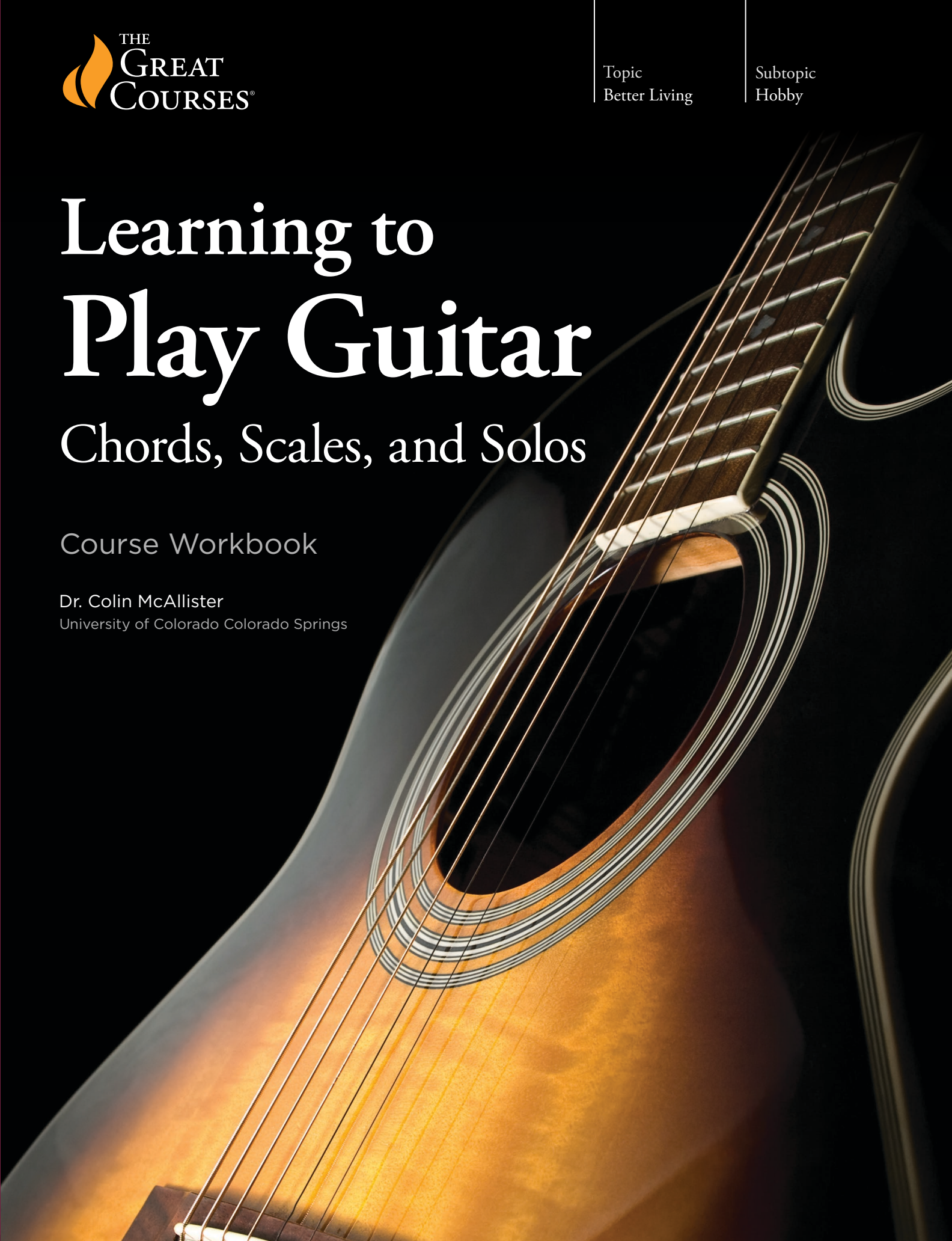


Learning to Play Guitar

Chords, Scales, and Solos

Course Workbook

Dr. Colin McAllister
University of Colorado Colorado Springs



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Dr. McAllister has recorded on several record labels, including Tzadik, Innova Recordings, and Naxos Records. He also pursues research interests in 3rd- and 4th-century religious beliefs related to apocalypticism and early medieval commentary on the Book of Revelation.

Dr. McAllister lives in Manitou Springs, Colorado, with his wife Barbara and their children. In addition to his academic studies in music and the apocalypse, he has climbed more than 35 of Colorado's 14,000-foot peaks, along with Mount Whitney in California and three high volcanoes in Mexico.



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LEARNING TO PLAY GUITAR

Chords, Scales, and Solos

Many people believe they simply are not musically inclined. Others believe they didn't learn to play at a young enough age, when their minds were supposed to soak up newfound skills more easily. This course aims to shatter those ideas with a series of lessons on how to play the guitar.

Some of the world's most famous music, from Bach to the Beatles and from classical to jazz, is based on basic melodies and harmonies that can sound elegant even in the hands of a beginner. This course's lessons build toward chord changes, constructing melodies, and even playing the guitar as a solo instrument, all while introducing some of the greatest music of every genre. By the end of the course, you will have a personal songbook to play and a basis for further musical exploration.

Through a unique modular construction, this course represents about 1 full year of university-level instruction. Students who successfully complete the course will have a broad foundation from which to embark on further study of the guitar in any genre, from classical to jazz to country to rock.

Each of this course's lessons contains 5 modules. They focus on proper technique; note reading and musicianship; chords; scales and melodic patterns; and an original song that brings together the lesson's elements.

But this course is not just work: Along the way, you'll meet some of the greatest players of the instrument through historical vignettes and stories of performance, traveling, and the life of a musician. The course also offers practical advice on organizing practice time, motivation, building a career, and performing.





LESSON

1

Guitar Basics: Play a Song in 60 Seconds

In this course, each of the 24 lessons consists of five basic modules that address 1) technique, 2) musicianship, 3) chords, 4) scales and melodic patterns, and 5) an original song that puts all of these elements together.

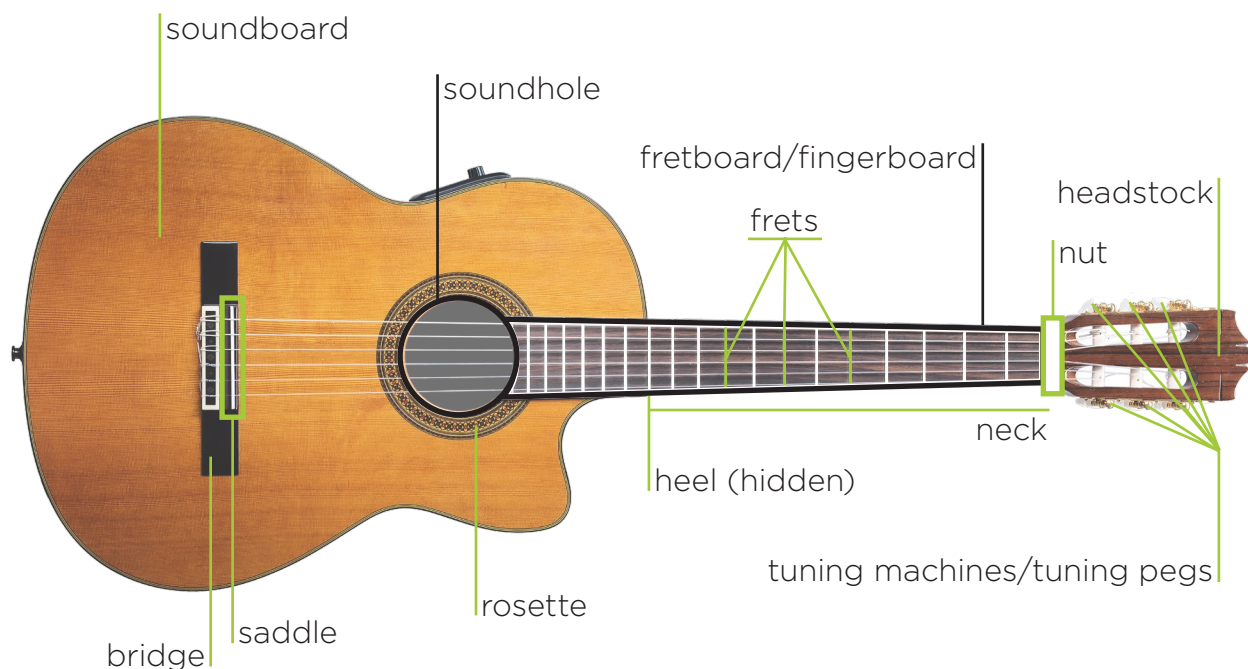
You're going to learn to master many styles of guitar—and become a well-rounded musician—by learning to read music, by understanding chords and scales, and by putting it all together as a lead player and accompanist. In doing so, you'll lay the foundation for becoming an accomplished soloist and improviser one day. But your objective in this course is to conclude as an accomplished beginner.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ Developing good technique means learning to play the instrument efficiently and without injury by optimizing force, building flexibility and strength, and conserving energy. Good technique allows you to express your musicality without inhibition.
- ▶ Let's start our introductory session on technique by walking through the various parts of the guitar while also going over some basic terminology.



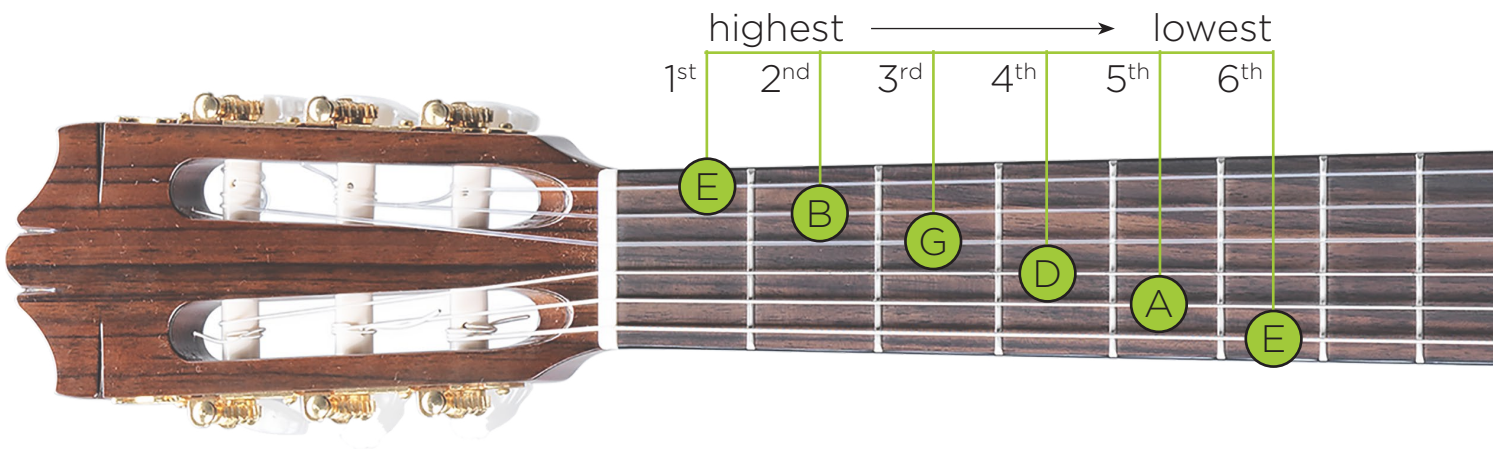
- ▷ The guitar is designed to be a resonant chamber. The most important component for sound production is the top, or **soundboard**. Cedar and spruce are the most common top woods in an acoustic guitar because of their resonant tonal qualities. The underside of the top is braced to make it stronger without adding too much weight.
- ▷ In the middle is the **soundhole**. The decoration around it is called the **rosette**. The back and sides are made of a hard wood, like maple and mahogany.
- ▷ Next are the neck and the **fretboard**—or **fingerboard**—topped off by the **headstock**, with its six **tuning machines**, or **tuning pegs**. The tuning pegs maintain string tension and allow us to change the pitch of the strings. The fingerboard itself is typically made of a very hard, durable wood (like ebony).
- ▷ A number of metal **frets** are overlaid at half-step intervals on the fingerboard. Acoustic guitars normally have between 19 and 21 frets. Some electric guitars have up to 24 or even more. Fret markers normally appear on the 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th, and 12th frets. The **heel** is where the neck joins the body.
- ▷ Each string is suspended over two points: the **saddle** and the **nut** (traditionally made of bone, but now often plastic). The string length varies depending on the type of instrument, but it's generally between 24 and 26 inches.
- ▷ The saddle is mounted on a wooden **bridge** that supports the strings and transmits string vibrations to the top. This vibration is the source of tone. The bridge may be glued to the soundboard, or it may be mounted in some guitars, including jazz archtops.



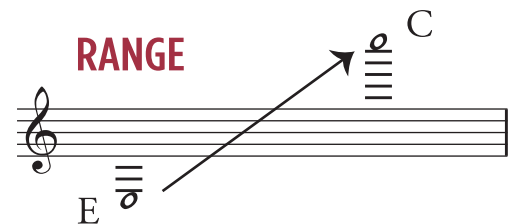
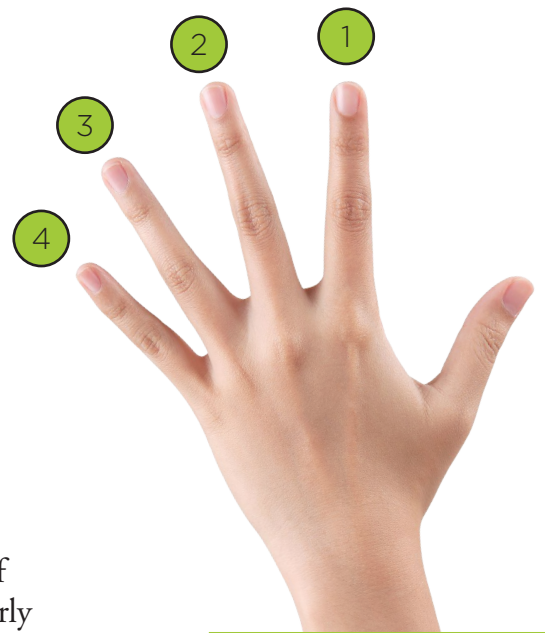
- ▶ Now, you'll start working with the instrument. With your left hand, imagine that you're holding onto a baseball. The wrist is straight, and the thumb is behind the fingers. It balances the hand.
- ▶ It's very difficult to move your fingers when your wrist is bent, so this should be the general disposition of the left hand on the guitar. And it's very important.
- ▶ Next, play on the tips of the fingers and feel for the front of the fret, right up against the metal. This accomplishes two things. It's easier to depress the string, and it helps accurately calibrate position (because the hand begins to remember the distances between frets via muscle memory).
- ▶ The thumb should be a point of balance behind the hand, close to the middle of the neck, and roughly behind the first or second fingers. The elbow and forearm should freely follow the hand. Don't hold your elbow against your body.
- ▶ With your right hand, you'll be learning to play with a pick as well as fingerstyle. It's advisable to hold the pick with your thumb and index finger, with just a little bit protruding. If too much of the pick sticks out, you'll sacrifice control and accuracy.

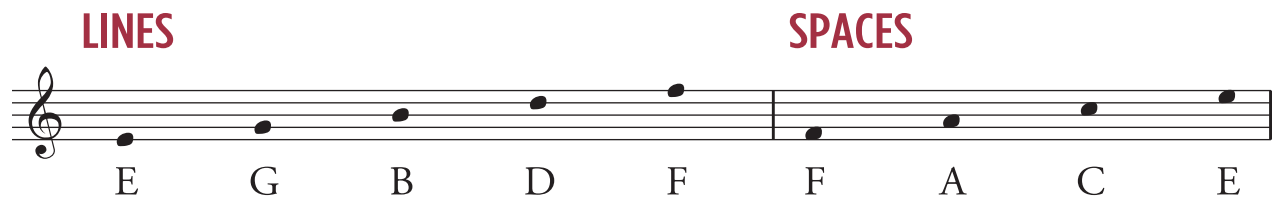
MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ In this course, you're going to learn to play by ear, and also by reading different systems of written notation. Both are important to the complete musician.
- ▶ Many great guitarists couldn't read music, from Wes Montgomery to Roy Buchanan. But if you want to take music further in school or professionally, you'll need to offer yourself every advantage. Being musically literate is one of them.
- ▶ Just like any language, reading notation is learned gradually and additively. A good recommendation is a little practice each day.
- ▶ On a guitar, the strings are numbered from highest to lowest (that is, highest in pitch). And these strings—the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th—are named for the note that is sounded when the open string is plucked.
- ▶ From highest to lowest, the progression is the E string, the B string, the G string, then the D, A, and E strings. These are also the notes that you'll tune to.



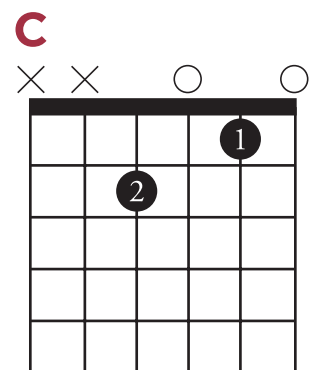
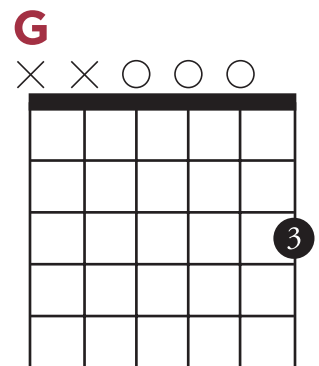
- ▶ The frets are numbered starting with the fret closest to the nut. The lowest fret is also known as the 1st fret. The frets move neck in succession: 2nd, 3rd, and so on. Most guitars have fret markers to help orient the player at the 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th, and 12th frets (and sometimes higher).
- ▶ Numbers are used for the fingers of the left hand, but letters for the right hand. So, on the left hand, 1 corresponds for the index finger, 2 to the middle finger, 3 to the ring finger, and 4 to the pinky.
- ▶ Music notation is a way to represent something in written form that a musician can understand and transform into sound. Modern staff notation is a universal system, understood by musicians playing all kinds of instruments all over the world.
- ▶ The earliest examples come from the 9th century and simply show the contours of a vocal melody (telling a singer how high or low to sing). In its current form, staff notation is very comprehensive. It's able to represent nearly every parameter of a sound: high or low, slow or fast, soft and loud, bright or dark.
- ▶ The entire range of an acoustic guitar goes from low E to a high C, way up on the 20th fret. Depending on your guitar, you may have a couple of frets more or less.





MODULE 3: Chords

- ▶ Chords typically are 3 or more notes sounded together at the same time. They are the harmonic building blocks of music. Since so many songs are constructed using the same basic building blocks, you'll be able to play literally thousands of tunes once you master a handful of these chords.
- ▶ Chords provide a harmonic and rhythmic foundation under a melody, whether sung or played by another instrument. And the guitar is one of the few instruments (along with the piano) that excels at playing melody and providing a backing harmony—or both.
- ▶ In this lesson, you'll learn 2 basic chords—the G and C chords—which are typically notated with a chord diagram. For now, you can use a pick, or the thumb of your right hand.
- ▶ For the **G**, you'll place the 3rd finger on the 1st string, 3rd fret. Strum the top 4 strings, so the 4th, 3rd, and 2nd are open.
- ▶ For the **C**, place the 1st finger on the 2nd string, 1st fret. Also place the 2nd finger on the 4th string, 2nd fret. And then strum the top 4 strings.
- ▶ Play 1 string at a time to make sure each one sounds clearly. Stay on the tips of your fingers to keep from blocking, or muting, any string. Position your fingers at the front of the frets, where it's easier to depress the string. Switch back and forth to become fluid in your chord changes.



MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▷ If you refer to the video, you can learn a basic bass line that uses the 3 open bass strings: A, D, and E.
- ▷ This might sound familiar because it's the most essential chord progression in music—something called the I–IV–V. You'll explore the theory behind this in later lessons. For now, just enjoy the satisfying sound these notes make when played together.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▷ Next, you need some melodic material to play over the groove you've established with the A, D, and E strings. And you can find these melodic notes all on the 1st string by using the open E, the 5th fret, the 7th fret, and the 12th fret. Refer to the video for a demonstration.





LESSON

2

Tuning Up, Reading Music, and Dexterity

In this lesson, you'll learn how to tune up, start to learn how to read music notation, and practice your first exercise for left-hand and right-hand dexterity. You'll also add 2 chords (A minor and E minor) to the 2 you already know (C and G). Mastering those 4 chords will help unlock hundreds of songs for you. But first, you'll learn about a Dominican thinker who has much to teach about preparation and persistence.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ Prior to starting each lesson, it's important that your guitar is in tune. In standard tuning, the guitar strings from highest to lowest are E, B, G, D, A, and E.
- ▶ The easiest method of tuning is to use an electronic tuner. You can buy a small one that clips onto the neck of your guitar.
- ▶ You can also tune the guitar to itself after starting with a reference point from a piano, a tuning fork, a pitch pipe, or any other reliable source.
- ▶ Once the low E string is in tune, you'll proceed from the lowest to the highest string. So, finger the low E string on the 5th fret. The low E string at the 5th fret is the same as the open A 5th string.
 - ▶ Tune the open 4th string to the 5th fret on the 5th string. This is a D.



~ Lessons from Sertillanges ~

In 1934, the French Dominican monk Antonin Sertillanges was preparing for the reprint of a small book he'd written in 1920 called *La Vie Intellectuelle*, or *The Intellectual Life*. Sertillanges was a clear, fluid thinker who was inspired by the *Sixteen Precepts for Acquiring the Treasure of Knowledge* written centuries earlier by St. Thomas Aquinas.

Aquinas's precepts include *Altiora te ne quaesieris*, meaning "Do not seek what is beyond your reach," and *Volo ut per rivulos, non statim, in mare eligas introire*, meaning "I want you to decide to go to the sea by the streams, not directly."

How is that relevant to the guitar? This course is constructed with a series of building blocks—sight-reading, scales, chords, and technique—with each lesson capped off by a song that puts all of these elements together.

You have an opportunity—and the necessity—to practice each module of this course independently (and repeatedly) until you've mastered every one of them. To that end, constancy is important: Leaving projects half-finished can be fatiguing and demoralizing.

To that end, Sertillanges said: "Learn constancy by persistent application and by obstinately returning to the interrupted study: a day will come when the recurring fits of weariness will vanish." The point here is, you will have become a guitar player.

Finally, Sertillanges encourages performance, saying it encourages progress: "Contact with the public will compel you to do better; well-deserved praise will stimulate you; criticism will try out your work." Practice, patience, and performance are habits to live by when learning guitar.

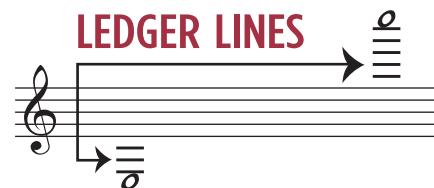
- Tune the open 3rd string to the 5th fret on the 4th string. This is a G.
 - The pattern changes once, between the 3rd and 2nd strings. It's the only time the 5th-fret rule for tuning the guitar doesn't apply. Finger the 3rd string on the 4th fret and get the 2nd string to match. This is B.
 - And finally, tune the open 1st string to the 2nd string, 5th fret. This is the high E—2 octaves above the low E.
- ▷ Now for a warmup. On the 1st string, place the 1st finger of your left hand on the 7th fret. If your guitar has fret markers, it should be the third one up from the nut.
 - ▷ Without lifting the 1st finger, place your 2nd finger on the 8th fret. Then place the 3rd finger on the 9th fret, and then the 4th on the 10th fret. Keep your wrist straight, with your thumb balanced behind the fingers. Imagine holding onto a baseball.
 - ▷ When ascending, don't lift the fingers as you progress. Holding that stretch position is very important: It helps develop flexibility. Now, come back down.
 - ▷ With the right hand, you're going to alternate pick: down and up. Hold the pick between the 1st finger and thumb or with the 1st two fingers and thumb. Don't let too much of the tip protrude. It's much harder to control, then.
 - ▷ Now for coordinating the left hand and the right:
 - Place the 1st finger of the left hand on the 7th fret, with the right hand picking downward. Then, place the 2nd finger one fret higher and pick up.
 - Next, place the 3rd finger a fret higher, and pick down. Then comes the 4th finger a fret higher; pick up.
 - Then comes the descent, starting with the 3rd finger and a downward pick. The 2nd finger and an upward pick come next, before finishing with the 1st finger and a downward pick.
 - Next, repeat this on all six strings. The video can serve as a reference.
 - ▷ Once you've got the hang of this, move down the neck to begin the exercise on the 5th fret, and then the 3rd fret, and lower. The exercise becomes more challenging as you move down because the frets are wider apart. You can use this exercise as a warmup for the rest of your playing career.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ Guitarists read music only on the treble (or upper) staff, unlike the piano, which uses both treble and bass staves. The musical alphabet—the names of the notes—extends from A to G.



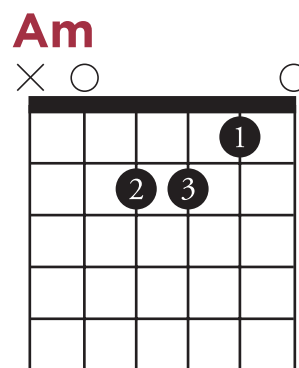
- ▶ The notes on the lines are E, G, B, D, and F. On the spaces are F, A, C, and E. Higher and lower notes can be written above or below the staff by adding extra lines and spaces. These are called ledger lines.
- ▶ Pitch is one element of musical sound. Another is rhythm, the arrangement of musical sounds in time. This includes the duration of a sound and the relationship in time of one sound to another.
- ▶ We notate the duration of sounds (and silences) on the staff with certain rhythm symbols. A whole note means you hold a note (or chord) for 4 counts or beats. The duration depends on the underlying tempo.
- ▶ A half note looks like a whole note with a stem along the side, like a sprout growing out of a lima bean. The duration of a half note is 2 counts or beats (half of the 4-beat whole).
- ▶ A quarter note has a filled-in notehead. It means you hold the note (or chord) for one count.
- ▶ Finally, for now, there is the dotted half note. The dot after a notehead increases the note's duration by half of its original value. Half of 2 is 1, and so the value of a dotted half-note is 3 beats. You can mix these rhythmic patterns together to create a sequence.



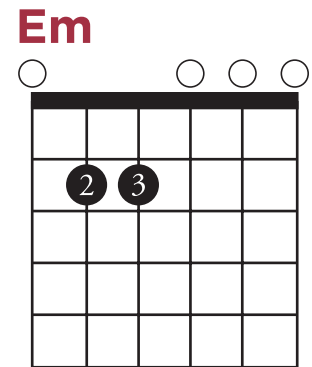
- ▶ You'll improve your rhythmic foundation by practicing with a metronome. The metronome is a timing device that signals the beat with a click or a strobe. You can buy a variety of mechanical or electronic metronomes, or download a version for free on your phone, tablet, or computer.
- ▶ The metronome allows us to practice at different tempi (that is, speeds), measured by the number of beats per minute. So, 60 on the metronome means 60 beats a minute, 1 per second.

MODULE 3: Chords

- ▶ In Lesson 1, you learned the C and G chords. The complete name for each of these is C major and G major. Now, when a musician refers to a chord as G or C, they are implying that is it a major chord.
- ▶ What makes a chord major? It is distinguished by the spacing of the notes, and the resulting bright sound. The darker Am and Em chords form a contrast. (A lowercase m after a capital note means it's a minor chord; for instance, Em means E minor.)
- ▶ In describing the difference between major and minor chords, musicians often use contrasting words like *light* versus *dark* or *cheerful* versus *melancholy*.
- ▶ Stated in terms of music theory, the difference has to do with the relationship between chords and scales in tonal harmony. Each note in a chord is derived from a related scale.
- ▶ The A major chord consists of the 1st, 3rd, and 5th notes of the scale, played together. The Am chord is the 1st, 3rd, and 5th notes of the minor scale, played together.
- ▶ To review: For the G chord, place the 3rd finger on the 1st string, 3rd fret. You strum the top 4 strings, so the 4th, 3rd, and 2nd are open.
- ▶ For the C chord, place the 1st finger on the 2nd string, 1st fret. Also place the 2nd finger on the 4th string, 2nd fret. Then strum the top 4 strings. Play one string at a time to make sure each sounds clearly. Stay on the tips of your fingers to keep from blocking, or muting, any string.
- ▶ Now, for the new chords. To play the **Am** chord, start with your 1st finger on the 2nd string at the 1st fret. Place the 2nd finger on the 4th string at the 2nd fret, and the 3rd finger on the 3rd string at the 2nd fret. Strum the top five strings.



