.
Bridge	3/4" Dotson Standard Bridge	A high bridge supports this player's aggressive playing style.	No action taken.

This sample shows how the important setup measurements and observations are documented.

A completed Personal Setup Profile creates a clear baseline for future maintenance, seasonal changes, and careful experimentation.