- ▶ For the **Em** chord, place your 2nd finger on the 5th string at the 2nd fret, and your 3rd finger right underneath it on the 4th string at the 2nd fret. Strum all six strings, making sure that your left-hand fingers mute none of the open strings.
- ▶ You'll use all of these chords in the song at the end of this lesson.



MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▶ The term *scale* comes from the Latin word *scala* meaning “staircase or ladder.” In a scale, the distances between notes—called intervals—determine the sound and function of the scale, including whether it is major, or minor, or something else.
- ▶ Scales and chords are closely related. Their component parts (the individual notes) encompass the melody (for example, the lead vocal line)—and harmony (the backing that supports the melody)—of music.
- ▶ A few scales that you’ll learn in this course are the major scale, the minor scale, the Lydian scale, and what’s known as a blues scale. These scales are intimately entwined with their associated chords, as you’ll see later.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ You’re going to work on an original number called “November Song,” and which uses the four chords we’ve learned so far: C, G, Am, and Em.
- ▶ This example also uses the 4 rhythmic values you’ve learned: whole notes, half notes, dotted half notes, and quarter notes. You’ll use your pick to strum down.

~ NOVEMBER SONG (PART 1) ~





LESSON

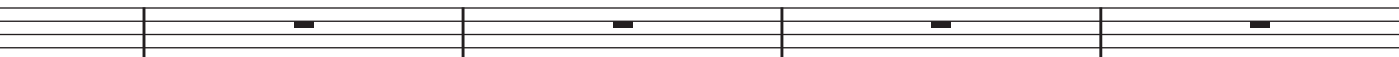
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Classical Guitar Position and Posture

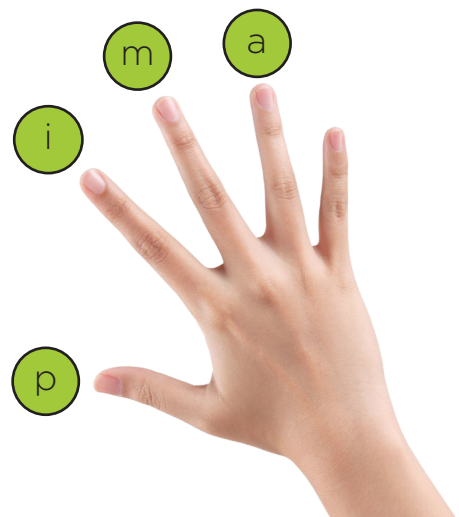
When you sit down to practice the guitar, enjoy the process, even as you focus on your larger goals. People so often get caught up in what the end result of the practice will be that they race through the story to reach the conclusion. But practicing—like reading a good book, or living a fulfilling life—is also about the journey. This is worth emphasizing because at the end of this course, you might not yet have the physical dexterity to command all the music that this course opens up for you. And you’ll only be starting to explore the ideas. The takeaway: You’ll have to spend time striving to capture that ability.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ Playing guitar is physically demanding, and you might want to play for hours on end. Therefore, you will need to learn to sit comfortably. The formal classical position is comfortable and perfect for playing all kinds of music.
- ▶ The seat of your chair should be flat, and preferably with some padding. Sit up straight, your head over your torso in a straight line. Check to make sure that your knees are aligned over your ankles, with your feet flat on the ground for stability.
- ▶ Your legs should form a 90-degree angle. If not, you might need a chair that’s higher or lower. Scoot up, so you’re sitting at the front of the chair, and rest your arms by your sides.

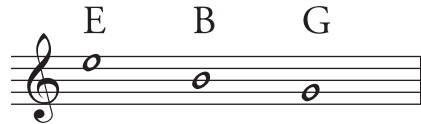


- ▷ If you place the guitar over your right leg, posture may become a disaster. Placing the guitar over the left leg is a little better, as the instrument is closer to the center of the body, but it's still too low. The trick is to elevate the left leg. A guitar footstool can help here.
- ▷ Generally speaking, the guitar nut—at the top of the neck, just behind the 1st fret—should be roughly level with your jaw. But everyone differs a little bit in what feels the most comfortable.
- ▷ By sitting properly, you have several points of contact with the guitar: The lower side rests on the left thigh; the right thigh braces the bottom of the guitar; and the upper edge of the back of the guitar leans against the sternum.
- ▷ This comfortable, efficient seating position is the foundation for playing. But if you find the position uncomfortable, here are a couple of options:
 - ▷ You can switch the guitar over to your right leg (and still use a footstool to keep the guitar elevated).
 - ▷ Or, you can use a guitar strap and play standing up. (Just adjust the strap so that you can approximate the classical position.)
- ▷ An alternative to playing with a pick is using the fingers of the right hand. We use numbers to designate the fingers of the left hand, and letters to designate the fingers of the right hand. This is to avoid confusion between the two.
- ▷ On the left hand, we number our fingers 1 (index), 2 (middle), 3 (ring), and 4 (pinky). On the right hand, we use the first letter of the Spanish name for each. That's:
 - ▷ p—*pulgár* (thumb)
 - ▷ i—*índice* (index finger)
 - ▷ m—*medio* (middle finger)
 - ▷ a—*anular* (ring finger)
- ▷ We use the Spanish terms because so much of the history of the classical guitar originated in Spain.
- ▷ When you pluck the strings of the guitar, you're essentially creating a loose fist. The wrist should be straight and natural feeling.



- ▶ Two common mistakes in right-hand playing are:
 - ▶ Playing with the top of the hand too low in relation to the soundboard of the guitar. This forces us to pull the string outwards (away from the soundboard), and produces a thin sound.
 - ▶ Anchoring the pinky on the soundboard. This restricts your range of motion and creates tension in the hand.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ At this point, you're going to learn to read the top three open strings as they are notated in treble clef. The higher upper E of the first open string is notated on the 4th space of the staff.
 - ▶ The 2nd open string is B, written on the 3rd line of the staff. And the 3rd open string, G, is notated on the 2nd line of the staff.
- 
- ▶ Using proper string and fingering indications are important to play fluidly, and with the most pleasing tones. We often see two numbers next to a note: The numbers 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 indicate either an open string or the use of left-hand fingers 1, 2, 3 or 4. And a number with a circle around it indicates the string number, from 1–6.
 - ▶ Next, you can try a couple of exercises using the rhythmic values you learned in Lesson 2. Use a metronome to help keep the beat. You can use a pick, or alternate the i and m fingers of the right hand.

EXERCISE

$\bullet = 60$



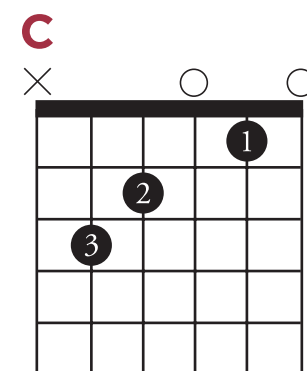
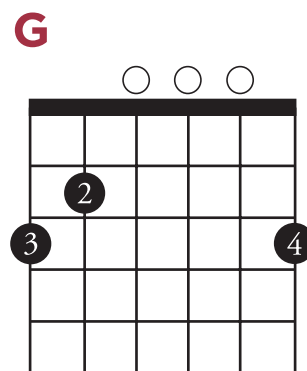
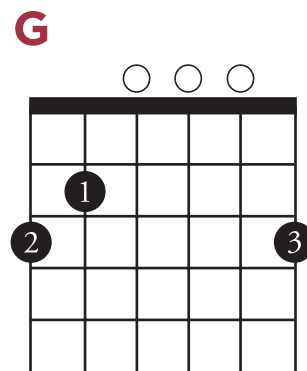
- ▷ The vertical lines that demarcate the staff are called bar lines, and they serve to divide the staff of music into bars or measures. They help keep track of your place and the rhythm. Each measure contains a certain number of beats, as indicated by the 2 numbers that look like a fraction just to the right of the treble clef. These numbers are known as a time signature.
- ▷ The upper number of the time signature signifies how many beats are in each measure, in this case, 4. The lower number indicates which kind of note receives 1 beat; in this example, it's the quarter note.
- ▷ A time signature of $\frac{4}{4}$ means 4 beats to a measure, with a quarter note equal to one beat. In this exercise, there are exactly 4 beats to each measure.
- ▷ The 1st measure contains 2 half notes, which receive 2 counts each. The 2nd measure has 4 quarter notes, at 1 count each.
- ▷ In the 7th measure is a dotted half note (that's 3 beats) plus a quarter note (1 beat). And the final measure has 1 whole note equal to 4 counts. The double bar line at the end of the last measure signifies the end of the piece.
- ▷ Next, you can run through another exercise that combines the top 3 open strings. It's also in $\frac{4}{4}$ time.

EXERCISE

$\text{♩} = 60$

MODULE 3: Chords

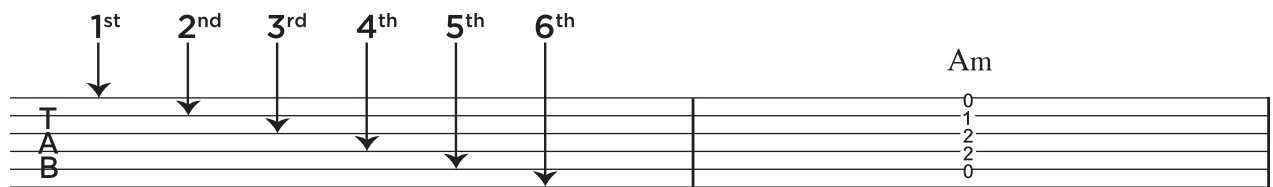
- ▶ Remember the C and G major chords from Lesson 1? Now, you're going to see slightly more advanced versions.
- ▶ You'll find the **G** major chord by placing your 2nd finger on the 6th string at the 3rd fret. The 1st finger falls on the 5th string, 2nd fret. And the 3rd (or ring) finger goes on the 1st string, 3rd fret. Now strum all 6 strings with your pick.
- ▶ Another fingering for the **G** chord is as follows: The 3rd finger goes on the 6th string at the 3rd fret. The 2nd finger goes on the 5th string at the 2nd fret. And the 4th finger goes on the 1st string at the 3rd fret.
- ▶ Now, for the **C** chord. Place your 1st finger on the 2nd string, at the 1st fret; the 2nd finger on the 4th string at the 2nd fret; and the 3rd finger on the 5th string at the 3rd fret. For the C chord, you won't strum the lowest string—only the top 5.
- ▶ Finally, practice switching between the four chords you know: Am, Em, C and G.
- ▶ Switching chords is challenging, and may take some time to master. It helps to keep your fingers close to the fretboard while changing between chords. One common mistake is to allow the fingers to fly off the fretboard into space before trying to find their way back into position for the next chord.
- ▶ It helps to be aware of a common finger between chords. For example, in moving from Am to C, the only finger that needs to move is the 3rd (or ring) finger. The index and middle fingers are common fingers, so try not to lift them when you switch.



MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

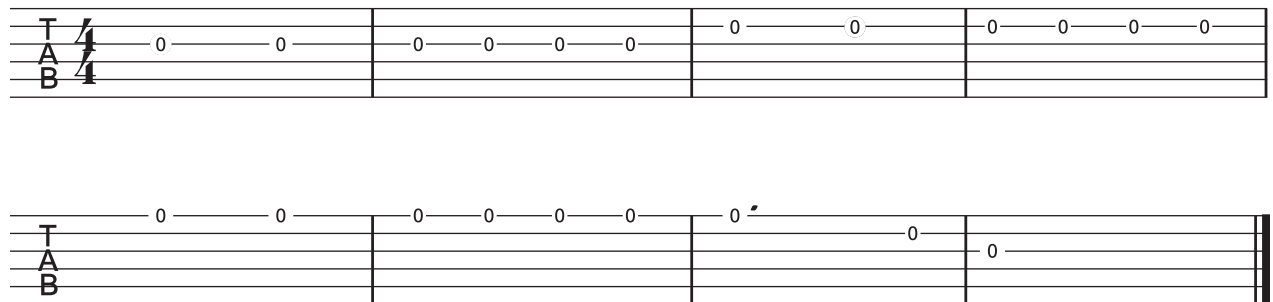
- ▶ So far, you've become familiar with two systems of notation: notes on the staff and chord diagrams. Now, let's look at a third type of notation that is very important for guitarists. It's called tablature (or tab), and it tells us where to place our fingers.

- ▶ Modern guitar tablature revolves around a 6-line staff, with each line representing a string of the guitar. The top line is the 1st string, and the bottom line is the 6th string. The number associated with each line, or string, refers to the fret where you are to finger the note, or notes.
- ▶ The number 0 indicates an open string. In this way, the 1st-string open E in tablature is designated with a 0 on the top line. Open B and open G are indicated by 0s on the 2nd and 3rd lines.
- ▶ Tablature identifies chords with a vertical stack of numbers. For instance, the Am chord can be read, starting on the 5th line (or string), as 0, 2, 2, 1 and 0.



- ▶ We can also indicate rhythm in tablature by adapting the symbols for note values that we find in staff notation. A quarter note is signified by a number with a stem extending from it. A half note is a circled number with a stem. A circled number without a stem is a whole note. And a dot after the circled number designates a dotted half note.
- ▶ Let's re-visit the first note reading exercise from Module 2 again, but now you'll read it in tablature.

EXERCISE



MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ In Lesson 2, you learned the chords to “November Song,” which uses the C, G, Am, and Em chords. Now, for the melody: It uses the E, B, and G that we learned on the top 3 strings with the rhythmic values of whole note, half note, quarter note, and dotted half note. For the chords, use the new versions of C and G that we now know.

~ NOVEMBER SONG (PART 2) ~

Am Em Am Em

C G C G

Am Em Am Em Am





LESSON

4

Learning How to Practice the Guitar

Practice—and the mastery of each step—are enormous building blocks in your success. As the French Dominican Antonin Sertillanges extolled, “Do not overload the foundation, do not carry the building higher than the base permits, or build at all before the base is secure: otherwise the whole structure is likely to collapse.” He also said, “Genius is long patience.” Remember that advice as you move through this lesson (and course).

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ The principle of shifting involves moving up or down the neck. It allows one to play melodic patterns and chords—ranging from the lowest to the highest notes on the instrument—with ease and fluidity.
- ▶ Because there are so many moving parts, guitarists often have a hard time making clean, accurate shifts up and down the neck. One way to stay out of trouble—or at least to minimize it—is to keep your movement to a minimum. Too many changes make it impossible to be consistent.
- ▶ For accuracy and consistency, you need to minimize possible movement. And so, you’ll be shifting mainly from the shoulder—keeping everything below the elbow fixed.
- ▶ Let’s try an exercise to work on shifting. It is similar to the chromatic warm-up from Lessons 2 and 3, except that you’ll continue moving up the neck until you get to the 12th fret. Play every note from the 1st to the 12th fret on the 1st string.



- ▶ Start by fingering the note on the 1st fret of the 1st string. Do so using the 1st finger. Now, without lifting the 1st finger, place your 2nd finger on the 2nd fret. Then place 3rd finger on the 3rd fret and the 4th finger on the 4th fret.
- ▶ We're starting at the part of the neck called 1st position because the 1st finger begins on the 1st fret. In notated music for guitar, position is notated with a Roman numeral. Therefore, 1st position is shown by the Roman numeral I.
- ▶ Next, shift your left hand up the neck so that your 1st finger is 1 fret above where your pinky was—that is, on the 5th fret. Now we're in 5th position, indicated by the Roman numeral V.
- ▶ Continue the exercise: Place the 2nd finger on the 6th fret, the 3rd finger on the 7th fret, and the 4th finger on the 8th fret. And repeat the shift. Your 1st finger should move up to the 9th fret. This is 9th position. Now place the 2nd finger at the 10th fret, the 3rd finger at the 11th fret, and the 4th finger on the 12th fret. Most guitars have a double fret marker at the 12th fret.
- ▶ Now descend back down the fretboard the same way you came. After you get your 1st finger to the 9th fret, shift back down to 5th position. You should have your 4th finger on the 8th fret, and then descend using your 3rd, 2nd, and 1st fingers. Shift down to 1st position, so that your pinky should be on the 4th fret. Descend using the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st fingers.
- ▶ Remember, mainly use your shoulder when shifting. Ideally, the neck of the guitar and your left forearm should form a 90-degree angle. Don't pin your left elbow against your body. Allow it to move outward, away from your torso, when you're playing in the lower positions. And visualize your left-hand thumb moving along a straight line.
- ▶ When you shift to a new position, check the position of your thumb in relation to the fingers. Is the thumb positioned behind the first and second fingers? You don't want to shift to a new position and readjust the thumb once you get there. The shift of the entire hand should happen in one motion. You can practice this exercise on every string.
- ▶ A side note: The guitar is a transposing instrument. That means it sounds an octave below where the note is written on the page. If you happen to play the piano, you'll notice that the same note on the staff sounds higher.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ In this module, you'll learn to read the bottom 3 open strings as they are notated in treble clef. The fourth string, D, is notated on the space just below the staff.
- ▶ For the A and E strings, we use ledger lines, which effectively add extra lines and spaces to the staff, either above or below. The open 5th string of A is notated 2 ledger lines below the staff.
- ▶ And the 6th-string E—the lowest note on the guitar—is notated 4 spaces below the lowest line on the staff. In guitar notation, a 0 next to the note indicates that it is an open string. A number with a circle around it indicates the string.
- ▶ Now, you can try a couple exercises with the open strings E, A, and D strings. Apply the rhythmic values you've learned, and use a metronome to help keep time. In the right hand, you can use a pick, or alternate fingersyle. It's advisable to practice both methods.

EXERCISES

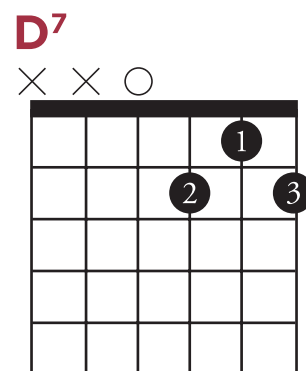
The exercises are presented on four staves in 4/4 time, each with a treble clef. The notes are as follows:

- Exercise 1:** Four measures. Measure 1: E (open 6th string, 4 spaces below staff), A (open 5th string, 2 ledger lines below staff), D (open 4th string, space below staff). Measure 2: D (open 4th string, space below staff), C (open 3rd string, line below staff), B (open 2nd string, space below staff), A (open 5th string, 2 ledger lines below staff). Measure 3: A (open 5th string, 2 ledger lines below staff), G (open 3rd string, line below staff), F (open 2nd string, space below staff), E (open 6th string, 4 spaces below staff). Measure 4: E (open 6th string, 4 spaces below staff), D (open 4th string, space below staff), C (open 3rd string, line below staff), B (open 2nd string, space below staff).
- Exercise 2:** Four measures. Measure 1: E (open 6th string, 4 spaces below staff), A (open 5th string, 2 ledger lines below staff), D (open 4th string, space below staff). Measure 2: D (open 4th string, space below staff), C (open 3rd string, line below staff), B (open 2nd string, space below staff), A (open 5th string, 2 ledger lines below staff). Measure 3: A (open 5th string, 2 ledger lines below staff), G (open 3rd string, line below staff), F (open 2nd string, space below staff), E (open 6th string, 4 spaces below staff). Measure 4: E (open 6th string, 4 spaces below staff), D (open 4th string, space below staff), C (open 3rd string, line below staff), B (open 2nd string, space below staff).
- Exercise 3:** Four measures. Measure 1: E (open 6th string, 4 spaces below staff), A (open 5th string, 2 ledger lines below staff), D (open 4th string, space below staff). Measure 2: D (open 4th string, space below staff), C (open 3rd string, line below staff), B (open 2nd string, space below staff), A (open 5th string, 2 ledger lines below staff). Measure 3: A (open 5th string, 2 ledger lines below staff), G (open 3rd string, line below staff), F (open 2nd string, space below staff), E (open 6th string, 4 spaces below staff). Measure 4: E (open 6th string, 4 spaces below staff), D (open 4th string, space below staff), C (open 3rd string, line below staff), B (open 2nd string, space below staff).
- Exercise 4:** Four measures. Measure 1: E (open 6th string, 4 spaces below staff), A (open 5th string, 2 ledger lines below staff), D (open 4th string, space below staff). Measure 2: D (open 4th string, space below staff), C (open 3rd string, line below staff), B (open 2nd string, space below staff), A (open 5th string, 2 ledger lines below staff). Measure 3: A (open 5th string, 2 ledger lines below staff), G (open 3rd string, line below staff), F (open 2nd string, space below staff), E (open 6th string, 4 spaces below staff). Measure 4: E (open 6th string, 4 spaces below staff), D (open 4th string, space below staff), C (open 3rd string, line below staff), B (open 2nd string, space below staff).

MODULE 3: Chords

- ▶ Major and minor chords differ in construction. The major chord contains the 1st, 3rd, and 5th notes of the major scale. And the minor chord contains the 1st, 3rd, and 5th notes of the minor scale.
- ▶ The first note of the scale is called the root or tonic. It's the most important note in a scale or chord, the center around which everything else revolves.
- ▶ Major and minor chords differ in their sound: Majors are often described as happy or light, while minors are often described as dark or sad.
- ▶ A third type of chord is called the dominant 7th. It contains 4 notes instead of 3. Specifically, it has the same 3 notes as the major chord plus 1 more, called the minor 7th. For example, we abbreviate the D dominant 7th chord as **D⁷**. To play it:

- ▶ Place your 1st finger on the 2nd string at the 1st fret.
- ▶ The 2nd finger goes on the 3rd string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ The 3rd finger goes on the 1st string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ The 4th string is open.
- ▶ Don't strum the 2 lowest strings—just the top 4.



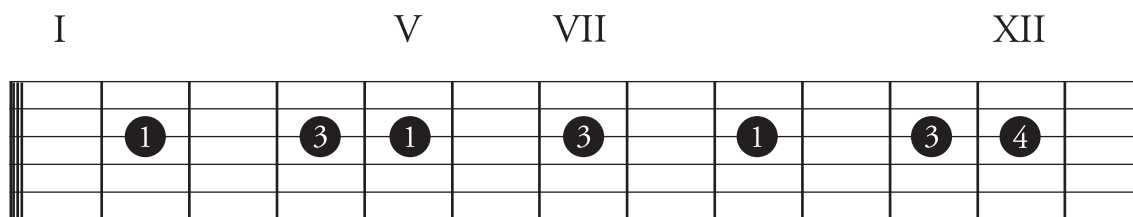
- ▶ The chord shape resembles a triangle that points toward the headstock. The D⁷ chord's sound is unstable compared to the major and minor chords. This instability makes players want to resolve it.
- ▶ An example is the move between D⁷ and G. It sounds like the D⁷ chord wants to move, or resolve, to G. Harmonic movement in music depends on this relationship between the opposites of tension and repose.
- ▶ Try playing the D⁷ chord, then practice moving between G, C, and D⁷. Notice that in C and D⁷, the chords have the 1st finger in common. Practice switching between those two chords without lifting your 1st finger.
- ▶ Likewise, when you move from D⁷ to G, the 3rd finger stays on the same string and moves up 1 fret. This is called a guide finger. Keeping this finger on the string without lifting it will make the switch between chords easier.

- ▶ The act of switching smoothly between chords can take the beginning guitarist a few months to master. Common and guide fingers help.
- ▶ You can practice without strumming. Just sit with your guitar, and go through the left-hand changes. Also, when practicing, imagine where your fingers will go before making a switch.

MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▶ The major scale has a cheerful sound to it that most people recognize. Next, you're going to learn how to play a major scale on just one string, and see how the scale is constructed.
 - ▶ Start with the open 3rd string—the G.
 - ▶ The next note—the A—is 1 whole step (or 2 frets) above the G.
 - ▶ Another whole step (2 frets, again) brings us to the B.
 - ▶ Then we move up a half step (1 fret) to the C.
- ▶ That pattern of intervals—whole, whole, half, whole, whole, whole, half—is consistent for every major scale and gives the major scale its particular sound.
- ▶ Other scales, like the minor scale and the diminished scale, have different combinations of whole and half steps. Committing them to memory helps you know where you are, anywhere on the guitar neck, even without the ebony and ivory visual markers that make the piano relatively easy to decode.
- ▶ Give the G major scale a try:

G MAJOR SCALE



- ▶ Start with the open G. Then comes 2nd position: 1st finger on 2nd fret, and then the 3rd finger on the 4th fret.
- ▶ Next, shift up to 5th position: The 1st finger is at the 5th fret, then the 3rd finger goes on the 7th fret.
- ▶ Now, shift up to 9th position: 1st finger at the 9th fret, 3rd finger at the 11th fret, and 4th finger at the 12th fret.
- ▶ Remember to shift mainly from the shoulder, with your left-hand thumb moving along a straight line. When you shift to a new position, check your thumb to make sure it's opposite your 1st and 2nd fingers.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ Next up is a tune called “Shifting Sands.” The entire melody is played on the G string, shifting up and down the neck using the G major scale—just as you learned in the last module. The rhythm consists of quarter notes, half notes, and whole notes. Refer to the video to hear how it sounds.
- ▶ Play the accompaniment with the G, C, and D⁷ chords, strummed in quarter notes and half notes. Try improvising over these chords using the G major scale on the 3rd string.

~ SHIFTING SANDS ~

	G		C		G		D ⁷
	0	7	7	9	5	4	7
							2

	G		C		G	D ⁷	G
	12	11	9	7	9	7	5
							0





LESSON

5

Playing Fingerstyle Guitar

When it comes to fingerstyle guitar, three artists stand out: John Fahey, Leo Kottke, and Ralph Towner. The fingerstylist Alex De Grassi credits John Fahey as “perhaps the first recording artist to make a career composing, arranging, and performing exclusively instrumental, solo, steel-string guitar music.” Kottke’s music is sometimes thought of as orchestral because of his ability to project two or more voices with the thumb and his fingers (or sometimes a slide) in alternate tunings. And Towner combines classical nylon string and 12-string steel guitars. In this lesson, you’ll explore the guitar’s open strings, and—through the fingerstyle of playing popularized by Fahey, Kottke, Towner, and others—you’ll develop a “pianistic” approach to playing the instrument.

MODULE 1: Technique

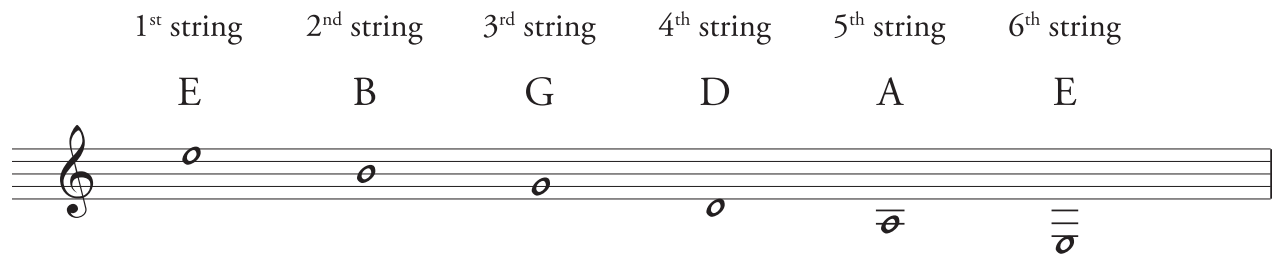
- ▶ This lesson will approach fingerstyle playing as classical guitarists do, strengthening and balancing the entire hand to develop the thumb and fingers equally.
- ▶ First, create a loose fist with the fingers of your right hand, keeping the wrist straight, and articulating the movement of your fingers from the large knuckle. Remember that this course indicates the fingers of the right hand with the first letter of the Spanish term for each: p for *pulgar*, or thumb; i for *índice*, or index; m for *medio*, or middle; a for *anular*, or ring.
- ▶ Grab the strings above the soundhole, as if you were picking up a tennis racket, and then gradually open your hand. Allow your hand to flex downward so that you have a slight bend in your wrist. This allows your fingers to be more perpendicular to the strings.



- ▷ Place the p finger on the 6th string—the lower E—and i, m, and a on strings 3, 2, and 1. (That’s the G, B and E). Try playing all four strings at the same time.
- ▷ Follow through with your fingers in the direction of your palm. This produces a rounder, louder sound.
- ▷ The big knuckles on your right hand should be positioned over the strings at the back of the soundhole. You don’t want your hand to cover the soundhole because that will block some of the sound.
- ▷ Keep your hand high enough above the soundboard that you can follow through without pulling outward. Outward movement results in a thin sound.
- ▷ You want to establish a free, uninhibited motion, so don’t anchor the pinky finger on the soundboard. That locks up your position, and produces extra tension in the hand.
- ▷ Next up, let’s practice some fingerstyle patterns. Start with your thumb (p) on the 6th string, the i on the 3rd string, the m on the 2nd string, and the a on the 1st string. Now, play the p, i, m, and a one finger at a time.
- ▷ Next, turn the sequence around: p–a–m–i. Play this twice.
- ▷ Next, alternate the thumb with the fingers. Play a p followed by i, m, and a played at the same time.
- ▷ Finally, try one last variation that ascends and descends across the strings: p–i–m–a–m–i. This pattern is commonly used in popular and classical music.

MODULE 2: Note Reading (Open Strings)

- ▷ In guitar music notation, the open strings are found on the staff as follows:
 - ▶ 1st string E on the fourth (top) space of the staff
 - ▶ 2nd string B on the third (or middle) line
 - ▶ 3rd string G on the second line
 - ▶ 4th string D just below the staff
 - ▶ 5th string A two ledger lines below the staff
 - ▶ 6th string E four spaces below the staff



- ▶ To indicate which fingers of the right hand to use, the letters p, i, m, or a are written above or below the notes. Use the thumb (p) to play the 3 low strings, and fingers for the 3 upper strings.
- ▶ You can hold the i, m, and a fingers above their designated strings because these finger positions won't change. Refer to the video for guided exercises on how to use these fingers.

MODULE 3: Chords

- ▶ Fingerstyle guitar increases your options immensely over strummed chordal accompaniment because fingerstyle allows the guitar to become more pianistic—more orchestral. The form is adaptable to all styles of music.
- ▶ Next, the lesson is going to combine fingerstyle patterns with the chords you already know: G, C, Am, Em, and D⁷. In fingerstyle playing, you'll normally play the lowest note of the chord with the thumb. For G and Em, that's the 6th string. For C and Am, it's the 5th string. And for D, it's the 4th string. You'll use 3 fingers—i, m, and a—to pluck the upper strings.
- ▶ First up, try to finger the G chord, and play p–i–m–a (two times each).
 - ▶ Next, try p–a–m–i.
 - ▶ Then, try p–i–m–a–m–i.
 - ▶ Finally, try p followed by i, m, and a played simultaneously, alternating back and forth. (Simultaneous plucking will be indicated by omitting the dashes between the letters.) This gives a “boom-chuck” sound.
- ▶ Now, finger the Em chord and then play p–i–m–a.
 - ▶ Next, try p–a–m–i.
 - ▶ Then, p–i–m–a–m–i.
 - ▶ Then, play p–ima.

- ▷ Next up is the C chord. Here, the thumb plays the 5th string: p–i–m–a.
 - ▷ Next, try p–a–m–i.
 - ▷ Then, try p–i–m–a–m–i.
 - ▷ Then, try p–ima.

- ▷ Next up, find the Am chord, and play: p–i–m–a.
 - ▷ Also try p–a–m–i.
 - ▷ Then, try p–i–m–a–m–i.
 - ▷ Then, try p–ima.

- ▷ Finally, find the D⁷ chord. Here, the thumb moves to the 4th string: p–i–m–a.
 - ▷ Then, play p–a–m–i.
 - ▷ After that, try p–i–m–a–m–i.
 - ▷ Finally, play p–ima.

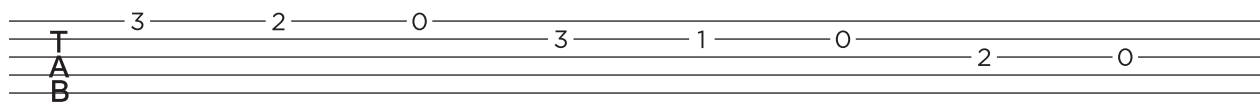
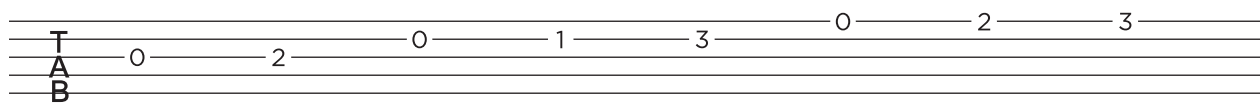
- ▷ Hold your fingers on their tips—and at the front of the frets—to avoid buzzing.

MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▷ Next up is a return to the major scale, which you first met in Lesson 4. The interval pattern is W–W–H–W–W–W–H. (Ws are whole steps and Hs are half steps).
- ▷ A whole step is 2 frets on the guitar. The half-step is 1 fret. Another term for these intervals is major second and minor second, respectively.
- ▷ Let's try the major scale on the first 3 strings, with the notation system of tablature. Remember, the 6 lines represent the 6 strings of the guitar. The top line identifies the 1st—or high E—string, and the bottom line is the low, 6th string E.

- ▷ You'll be playing a G major scale, alternating with the i and m fingers of the right hand.
 - ▷ Start on the open 3rd string. This is the open G.
 - ▷ The 2nd finger, on the 2nd fret, sounds the A. That's a whole step up.
 - ▷ Then move up a string to the open B—that's another whole step.
 - ▷ That's followed by a half step to the 1st fret C.
 - ▷ Then comes the 3rd fret D.
 - ▷ Following that is an open E on the 1st string.
 - ▷ Another half step to the 2nd fret gives the raised F (this is really an F sharp—but more about that later).
 - ▷ You'll finish with the 3rd finger of the right hand on the 3rd fret G.
 - ▷ To descend, follow those steps in reverse.

G MAJOR SCALE



- ▷ The interval between the 3rd string, open G and the 1st string, 3rd fret G is called an octave. You've now learned a 1-octave G major scale.
- ▷ If you're mathematically inclined, you might be interested to know that an octave is a doubling of frequency, measured in Hertz (or cycles per second). The pitch of the 3rd string G is 196 Hz. The higher G is twice that, or 392 Hertz.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ Switching between chords is challenging at first. It takes some time to get the coordination down. But when the accompaniment is fingerstyle, you have a little extra time to get the fingers of your left-hand chord position in place on the guitar neck.
- ▶ This lesson's song consists of a melody of open strings, along with 3 chords: G, C, and D⁷. For accompaniment, there are two different fingerstyle patterns.
- ▶ Since you generally start with the lowest note of the chord, you'll get that finger in place first—when you change position—followed by the others. In other words, not all fingers have to go down at the same time.
- ▶ The first of the two fingerstyle patterns is p, i, m, a. You'll use a steady quarter note pattern—with 4 beats to each bar (except for the second-to-last measure).
- ▶ As you approach the conclusion of the song, substitute p, i, m, a with p and ima played on the G and D⁷ chords.
- ▶ On the very last chord, G, you'll play all 4 strings simultaneously. And for the melody, you'll be using the top 4 open strings.
- ▶ For a stretch, improvise on the G major scale over these chords using only the top 3 strings.

≈ IMPROVISATION IN G ≈

The image displays two lines of musical notation for fingerstyle accompaniment. Each line consists of a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a staff with notes and fingerings. Above the notes are chord names: G, C, G, D⁷ for the first line, and G, C, G, D⁷, G for the second line. Below the notes are red fingerings: i p p i a m i p for the first line, and p i m i a a i p i for the second line.





LESSON

6

Playing Rhythm Guitar

Freddie Green played rhythm guitar in the Count Basie Orchestra for 50 years, from 1937 to 1987. Basie is famous for the open spaces he left between chords and notes. Walter Page, his bass player, helped give the band its distinctive swing with his walking bass lines. Green was an ideal fit: His 3-note chording left plenty of space for Page’s bass at the low end, for Basie’s sparse chords and single-note plunks, and for Lester Young’s and Herschel Evans’s smooth saxophone voicings. Green made even more space with what he called 1-note chords. He fingered the entire chord, but he might sound only 1 or 2 notes while strumming against the other muted strings. This lesson focuses on Green’s specialty, the rhythm guitar.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ Most of us love the guitar because it has a beautiful sound. And the tone we make is determined mostly by what we do with our right hand—and whether we use a pick or our fingers.
- ▶ The classical guitarist Ricardo Iznaola says that “technique is made up of a limited number of procedures with an unlimited number of applications.” For every exercise we learn in this course, we’ll also devise variations to practice.
- ▶ But first, let’s review a few essentials of right-hand fingerstyle technique. You want to activate the movement from the large knuckle. When following through, all the joints of the finger move inward toward the palm. This produces less tension than activating each joint to move the finger. Try the two and feel the difference.



- ▷ Now, when you place your right hand over the strings, you want to have the top of the hand high enough above the soundboard so there's no need to pull outward to follow through. A steady hand helps calibrate tone and keep your movements precise.
- ▷ You might know from experience that when the hand bounces up and down, it's impossible to play quickly and efficiently.
- ▷ Your motion should stay the same, whether you play softly or loudly. When you want to play louder, apply a little more pressure to the strings with your fingertips before you play, and then follow through.
- ▷ Another thought to keep in mind is you want to push the string in toward the soundhole (as opposed to pulling outward, away from the guitar). When you hook a finger under the string and pluck it, you get a thin, twangy sound. Generally, a fuller tone is desirable.
- ▷ Now, you'll try a few different arpeggio patterns to stretch out the right hand. In this exercise, you'll place the i (or index) finger on the third string, the m (or middle finger) on the second string, and the a (or ring finger) on the first string. With the thumb, you'll alternate between the bass strings E, A, D, and A.
- ▷ First try p–m–i–a, then p–i–a–m, and finally p–a–i–m. Of course, feel free to devise your own variations, including moving the i, m, and a fingers onto different strings.

~ EXERCISE ~

The exercise consists of three musical staves, each in 4/4 time. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The notes are G₂, B₂, D₃, and F₃, which are the notes of the bass strings E, A, D, and A respectively. The fingerings for each note are indicated by letters in red below the notes.

- Staff 1: p m i a
- Staff 2: p i a m
- Staff 3: p a i m

MODULE 2: Note Reading

▶ This lesson will expand your rhythmic palette to include eighth notes. An eighth note is one-half of a quarter note (that is, it's half a beat). So, in $\frac{1}{4}$ time, you would count out a total of 8 eighth notes.

▶ A single eighth note is written on the page like a quarter note, but with a flag coming off the stem. More commonly, you'll see eighth notes in groups of 2, or 4, or even more, and then they're attached with a thick line that looks like a stair rail.

EIGHTH NOTES



▶ You can count off eighth notes as “1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &.” That means playing on the beat with the first of each pair of eighth-notes, and playing an offbeat with each “&.” These are also known as downbeats and upbeats.

▶ Let's work with these, using open strings. You can alternate (fingerstyle) with your i and m fingers, or use your pick with alternating up and down motion.

EXERCISE

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

Combining quarter-note and eighth-note patterns gives lots of options for accompaniment, both in fingerstyle and when strumming.

MODULE 3: Chords

- ▷ Playing the bass notes of a chord on the beat and the higher notes of the chord on the offbeats creates a “boom-chuck” rhythm. It’s very common, especially in folk and country music. Think of Johnny Cash.
- ▷ You can try this on the Am chord, playing the bass note on the beat, and the 3 upper strings—with ima—on the offbeat. Refer to the video for a demonstration.
- ▷ The next pattern is often played by alternating the root of the chord (the note after which the chord is named) with the fifth of the chord (the 5th note of the scale from which the chord is derived).
- ▷ The fifth of the Am chord is E, so you can alternate the A string with the low E string. Refer to the video for a demonstration.
- ▷ You can do this with other chords:
 - ▶ On Em: Alternate the 6th-string lower E with the 5th-string B (which you’re holding down with your 2nd finger).
 - ▶ On G: Alternate the 6th and 4th strings. That’s a G and a D.
 - ▶ On C: Alternate the 5th and 6th strings. That’s a C on the 5th string and G on the 6th. Here, you’ll need to move your 3rd finger between the strings at the 3rd fret.
 - ▶ For D, you’ll alternate the 4th string D with the open 5th string A.
- ▷ So far, you’ve played pieces and exercises written only in a meter of $\frac{4}{4}$, with 4 beats to every measure or bar. But there are many possibilities.
- ▷ A common one is $\frac{3}{4}$, which incorporates 3 beats to the measure. That gives a waltz-like sound.

MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▶ Next, you'll learn a 2-octave major scale in the key of G. You'll be using all 6 strings.

G MAJOR SCALE — 2 OCTAVES

The image shows two musical staves for a 4/4 time signature. The first staff shows the G major scale from the low 6th string to the 3rd string. The notes are: 3 (6th string), 0 (5th string), 2 (4th string), 3 (4th string), 0 (3rd string), 2 (3rd string), 4 (3rd string), 0 (3rd string), 2 (2nd string), 0 (2nd string), 1 (2nd string), 3 (2nd string), 0 (1st string), 2 (1st string), and 3 (1st string). The second staff shows the scale from the 2nd string to the 1st string. The notes are: 3 (2nd string), 2 (2nd string), 0 (2nd string), 3 (2nd string), 1 (1st string), 0 (1st string), 2 (1st string), 0 (1st string), 4 (1st string), 2 (1st string), 0 (1st string), 3 (1st string), 2 (1st string), 0 (1st string), and 3 (1st string). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-3 above notes.

- ▶ Start with the 3rd finger at the 3rd fret of the low 6th string. Then, in order, it's:
 - ▶ 5th string: Open A, 2nd fret B, 3rd fret C.
 - ▶ 4th string: Open D, 2nd fret E, 4th fret F#.
 - ▶ 3rd string: Open G.
- ▶ Now you've reached G again, so you've completed 1 octave of this 2-octave scale. To continue:
 - ▶ Place the 2nd finger on the 3rd string, 2nd fret. This note is an A.
 - ▶ 2nd string: Open B, 1st fret C, 3rd fret D.
 - ▶ 1st string: Open E, 2nd fret F#, and finish with a 3rd finger G.
- ▶ When it comes to improvising or soloing over a tune, or chord progression, you can think of the notes of the scale like a collection of words. You can put the notes in any order, but playing something musical means arranging the words (or notes) into effective sentences and paragraphs. The order and rhythm dictate how the statement sounds.

- ▶ Here are some patterns or “licks” using the G major scale. You might want to try them as you improvise over this lesson’s final tune.

G MAJOR PATTERNS

The first staff shows a lick in 3/4 time. The notes are G4 (3rd fret, 1st string), F4 (2nd fret, 1st string), E4 (1st fret, 1st string), D4 (open 1st string), C4 (open 2nd string), B3 (2nd fret, 2nd string), A3 (open 2nd string), and G4 (open 3rd string). The second staff shows a lick in 3/4 time. The notes are G3 (open 3rd string), A3 (2nd fret, 2nd string), B3 (3rd fret, 2nd string), C4 (open 2nd string), D4 (1st fret, 2nd string), E4 (2nd fret, 2nd string), F4 (3rd fret, 2nd string), and G4 (open 3rd string).

- ▶ The first pattern starts on the high G and descends 2 notes, then goes up 1. In scale degrees that’s 1, 6, 7, 5, 6, and so on.
- ▶ In the second example, you’ll play the pattern by going up 2 notes in the scale, then down 1. In scale degrees, that’s 1, 3, 2, 4, 3, 5, and so on. This interval of 2 notes up or down in a scale is called a third, so this “lick” is a G major scale in thirds.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ This lesson’s song uses the familiar chords of G, C, D⁷, and Am—but now in $\frac{3}{4}$ time. That’s 3 beats per measure.
- ▶ Your fingerstyle accompaniment pattern is p–i–m–a–m–i. That’s thumb, index, middle, ring, middle, and index. The pattern will undulate from your thumb all the way up and back again, while stopping short of the pinky.
- ▶ Your thumb strikes the lowest note of the chord, and the i, m, and a fingers fill out the top 3 strings. On the very last chord, you’ll play all strings at the same time, and hold for three counts.
- ▶ For the melody, all the notes are taken from the G major scale. As a stretch, try playing some of these patterns in G major from the last module over the chord progression—or invent your own.

~ CHANTILLY WALTZ ~

MELODY

G Em C D⁷ G

Em Am D⁷ G

ACCOMPANIMENT

G Em C D⁷

p i m a m i

G Em Am D⁷ G



LESSON

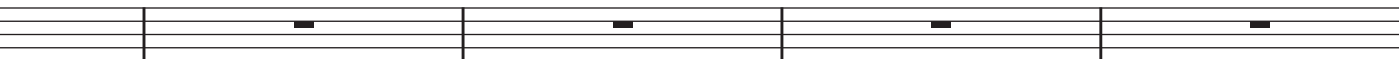
7

The Pentatonic Scale

In May 1986, *Guitar Player* magazine ran a cover story titled, “Who is Eric Johnson?” The short answer is he’s an Austin, Texas, artist who’s legendary in guitar circles. The truly distinguishing feature of Johnson’s guitar playing is what’s been described as his violin tone—which he gets by “brushing the string like a paintbrush,” he says—and the inverted chord shapes he develops to find new arrangements of conventional notes. If you listen to him, you’ll probably hear rapid-fire notes, frequently on a pentatonic scale—the topic of this lesson.

MODULE 1: Technique (Left Hand Walking)

- ▷ In Lesson 4, you learned about shifting, which allows you to move up and down the neck on a single string. This module starts with an exercise that develops the ability to move across the strings of the fretboard. Like shifting up and down the neck, this exercise requires consistent left-hand form.
- ▷ You’ll start out with your first finger on the 6th string, 1st fret. That’s a low F. And then you’ll work your way across the strings—staying on the 1st fret—while alternating your 1st and 2nd fingers.
- ▷ Here’s the sequence:
 - ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 5th string, 1st fret.
 - ▶ Place your 1st finger on the 4th string.



What is a Pentatonic Scale?

Think of the G scale from Lesson 4: G, A, B, C, D, E, F#, G.

What would happen if we took out the 4th and 7th notes? That is, what would happen if we removed both the C and F# from the G scale? We'd have a scale of 5 notes—G, A, B, D, E—with the G tonic on the bottom doubled by another G on the top.

This lesson will introduce the pentatonic scale, which is an indispensable tool (and riffing machine) for rock and blues players—from B.B. King to Greg Allman, Eric Clapton, and Steve Morse—and a favorite of guitarists of all stripes.

- ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 3rd string.
- ▶ Place your 1st finger on the 2nd string.
- ▶ Go all the way across the fret, ending with the 2nd finger on the 1st string.

- ▷ Then, it's back down to the 6th string:
 - ▶ Place your 1st finger on the 2nd string.
 - ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 3rd string.
 - ▶ Place your 1st finger on the 4th string.
 - ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 5th string.
 - ▶ Finally, place your 1st finger on the 6th string.

- ▷ With your right hand, you have 2 options: You can alternate your i (or index) and m (middle) fingers—so that your right hand is walking along with your left—or alternate pick, starting with a downstroke.

- ▷ Here is some advice that will help you: Play with your fingers on their tips and right up against the fret. Move your left-hand thumb up and down as you go, so that it tracks the 1st and 2nd fingers. That keeps the left hand in the same position at all times.
- ▷ Once you've completed this, you can try variations.
- ▷ First, move along the second fret using the 2nd and 3rd fingers. Start with your 2nd finger on the 6th string, 2nd fret. Work your way across the strings, staying on the 2nd fret, while alternating your 2nd and 3rd fingers. Here's the sequence:
 - ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 5th string.
 - ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 4th string.
 - ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 3rd string.
 - ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 2nd string.
 - ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 1st string.
 - ▶ Then, go back down to the 6th string.
- ▷ Complete the exercise by moving across the strings at the 3rd fret while alternating the 3rd and 4th fingers.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▷ The musical alphabet consists of the notes A to G. But there are other notes in between. These correspond to the black keys on a piano.
- ▷ As an example, think about the 1-octave G major scale that starts with the open G on the 3rd string. The 2nd note in the scale is A, played with the 2nd finger at the 2nd fret. But this leaves out a note at the 1st fret: G[#] or A^b, depending on the key signature.



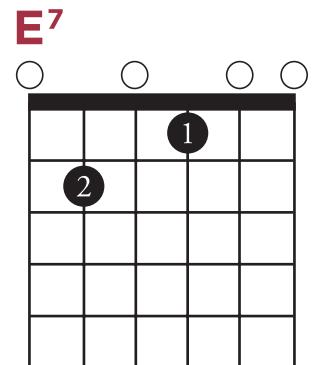
- ▷ A sharp symbol (#) indicates that the note is a half step (or 1 fret) above its letter: G# is G sharp. A flat symbol (b) indicates that the note is a half step (or 1 fret) below its letter: Ab is A flat.
- ▷ G# and Ab have 2 different meanings, depending on the key. G# and Ab are called enharmonic equivalents, meaning they sound the same but are named (or spelled, in music terminology) differently.

MODULE 3: Chords

- ▷ Syncopation means placing an accent—or stress—on normally unaccented beats. For example, in $\frac{4}{4}$ meter, the natural accent pattern occurs on the beats. The offbeats occur in between the beats; counting out loud, you'd say a number for the beats and “and” for the offbeats: “1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &.”
- ▷ If you place an accent off the beat, then you're introducing syncopation into the rhythm. Syncopation offers a great sense of forward motion. Lots of music—from ragtime to bossa nova, and the Cuban mambo and salsa—is filled with syncopated rhythms.

- ▷ You can try some syncopated strumming patterns by introducing eighth-note rhythms into chord progressions, beginning with **E⁷**, a new chord. To play E⁷, follow these steps:

- ▷ Place your 1st finger on the 3rd string at the 1st fret.
- ▷ Place your 2nd finger on the 5th string at the 2nd fret.
- ▷ Keep the rest of the strings open and strum all 6 strings.



- ▷ Hold down that E⁷ chord for the moment and try the following exercise.
 - ▷ Start by playing 4 downstrums on the beat, counted “1, 2, 3, 4.” Next, try adding an upward strum on the “and” of 1, counted “1 & 2, 3, 4.” After that, you can move the offbeat upward strum to different places in the measure, counted “1, 2 & 3, 4” or “1, 2, 3 & 4,” or “1, 2, 3, 4 &.”
 - ▷ You can also include more than one upward strum, also: “1 & 2, 3 & 4” or “1, 2 & 3 & 4.” You can mix and match these patterns in your strumming accompaniment.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ This lesson's song is called "In a Pentamental Mood," and it encourages you to improvise over this using the minor pentatonic scale. You'll use 4 chords: A minor, E⁷, C, and G.
- ▶ Strum the accompaniment using a pick. The rhythm's pattern is "1, 2 & 3, 4. Remember to put an accent on the upstroke. If you want, you can vary this by placing the upstrum accent on different beats.
- ▶ The strumming pattern is simpler in the last 2 measures: 2 half notes and then a final whole note. The melody uses open and fretted notes on the 1st string along with the open B and G strings. Watch out for the G#. It occurs twice.
- ▶ Finally, for fun, try improvising using the A minor pentatonic scale over this chord progression.

~ IN A PENTAMENTAL MOOD ~

The musical notation is presented in three systems, each on a single staff in 4/4 time. The first system shows a melody line with notes and rests, with chords Am, E⁷, Am, and E⁷ indicated above. The second system shows a melody line with notes and rests, with chords C, G, C, and G indicated above. The third system shows a melody line with notes and rests, with chords Am, E⁷, Am, E⁷, and Am indicated above. The notes in the melody are: System 1: A4, B4, A4, G4, A4, B4, A4, G4; System 2: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5; System 3: A4, B4, A4, G4, A4, B4, A4, G4.





LESSON

8

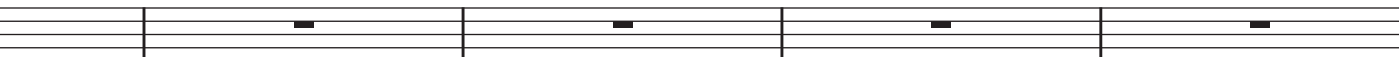
The Blues Scale and Lateral Stretching

On December 21, 1928, the country bluesman John Hurt walked into a recording studio in New York City and laid down three memorable numbers: “Ain’t No Tellin’,” “Louis Collins,” and “Avalon Blues.” Decades later, in February 1963, a music collector named Tom Hoskins tracked down Hurt, passed him a guitar, and asked Hurt to play it. Hurt was 69 and hadn’t picked up a guitar in 2 years. But he hadn’t forgotten how to play. In July 1963, Hurt recorded 39 songs in one day at the Library of Congress’s Coolidge Auditorium—including new takes on some of the old sides from 1928. This is just one of many stories about how the pre-war American blues were lost and found.

In this lesson, you’re going to learn to play an A^7 chord and some syncopated rhythms along with some new notes and fingerings on the top 3 strings of the guitar. And you’re going to learn to play an original blues song.

MODULE 1: Technique (Lateral Stretching)

- ▶ Guitarists often think that they need to apply lots of pressure to the strings and in their picking motion, but this causes fatigue. Proper posture and disciplined hand and finger position make playing easier.
- ▶ Flexibility is just as important as strength. This next exercise, called lateral stretching, works on flexibility.
- ▶ Start on the 1st string with your pinky at the 12th fret and descend through frets 12, 11, 10, and 9. Place just 1 finger on the fretboard at a time. Point your fingers on their tips, with the thumb balanced behind the neck, opposite the 1st and 2nd fingers.



- ▶ Here's where the stretching comes in: On the next descent, insert a 1-fret stretch between the 2nd and 1st fingers. You're now descending on frets 12, 11, 10, and 8. Resist the temptation to slide down into position. That defeats the purpose of the stretch.
- ▶ Next, introduce a stretch between the 3rd and 2nd fingers. You're now descending on frets 12, 11, 9, and 8.
- ▶ Finally, try to stretch between the 4th and 3rd fingers. That means you're now descending on frets 12, 10, 9, and 8.
- ▶ In this exercise, always begin with the pinky in its original position on the 12th fret. Now, you'll repeat the exercise, at first with no gaps between frets, descending from 12 to 9. But then, stretch between the middle and index fingers, the 2nd and 1st fingers, skipping from fret 10 to 8 at the appropriate time. The sequence has you hitting frets 12, 11, 10, and 8.
- ▶ Then, stretch between the 2nd and 3rd fingers, or ring and middle finger. That will have you hit frets 12, 11, 9, and 8.
- ▶ Finally, between the pinky and the ring finger, or fingers 4 and 3. That will cover frets 12, 10, 9, and 8.
- ▶ If you're doing this correctly, you should feel the stretch across the top of the hand. You can work your way down the neck (and increase the distance of your stretch) by starting at the 11th fret, then the 10th, and so forth. You can also try this exercise on each string.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ Now, let's cover the names of the notes in 1st position on the first 3 strings. We'll start with the 1st string E.

1ST STRING



- ▶ The open string is an E, and the 1st fret sounds an F. The 2nd fret is either F[#] or G^b (depending on the key). Common notes like these are called enharmonic equivalents. The pitch can be notated, or spelled, either way depending on the context. It sounds the same whether it's F[#] or G^b. The 3rd fret is G and the 4th fret is G[#] or A^b.

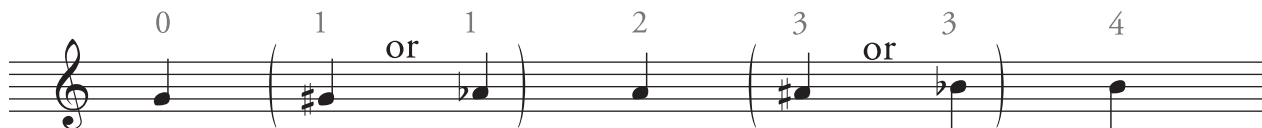
- ▷ Now for the notes of the 2nd string.

2ND STRING

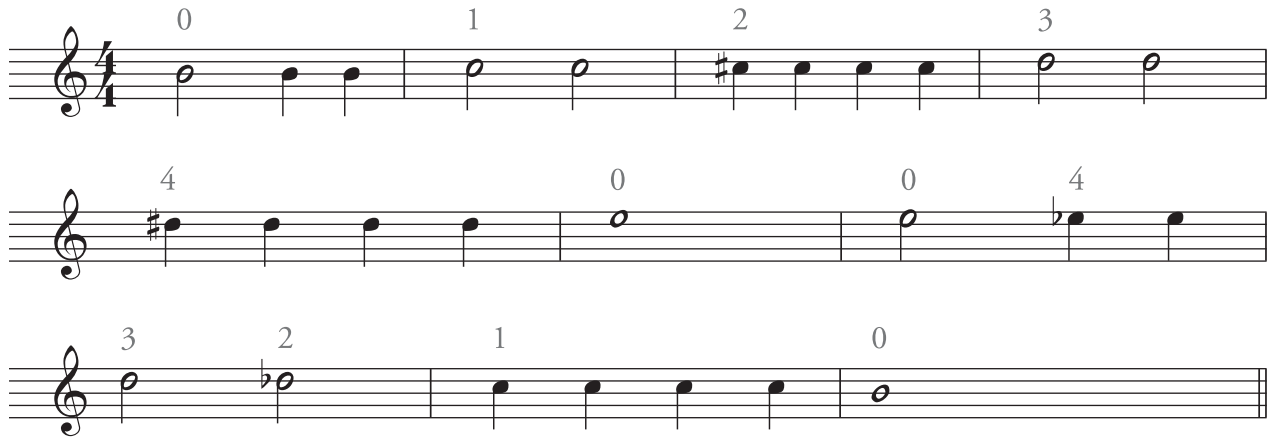


- ▷ The open B of the 2nd string is notated on the 3rd line of the treble staff. Next, you can play the C on the 1st fret with the 1st finger. The C# or D^b is played at the 2nd fret with the 2nd finger. The D is played at the 3rd fret with the 3rd finger, and D# or E^b is played with the pinky on the 4th fret.
- ▷ Finally, here are the notes of the 3rd string.

3RD STRING

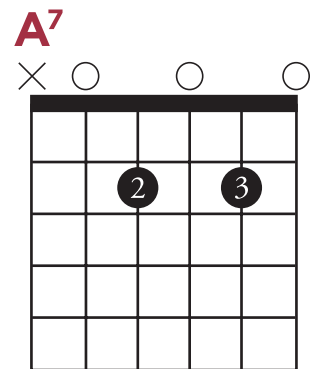


- ▷ The open G of the 3rd string is notated on the 2nd line of the treble staff. The G# or A^b is played at the 1st fret with the 1st finger. Next, play the A on the 2nd fret with the 2nd finger. The A# or B^b is played at the 3rd fret with the 3rd finger, and the B is played with the pinky on the 4th fret.
- ▷ Remember that once a sharp or flat is notated, it carries through the measure and doesn't need to be repeated.
- ▷ In the following exercises, you'll practice these notes on the first 3 strings, using a mixture of rhythms. The first exercise is in $\frac{4}{4}$ and uses notes on the 1st and 2nd strings. The second exercise is in $\frac{3}{4}$ time and uses notes on the 3rd and 2nd strings.



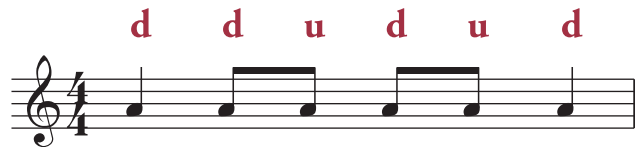
MODULE 3: Chords

- ▶ This lesson's chord is **A⁷**, a tonally beautiful and provocative arrangement of notes that can fill a concert hall with upbeat rock and roll or a sad Celtic story. The A⁷ chord is shown at right.
- ▶ The 5th, 3rd, and 1st strings are open, but you place your 2nd finger on the 2nd fret of the 4th string. You'll place your 3rd finger on the 2nd fret of the 2nd string, and you won't play the 6th string.



- ▷ As always, keep your fingers on the tips so that you don't dampen the open strings. Play the chord 1 note at a time and listen to make sure all the notes are clear.
- ▷ Since the theme of this lesson is the blues, now you're going to see some syncopated blues patterns. Grab a pick for these short exercises.

- ▷ Using the A⁷ chord, this example starts with a combination of quarter- and eighth-note strumming. Your pick should move in this pattern: down, down-up, down-up, down.



- ▷ The next example adapts this slightly by not strumming down on beat 3. This will further emphasize the & or upbeat. That pick pattern is: down, down-up, up, down. You'll still move your right hand downward on beat 3; you just won't strum the strings.



- ▷ In music notation, this can be written with a symbol called a tie. The tie tells us to sustain the note, not re-attack on the downbeat. By using ties, you can create a variety of strumming patterns with a syncopated feel. And you'll use these in the blues tune at the end of this lesson.

MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▷ The most common form of the blues scale is sometimes called the 6-note or hexatonic blues scale. The blues scale is commonly used for improvising in blues, jazz, and rock music, and works well over a 12-bar blues progression.
- ▷ To play the A blues scale, follow these finger and string configurations in order.
 - ▶ Start on the A note on the 6th string, 5th fret, played with the 1st finger.
 - ▶ 4th finger at the 8th fret.
 - ▶ Switch to the 5th string at the 5th fret.
 - ▶ 2nd finger at the 6th fret.
 - ▶ 3rd finger at the 7th fret.

- Switch to the 4th string at the 5th fret.
 - 3rd finger at 7th fret.
 - Switch to the 3rd string with the 1st finger at the 5th fret.
 - 3rd finger at the 7th fret.
 - 4th finger at the 8th fret.
 - Switch to the 2nd string with the 1st finger at the 5th fret.
 - 4th finger at the 8th fret.
 - Switch to the 1st string at the 5th fret with the 1st finger.
 - Close with the 4th finger on the 8th fret.
- You can descend down the scale by following those steps in reverse.
 - The blues scale is the same as the minor pentatonic scale with one added note. This extra note marks the interval that is a flatted fifth above the root, or starting note of the scale. It's called a blue note. This blue note is often sounded by bending the string up from the note beneath it.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- This lesson's tune is called "Blues for Art." This is going to combine your new syncopated strumming pattern with the notes you've learned on strings 1, 2, and 3, including sharps and flats. You can also improvise using the A blues scale.
- The typical blues song consists of 3 chords (all dominant sevenths), and has a 12-bar form, which means the chords and melody repeat every 12 bars or measures. The three chords in "Blues for Art" are A⁷, D⁷, and E⁷.
- You'll use the strumming pattern you practiced earlier in the lesson. First, practice playing through the chord progression. The melody, meanwhile, is found on the first 3 strings. Watch out for the sharped notes when they occur. You can also use the video lesson for accompaniment and improvise.

~ BLUES FOR ART ~

A⁷ D⁷ A⁷ A⁷

2 2 2 3 2 0 2 1 0

D⁷ D⁷ A⁷ A⁷

1 2 2 3 2 0 2 1 0

E⁷ D⁷ A⁷ E⁷

0 4 0 3 2 3 2 0 2 0 1





LESSON

9

Planting for Control and Accuracy

The Romero family—a line of ultra-talented guitarists originally from Spain—has many lessons to impart. A paramount one is to listen and be attentive to tone. The guitar is a beautiful instrument, so anything you play on the guitar should sound beautiful. And more than anything else—an expensive guitar, a boutique amplifier, effects pedals, or a new set of strings—tone comes from the hands. This lesson introduces a hand-centric technique called planting.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ This lesson will start with a technique called planting. Planting helps you perform with greater control and accuracy because you prepare (or plant) each finger on the string before you play it. This way, you'll avoid the unpleasant feeling of swinging at the strings with your fingers.
- ▶ The technique consists of two parts: preparation and execution. To form your right-hand posture, imagine picking up a tennis racket, and then opening the hand to place the thumb and fingers on the strings. Make sure the top of your hand isn't too close to the soundboard of the guitar. Don't anchor the pinky on the soundboard. That inhibits your motion.



- ▷ Keep the index, middle, and ring fingers—the i, m, and a fingers—on the first 3 strings. Your thumb (the p) alternates between the lower 3 strings, depending on what the lowest note in the chord is.
- ▷ Let's start with the concept of full planting. This is normally used in ascending arpeggios, going from low to high strings. *Arpeggio* is an Italian word for “broken chord.” It involves playing the notes of a chord in sequence, one after another, as opposed to playing them all at the same time.
- ▷ A perfect example of full planting can be demonstrated in a pattern you've played before: p–i–m–a. Start with the p, or thumb, on the 6th string. As the thumb plays the bottom string of the pattern, plant i, m, and a simultaneously, and play through the rest of the notes, one at a time: i, m, a. Don't lift your fingers. Once they're planted, keep them there until you play.
- ▷ Once you've played the a (or ring finger), plant p (or thumb), and repeat. Remember, plant quickly, even if you're playing slowly. You'll always have 1 finger on the strings, and this gives some added stability.
- ▷ Sequential planting is used for descending arpeggios, or mixed patterns—something like p–m–i–a. Sequential planting is more commonly used than the full plant. Let's try this with p–a–m–i. Here, you just plant one finger at a time:
 - ▶ As you play p, plant a.
 - ▶ As you play a, plant m.
 - ▶ As you play m, plant i.
 - ▶ As you play i, plant p.
 - ▶ And repeat.
- ▷ The concept takes time to apply, but once you master it, you'll be able to speed up your arpeggios and not have the problem of missing strings.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ In this lesson, you'll start working on the lower 3 strings of the guitar. For now, you'll tackle the notes of the 4th string.

4TH STRING



- ▶ The open D is written in the first space below the staff. As you move up the neck of the guitar, the 1st fret is a D[#] or E^b. The 2nd fret is E. The 3rd fret is F. The 4th fret is F[#] or G^b. Between the E and F, there is no sharp or flat note.
- ▶ In the next two exercises, you'll practice these using a mixture of rhythms. The first exercise is in $\frac{4}{4}$ time; it includes notes on the 4th string along with open 3rd string G. The second exercise is in $\frac{3}{4}$ time.

EXERCISES

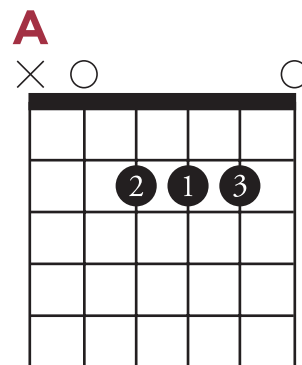


MODULE 3: Chords

▶ It's time to learn 2 very important—and frequently used—chords on the guitar: A and D. These are the foundational chords for A⁷ and D⁷. And they look very similar.

▶ To play the **A**, follow these steps:

- ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 4th string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ Place your 1st finger on the 3rd string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 2nd string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ Strings 5 and 1 are open.
- ▶ Don't sound the 6th string.

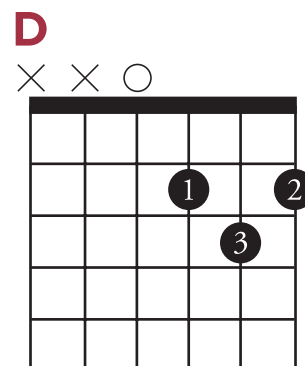


▶ Make sure your 2nd and 3rd fingers are right up against the fret wire, and tuck the 1st finger right up against them.

▶ Now for the D chord. Remember that D⁷ was in the shape of a little triangle that pointed down the neck, towards the headstock. The D chord is also a triangle shape, but it points up the neck toward the body of the guitar.

▶ To find the **D** chord, follow these steps:

- ▶ Place your 1st finger on the 3rd string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ Place your 3rd finger on 2nd string at the 3rd fret.
- ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 1st string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ The 4th string is an open D.
- ▶ Don't play the 5th and 6th strings.



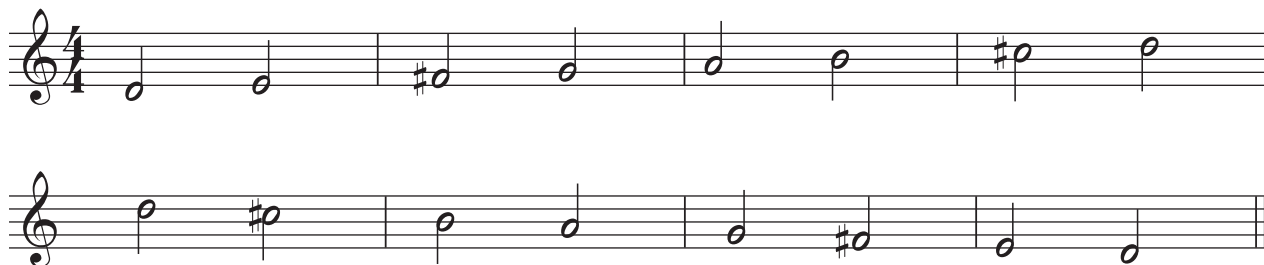
- ▷ Play each of these chords one string at a time to make sure nothing is muted or buzzing. You'll often find the A and D chords side-by-side in a tune. To switch between them, notice that you have a common finger and a guide finger.
- ▷ From the A chord, you'll see that when you switch to D, your 1st finger stays right where it is. That's the common finger. The 3rd finger just slides up 1 fret. You don't want to lift that finger off the string. Hold it down, and slide it up. The 2nd finger is the only one that has to come off the fingerboard.
- ▷ Practice switching back and forth between these chords. Remember to keep an eye on your common and guide fingers.

MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▷ Now that you have learned the D major chord, this lesson will add the D major scale to your repertoire. The 4th string is an open D; that gives you the tonic for this scale.
- ▷ You'll start with the open D string and move up as follows:
 - ▶ Play E with the 2nd finger on the 2nd fret.
 - ▶ Play F[#] with the 4th finger on the 4th fret.
 - ▶ Play the open G on the 3rd string.
 - ▶ Move up 2 frets to the A with the 2nd finger on the 2nd fret.
 - ▶ Cross to the 2nd string, an open B.
 - ▶ Now play C[#] with the 2nd finger on the 2nd fret.
 - ▶ Move up 1 fret to D, with the 3rd finger on the 3rd fret.
- ▷ You come back down the same way: D–C[#]–B–A–G–F[#]–E–D
- ▷ The major scale sounds the way it does because it follows a particular pattern of whole (W) and half (H) steps: W–W–H–W–W–W–H. Because that spacing of intervals remains consistent wherever you start a major scale, moving around the fretboard necessarily means that as you change scales, the numbers of sharps or flats will change, too.

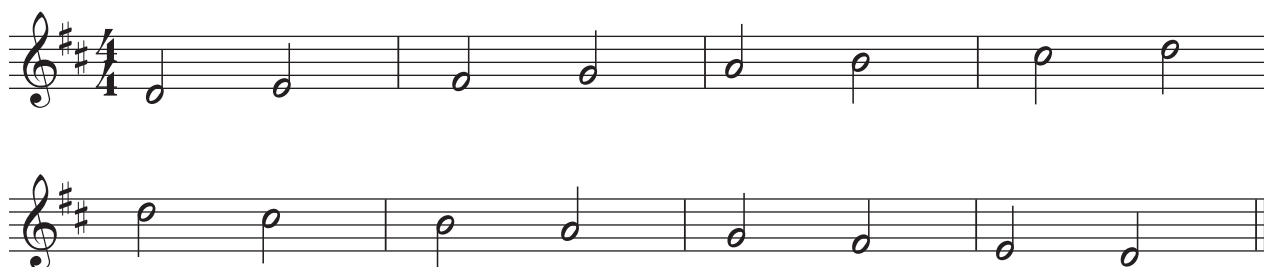
- ▷ The C scale has no flats or sharps, but your D major scale contains two sharps: F# and C#.

D MAJOR SCALE



- ▷ Instead of writing a separate sharp sign in front of every F and C on the staff—which can become cumbersome—something called a key signature can be used. This is a shorthand method for indicating that all Fs and Cs are sharped. It's written in between the clef and the time signature.
- ▷ For the key of D, a sharp is written on the top line for F, and on the 3rd space for C. This key signature instructs the performer to read every F and C written on the staff as F# and C#.

D MAJOR SCALE WITH KEY SIGNATURE



- ▷ It's very economical and, when you get used to it, much easier to read than having lots of sharps and flats written on the page.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ Next, you'll learn a new melody in the key of D major, and how to accompany it using your two new chords—D and A—along with two old favorites, G and Em.
- ▶ You probably already know 2 different fingerings for G. The one you use depends on the context, including which is easier to get to. But there is one other way:
 - ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 6th string at the 3rd fret.
 - ▶ Place your 1st finger on the 5th string at the 2nd fret.
 - ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 2nd string at the 3rd fret.
 - ▶ Place your 4th finger on the 1st string at the 3rd fret.
- ▶ When you switch from a D to a G chord—as you will in this lesson's song—this new fingering allows you to keep your 3rd finger on the 2nd string as you switch between the two chords. That means you have a common finger.
- ▶ Start by just practicing the left-hand chord changes. Don't worry about the right hand yet. The first sequence is D–G–D–A. Remember your common and guide fingers. Next, try D–Em–A–D.
- ▶ You'll use a fingerstyle pattern for the accompaniment. It's a mixed arpeggio pattern: p–i–a–m–i–m. You'll want to practice your sequential planting by preparing the right-hand fingers on the strings in advance.
- ▶ The thumb takes the bass line, and so it moves depending on the lowest note of the chord. That's the 4th string for D, the 5th string for A, and the 6th string for Em and G. The song is in $\frac{3}{4}$ time, so your p–i–a–m–i–m pattern is comprised of eighth notes.
- ▶ The melody is primarily in eighth and quarter notes and is taken from the D major scale. It's written out using the key signature of D major with two sharps. For an added challenge, try improvising over the accompaniment, using the D major scale.

≈ MOONCAKES ≈

D G D A

2 0 3 0 3 2 0 0 0 2 0 4 2

The first line of music is written on a single treble clef staff in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of four measures. The first measure has a D chord above it and contains the notes D4, F#4, and A4. The second measure has a G chord above it and contains the notes G4, B4, and D5. The third measure has a D chord above it and contains the notes D4, F#4, and A4. The fourth measure has an A chord above it and contains the note A4. Fingering numbers are placed above the notes: 2, 0, 3, 0, 3, 2, 0, 0, 0, 2, 0, 4, 2.

D Em A D

3 2 3 2 0 3 0 0 0 2 2 3 0 2 3

The second line of music is written on a single treble clef staff in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of four measures. The first measure has a D chord above it and contains the notes D4, F#4, and A4. The second measure has an Em chord above it and contains the notes G4, B4, and D5. The third measure has an A chord above it and contains the notes A4, C#5, and E5. The fourth measure has a D chord above it and contains the note D4. Fingering numbers are placed above the notes: 3, 2, 3, 2, 0, 3, 0, 0, 0, 2, 2, 3, 0, 2, 3.





LESSON

10

Guitar Tremolo: Gaining Speed

The guitar plays many roles, including as accompaniment for a vocalist and as part of various instrumental ensembles. But for some, the real magic is that the guitar can be played just by itself—as a solo instrument that carries the melody, the harmony and the rhythm, all at the same time. You’ll explore that in today’s lesson, including a close look at tremolo as a new technique. And, at the end, you’ll learn your first solo.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ Tremolo is a technique used by classical guitarists to give the illusion of a sustained note—like a waterfall that keeps spilling over the rocks.
- ▶ The unamplified guitar generally can’t sustain any note for very long. After the initial attack, the note steadily decreases in volume and dies away.
- ▶ Violin and cello players can sustain a tone by changing the direction of their bow. Wind-instrument players and singers can support a sustained note with their breath. Pianists have a sustain pedal. But acoustic guitarists don’t have those options, so guitarists sometimes use the trick of the tremolo.
- ▶ It works like this. Your thumb, ring finger, middle and index all strike one string like the blades of a fan.
- ▶ Agustín Barrios expanded the range of the tremolo with his 1918 composition “Un Sueño en la Floresta” (“A Dream in the Forest”). And the reason he wanted a 20th fret added to his guitar was to finger the high C on the first string that concludes the piece.



Scientific Pitch Notation

A simple way to differentiate between the high E and low E on a guitar is by using scientific pitch notation. In this system of pitch identification, numbers are assigned to a note based on the octave of the pitch, with C₄ describing middle C on a piano. The piano's lowest C is C₀ and the highest is C₈.

The low E on a guitar corresponds to the E 2 octaves below middle C and is labeled E₂. The guitar's high E is in the same octave as middle C, and as such is called E₄. The labels for the standard tuning of the guitar are as follows: E₂, A₂, D₃, G₃, B₃, and E₄. The remainder of this lesson will use scientific pitch notation to distinguish between the Es on a guitar.

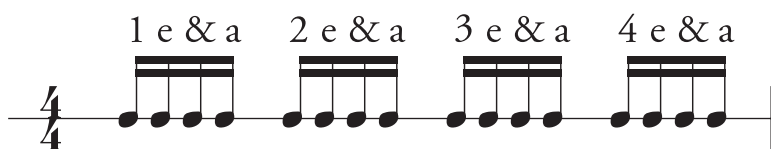
- ▶ Let's start by practicing the tremolo on just one string, the high E (E₄). Play the string with your thumb (p), then a, m, i.
- ▶ The tremolo is generally played very quickly, so it's a good idea to practice with a metronome, and then gradually speed it up.
- ▶ You might start by setting your metronome at the slowest possible tempo, perhaps 40 beats per minute, and then playing the 4 strokes of the p-i-m-a with the thumb stroke on the beat of the metronome.
- ▶ Once you feel comfortable, you can increase your speed, one metronome click at a time. But even more important than speed is consistency of tone and volume.
- ▶ Your movements must be short, precise, and consistent. It's very easy to overplay the thumb, so listen for that.
- ▶ To help balance the volume between the fingers, practice the p-i-m-a exercise that you just did, but instead of having the metronome click when you play p, have it click on i. The pattern becomes i-p-a-m, or m-i-p-a, or a-m-i-p.
 - ▶ Next, you'll change the notes you play with your thumb, while leaving a-m-i to play on the 1st string. This is what you'll often find in classical guitar pieces that use tremolo.

- Start with thumb on the B string, and the a–m–i on the E₄ string: B–E₄–E₄–E₄.
 - Then, move the thumb back to the E₄ string (and then i–m–a): E₄–E₄–E₄–E₄.
 - Then, move the thumb to G, playing G–E₄–E₄–E₄.
 - Next, move back to E₄, playing E₄–E₄–E₄–E₄.
 - Then, move the thumb to D, playing D–E₄–E₄–E₄.
 - Next, move the thumb back to E₄, playing E₄–E₄–E₄–E₄.
 - The thumb goes to A next: A–E₄–E₄–E₄.
 - Next, it's back to E₄, playing E₄–E₄–E₄–E₄.
 - Finally, move the thumb to low E to play E₂–E₄–E₄–E₄.
- Now, reverse direction and go back up, playing these sequences:
- A–E₄–E₄–E₄
 - E₄–E₄–E₄–E₄
 - D–E₄–E₄–E₄
 - E₄–E₄–E₄–E₄
 - G–E₄–E₄–E₄
 - E₄–E₄–E₄–E₄
 - B–E₄–E₄–E₄
 - E₄–E₄–E₄–E₄
- This is a difficult technique to master, but a truly magical one. Practice daily, use a metronome, and listen to ensure that all the notes are even.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ In this lesson, you're going to study a further subdivision of the beat called a sixteenth note. The rhythms that you should know so far include the whole note, half note, quarter note, dotted half note, and eighth note. A sixteenth note is half of an eighth-note. And there are four sixteenth notes in a quarter note.
- ▶ For notation purposes, a single sixteenth note is written on the page just like an eighth-note, but with 2 flags coming off the stem instead of just 1.
- ▶ You'll commonly find sixteenth notes clustered in groups, and with 2 beams (the symbol that looks like a stair rail). Eighth notes are notated together with 1 beam.
- ▶ Musicians count the sixteenth notes by saying, "1 e & a." A full $\frac{4}{4}$ measure of sixteenths would be played and counted as shown below.

SIXTEENTH NOTES

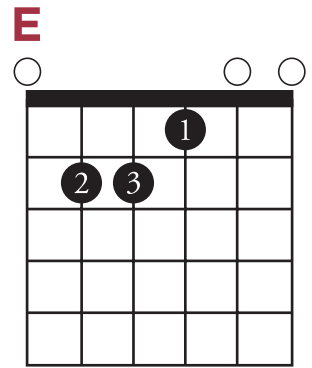


- ▶ Next, you'll try playing an exercise on open strings that incorporates quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes. You're going to move through all 6 strings in $\frac{4}{4}$. The rhythm in each measure is the same: quarter, quarter, 2 eighths, then 4 sixteenths.
- ▶ You count this out loud as "1, 2, 3 & 4 e & a."
- ▶ You can either alternate pick with your right hand or use alternating i and m fingers. Or, better yet, try both options. Use your metronome and start with a slow tempo. When you play your sixteenths, listen to make sure they're even and regular.

MODULE 3: Chords

- ▶ This lesson's new chord is **E** major. It's very similar to the Em and E⁷ you've already learned.

- ▷ The strings 6, 2, and 1 are open. That's because the 1st and 6th strings give the high and low E notes. The B—which is the 5th note of the E major scale—occurs on 2nd string. To find the E major chord, follow these steps:



- ▷ Place your 2nd finger on the 5th string at the 2nd fret.
 - ▷ Place your 3rd finger on the 4th string at the 2nd fret.
 - ▷ Place your 1st finger on the 3rd string at the 1st fret.
 - ▷ Just like with Em and E⁷, you'll strum all 6 strings.
- ▷ By this point in the course, you've seen 10 chords. The best way to master these shapes is to memorize them as soon as possible. And that means it's time for a quiz. Take a look at the following chords and see if you can form each one from memory:

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Am | <input type="checkbox"/> A ⁷ | <input type="checkbox"/> D | <input type="checkbox"/> E | <input type="checkbox"/> E ⁷ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A | <input type="checkbox"/> C | <input type="checkbox"/> D ⁷ | <input type="checkbox"/> Em | <input type="checkbox"/> G |

- ▷ It takes time to fluidly execute the changes from one chord to the next. But if you have most of those chords memorized, you're doing well.

MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▷ On several occasions, this course has asked you to practice improvising by using the notes of the major scale. If you consider the notes in a scale as something like a musical vocabulary, you can see how to begin constructing musical phrases, sentences, and even paragraphs.
- ▷ Some of these combinations might make sense, and some might sound like noise. In a major scale, 2 notes are more difficult than the others to use when played against the major chord. The hard sounds are scale degrees 4 and 7. That's because these notes clash with the underlying chord.
- ▷ They can be used as melodic notes, but they sound unstable. They need to resolve: The 4th note resolves down to the 3rd and the 7th resolves up to the root.

- ▶ When improvising, you might create licks that avoid the 4th and 7th notes. If you play the root, the 2nd, 3rd, 5th, and 6th notes of a major scale, this creates another 5-note scale called the major pentatonic scale. And it very conveniently avoids scale degrees 4 and 7.
- ▶ Below are four patterns using the G major pentatonic scale.

EXERCISES

1 **2**

TAB 4/4

3 **4**

TAB 4/4

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ To conclude this lesson, you're going to learn an original piece called "The Waterfall Prelude." It's based on the tremolo technique on the A, D, and E major chords.
- ▶ The bass notes and melody are played with the thumb, and the repeated notes with the fingers a, m, i (ring, middle, and index). It might be helpful to practice just the thumb alone before adding the tremolo notes.

~ THE WATERFALL PRELUDE ~

0 3 2 0 0 3 2 0

The first line of musical notation is in 4/4 time, featuring a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of eight eighth-note tremolos, each with a specific fret number indicated above it: 0, 3, 2, 0, 0, 3, 2, and 0. The notes are positioned on the first string of the guitar.

0 2 3 1 3 0 3 2 0

The second line of musical notation continues the piece with eight eighth-note tremolos. The fret numbers above the notes are 0, 2, 3, 1, 3, 0, 3, and 2. The notes are positioned on the first string of the guitar.

0 1 0 3 2 0 1 2

The third line of musical notation continues with eight eighth-note tremolos. The fret numbers above the notes are 0, 1, 0, 3, 2, 0, 1, and 2. The notes are positioned on the first string of the guitar.

0 3 2 0 2

The fourth line of musical notation concludes the piece with five eighth-note tremolos. The fret numbers above the notes are 0, 3, 2, 0, and 2. The notes are positioned on the first string of the guitar. The piece ends with a double bar line.





LESSON

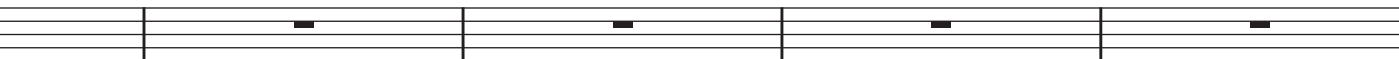
11

Legato and Power Chords

A Spanish guitarist named Gaspar Sanz—who lived from 1640 to 1710—once said that the composers of his era taught “their pupils to play their pieces, but none of them gives out the rules to compose these pieces.” He had an interesting idea that introduces a problem this lesson will tackle. In this lesson, you’re going to learn one new rule—or principle—that will take you all the way from Spanish classical guitar to Blue Öyster Cult and rock music. It has to do with the power chord. This lesson covers a lot of additional ground, including some licks from the minor pentatonic scale and legato, using hammer-ons and pull-offs. By the end, you’ll have equipped yourself with some of the essential tools in the guitarist’s toolbox—just the way Gaspar Sanz said guitarists should.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ Sometimes, guitarists want a flowing sound. That’s called legato, meaning to play without separation between the notes. Think of a singer singing a phrase or a flutist playing a melodic line without taking a breath. Similarly, a violinist or cellist can play a passage without changing the direction of the bow.
- ▶ You can accomplish the legato sound on the guitar through what are known as hammer-ons and pull-offs.
 - ▶ A hammer-on requires a left-hand finger to hammer, or strike, the string on the fretboard, producing the desired musical note without plucking the string with the right hand.



- A pull-off is the opposite. While the previous note you've played is still ringing, you pull off the string with the pad of the fretting finger to sound a new note.
 - Either way, a finger on the left hand articulates the note without any help from the right hand. The result of either a hammer-on or a pull-off is known as a slur.
- For examples of Gaspar Sanz's composition "Canarios" and a blues pattern with and without slurs, refer to the video.
 - The use of slurs equips guitarists with an additional option for phrasing melodies.
 - Next, you'll learn how to perform the ascending slur (or hammer-on).
 - Start with your 1st finger on the 6th string, 5th fret.
 - Now play the next fret on the string with your 2nd finger. Notice how your finger moves: The finger snaps down on the string, with a quick, accurate motion. You don't want to take a big wind-up. It's unnecessary, and you risk missing the string.
 - In the 1960s, the martial artist and actor Bruce Lee popularized a technique called the one-inch punch, where he would easily knock down an opponent without pulling his fist back. The idea behind the slur is the same: It's a quick, accurate, forceful motion.
 - Keep your finger curled through all the joints, and play with the tip. Straightening your finger causes you to lose power instantly.
 - Now, try slurring from the 1st finger to the 2nd on each string: 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Then, go back down.
 - Next try a 2nd finger to 3rd finger ascending slur. This is more challenging because you're taking your 1st finger out of the equation. Then, try a 3rd finger to 4th finger slur.
 - You can also add 2nd finger to 4th finger, 1st finger to 4th finger, and 1st finger to 3rd finger slurs. Try playing each of these through all 6 strings for a great left-hand workout.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- In this module, you'll learn the notes on the 5th string.
 - Moving up from the open A, the 1st fret is A[#] or B^b.

- ▶ The 2nd fret is B.
- ▶ The 3rd fret is C.
- ▶ The 4th fret is C# or Db.

5TH STRING

Musical notation for the 5th string. The staff shows notes with fret numbers above them: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 4, 4. The word "or" is written between the first and second 1, and between the first and second 4. The notes are: open G (0), G# (1), Bb (1), B (2), C (3), C# (4), and Db (4). The G# and Bb notes are grouped in parentheses.

- ▶ Here's a short exercise you can play using just these notes:

EXERCISE

Musical notation for a short exercise on the 5th string in 4/4 time. The staff shows notes with fret numbers above them: 0, 2, 4, 2, 0, 1, 3, 1, 0. The notes are: open G (0), G# (2), A# (4), B (2), open G (0), G# (1), A# (3), B (1), and open G (0).

- ▶ The next example uses notes on the 5th and 4th strings, along with the open G 3rd string. Once again, it uses the key signature for D major, which tells you that every F and C on the staff should be sharpened, or raised one fret. Follow the left-hand fingerings.

EXERCISE

Musical notation for an exercise on the 5th and 4th strings in 3/4 time, key of D major. The first staff shows notes with fret numbers: 0, 2, 4, 2, 4, 0, 4, 2, 4. The notes are: open G (0), G# (2), A# (4), B (2), C# (4), open G (0), G# (4), A# (2), and B (4). The second staff shows notes with fret numbers: 0, 4, 2, 0, 2, 0, 2, 4, 0. The notes are: open G (0), G# (4), A# (2), open G (0), G# (2), open G (0), G# (2), A# (4), and open G (0).

MODULE 3: Chords

- ▶ A “power chord” is the informal name for a chord that contains only 2 notes: the root (or tonic) and the fifth. Often, the root is doubled an octave above. As such, they’re often called a fifth chord and are notated A^5 , G^5 , E^5 , and so on.
- ▶ The root is the most important note in a scale or chord. It is the tonal center from which the other notes are derived. They’re discussed in Lesson 4. If you need to brush up, take a look at the chord module in that lesson.
- ▶ Power chords are a key element in rock music. Think of “You Really Got Me” by the Kinks, Led Zeppelin’s “Stairway to Heaven,” and “Rock You Like A Hurricane” by the Scorpions. Power chords are usually played on a distorted electric guitar. They’re easy to grab on the guitar neck, and they have a lean, driving sound.
- ▶ The word “power” refers not only to the simplicity, but also to the focused sound derived from the doubling of the octave. Power chords can be played with the root on either the 6th or 5th strings. The shape of the fingers on the fretboard is the same for both:
 - ▶ Start with your 1st finger on the 6th string at the 5th fret.
 - ▶ Your 3rd finger goes on the 5th string at the 7th fret.
 - ▶ Your 4th finger goes on the 4th string at the 7th fret.
 - ▶ Then, strum just those 3 strings. You’ll have the root on the 6th string—doubled an octave above on the 4th string—with the 5th in the middle.
- ▶ The shape with the root on the 5th string is the same:
 - ▶ Start with your 1st finger on the 5th string at the 5th fret.
 - ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 4th string at the 7th fret.
 - ▶ Place your 4th finger on the 3rd string at the 7th fret.
 - ▶ Then, play just those 3 strings.
- ▶ The chord is named for the tonic, played by the 1st finger. For example, if you wanted to play a C^5 , you could play the tonic either on the 8th fret on the 6th string or the 3rd fret on the 5th string. Meanwhile, you could play the tonic of a G^5 either on the 3rd fret on the 6th string or the 10th fret on the 5th string.

The beauty of power chords is that they’re easy to move around. Unlike the open chords you’ve learned previously, power chords are easy to slide up and down the neck.

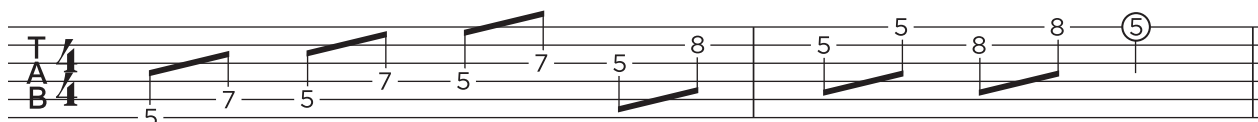
MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▶ This module will introduce some patterns—or “licks”—using the minor pentatonic scale. These will use the A minor pentatonic, with the root at the 5th fret. But you can try them in different keys, by starting on a different tonic note. The third example uses hammer-ons.

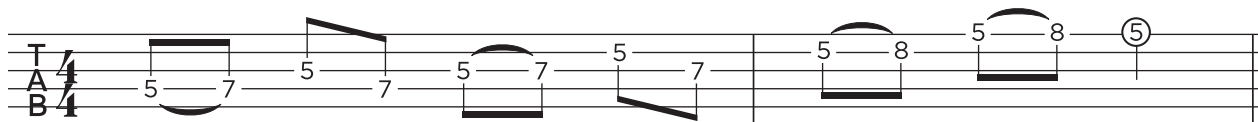
PATTERN 1



PATTERN 2



PATTERN 3



MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ This lesson’s song introduces a tune that incorporates everything you’ve learned: a melody with slurs, power chord accompaniment, and a chance to improvise using the A minor pentatonic scale. It has some similarities to the aforementioned “Canarios” by Gaspar Sanz.
- ▶ The accompaniment uses the A, G, and F power chords anchored on the 6th string. That means it uses the 5th, 3rd, and 1st frets.
- ▶ The strumming pattern for each measure is: 2 eighths, quarter, 2 eighths, quarter. That’s counted out loud as “1 & 2, 3 & 4.” The melody is a mixture of eighths and quarter notes, and has a few slurs.
- ▶ If you’re daring, try improvising over the chord progression while using some of the pentatonic licks that you just learned.

~ ROCK SONG ~

A⁵ G⁵ F⁵ G⁵ A⁵ G⁵ F⁵ G⁵

0 2 2 0 0 3 1 0 0

A⁵ G⁵ F⁵ G⁵ F⁵ G⁵ A⁵ G⁵

0 2 1 3 0 1 0 2 0 2 3





LESSON

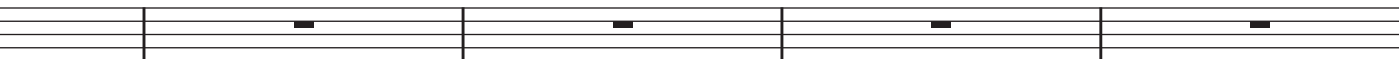
12

Travis Picking for Folk, Country, and Rock

Merle Robert Travis was born in 1917, in Muhlenberg County, Kentucky, among the state's western coalfields and tobacco farms. While there was a lot of music around, Merle was drawn to two men—Ike Everly and Mose Rager—who played a distinct fingerpicking style that hadn't traveled far outside of Muhlenberg County. This style consisted of a driving alternate bass—pushed along with a thumbpick—and melody on the treble strings played with just the index finger. Today, we know this as Travis picking, which takes its name from Merle Travis. This lesson covers that technique as well as pull-offs.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ This module will cover the descending slur, which in guitar lingo is also called a pull-off. As its name implies, the descending slur is the opposite of the ascending slur, or hammer-on. The descending slur allows guitarists to play legato (or smoothly) when they're phrasing a melody, much like a singer might phrase a passage with one breath.
- ▶ To practice this, start on the low E string, with the 1st finger at the 5th fret and the 2nd finger on the 6th fret. Pluck the string with your right hand, and then pull directly downward along the fret with your 2nd finger, while the 1st finger holds the string in place at the 5th fret. Your fingertip should snap off the string, and the lower tone on the 5th fret will sound.

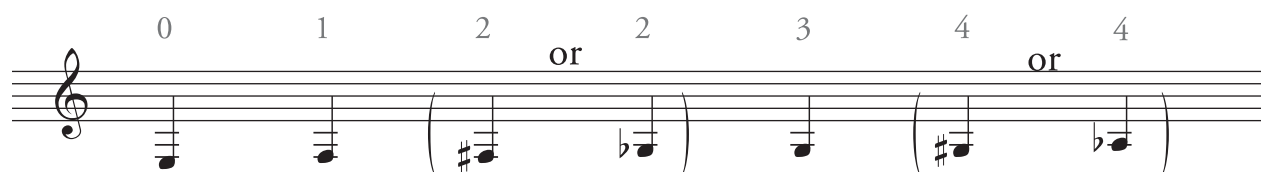


- ▶ The name “pull-off” is actually a misnomer. There is some pull to the motion, but very little. You’re going to pluck the string with your left-hand finger to sound the tone at the lower fret. If you simply lift the 2nd finger off of the string, the sound is not very strong.
- ▶ Your goal is to make that lower note sound with the same volume as the first. And that requires a downward snapping motion. Additionally, you want to avoid bending the string out of tune, so hold the string in place with the lower (1st) finger as you pull-off with the 2nd finger.
- ▶ Next, try a 3rd finger to 2nd finger pull-off, again on the 6th string. Starting in 5th position, place your 2nd finger on the 6th fret and third finger on the 7th fret. Pluck the string with the right hand, and snap downward with the 3rd finger while the 2nd finger remains pressed against the fretboard.
- ▶ Other 2-finger pull-off combinations are 4th and 3rd fingers, 4th and 2nd fingers, and 4th and 1st fingers.
- ▶ You’ll want to practice each of these on all 6 strings. Slurs are some of the best exercises for building strength, flexibility, and finger independence. Daily practice is recommended.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ This module covers the notes of the 6th string. With this, you’ll have all of the notes (in 1st position) under your fingers. After assimilating these notes, you’ll be able to read many simple classical guitar pieces, as well as most jazz and popular melodies.
- ▶ Just up from the open E, the 1st fret is F (notated 3 lines below the staff). The note of the 2nd fret can be written as F[#] or G^b. The note of the 3rd fret is G (notated 3 spaces below the staff). The note of the 4th fret is either G[#] or A^b. Here’s a look:

6TH STRING



- ▶ The names of the notes on the 6th string E are the same as those on the 1st string E. That makes it easier to memorize the names of the notes.

- ▶ Next, try playing this exercise, which incorporates the notes you know on the 6th and 5th strings, along with the open 4th string D:

EXERCISE

0 4 2 0 0 2 0 2 0 4 2 4 2 0 0 2 4 0

MODULE 3: Chords

- ▶ Travis picking uses the repeating thumb to lay out the bass notes and to create rhythmic and harmonic foundations. The fingers pick out the melody, typically in eighth notes. Merle used just his index finger, but in this course, you'll use the middle and ring fingers of the right hand as well.
- ▶ Normally, Merle applied the palm of his right hand to partly mute the base strings for a more percussive effect. But this module will concentrate on an unmuted bass and melody combination.
- ▶ Before you add the chords, first practice on the open strings. Start by checking the posture and placement of your right hand, above the strings. Place p (the thumb) on the 5th string, and a (the ring finger) on the first string, with i on the 3rd string and m on the 2nd string.
- ▶ Now, play p and a at the same time, and follow with i–m–p–a–m. Use a $\frac{4}{4}$ pattern; the rhythm is a quarter note, followed by four eighths and ending with a quarter. Out loud, that's counted as "1, 2 & 3 & 4."
- ▶ Your thumb plays the root note of each chord on the bass strings. That's the 4th string in the case of D, the 5th string for C or A minor, and the 6th string when you play E or G.
- ▶ A second variation to this Travis picking pattern adds an extra eighth note on the "and" of 4. You play the p and a fingers, at the same time, then i–m–p–a–i–m in eighth notes. Out loud, that's counted as "1, 2 & 3 & 4 &."
- ▶ You might recognize this pattern as one used in the song "Dust in the Wind." Guitarist Kerry Livgren, who wrote the tune, came up with the chord sequence and fingerstyle pattern as an exercise for practicing the technique. His wife heard it and encouraged him to write lyrics, and the song has become an acoustic guitar classic.

- ▶ As a variation, you can alternate the root of the chord with the fifth of the chord. For instance, on the C chord, alternate the C with 6th string G at the 3rd fret. On the D, you can alternate with open 5th string A. And on the E, you can alternate with 5th string, 2nd fret B.

MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▶ This lesson will show you some variations on pentatonic patterns. These use the descending slur technique (the pull-off), so make sure you've practiced that a bit. The slur is notated with a curved line, the same as with the ascending slur.
- ▶ These licks are written out in the A minor pentatonic scale. You'll be playing in 5th position, because the A on the 6th string is at the 5th fret.
- ▶ The first measure contains two 4-1 pulloffs on the 1st and 2nd strings. A 4-1 pulloff means the left pinky pulls off the string from the fourth fretted position (at the 8th fret) to sound the note of the 1st finger (at the 5th fret). In the second measure, a 3-1 pulloff is performed on the 3rd string.

EXERCISE



- ▶ The second lick starts on the low A on the 6th string, 5th fret and works upward, incorporating 3-1 and 4-1 pulloffs:

EXERCISE



- ▶ The third lick starts on the 4th string, 5th fret and uses hammer-ons, 1-3 and 1-4:

EXERCISE



MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ This lesson's tune is "Dusty Blue." You'll use a Travis picking pattern and alternating bass on the A⁷, D⁷, and E⁷ chords. This accompanies the higher melodic notes and sounds great as a solo blues piece.
- ▶ In the last measure of a blues passage, if you want to repeat back to the top, you play something called a turnaround chord. In the key of A, that chord is an E⁷. Therefore, if you want to repeat back to the beginning, play E⁷ instead of A⁷ in the final measure.
- ▶ Work on improvising over the chords, using the A minor pentatonic or the A blues scale—especially licks that incorporate hammer-ons and pull-offs.

≈ DUSTY BLUE ≈

The image displays three staves of guitar tablature for the song "Dusty Blue". Each staff represents a 4/4 measure with a Travis picking pattern and alternating bass. The first staff has chords A⁷, D⁷, A⁷, and A⁷. The second staff has chords D⁷, D⁷, A⁷, and A⁷. The third staff has chords E⁷, D⁷, A⁷, and A⁷, ending with a turnaround chord E⁷ indicated by a double bar line and a vertical line with circles.





LESSON

13

Hammer-Ons and Pull-Offs

The guitar is appropriate to many musical roles. That makes it unusual for an instrument, unrivaled by any other than maybe the piano. Sometimes, guitarists need to be the harmonic and rhythmic backbone of a duo, trio, quartet or larger ensemble. They can provide the rhythmic comping behind a big band, like Freddie Greene did for Count Basie. Or, guitarists can gently accompany a singer like in the folk songs of Peter, Paul and Mary.

This lesson's closing song will demonstrate how the guitar can accompany the voice. But first, the lesson provides exercise that incorporate on hammer-ons and pull-offs.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ This module will expand your abilities with ascending and descending slurs (or, more colloquially, hammer-ons and pull-offs). Both played in succession are called combined slurs.
- ▶ Start in the 5th position, with the 1st finger on the 6th string (at the 5th fret). Pluck the string and hammer-on with the 2nd finger at the 6th fret. Now—without plucking again—pull-off from 2 to 1 (that is, from the 6th fret to the 5th). Again: pluck and hammer-on with the 2, and pull-off back to the 1.



- ▷ Make sure you play with the tip of the finger. Stay close to the front of the fret. And when you pull-off with the 2nd finger, keep it alongside the fret and move the tip of the finger directly downward with a snapping motion. Aim to achieve the same volume for all 3 notes: the original plucked note, the hammer-on, and the pull-off.
- ▷ Next, perform the reverse on the 5th string. Start with fingers 1 and 2 on the string at the 5th and 6th frets. Pluck and pull-off from 2 to 1. Then, hammer-on, from 1 to 2. After that, try once more: pluck, pull-off, hammer-on.
- ▷ To recap, on the 6th string, perform a hammer-on, then a pull-off. Do the opposite on the 5th string: Pull-off, then hammer-on. You can continue to work up the strings in the same way:
 - ▷ 4th string: Hammer-on, then pull-off.
 - ▷ 3rd string: Pull-off, then hammer-on.
 - ▷ 2nd string: Hammer-on, then pull-off.
 - ▷ 1st string: Pull-off, then hammer-on.
- ▷ Then, you can descend back down the strings in the same way.

EXERCISE

COMBINED SLURS

The image displays two musical staves for guitar exercises. Each staff is labeled with 'T' (Treble clef), 'A' (Acoustic guitar), and 'B' (Bass clef). The first staff contains a sequence of notes: 5-6-5, 6-5-6, 5-6-5, 6-5-6, 5-6-5, 6-5-6. Slurs are placed over the first two notes of each triplet, and over the last two notes of each triplet. The second staff contains a similar sequence: 5-6-5, 6-5-6, 5-6-5, 6-5-6, 5-6-5, 6-5-6. Slurs are placed over the first two notes of each triplet, and over the last two notes of each triplet.

- ▷ You can also expand this exercise to work on the other finger groupings. These finger groupings include 2-3, 3-4, 2-4, 1-4, and 1-3.
- ▷ This is a great strengthening and flexibility exercise for the left hand. You can use the technique of combined slurs both for single-line melodies and when playing chords, as you'll see in the song at the end of this lesson.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▷ This module reviews the notes on the lower 3 strings (E, A, and D). The exercise is written in the key of E major. The key signature for E major has 4 sharps: F#, C#, G# and D#. The notes you'll be using are:
 - ▷ E on the open 6th string.
 - ▷ F# on the 6th string, with the 2nd finger at the 2nd fret.
 - ▷ G# on the 6th string, with the 4th finger at the 4th fret.
 - ▷ A on the open 5th string.
 - ▷ B on the 5th string, with the 2nd finger at the 2nd fret.
 - ▷ C# on the 5th string, with the 4th finger at the 4th fret.
 - ▷ D# on the 4th string, with the 1st finger on the 1st fret.
 - ▷ E on the 4th string, with the 2nd finger on the 2nd fret.
 - ▷ F# on the 4th string, with the 4th finger on the 4th fret.
- ▷ Now for a new notation symbol: the natural sign. The natural sign cancels out a sharp or flat and returns the note to its natural, unaltered pitch. Here's what it looks like: ♮
- ▷ In the key of E major, if you want to indicate an F natural, you'd place a natural sign in front of the note. That cancels out the F#. This holds effect through the entire measure.
- ▷ In this exercise, you'll start in E major, but finish in E minor. You'll find natural signs in front of the notes D, C, and G in the latter half.

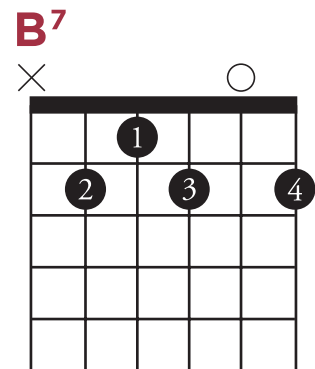
EXERCISE

MODULE 3: Chords

Next, you'll learn the last of the dominant sevenths that you'll play using open chords. These are **B⁷**, **C⁷**, and **G⁷**. Dominant chords contain 4 notes and sound less stable compared to the major and minor chords. These chords are not resting places. They push the music forward to reach a resolution.

The B⁷ and C⁷ chords use all 4 fingers of the left hand. Here's how to play B⁷:

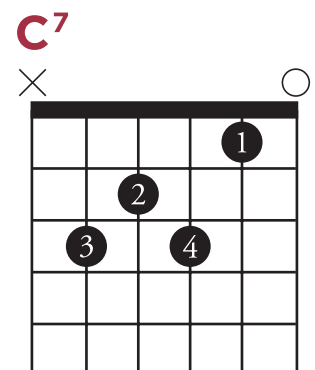
- ▶ The 2nd finger goes on the 5th string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ The 1st finger is on the 4th string at the 1st fret.
- ▶ The 3rd finger goes on the 3rd string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ The 4th finger goes on the 1st string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ The B string is open, and you don't play the low 6th string.



The B⁷ chord resolves to E.

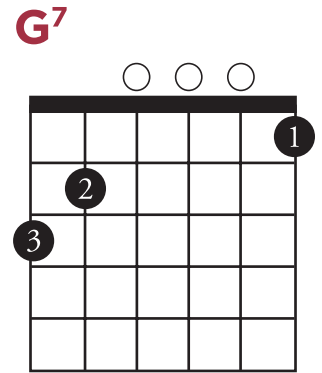
The C⁷ chord starts with the shape for C major, and then adds 1 finger. Here's the pattern:

- ▶ The 3rd finger goes on the 5th string at the 3rd fret.
- ▶ The 2nd finger goes on the 4th string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ The 1st finger goes on the 2nd string at the 1st fret.



- › Finally, add the 4th finger on the 3rd string at the 3rd fret. This is what makes it a seventh chord.
- › The first string is open, and you won't play the low 6th string.

- ▷ The G⁷ chord has 3 strings open: the 4th, 3rd, and 2nd.
 - › Place your 3rd finger on the 6th string at the 3rd fret.
 - › Place your 2nd finger on the 5th string at the 2nd fret.
 - › The 1st finger goes on the 1st string at the 1st fret.



- ▷ The shape of the chord resembles the C, but it's a wider, more expanded version. The stretch can be a bit challenging. Keep your fingers on their tips, and at the front of the frets, so that you can hear all 6 strings ring.
- ▷ The G⁷ resolves to C. Try switching back and forth a few times.

MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▷ This module expands the E major scale to all 6 strings, in 1st position. The key signature for E major indicates that it has 4 sharps.

E MAJOR SCALE

- ▷ Here's how to play 1 octave of the scale:
 - ▷ Begin with the open E on the 6th string.
 - ▷ Next, play the 2nd finger at the 2nd fret (that's F#).
 - ▷ Then, use the 4th finger at the 4th fret for G#.
 - ▷ Next, it's the open 5th string for A.
 - ▷ Then, move the 2nd finger to the 2nd fret for B.
 - ▷ Next, play the 4th finger at the 4th fret for C#.
 - ▷ Then, use the 1st finger on the 1st fret of the 4th string for D#.
 - ▷ Next, it's the 2nd finger on the 2nd fret for E. That completes 1 octave of the scale.

- ▷ To continue onto the next octave, place the 4th finger on the 4th fret of the 4th string for F#.
 - ▷ Then, play the 1st fret of the 3rd string for G#.
 - ▷ Next, it's the 2nd finger on the 2nd fret for A.
 - ▷ Then, play open B on the 2nd string.
 - ▷ From there, place the 2nd finger on the 2nd fret for C#.
 - ▷ Next, place the 4th finger on the 4th fret for D#.
 - ▷ Finally, play the open 1st string E.

- ▷ You can descend in the same manner, following the opposite order.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▷ This module's song is called "Telluride." It uses the E, A and B⁷ chords. There's also a fingerstyle accompaniment pattern, but with a twist: a hammer-on/pull-off lick on the E and A chords.

- ▶ It begins with one hammer-on, and keeps climbing from there: On each E chord, play the lowest 4 strings at the same time, then add a hammer-on/pull-off with the 4th finger on the 3rd string. Then, continue with the ring, middle, and index fingers on the top 3 strings.
- ▶ On the A chord, start with just the 2nd and 1st fingers on the strings, and then hammer-on and pull-off with the 3rd finger at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ You'll play strings 5, 4, 3, and 2 with all 4 fingers of the right hand. Then, continue with the ring, middle and index fingers on the top 3 strings.
- ▶ For the B⁷ chord, use the right-hand pattern p-p-i-a-m-i on strings 5, 4, 3, then strings 1, 2, 3. There's a little pause in the rhythm after you play the first string.
- ▶ For the accompaniment pattern on each chord, there is a rhythmic tie from the "and" of count 2 to count 3. That gives this accompaniment its lilting sound. The melody also uses lots of ties, as well as open strings.
- ▶ You can improvise over the accompaniment using the E major scale. Use your ear, and remember that leaving out the 4th and 7th tones of the scale creates the major pentatonic. To hear the vocalist's part, refer to the video.

≈ TELLURIDE ≈

ACCOMPANIMENT PATTERN THROUGHOUT

The musical notation shows the accompaniment pattern for three chords: E, A, and B⁷. The key signature is E major (three sharps) and the time signature is 4/4. The notation is written on a grand staff with a treble clef. The E chord section consists of two measures: the first measure has a rhythmic tie from the second beat to the third, and the second measure has a rhythmic tie from the second beat to the third. The A chord section consists of two measures: the first measure has a rhythmic tie from the second beat to the third, and the second measure has a rhythmic tie from the second beat to the third. The B⁷ chord section consists of two measures: the first measure has a rhythmic tie from the second beat to the third, and the second measure has a rhythmic tie from the second beat to the third. The notation includes fingerings and a 'T' (thumb) marking for the first string in the B⁷ measure.

CONTINUED 

E A E

T
A
B

E A B⁷

T
A
B

E A E

T
A
B

A B⁷ E

T
A
B





LESSON

14

Finger Independence and Chord Theory

In this course, you've been working extensively with the musical concepts of melody (usually based on a major scale); harmony (the supporting chords underneath a melody); and rhythm. And you've started to see that certain chords sound nice together. But why do people like that? What chords and tones work well together? And which of them don't? In this lesson, you'll explore these questions in detail.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ Developing independent motion between the fingers of the left hand is challenging—and absolutely essential if you want to master the guitar.
- ▶ This module aims to loosen up those fingers to make them more independent and increase their vertical dexterity when moving across strings.
- ▶ Now for an exercise: Start at the 5th fret on the 3rd string. Place the 1st finger at the 5th fret, the 2nd finger at the 6th fret, the 3rd finger at the 7th fret, and the pinky on the 8th fret.
- ▶ Keep the fingers on the tips and at the front of the fret. The thumb is positioned behind the neck, opposite the 1st and 2nd fingers. Keep your wrist straight and the forearm at a roughly 90-degree angle to the neck. Now, imagine your fingers being secured to the neck with strong glue.



- ▶ Next, un-glue your 1st finger and make it lightweight. Without moving any of those other glued-on fingers, alternate the 1st finger between strings 5 (the A) and 1 (the high E) on the 5th fret.
- ▶ Now, try the same exercise, making the 2nd finger lightweight and repeating that alternating motion between the between 5th and 2nd strings (the B), now at the 6th fret. This might be more difficult: Guitarists often struggle to keep the 2nd and 3rd fingers from following each other.
- ▶ Next, put all 4 fingers back on the string, and once again check your position. Continue with 3rd finger. Make it light and alternate between the 5th and 2nd strings (the low A and the high B). This is a finger-independence exercise, so minimize the movement of the hand and wrist as well.
- ▶ Finish up with the 4th finger alternating between strings 5 and 2.
- ▶ After you've mastered this, you can make the exercise harder in 2 ways. First, increase the distance you're traveling, from the 5th to the 1st string. You can even try to reach from the 6th to the 1st string.
- ▶ The second way to make the original exercise more demanding is to move the exercise lower on the neck, where the frets are wider. This is a very effective exercise, especially as part of a daily warm-up routine.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ You've already learned 2 different ways to play a 1-octave G major scale. Now, you'll expand that knowledge and master a 2-octave G major scale as it's written in staff notation. The key signature for G major contains 1 sharp, so every F written on the staff is raised to F#.

G MAJOR SCALE — 2 OCTAVES

The image shows two staves of musical notation for a 2-octave G major scale in treble clef, 4/4 time. The first staff represents the ascending scale, and the second staff represents the descending scale. Fret numbers are written above each note to indicate finger placement.

Ascending Scale (Staff 1): 3, 0, 2, 3, 0, 2, 4, 0, 2, 0, 1, 3, 0, 2, 3

Descending Scale (Staff 2): 3, 2, 0, 3, 1, 0, 2, 0, 4, 2, 0, 3, 2, 0, 3

- ▷ Start with your 3rd finger on the 3rd fret of the 6th string to play G. Then continue:
 - ▷ Play the open A string.
 - ▷ Then, place your 2nd finger on the 2nd fret for B.
 - ▷ Next, it's the 3rd finger on the 3rd fret for C.
 - ▷ Then, move to the open 4th string for D.
 - ▷ Next, place your 2nd finger on the 2nd fret for E.
 - ▷ After that, it's the 4th finger on the 4th fret for F[#].
 - ▷ Then, play the open 3rd string for G.
 - ▷ Next, move the 2nd finger to the 2nd fret for A.
 - ▷ After that, play the open 2nd string B.
 - ▷ Move the 1st finger to the 1st fret for C.
 - ▷ Then, place the 3rd finger on the 3rd fret for D.
 - ▷ Follow that with the open E string.
 - ▷ Then, place the 2nd finger on the 2nd fret for F[#].
 - ▷ Finally, place the 3rd finger on the 3rd fret for G.

- ▷ You can descend by following the notes in reverse.

- ▷ It can be a stretch to reach up to the 4th fret for the F[#] on the 4th string. Get as close to the front of the fret as you can. Practice the scale slowly at first so you can get used to this.

- ▷ Next, you'll learn about a rhythmic value called a dotted quarter note. Adding a dot to any note increases the value of the original note by half of its original value, so the value of the dotted quarter note is 1 1/2 beats. That's the same as a quarter note tied to an eighth note. For example, in a $\frac{4}{4}$ measure, you could have two dotted quarters followed by a quarter. You'd count this as "1 (& 2) & (3 &) 4."

EXERCISE



- ▶ Next, you'll play a passage in G major that incorporates notes from all 6 strings of the guitar along with some dotted quarter-note rhythms. (You'll be using this dotted quarter note rhythm in the melody for the song at the end of the lesson.)

EXERCISE



MODULE 3: Chords

- ▶ Music theory, as a discipline, seeks to answer questions about how music works, such as: Why do certain chords and scales sound good together? How can people talk about the construction of music with others? The answers provide insight that helps musicians develop their ideas and craft.
- ▶ Chord theory looks specifically at the relationship between scales—and the chords that can be constructed from those scales. For example, with any major scale, musicians can construct triads—that is, chords (or combinations of 3 notes)—on every note of the scale.
- ▶ A triad built on the first note of the G scale would add the 3rd and 5th notes. These are called scale degrees.

- ▷ A triad built on the 2nd note (or degree) of the scale would consist of the scale degrees 2, 4, and 6. A chord built on the 3rd note (or degree) of the scale would consist of scale degrees 3, 5, and 7. And so on.
- ▷ After developing triads for all 7 notes of the scale, the following pattern emerges for chords constructed on the notes of the major scale: major, minor, minor, major, major, minor, diminished.
- ▷ Chords are identified with Roman numerals. I, IV and V are major triads (or chords). Lowercase Roman numerals signify minor chords: ii, iii, and vi.
- ▷ Taking the idea one step from the abstract to the concrete, here are the names of the triads built on a G major scale:
 - ▷ I: G major
 - ▷ ii: A minor
 - ▷ iii: B minor
 - ▷ IV: C major
 - ▷ V: D major
 - ▷ vi: E minor
- ▷ Now for a word of vocabulary: *diatonic*, which refers to the proper notes of any given key before introducing chromatic alteration (such as an added flat or sharp). In the G major scale, the diatonic chords are G major, A minor, B minor, C major, D major, and E minor.
- ▷ They sound harmonious when played in sequence, just like the notes of the major scale do. You might already have noticed this in songs that you know. Train your mind to recognize these patterns, and your ear to listen for them.

MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▶ When trying to put together coherent solo phrases, playing patterns of the scale based on triads is a great way to begin. This module looks at some patterns that are useful in improvisation—and for further improving your listening ear—by putting to work the triads from the G major scale that you just learned.
- ▶ Start with the notes in the G major triad. These are the 1st, 3rd, and 5th notes of the G major scale.
- ▶ Next is the A minor triad, formed by the 2nd, 4th, and 6th notes.
- ▶ Now try the B minor triad, formed by the 3rd, 5th, and 7th notes.
- ▶ Then try the C triad, formed by the 4th, 6th, and 1st notes.
- ▶ Next up is the D major triad, formed by the 5th, 7th, and 2nd notes.
- ▶ Finally, there is the E minor triad, formed by the 6th, 1st, and 3rd notes.

EXERCISE

G MAJOR DIATONIC ARPEGGIO PATTERNS

The image displays two musical staves. The top staff is in treble clef, 4/4 time, showing the G major scale: G (quarter), A (quarter), B (quarter), C (quarter), D (quarter), E (quarter), F# (quarter), G (half). The bottom staff is in guitar tablature, 4/4 time, showing two patterns. The first pattern, labeled 'G', has fret numbers 3, 3, 0, 0, 2, 4, with a circled 4. The second pattern, labeled 'Am', has fret numbers 2, 1, 0, 1, 0, 0, with a circled 2.

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The first system is for chords Bm and C. The Bm system consists of two measures: the first measure has a melody of G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), and G4 (quarter), with a bass line of 0-3-2-4; the second measure has a melody of A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), and F#4 (quarter), with a bass line of 2-2-0. The C system consists of two measures: the first measure has a melody of G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), and G4 (quarter), with a bass line of 1-0-3-0; the second measure has a melody of A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), and F#4 (quarter), with a bass line of 3-0-1. The second system is for chords D and Em. The D system consists of two measures: the first measure has a melody of G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), and G4 (quarter), with a bass line of 2-3-0-3; the second measure has a melody of A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), and F#4 (quarter), with a bass line of 0-2-0. The Em system consists of two measures: the first measure has a melody of G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), and G4 (quarter), with a bass line of 3-3-0-0; the second measure has a melody of A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), and F#4 (quarter), with a bass line of 0-2-2.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ This lesson’s song is called “The Old Stone Chapel.” The melody is played on the 1st and 2nd strings, and is taken from the G major scale. The rhythm contains some dotted quarter notes. The accompaniment is fingerstyle. Playing in the key of G, you’ll make use of the I, ii, IV, V and vi triads.
- ▶ The right-hand accompaniment pattern is p–i–m–i–a–i–m–i for each measure where a chord is held for 4 counts. It is p–i–m–a–p–i–m–a whenever a chord is held for 2 counts.
- ▶ First, try improvising over the chords, using the G major scale. In particular, try incorporating some of the diatonic arpeggio patterns you learned above. In other words, on the G chord, play the arpeggio for G major (the 1st, 3rd and 5th notes of the scale). Then over the A minor chord, try the 2nd, 4th and 6th notes of the scale. And so on.
- ▶ Second, try combining the melody and chords at the same time.
- ▶ For a demonstration and to hear vocal accompaniment, refer to the video.

THE OLD STONE CHAPEL

G Em C D

pimi aimi

0 1 3 0 3 2

Detailed description: This block contains the first line of music. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4 (0), A4 (1), B4 (3), G4 (0), A4 (3), and B4 (2). Chords G, Em, C, and D are indicated above the staff. A red vocal line above the staff shows the lyrics 'pimi aimi' with corresponding notes: p (G4), i (A4), m (B4), i (G4), a (A4), i (B4).

G Em C D

0 1 3 4 0 3 1 0 2

Detailed description: This block contains the second line of music. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4 (0), A4 (1), B4 (3), C5 (4), G4 (0), A4 (3), B4 (1), A4 (0), and G4 (2). Chords G, Em, C, and D are indicated above the staff.

Em Am Am C D

pima

3 2 0 3 1 2 0 1 3 0 3 2

Detailed description: This block contains the third line of music. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4 (3), F#4 (2), E4 (0), G4 (3), F#4 (1), G4 (2), E4 (0), F#4 (1), G4 (3), E4 (0), G4 (3), and F#4 (2). Chords Em, Am, Am, C, and D are indicated above the staff. A red vocal line above the staff shows the lyrics 'pima' with corresponding notes: p (G4), i (F#4), m (E4), a (G4).

G Em C D G

0 1 3 0 3 2 3

Detailed description: This block contains the fourth line of music. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes: G4 (0), A4 (1), B4 (3), G4 (0), A4 (3), B4 (2), and G4 (3). Chords G, Em, C, D, and G are indicated above the staff.



- ▶ The symbols that look like staples represent downstrokes, while the V-like symbols represent upstrokes. Listen to make sure that your rhythm is steady and that the volume of each note is consistent. It should stay the same. Avoid overpowering on the downstrokes.
- ▶ Next, play 1 stroke per string. That's down on the 1st string, up on the 2nd string, down on the 3rd string, up on the 4th string, down on the 5th string, and up on the 6th string. Then go back up:

EXERCISE

- ▶ This exercise becomes more challenging as you speed up. Set your metronome at a relatively slow, comfortable pace, and play what you just learned, using eighth notes. Once you can play cleanly at that slow tempo, gradually increase the speed on your metronome.
- ▶ For an extra challenge, try skipping across strings. For example, instead on starting on the 1st string and working your way successively down to the 6th string, you might start with the 1st string, then skip to the 3rd, then the 5th, followed by the 6th, 4th, and 2nd. Try that first with down-up picking on each string:

EXERCISE

- ▶ Then try it with just 1 stroke per string:

EXERCISE

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ This module includes a melody that doesn't introduce any new notes or rhythms, but will challenge your playing by alternating frequently between the lower and upper strings. You'll move across the strings frequently. Consistently alternate pick through the entire exercise, playing down-up-down-up in each measure.

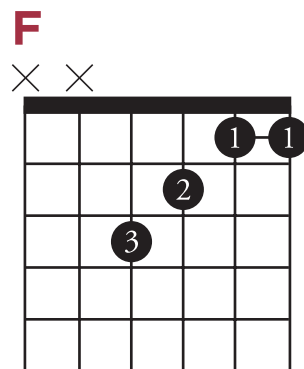
EXERCISE

3 0 0 1 3 1 0 3 0 3 0 2 3 2 0 1

2 3 1 0 2 1 0 0 3 1 0 1 2

MODULE 3: Chords

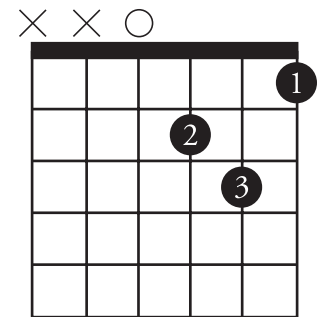
- ▶ The F major chord—which is one of the essential chords in the key of C—involves a new left-hand technique called the barre. Barring refers to playing multiple strings on 1 fret with the same finger. It involves using the flat part of the finger rather than just the tip.
- ▶ A later lesson will cover the barre in more detail; for now, you'll just try the **F** chord.
 - ▶ Cover the 1st and 2nd strings with your index finger flattened at the 1st fret.
 - ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 3rd string (G) at the 2nd fret.
 - ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 4th string (D) at the 3rd fret.
 - ▶ Play just the top 4 strings. The trick is to keep the 1st finger flattened for the barre, but the 2nd and 3rd fingers curled—and on their tips.



▷ Next, try the **Dm** chord.

- ▷ Place your 2nd finger on the 3rd string (G) at the 2nd fret.
- ▷ Place your 1st finger on the 1st string (high E) at the 1st fret.
- ▷ You may use the ring finger or the pinky—whichever feels more comfortable—on the 2nd string (B) at the 3rd fret. Some people prefer the pinky (or 4th finger) because their hand doesn't feel stretched out that way.
- ▷ Play only the top 4 strings, just as with the D major and D⁷ chords.

Dm



▷ Alternating back and forth between the F and D minor chords is excellent practice at forming the barre and then releasing it. Leave the 2nd finger in place as the common finger as you switch.

MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

▷ The C major scale is a bit challenging, but not greatly so. For a 1-octave C major, this module will begin with the C on the 5th string at the 3rd fret.

C MAJOR SCALE

3 0 2 3 0 2 0 1 1 0 2 0 3 2 0 3

T 4/4
A 4/4
B 4/4

3 0 2 3 0 2 0 1 1 0 2 0 3 2 0 3

▷ Continue as such:

- ▷ Play the open D string.
- ▷ Place your 2nd finger at the 2nd fret for E.
- ▷ Place your 3rd finger at the 3rd fret for F.

- Switch to the open 3rd string G.
 - Place your 2nd finger at the 2nd fret for A.
 - Play the open 2nd string B.
 - Then, place your 1st finger at the 1st fret for C.
- Come back down the same way:
- From C, play an open B.
 - Play the 3rd string, 2nd finger A.
 - Switch to the open G.
 - Play the 4th string, 3rd finger F.
 - Switch to the 2nd finger E.
 - Play the open D.
 - Conclude with the 5th string, 3rd fret C.
- If you extend the scale over the full range of the 1st position, you can go all the way down to the low E and up to G on the 3rd fret of the 1st string. It's useful to think of this extended scale when improvising.
- Here's the entire scale through the range of notes this course has covered.

“EXTENDED” C MAJOR SCALE

0 1 3 0 2 3 0 2 3 0 2 0 1 3 0 1

3 1 0 3 1 0 2 0 3 2 0 3 2 0 3 1 0

- ▷ That begins with the open 6th string E.
 - From there, play the 1st finger, 1st fret F.
 - Next up is the 3rd finger, 3rd fret G.
 - Then, play the open 5th string A.
 - After that is the 2nd finger, 2nd fret B.
 - Then, play the 3rd finger, 3rd fret C.
 - Switch to the open D.
 - From there, play the 2nd finger, 2nd fret E.
 - After that is the 3rd finger, 3rd fret F.
 - Switch to the open 3rd string G.
 - Next, play the 2nd finger, 2nd fret A.
 - After that comes the open 2nd string B.
 - Then, play the 1st finger, 1st fret C.
 - Next up is the 3rd finger, 3rd fret D.
 - From there, play the open 1st string E.
 - Then comes the 1st finger, 1st fret F.
 - Conclude with the 3rd finger, 3rd fret G.



- ▷ As an added exercise, go back and try extended versions of the scales you've learned previously. This reinforces the idea of the scales as a pool of notes, rather than being fixed by the tonic at the bottom (and again at the top).

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▷ When Marshall Grant, Luther Perkins, and Johnny Cash started playing music together in 1954, all 3 of them had guitars, but none of them was very accomplished. They figured out very quickly that they needed to find a way to distinguish their sound.
- ▷ Grant bought a standup bass for \$25. Perkins—who could pick out single notes only very slowly—deadened the strings with the palm of his hand, which made mistakes less obvious. Cash was left to play rhythm, because he did most of the singing. But he fed paper through the strings to sound like the brushes on a snare drum.
- ▷ This module's tune, "I Watch the Time," takes inspiration from that style. The song features chords in the key of C major: C, D minor, F, G⁷, and A minor. You'll be using your pick to bring out a bass-note melody.

~ I WATCH THE TIME ~

A

C F

C G⁷

C

B

Am Dm

Am Dm G⁷

C G⁷ C



 **NOTES**

Handwriting practice area consisting of 10 sets of four horizontal lines, providing a guide for letter height and placement.



LESSON

16

Piano-Style Guitar and Fingernail Care

Fingernail care is important for guitarists: Once you figure out the advantages of playing with perfectly shaped and maintained nails, you won't want to go back. Tone (and ease of playing) are much improved. This lesson opens with some tips on fingernail care, and then moves into some exercises that show how fingernails can come in handy.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ Why do classical guitarists grow and maintain fingernails on their right hands? The main reasons are greater control, more volume, and—most importantly—better tone.
- ▶ If you strike the string with just the pad of the finger—that is, without the nail—the release point is slightly different each time. But with the nail, you can be assured that the string will come off exactly the same way every time.
- ▶ The sound is louder. The tone is more focused. And by changing where on the string you play—between the bridge and the 12th fret—you can achieve your choice of a metallic or rounder, more mellow sound.
- ▶ If you'd like to try this for yourself, grow out your nails on your right hand until you can see them showing above the fingertip (when you hold your palm facing you). To get an idea of the proper length, try holding a nail file against the end of the finger so that it touches both the fingernail and fleshy tip.



- ▷ If the file is straight up and down—perpendicular, with the finger at a 90-degree angle—that’s a pretty good length. If the angle is less than 90 degrees, grow the nail out a little longer.
- ▷ Once you have the proper length nail, you want to shape it with a metal nail file. Metal is ideal because it doesn’t give way, like a cheap emory board, and metal files last for years.
- ▷ There are 2 different angles to keep in mind. The first is across the tip of the nail. You want a ramp-shaped nail that rises from low on one side to high on the other.
- ▷ With some players, the high point of the ramp is closest to the thumb, that is, on the left side. But some players feel more comfortable with the ramp inclined the opposite direction. Either way, the string stays on the nail longer: It rides up the ramp and releases at the end, giving a rich sound without an annoying click.

- ▷ The second angle is called the undercut. This is what you find when you view the nail’s profile from the side. Place your metal file against the tip of the nail. If the angle is too shallow, you might feel the nail hook—or catch—against the string. To avoid this, aim for about a 45-degree angle for the profile of the nail.



- ▷ The next step is to clean and polish the nail. Even with the proper shape, your playing won’t sound as good as it could if nicks and scratches mar the side of the nail. Rough nails also set you up for painful splinters, bends, tears, and breaks.
- ▷ First, polish the nail with fine-grade sandpaper; 500 or 600 grit works well. You can fold a little piece and work all over the surface, edge, and underside of the nail. When done, you can use a very fine buffing board to get a final shine.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ The piano is a wonderful instrument, and one of its attractions is that a pianist can play accompaniment and melody at the same time. An advantage to playing fingerstyle guitar is that you can imitate the piano in regard to playing melody and accompaniment simultaneously: right-hand thumb on the bass line, and fingers picking out the melody fingered by the left hand.
- ▶ You're going to put this principle in action with an original song at the end of this lesson. But first, this module helps you practice your note reading and technique.
- ▶ Start with your right-hand thumb on the low E 6th string and your index, middle, and ring fingers on the top 3 open strings.
 - ▶ Next, play p and i (or thumb and index) at the same time.
 - ▶ Now, play p and m (that's the thumb and middle finger).
 - ▶ Next, play p and a (thumb and ring finger).
- ▶ Now, reverse the order: p and a at the same time, then p and m at the same time, and finally, p and i at the same time.
- ▶ In the next exercise, you'll put this principle of simultaneous plucking into action, using open bass strings along with a melody on strings 1,2, and 3. Make sure to follow the right-hand finger indications carefully:

Listen to make sure that you're playing each pair of notes precisely together. Guitarists in training often produce a slight delay between bass and treble note.

i m a m i a m i i m a

a m i m a m i a m

EXERCISE

MODULE 3: Chords

- ▷ Chords are building blocks in music. Understanding how they are constructed provides musicians with insights into the relationship between chords and melodies.
- ▷ When you build triads (or 3-note chords) on each note of the major scale, you derive a pattern of major, minor, and—on the seventh scale degree—a diminished chord.
- ▷ These names (major, minor, diminished) are known as chord qualities. That doesn't mean one is better or more desirable than another. It's just a descriptive term.
- ▷ The pattern of diatonic chords derived from a major scale is:
 - ▷ I: major.
 - ▷ ii: minor.
 - ▷ iii: minor.
 - ▷ IV: major.
 - ▷ V: major.
 - ▷ vi: minor.
 - ▷ vii^o: diminished.
- ▷ This is true for every major scale.
- ▷ So, what are the chords derived from the C major scale? The C major scale has no flats or sharps. The notes are C–D–E–F–G–A–B. Applying our formula—or pattern—the matching chords are:
 - ▷ C major.
 - ▷ D minor.
 - ▷ E minor.
 - ▷ F major.
 - ▷ G major.
 - ▷ A minor.
 - ▷ B diminished.

- ▷ Now, what about D major? The D major scale includes two sharps, as follows: D–E–F#–G–A–B–C#. Making use of chord formula, or pattern, the chords are:
 - ▷ D major.
 - ▷ E minor.
 - ▷ F# minor.
 - ▷ G major.
 - ▷ A major.
 - ▷ B minor.
 - ▷ C# diminished.

- ▷ A common sequence of chords in popular music is the I–IV–V progression, following the pattern identified above. The I–IV–V progression in C major consists of the chords C–F–G. In D major, it's D–G–A. In G major, it's G–C–D.

- ▷ Take a look at the chords in some of your favorite songs. You'll begin to see and hear patterns like the I–IV–V. And this will make it easier for you to learn and memorize songs, and perhaps even start composing music of your own.

MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▷ The A major scale contains 3 sharps: F#, C#, and G#. To help you play a 2-octave A major scale on the guitar, this module will introduce new note: the high A, which is notated one line above the staff, and played on the 1st string at the 5th fret.

A MAJOR SCALE



- ▷ Start with the 5th string with the open A.
 - ▶ Now play the 2nd finger, 2nd fret B.
 - ▶ Next comes the 4th finger, 4th fret C#.
 - ▶ Then it's the open D
 - ▶ Next up is the 2nd finger, 2nd fret E.
 - ▶ After that, play the 4th finger, 4th fret F#
 - ▶ Now it's the 3rd string, 1st fret G#.
 - ▶ From there, play the 2nd finger, 2nd fret A.
 - ▶ Next is the B on the open 2nd string.
 - ▶ After that, play the 2nd finger, 2nd fret C#.
 - ▶ Then it's the 3rd finger, 3rd fret D.
 - ▶ Next is the open 1st string E.
 - ▶ Now, play the 2nd fret F#. But shift your left hand up the neck so that you play F# with your 1st finger, G# with your 3rd finger, and the high A (at the 5th fret) with your 4th finger.
 - ▶ You'll make this left-hand shift when you play the open E. When you play the F#, G#, and A, you'll be playing in 2nd position, as your 1st finger is on the 2nd fret. When you come back down the scale, shift back down to first position when you play the open E.

- ▷ Now that you know the notes in the A major scale, you also know the pattern of diatonic chords:
 - ▶ I: A major.
 - ▶ ii: B minor.
 - ▶ iii: C# minor.
 - ▶ IV: D major.
 - ▶ V: E major.

▶ vi: F# minor.

▶ vii°: G# diminished.

- ▶ Now, you'll run through some melodic patterns or licks that are based on the 7 chords in the key of A major. Some of these use hammer-ons and pull-offs, so follow the notation carefully:

A MAJOR ARPEGGIO PATTERNS

A Bm C#m

1 2 3 0 0 2 3 0 2 1 1 4 1 2 1 0 0 0 4 0 2

D E

2 3 1 2 0 2 3 2 1 0 0 2 0 0

F#m G#°

1 4 1 1 1 1 3 1 0 3 4 2 0 3



LESSON

17

Syncopated Strumming and Movable Scales

This lesson starts with a new exercise called chromatic octaves, designed to practice both your hand and finger technique as well as your note recollection. After that, you'll learn a new, final rhythmic notation: the dotted eighth note. The lesson's third module covers new patterns of chords, and the fourth module introduces something called movable scales.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ The chromatic octaves exercise complements the fact that you've learned all the notes in 1st position, including sharps and flats. As a reminder, an octave is the intervallic distance between 2 notes of the same name: from A to the next A, or D up to the next D. The chromatic scale contains all 12 semitones between.
- ▶ The chromatic octaves exercise works on left- and right-hand coordination, and hand position. And it's particularly good for flexibility. It may also help you learn your notes more thoroughly.
- ▶ Start on the 6th string, or low E, doubled on the E an octave above it. That's the 4th string, 2nd fret.
- ▶ Continue with the F. That's 1st finger at the 6th string and the 3rd finger on the 4th string. Continue this pattern until you finish at the G[#], which falls on the 1st fret of the 3rd string and the 4th fret of the 1st string.
- ▶ String for a smooth progression and even sound. On the right hand, your thumb should alternate with the index and middle fingers to grab those octave notes.



MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ It's time to learn one last rhythmic notation in this course, called the dotted eighth note. A dotted eighth note is three-quarters of a beat (an eighth plus a sixteenth note).
- ▶ You'll most frequently see a dotted eighth note followed by a sixteenth, counted "1 e & a." Try playing this rhythm on the open E string.

EXERCISE

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a

- ▶ The dotted eighth takes up the first three-sixteenths of the beat.
- ▶ Next, try this passage, using lots of chromatic notes and the new rhythm:

EXERCISE

0 3 4 1 0 3 1 0 2 1 2 3 4 1 2

3 0 2 3 2 3 2 0 3 4 0

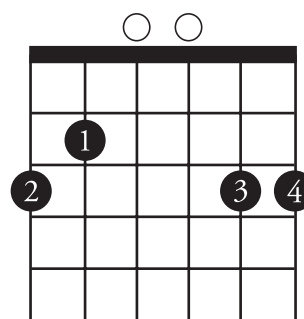
MODULE 3: Chords

- ▶ So far, you've learned triad chords (consisting of 3 pitches) and dominant seventh chords (containing 4 pitches). For example, a G major chord contains the notes G, B, and D. Those are the 1st, 3rd and 5th degrees of the G major scale. Playing these 3 pitches in any permutation is always G major. So, in other words, you can find many different ways to play this chord.
- ▶ In triads, you're normally doubling 1 or more notes. For instance, in the 1st-position C major chord, you have—from bottom to top—C, E, G, another C, and another E.
- ▶ Although you've been learning the most commonly used shapes for most chords, there are many others. One notable one is a particular pattern of G, C, and D. It allows you to keep a common finger through all 3 chords, giving a really consistent sound.

- ▶ For **G**:

- ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 6th string at the 3rd fret.
- ▶ Place your 1st finger on the 5th string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 2nd string at the 3rd fret.
- ▶ Place your 4th finger on the 1st string at the 3rd fret.

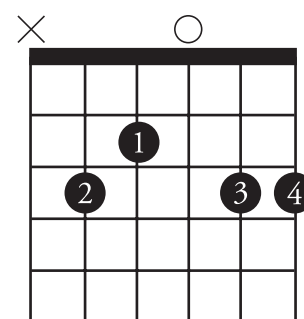
G



- ▶ For **C**:

- ▶ Leave your 3rd and 4th fingers where they are.
- ▶ Move your 2nd finger to the 5th string at the 3rd fret.
- ▶ Move your 1st finger to the 4th string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ This variant contains the D note—with your 3rd finger on the 2nd string—and so the chord is called C^{add9} (a condensed version of “C add 9”). The 9 refers to the D you've added 9 notes up from the tonic C. But it's in the same family as C major.

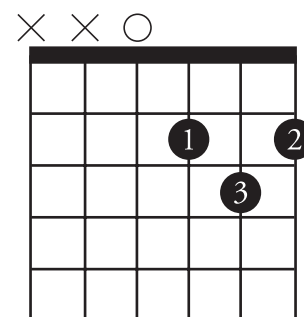
C^{add9}



- ▶ Now, try switching back and forth between the G and C^{add9} without lifting the 3rd and 4th fingers. This should be easy compared with the normal movement between C and G.

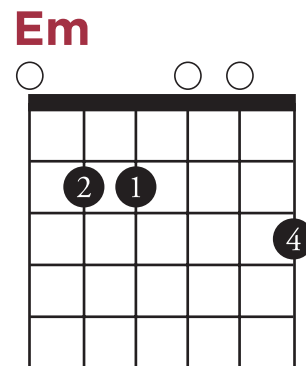
- ▶ You can play the **D** chord the way you normally do.

D



- ▷ Give this sequence a try: G, D, C^{add9}, D.
- ▷ E minor is another chord in G major that you can play with a common finger (the 4th) on the high G, as well. You just need to change your fingering a little. For **Em**:

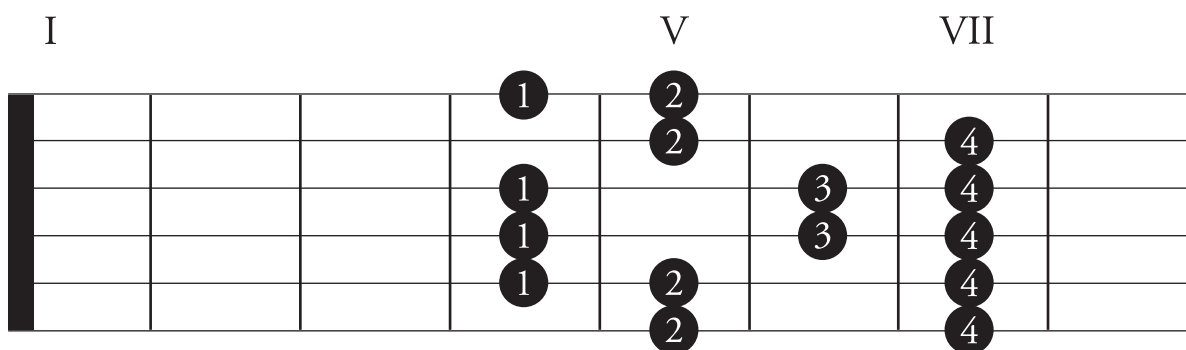
- ▷ Place your 2nd finger on the 5th string at the 2nd fret.
- ▷ Place your 1st finger on the 4th string at the 2nd fret.
- ▷ Keep your 4th finger on the 1st string at the 3rd fret.



MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▷ You've learned several scales in 1st position, and they require you to use different fingerings because the notes in each scale are different. But you can use the same fingering pattern for a variety of scales. These are called movable scales. The trick is to not use any open strings.
- ▷ Now, you'll learn a movable major scale starting on the 6th string: an A major scale. Start with your 2nd finger on the 6th string (at the 5th fret). This is an A. Next, play the entire A scale with no open strings.

A MAJOR SCALE



- ▷ Since the intervallic pattern of a major scale is always the same, all you have to do to make this A major scale into a B^b major scale is to start one fret higher (on the 6th fret), and play the same pattern.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ The rhythm of this lesson’s song, “Red Rocks,” is generated by the strumming pattern, which incorporates some sixteenth notes and a tie. One new trick is that you’re going to switch chords on an offbeat—the last sixteenth note of the second beat.
- ▶ First, try the pattern while holding the C^{add9} chord. Next, try it while shifting back and forth between C^{add9} and G. Then, try the entire sequence.
- ▶ The melody is in G major. Make sure you play the dotted eighth note and sixteenth note rhythms accurately. Finally, try improvising using the movable G major scale.

~ RED ROCKS ~

C G D Em C G D D

C G D Em C D G





LESSON

18

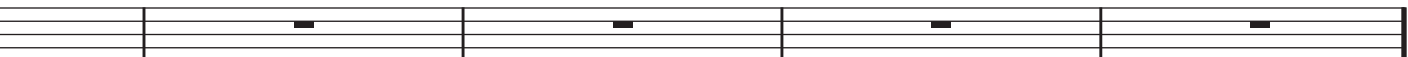
A New Pentatonic Scale and the Capo

This lesson returns to the principle of shifting, that is, moving up and down the neck of the guitar. This lesson also introduces the use of a new tool, the capo.

To review the basics of shifting before beginning the first module: The shifting motion comes mainly from the shoulder. As much as you can, keep your arm fixed in a straight line from the elbow to the hand. Your left-hand thumb should move along a straight line. When you shift up the neck to a new position, check that your thumb remains opposite your 1st and 2nd fingers. As you shift back down the neck, move the elbow out away from your torso, and slightly rotate your forearm outward to maintain proper hand position.

MODULE 1: Technique

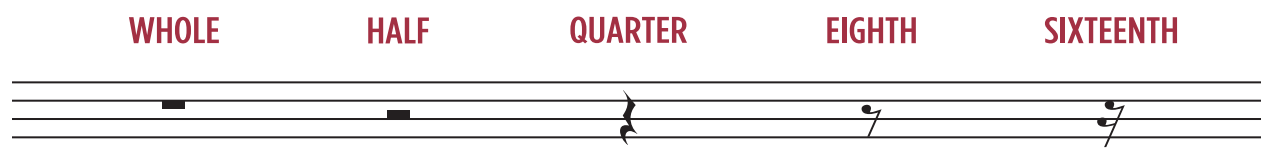
- ▶ This module begins with a 1-octave F major scale, all on the 1st string. Start with your 1st finger on the 1st fret F, and then the 3rd finger on G.
- ▶ Now, shift up so that your 1st finger is on the 5th fret (for the note A). You're now in 5th position on the neck of the guitar.
- ▶ Then continue with 2nd finger (that's a B^b) and then 4th finger (that's a C). Now, shift up again so that your 1st finger is on the 10th fret. That's the note D, and you're in 10th position.



- ▶ Then, place the 3rd finger on the 12th fret (for an E). Finish with the 4th finger on the 13th fret (F). That's one octave above the starting note.
- ▶ Now try descending, and then go back up the scale. Finally, for a big shift, try skipping from the lowest to the highest note, before descending one more time.
- ▶ Next, use a metronome to increase your speed and accuracy. Set your metronome to a slow tempo that feels comfortable. On each note of the scale, try playing two eighth notes with the right hand slowly.
- ▶ You can use a pick or alternate the fingers i and m. Then, without changing the pulse, switch to single eighth notes.

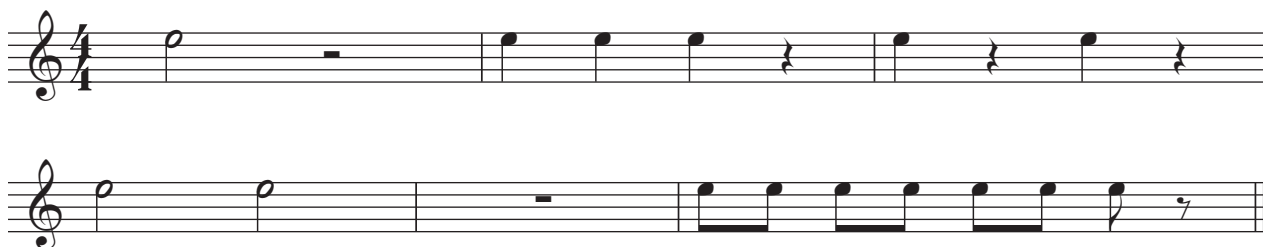
MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ Music consists of sound, but also of silences—or spaces—between notes. In music notation, the silences are indicated by symbols that designate rests. When you see a rest, you'll want to dampen the sound of the string. Usually, this is easiest to do with the right hand.
- ▶ Different symbols designate rests corresponding with the duration of each type of note, including quarter, eighth, half, and whole.
 - ▶ The whole rest is written as a filled-in rectangle that hangs from the 4th line of the staff. It looks like an upside-down hat, and tells a performer to remain silent for 4 beats.
 - ▶ The half rest is written as a filled rectangle that sits on the 3rd line of the staff. By itself, it looks like a hat right-side up. It tells a performer to remain silent for 2 beats.
 - ▶ The quarter rest is a squiggly vertical line that sits in the middle of the staff. It tells a performer to remain silent for 1 beat.
 - ▶ The eighth rest has the same duration as an eighth note. It's half of a beat, and its shape resembles a fancy-looking number 7.
 - ▶ The sixteenth rest has a similar shape as an eighth rest, but with 2 curved lines, just as a sixteenth note has 2 flags or beams.



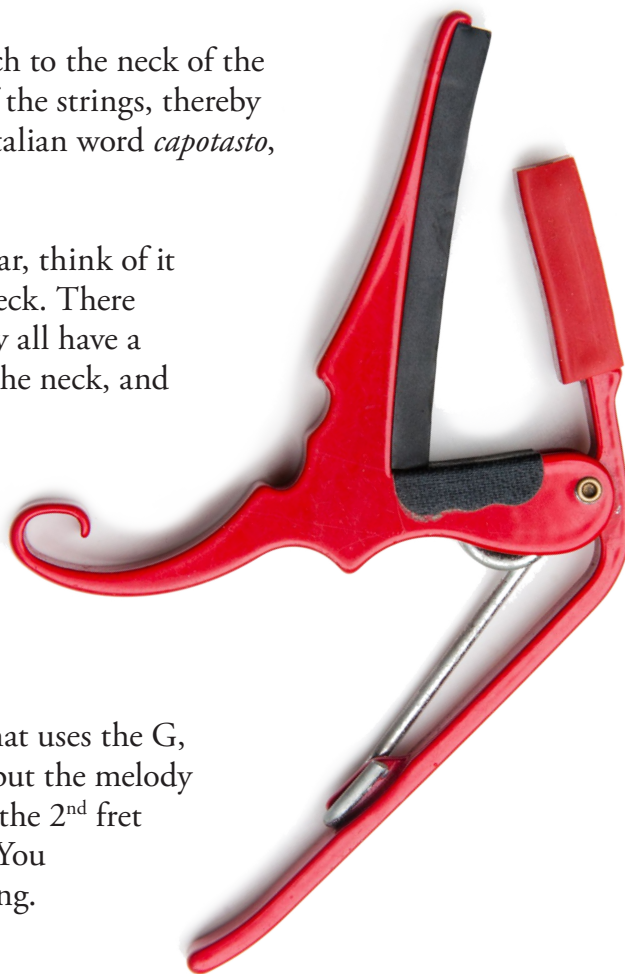
- ▷ Now you can play an exercise in $\frac{4}{4}$ meter that contains a variety of rests. Work on the open E string so that you can really focus on the rhythm:

EXERCISE



MODULE 3: Chords

- ▷ The guitar capo is a device that you can attach to the neck of the instrument to shorten the vibrating length of the strings, thereby raising the pitch. The term comes from the Italian word *capotasto*, meaning “head of the fretboard.”
- ▷ In applying the capo to the neck of your guitar, think of it as the nut on the headstock moving up the neck. There are different types of capos, but typically they all have a protective rubber surface that interacts with the neck, and compresses the strings.
- ▷ A capo is useful for transposing 1st-position melodies and chords to higher keys and different timbres. The same tune played in open position will sound much different than at the 2nd or 5th fret.
- ▷ For instance, let’s say you’ve learned a song that uses the G, C, and D chords. If you want to sing along, but the melody is too low for your voice, attaching a capo to the 2nd fret would make everything a whole step higher. You wouldn’t have to change what you were playing.



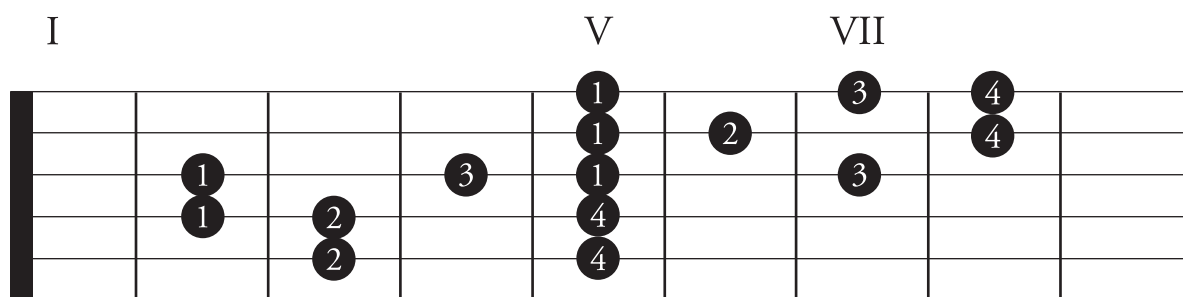
▷ To hear a capo in action, attach one at the 3rd fret, and play some open chords. Line the capo up close to the fret wire, but not directly on top of it. Make sure it's straight along the fret. And play the open strings to make sure it's attached correctly. Play the following chords and listen to their sound:

- ▷ A, A minor, A⁷
- ▷ A⁷, B⁷, C
- ▷ C⁷, D, D⁷
- ▷ D minor, E, E minor
- ▷ E⁷, F, G, and G⁷

MODULE 4: Scales and Melodic Patterns

- ▷ So far, you've learned movable pentatonic and major scales beginning with the root on the 6th string. In this lesson, you're going to learn these 2 scales with the root on the 5th string instead. Each requires a shift.
- ▷ You'll be playing a C major scale, so start with your 2nd finger on the 5th string, 3rd fret.

C MAJOR SCALE



- ▷ Continue with the 4th finger on the 5th fret.
- ▷ Then, on the 4th string, place your 1st finger on the 2nd fret.
- ▷ Next, the 2nd finger goes on the 3rd fret.
- ▷ The 4th finger goes on the 5th fret.

- Continue on the 3rd string, with the 1st finger at the 2nd fret.
 - Then, place your 3rd finger at the 4th fret.
 - Now, staying on the 3rd string, shift up to 5th position, so the 1st finger is at the 5th fret.
 - Then, place your 3rd finger at the 7th fret.
 - Next, move to the 2nd string, with your 1st finger at the 5th fret.
 - Then, place your 2nd finger at the 6th fret.
 - Continue with the 4th finger at the 8th fret.
 - Next, on the 1st string, place your 1st finger at the 5th fret.
 - Place your 3rd finger at the 7th fret.
 - Place your 4th finger at the 8th fret.
- Next up is a C minor pentatonic scale.
- Start on the 5th string, with your 1st finger at the 3rd fret C.
 - Then, place your 4th finger on the 6th fret.
 - Continue by moving to the 4th string, with your 1st finger on the 3rd fret.
 - Then, move your 3rd finger to the 5th fret.
 - Next, move to the 3rd string, placing your 1st finger on the 3rd fret.
 - Then, your 3rd finger goes on the 5th fret.
 - After that, move to the 2nd string, placing your 2nd finger on the 4th fret.
 - Then, the 4th finger goes on the 6th fret.
 - Next, move to the 1st string, placing your 1st finger at the 3rd fret.

- After that, the 4th finger goes to the 6th fret.
- To reach the high C and complete the scale, shift the 4th finger up 2 frets, to the 8th fret.
- You descend both of these scales in the same manner, but following the steps in reverse.
- To figure out where to start your new scales, you'll need to know all the notes on the 5th string. Here they are, by fret:
 - Open String: A
 - I: A[#] or B^b
 - II: B
 - III: C
 - IV: C[#] or D^b
 - V: D
 - VI: D[#] or E^b
 - VII: E
 - VIII: F
 - IX: F[#] or G^b
 - X: G
 - XI: G[#] or A^b
 - XII: A
- Now, if you want to play a G major scale, you have 3 options. You can play the scale in 1st position, using open strings. Or, you can start at the 6th string on the 3rd fret. Or, you can start on the 5th string at the 10th fret. Practicing and mastering these new positions and scales are important steps toward knowing the notes all over the neck.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ For this module's song, begin by putting your capo on the 3rd fret. This tune is an homage to the Eagles called "Hotel Colorado," and it uses a chord progression that you'll recognize: Am–E–G–D–F–C–Dm–E.
- ▶ For this song, you'll revive your Travis picking skills from Lesson 12 to produce a fingerpicking pattern over the chords. Place your i, m, and a fingers on the top 3 strings. Then, use your thumb to change between the bass notes, depending on the root of the chord: 6th string for G and E, 5th string for A minor and C, and 4th string for D, D minor, and F. The melody is played almost entirely on the 1st string, so you'll need to shift frequently.

≈ HOTEL COLORADO ≈

Capo at III
Picking Rhythm



Am E G D

F C Dm E





LESSON

19

Barre Chords: Movable Chords

This lesson introduces the barre chord, one of the most challenging—and most misunderstood—guitar techniques. Many players don't understand how to perform it correctly, and make it more difficult than it should be. It's basically a movable capo, so the finger must be perfectly straight to depress multiple strings. That's different from what we normally aim for as guitarists, which is to play with the tips of our fingers (and curve all three joints of the finger). Barres can tire the left hand when performed incorrectly, so this lesson will look at some elements for success.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ Correct posture is especially important when learning a new technique like a barre. Start by making sure that the neck of the guitar is angled upward.
- ▶ The finger must be completely straight, and it must contact all the strings, for the barre to succeed. Begin by straightening your 1st finger and placing it against the fret. Use the weight of your hand and arm to lean into the fret.
- ▶ Can you feel all 6 strings? If so, then the chord is safe from buzzing.
- ▶ When guitarists first learn the barre, they often curl the finger up in the middle. As a result, the middle strings won't sound fully. Therefore, you should pay attention to the contact between the finger and those middle (2nd, 3rd, and 4th) strings.
- ▶ Next, check your thumb position. It should be opposite the 1st finger for balance. Don't clamp like a vice. A barre does not entail pushing the thumb into the back of the neck.



- ▶ After that, rotate the barre finger slightly toward the thumb, which is a counterclockwise motion. You want to use the hard bone of the finger as much as possible. This movement shifts the finger's contact point towards the side, where the flesh is thinner. It helps to drop the elbow toward your body.
- ▶ To review: Check your posture; straighten the 1st finger; use the weight of your arm and hand to contact all 6 strings; balance the thumb and 1st finger; drop the elbow and rotate your finger slightly counterclockwise.
- ▶ Now, play each string 1 at a time, paying special attention to the middle strings (2, 3, and 4). A barre that spans across all 6 strings is called a full barre. When you barre fewer strings, as with the F chord, that's a partial barre.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ The keys of G major, D major, A major, and E major are among the most common for the guitar, and each of them contains sharps. Other instruments—like the saxophone and trumpet—sound better, and are easier to play, in keys that contain flats. If you like jazz, you'll normally find yourself playing in flat keys.
- ▶ Next up, you'll try an exercise in the key of F major that contains one flat: B \flat . In the 1st position, you'll find the B \flat in two places, on the 3rd string at the 3rd fret and on the 5th string at the 1st fret.
- ▶ This module's exercise is written in the time signature of $\frac{2}{4}$, which means 2 counts, or beats, to the measure.
- ▶ There are a few things to keep in mind about the left-hand fingering in this exercise. The exercise will ask you to grab a low C with the 3rd finger on the 5th string, and the next note (an F) with the 4th finger.

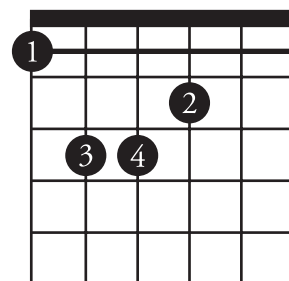
EXERCISE

- ▶ Normally you'd fret that F with the 3rd finger because it's at the 3rd fret. But a principle of guitar playing is to avoid jumping across strings to play 2 or more consecutive notes with the same finger. By using 2 different fingers, you can maintain legato phrasing and avoid an unwanted break in the sound.
- ▶ In measure 6, when moving from B^b to D, you'll apply the same principle. Those notes are the 3rd fret at the 3rd string and the 3rd fret at the 2nd string, respectively.
- ▶ Normally you'd play that play D with the 3rd finger, but this time use the 4th. If you study classical guitar, you'll examine this principle in more detail.

MODULE 3: Chords

- ▶ This module focuses on what are called E-type movable chords—or E-type barre chords—based on the shapes of the E chords that you already know: E major, E minor, and E seventh. You'll use the 1st finger barre as a movable capo.
- ▶ Movable chord shapes allow you to use the same fingerings to play multiple chords up and down the neck.
- ▶ Start off by playing the E major chord, but re-fingering it so your 1st finger is free. To accomplish that, follow these steps:
 - ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 5th string at the 2nd fret.
 - ▶ Place your 4th finger on the 4th string at the 2nd fret.
 - ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 3rd string at the 1st fret.

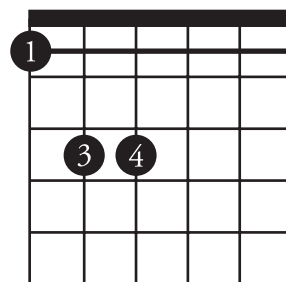
Major



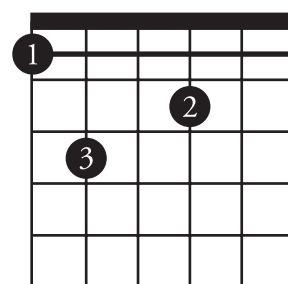
- ▶ Move that entire shape up 1 fret, and then affix your 1st-finger barre at the 1st fret.
- ▶ Since this is the shape for a major chord, you're now playing an F major. That's because the note on the 1st fret of the 6th string is an F. If you shift the entire chord up another fret, you'll now have F[#] major. Going up another fret produces G major, and so on. You can cover all the major chords with this shape.
- ▶ Notice that the barre is covering only the 1st, 2nd, and 6th strings. When you notice the weight of that barre, make sure you're firmly in contact with the top 2 strings.
- ▶ Lean into the fret with the weight of your arm and hand. Your thumb should be positioned at the back of the neck, in the center. And keep your fingers close to the fretwire.

- ▶ Next, you'll repeat this exercise for the minor chords.
- ▶ Play your 1st-position open E minor chord, with fingers 3 and 4 fretting the notes. Then, shift up 1 fret and add the barre. You now have F minor.
- ▶ For the seventh chords, start with the 1st-position open E seventh chord, then re-finger with the 2nd and 3rd fingers on the fretted notes. Now, shift up and barre.
- ▶ Once you have memorized these shapes, you just need to know where to find the root note of each chord.
- ▶ How would you play a B-major barre chord? The tonic B is on the 7th fret of the bottom string, so the barre goes there. Then, you add the chord shape of an E major.
- ▶ What about G minor? Find G on the 3rd fret. Barre there and then add the shape of the minor chord.

Minor



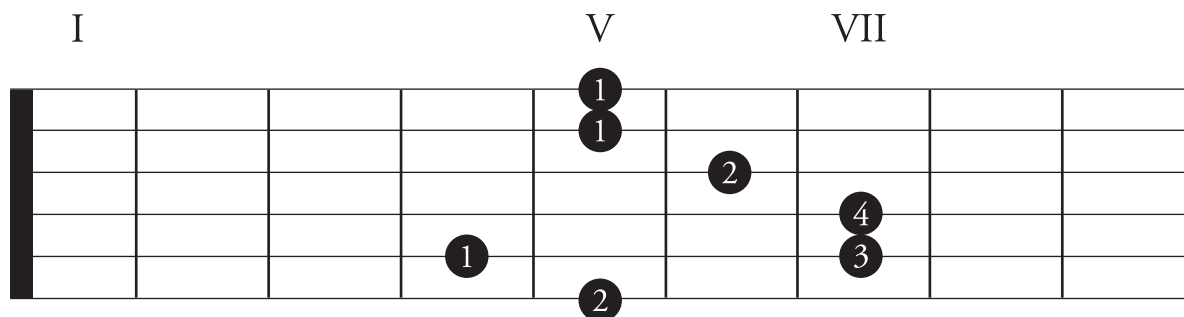
Seventh



MODULE 4: Scales

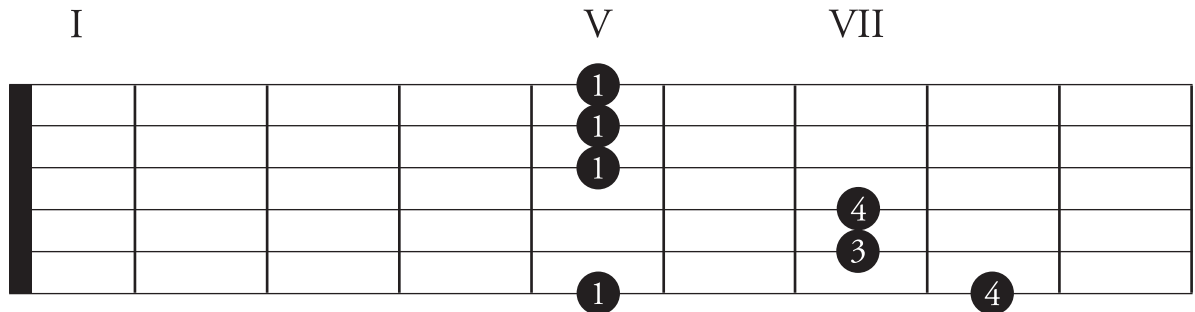
- ▶ You can play major, minor, and dominant seventh arpeggios in patterns on the neck that are similar to the barre chords, extending 2 octaves from bottom to top. As long as you know where on the 6th string to start the pattern, you can find and play any major, minor, or dominant seventh arpeggio.
- ▶ You can practice on A major (starting at the 5th fret):

MAJOR ARPEGGIO



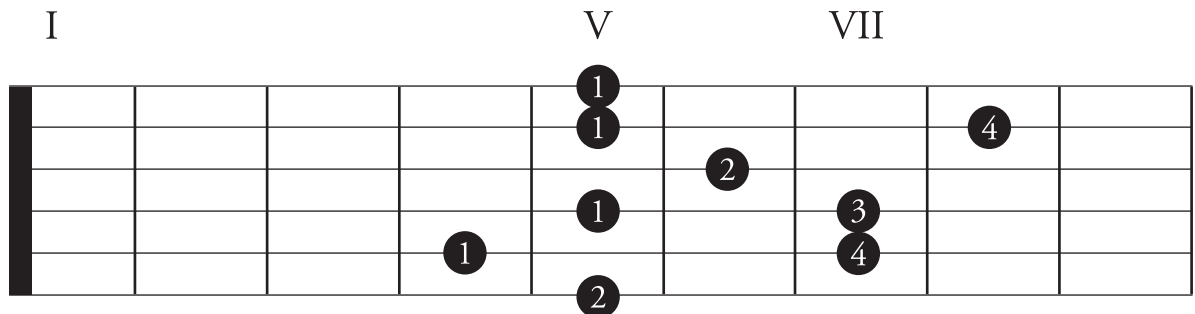
- ▷ You can also practice on the minor chord:

MINOR ARPEGGIO



- ▷ And here is the exercise for the dominant seventh:

DOMINANT SEVENTH ARPEGGIO



- ▷ Refer to the video for more detailed instructions on these exercises.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▷ This lesson's song has a reggae feel to it. You'll use a pick to strum the accompaniment. Play the bass note of the chord on beats 1 and 3. Strum the entire chord on beats 2 and 4 (but cut these short by lifting the left hand for a "boom-chuck" effect).
- ▷ The form of this arrangement is AABA. That means it has an A section that repeats, followed by a B section (usually called the bridge), and a final A. Use the E-type barre chord during the A section.
 - ▷ Play F at the 1st fret.
 - ▷ Play B^b at the 6th fret.
 - ▷ Play C at the 8th fret.

- ▷ The A section is 16 measures long. It uses the following chord progression: F–B \flat –F–C–F–B \flat –F–C–F.
- ▷ The second iteration of the A section (measure marker B) uses the following chord progression: F–B \flat –F–C–F–C–F.
- ▷ In the B section—which is a minor modal refrain—you’ll take a rest from the barre and play D minor, A minor, and C as open chords. But keep the same feel.
- ▷ The melody of the A section is built around the major and minor arpeggios of each chord. You can make use of those arpeggios from module 4 to improvise.

≈ HEY JOEY ≈

A

1 Hey Jo - ey Hey Jo - ey Hey Jo - ey

5 It's Fri - day night on the is - land

9 Hey Jo - ey Hey Jo - ey Hey Jo - ey

13 It's Fri - day night in the coun - try *Fine*

B

F B \flat

Down at the ice _____ - house it's cool all the time _____

21 F C

I had to sit there for a while _____

F B \flat

All day _____ long with the heat a - ri-sing _____

29 F C F

I need a ride in - to town _____

C

Dm Am

Palm trees wave to the sky

37 Dm Am C *D.C. al fine*

White cap break - ers lift the tide





LESSON

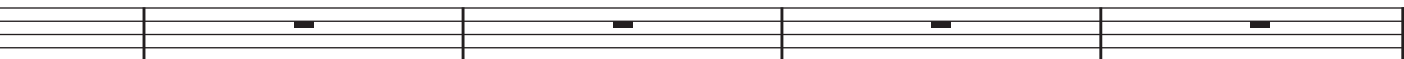
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Flamenco Technique: Rasgueado

Born in Algeciras, Spain, in 1947, Paco de Lucía grew up to be the world's greatest flamenco guitarist. Flamenco music combines guitar, singing, and dance. It is little more than 150 years old in its modern form, though its origins go back hundreds of years. De Lucía made several innovations, including improvisation and the use of a full-size instrument with a richer tone rather than smaller, more delicate cypress guitars. This lesson will introduce you to flamenco guitar, the style of play De Lucía gave so much to.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ One distinguishing characteristic of flamenco guitar is the rasgueado, which is a rhythmic right-hand strumming, using the back of the fingernails. Guitarists from other genres have adopted this rasgueado technique. This module will show you a basic pattern.
- ▶ The technique works on your ability to percussively strum the strings, moving the fingers outward away from the palm. Start this exercise by muting all strings with the left hand, because you don't want them to ring for the moment.
- ▶ With the right hand, strum down across the strings with the nails of the i, m, and a fingers (index, middle, and ring).



- ▶ You'll need to use a couple of left-hand fingerings that may come as a surprise. In measure 2, you need to play B and D at the same time. Normally, each of these 2 notes is played on the 2nd string: B open and D at the 3rd fret. But since you need to play them at the same time, you'll play the B on the 3rd string (at the 4th fret) instead. In sum, you'll play the D and B simultaneously with the 3rd and 4th fingers.
- ▶ Then, at the end of the 2nd measure, you'll need G and E at the same time. Each of those normally is played on the 1st string. In this case, play the E on the 2nd string at the 5th fret (with the 3rd finger). And play the G on the 1st string at the 3rd fret (with the 1st finger).

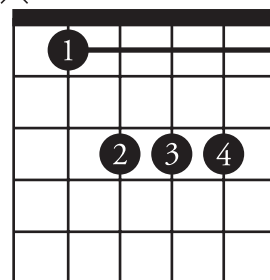
MODULE 3: Chords

- ▶ It's nice to have multiple ways to play all major, minor, and seventh chords. In the last lesson, you learned these chords with the root on the 6th (E) string. Next, you'll learn the movable chords with the root on the A string. These are known as the A-type barre, because they're based on the shapes of the A chords you already know: A, A minor, and A⁷.
- ▶ Once again, you're going to use the 1st-finger barre as a movable capo. Start off by playing the A major chord. But then, you'll re-finger your left hand so that our 1st finger is free. To do that:

- ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 4th string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 3rd string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ Place your 4th finger on the 2nd string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ Now, move the entire shape up 1 fret and affix your 1st-finger barre at the 1st fret.

Major

×

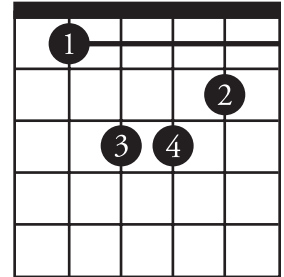


- ▶ Only the 1st and 5th are being played by the barre. Concentrate the energy of your barre on the 1st string. Lean into the fret with your arm and hand. Keep all fingers close to the frets, and your 1st finger straight.
- ▶ Since this is a major chord shape, you'll be playing B^b major, since the note on the 5th string at the 1st fret is B^b. If you shift the entire chord up 1 fret, you'll have B major. You can play the major chords with this same shape.

- ▶ For the minor chords, you'll repeat the exercise. Play A minor, but with fingers 2,3, and 4. To accomplish that:

- ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 4th string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ Place your 4th finger on the 3rd string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 2nd string at the 1st fret.
- ▶ Shift that shape up 1 fret and add the barre. This creates B^b minor.

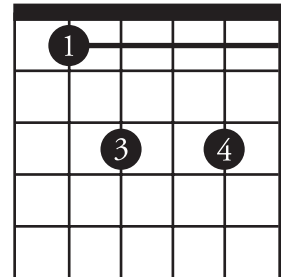
Minor



- ▶ To practice this with seventh chords, start with A⁷. Re-finger it with fingers 3 and 4 by doing this:

- ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 4th string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ Place your 4th finger on the 2nd string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ Shift the shape up 1 fret, and affix your 1st-finger barre. This creates B^{b7}.

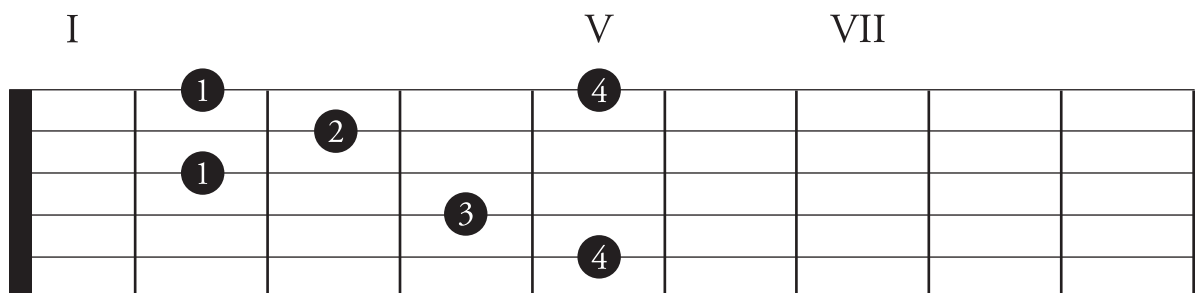
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MODULE 4: Scales

- ▶ This module takes a look at some arpeggios for the major, minor, and dominant seventh chords, but this time with the root on the 5th string. You'll use D as the root, which is at the 5th fret.
- ▶ D major contains the notes D, F[#], and A.

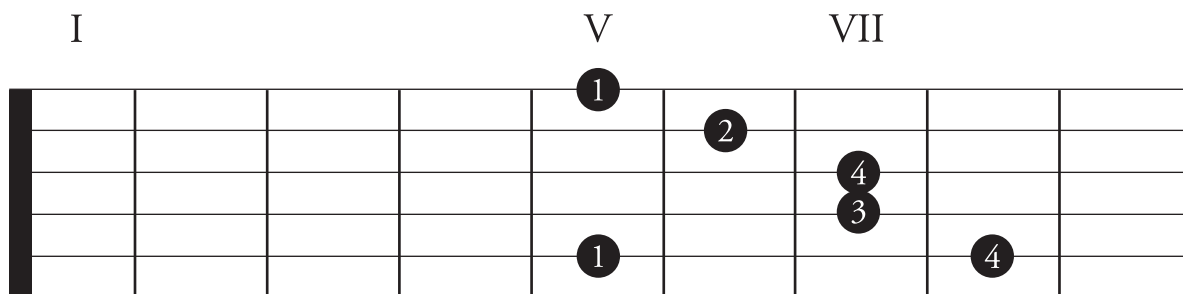
MAJOR ARPEGGIO



- ▷ This arpeggio pattern starts with the 4th finger on the root. Then, follow these steps:
 - ▷ Place your 3rd finger on the 4th string at the 4th fret. This sounds F#.
 - ▷ Place your 1st finger on the 3rd string at the 2nd fret. This sounds A.
 - ▷ Place your 2nd finger on the 2nd string (3rd fret). This sounds D.
 - ▷ Place your 1st finger on the 1st string at the 2nd fret. This sounds F#.
 - ▷ Place your 4th finger on the 1st string at the 5th fret. This sounds A.

- ▷ D minor contains the notes D, F, and A.

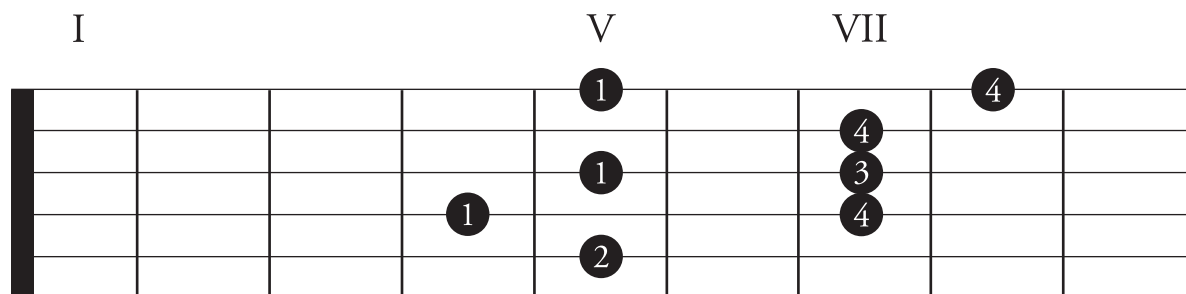
MINOR ARPEGGIO



- ▷ For the minor arpeggio pattern, start with your 1st finger on the root, which is the 5th string at the 5th fret.
 - ▷ Next, place your 4th finger 5th string at the 8th fret. This creates the note F.
 - ▷ Place your 3rd finger on the 4th string at the 7th fret. This creates A.
 - ▷ Place your 4th finger on the 3rd string at the 7th fret. This creates D.
 - ▷ Place your 2nd finger on the 2nd string at the 6th fret. This creates F.
 - ▷ Finish with the 1st finger on the 1st string at the 5th fret. This creates A.

- ▷ The D⁷ chord contains D, F[♯], A, and C.

DOMINANT SEVENTH ARPEGGIO



- ▷ For this arpeggio pattern, start with the 2nd finger on the root, which is the 5th string at the 5th fret. From there, follow these steps:
 - ▷ Place your 1st finger on the 4th string at the 4th fret. This creates F[♯].
 - ▷ Place your 4th finger at the 7th fret. This creates A.
 - ▷ Moving to the 3rd string, shift up so that your 1st finger plays the note at the 5th fret. This creates C.
 - ▷ Next, place your 3rd finger on the 7th fret. This creates D.
 - ▷ Moving to the 2nd string, place your 4th finger on the 7th fret. This creates F[♯].
 - ▷ On the 1st string, place your 1st finger on the 5th fret. This creates A.
 - ▷ Finish on the 1st string, placing your 4th finger on the 8th fret. This creates C.
- ▷ Notice that unlike the 6th-string-root arpeggios, these patterns don't quite fully span 2 octaves.

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▷ This lesson's song has a flamenco vibe. It's called "Un Puro Con los Romeros," or, "A Cigar with the Romeros." For the accompaniment, play the following pattern, using the rasgueado technique: down-up, hit, up-down-up, hit.

- ▶ The rhythm is counted “1 & 2 & 3 & 4.” The chords switch from A minor to D minor and then E⁷. You’ll use your new A-type barre chord shapes:
 - ▶ A minor, the open chord.
 - ▶ D minor, with the barre on the 5th fret.
 - ▶ E⁷, with the barre on the 7th fret.
- ▶ The melody is harmonized largely in thirds. Don’t forget to play the slurs where they’re indicated. And to improvise, use the A minor, D minor, and E⁷ arpeggios.

≈ UN PURO CON LOS ROMEROS ≈

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of four staves. The first staff shows a sequence of chords: Am (open), Dm (5th fret), and Am (open). The second staff begins with an E⁷ chord (7th fret) and features a melodic line with slurs and fingerings (0, 1, 3, 1, 0, 1, 2). The third staff continues with Dm (5th fret), Am (open), and Am (open) chords, with fingerings (1/3, 4, 1, 1/2, 0/1, 4/3) and a slur. The fourth staff concludes with an E⁷ chord (7th fret) and an Am (open) chord, ending with a double bar line.





LESSON

21

Playing with Natural Harmonics

If you hold a guitar just the right way, pluck an open string, and then lightly touch the vibration 12 frets higher, you'll capture a beautiful chiming tone. It's called a natural harmonic. What you really have is the point at which art crosses science, like electricity flowing through the filament in a light bulb. A harmonic is beautiful—but it's delicate. In this lesson, you'll learn how to play harmonics to extend the guitar's tonal coloration and upper range.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ Harmonics are a nice special effect to add to your repertoire. When you pluck a string, you hear the fundamental frequency most prominently. But within the fundamental are other higher notes (called overtones or partials), which also color the sound. Different combinations of overtones create different timbres. That's the reason a guitar and clarinet sound different, even if each is playing the same pitch at the same volume.
- ▶ When you play harmonics, you suppress the fundamental pitch and bring out the overtones. These are found at proportional subdivisions on the string called nodes.
- ▶ It's easier to make a harmonic sound on the lower strings, so this module's instruction will start there. To get a natural harmonic, place a left-hand finger directly above the 12th fret and lightly touch the string. Don't depress the string; just touch it. The 12th fret is exactly halfway between the nut and the saddle, and so it is one of the proportional subdivisions on the string that produces a natural harmonic.



- ▶ You should get a clear, ringing sound 1 octave above the fundamental. If the sound is muffled, you're pushing down too hard with the left hand, or the finger isn't directly over the fret wire. And if you're hearing the fundamental (that is, the open string), you're lifting the finger too soon. Try this on all 6 strings.
- ▶ This harmonic at the 12th fret is the strongest overtone, and it's called the 2nd partial.
- ▶ The 3rd partial occurs at the 7th fret, at a proportional subdivision a third of the way between nut and saddle. It sounds an octave plus a fifth above the fundamental. The pitch is a B, the same as open string B.
- ▶ The 4th partial occurs at the 5th fret, which is a quarter of the way from nut to saddle. It sounds 2 octaves above the fundamental. The technique is the same, but with the left-hand finger over the 5th fret. Other partials are arrayed along each string, though they are a bit harder to play.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ In this module, you'll play the harmonics on the 12th, 7th and 5th frets, starting on the 6th string. You'll also see how they are notated. This is not completely standardized, so you might come across slightly different ways of illustrating harmonics. But this course uses a system that is both common and descriptive.

NATURAL HARMONIC NOTATION

The image displays two musical staves illustrating natural harmonic notation for the 6th string. The first staff shows three frets: 12, 7, and 5. Above each fret is a Roman numeral: XII, VII, and V. Above the staff are circled numbers 6, 5, and 4, indicating the partial number. The second staff shows the same three frets with Roman numerals XII, VII, and V. Above the staff are circled numbers 3, 2, and 1. The V in the second staff has a sharp sign and '8va' above it, indicating an octave higher.

- ▷ Take note of 3 pieces of information:
 - ▷ A diamond-shaped notehead indicates a harmonic.
 - ▷ A roman numeral designates the fret on which the harmonic is located.
 - ▷ The written pitch is the actual sounding pitch of the harmonic.
- ▷ Try playing the harmonics at the 12th, 7th, and 5th frets, beginning on the 6th string. Do this on each string, working your way through the harmonics on the 1st string.
- ▷ The lettering *8va* over the 5th fret, 1st string harmonic indicates that the pitch is 1 octave above where it's indicated on the staff. This *8va* indication is used to avoid writing so many ledger lines above the staff.

MODULE 3: Chords

- ▷ In this course's earlier discussion on chord theory, you learned that if you build triads on the 7 notes of the major scale—stacking them in thirds—you derive the following pattern:
 - ▷ I: major
 - ▷ ii: minor
 - ▷ iii: minor
 - ▷ IV: major
 - ▷ V: major
 - ▷ vi: minor
 - ▷ vii^o: diminished
- ▷ You can extend each of these by adding another third, making them 4-note chords. For example, the chords built on the 1st note of the scale contain scale degrees 1, 3, 5, and 7. A chord built on the scale's 2nd note contains scale degrees 2, 4, 6, 8 (or 1) and so on.

▷ Adding this extra third turns each of these chords from a triad into a seventh chord. The pattern of diatonic seventh chords in a major key is:

- ▷ I: major seventh.
- ▷ ii: minor seventh.
- ▷ iii: minor seventh.
- ▷ IV: major seventh.
- ▷ V: dominant seventh.
- ▷ vi: minor seventh.
- ▷ vii^o: half-diminished seventh.

*Seventh chords sound richer than triads.
They are prevalent in jazz and classical music.*

▷ Next, you'll learn the shapes for the major seventh and minor seventh in the A-type barre chords. They are based on the shapes of A major seventh and A minor seventh.

▷ To play the A major seventh chord, follow these steps:

- ▷ Place your 2nd finger on the 3rd string at the 1st fret.
- ▷ Place your 3rd finger on the 4th string at the 2nd fret.
- ▷ Place your 4th finger on the 2nd string at the 2nd fret.

▷ This leaves the 1st finger free to barre. If you want a C major, for instance, you'd just slide the entire chord shape up 3 frets and place the barre at the 3rd fret.

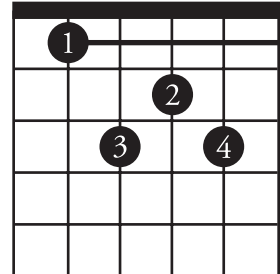
▷ To play the A minor seventh chord:

- ▷ Place your 3rd finger on the 4th string at the 2nd fret.
- ▷ Place your 2nd finger on the 2nd string at the 1st fret.

▷ To play B minor seventh, for example, shift the entire shape up 2 frets, and then affix your 1st-finger barre at the 2nd fret.

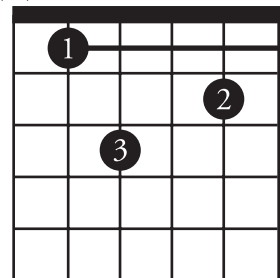
Major 7

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Minor 7

×

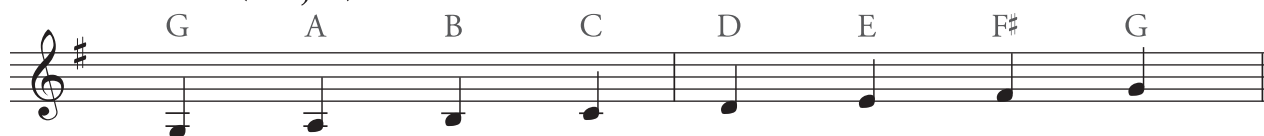


MODULE 4: Scales

- ▶ This module introduces the concept of modes. Modes of a major scale are just different permutations of the scale. But because they start and end in different places, they sound different even while containing the same notes.
- ▶ This module will use the key of G major—also known as G Ionian—as an example.
- ▶ If you begin and end the G major scale on the 2nd note, A, you create the 2nd mode, called the A Dorian scale. If you start on the 3rd note, B, you'll have the B Phrygian scale.
- ▶ Starting on the 4th note will give you the C Lydian scale. Starting on the 5th note produces the D Mixolydian scale. Beginning on the 6th note creates the E Aeolian scale. And starting on the 7th note creates the F[#] Locrian scale.
- ▶ These scales' names are derived from groups of ancient Greek peoples and regions. The scales contain the same notes, so there is no need to learn any different scale patterns. You can play all of these using the same pattern that you already know for G major.

MODES OF G MAJOR

G Ionian (Major)



A Dorian



B Phrygian



C Lydian



CONTINUED 

D Mixolydian



E Aeolian



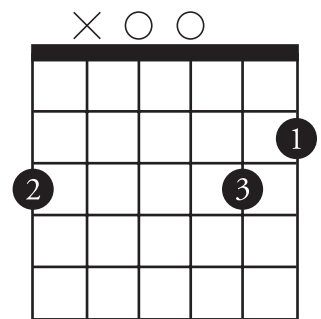
F# Locrian



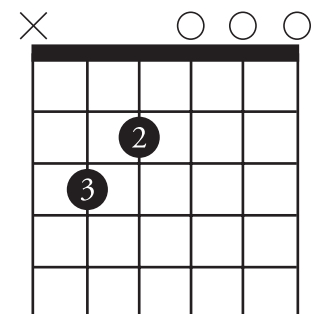
MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ This module's tune is called "Harmonic Landscapes," and it uses major seventh and minor seventh chords. To start, you'll use the G major seventh and C major seventh chords without barres to get the resonant sound of open strings.
- ▶ To play **G^{maj7}**, follow these steps:
 - ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 6th string at the 3rd fret.
 - ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 2nd string at the 3rd fret.
 - ▶ Place your 1st finger on the 1st string at the 2nd fret.
- ▶ For **C^{maj7}**, play an open C chord, and then lift the 1st finger so that the 2nd string B rings open.
- ▶ When you get to the B section of "Harmonic Landscapes," you'll use the A-type barre chords: A minor seventh, B minor seventh, C major seventh, and D dominant seventh.
- ▶ Refer to the video lesson for a demonstration of how to vary the rhythm. Use your ear to get the same feeling.
- ▶ The melody is all in harmonics, and you can improvise over the chords using the G major scale.

G^{maj7}



C^{maj7}



~ HARMONIC LANDSCAPES ~

G^{maj7} C^{maj7}

XII XII XII VII XII XII XII VII

Detailed description: This staff shows two musical phrases. The first phrase is for G^{maj7} and consists of four measures with fretboard diagrams and fingerings: 4-3-2-2. The second phrase is for C^{maj7} and also consists of four measures with fretboard diagrams and fingerings: 3-2-1-1.

G^{maj7} C^{maj7}

XII XII XII VII XII XII XII VII

Detailed description: This staff shows two musical phrases. The first phrase is for G^{maj7} and consists of four measures with fretboard diagrams and fingerings: 4-3-2-2. The second phrase is for C^{maj7} and consists of four measures with fretboard diagrams and fingerings: 3-2-1-1.

Am⁷ Bm⁷ C^{maj7} D⁷

XII XII XII XII VII ————— XII V VII

Detailed description: This staff shows four musical phrases. The first phrase is for Am⁷ (4 measures, fingerings 1-2-3-2). The second phrase is for Bm⁷ (4 measures, fingerings 2-3-4-3). The third phrase is for C^{maj7} (2 measures, fingering 3). The fourth phrase is for D⁷ (2 measures, fingerings 2-3-4).

G^{maj7} C^{maj7}

XII XII XII VII XII XII XII VII

Detailed description: This staff shows two musical phrases. The first phrase is for G^{maj7} and consists of four measures with fretboard diagrams and fingerings: 4-3-2-2. The second phrase is for C^{maj7} and consists of four measures with fretboard diagrams and fingerings: 3-2-1-1.

G^{maj7} C^{maj7} D⁷ G^{maj7}

XII XII XII VII XII XII VII VII V

Detailed description: This staff shows four musical phrases. The first phrase is for G^{maj7} (4 measures, fingerings 4-3-2-2). The second phrase is for C^{maj7} (2 measures, fingerings 3-4). The third phrase is for D⁷ (2 measures, fingerings 2-3). The fourth phrase is for G^{maj7} (2 measures, fingering 3).





LESSON

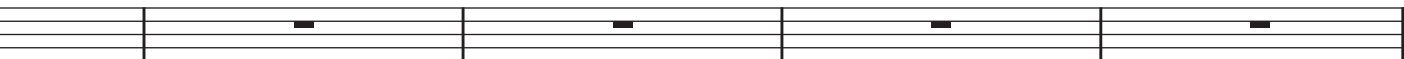
22

Jazz Harmony and Dorian Mode

Charlie Christian was the first modern jazz guitarist. He was born in 1916 and died at just 25. During his brief life, he played cool, rapid, single-note melodies—like a horn player—through an archtop guitar and early amplifier. Christian transformed the guitar from a member of the rhythm section—along with the piano, bass, and drums—into a solo instrument on par with the clarinet, saxophone, and trumpet. This lesson takes a look at jazz guitar, Christian’s specialty, with a focus on solo passages.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ This module takes a look at improving speed and accuracy when playing a solo passage, like a melody, a scale, or a lick.
- ▶ Imagine that you hear a lick that you want to play. You know how it goes, but you can’t play it anywhere close to the actual performance speed. As an example, this module will use the movable G major scale that starts on the 6th string.
- ▶ What if you want to play this scale faster, but still keep it clean and accurate? There are 3 keys to doing this:
 - ▶ Work with a metronome to keep track of your speed. Otherwise, it’s impossible to objectively measure your progress.
 - ▶ Always play cleanly and accurately. If you’re sloppy at a slow tempo, it only gets worse as you speed up.

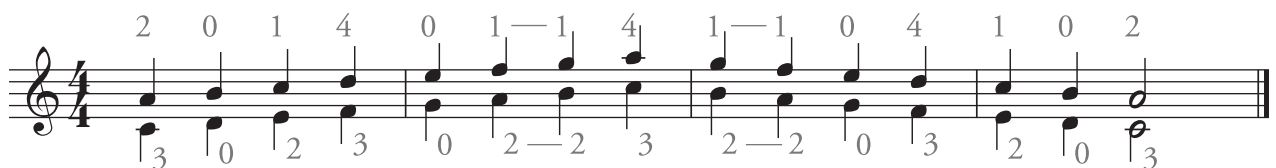


- ▶ Try the following method of playing the scale using different rhythmic values. You're going to alternate between speeding up the movement of the left hand and the right hand. You can use this with alternate picking or alternating the i and m fingers in the right hand. Here's how it works:
 - ◇ First, play the G major scale with quarter notes. Try this with the metronome set at 60 beats per minute.
 - ◇ Next, play 2 eighth notes with the right hand for every note in the left hand. This will double the speed of your right hand while the left hand stays the same.
 - ◇ Now, play the scale in eighth notes. You'll bring the left hand up to speed with the right.
 - ◇ Next, play 2 sixteenth notes in the right hand per note of the major scale. Once again, you'll be doubling the speed of the right hand while the left hand stays the same.
 - ◇ Finally, play the scale using single sixteenth notes. This brings the left hand up to speed with the right.
- ▶ Once you can do that accurately, turn the metronome up a notch. You'll improve your speed gradually. Stay in control, and eventually you'll reach your desired speed.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ The intervals of sixths and tenths (an octave plus a third) are commonly used to harmonize melodies on guitar. Think of “Brown-Eyed Girl” by Van Morrison or “Blackbird” by the Beatles. In this lesson, you'll try harmonizing a melody in the key of C major, using the interval of a sixth between the lower and higher notes.

SIXTHS



- ▶ Begin with the 3 finger on the 5th string, 3rd fret C.
 - ▶ Also place your 2nd finger on the 3rd string, 2nd fret A.
 - ▶ Move up the C major scale, maintaining that interval.

- ▷ The next pair is open 4th string D and open 2nd string B.
- ▷ Then comes another pair: 4th string, 2nd fret E and 2nd string, 1st fret C.
- ▷ Keep going until you reach C (on the 3rd string, 5th fret) and A (on the 1st string, 5th fret).
- ▷ For the last 2 intervals, shift up 2 frets into 3rd position, and then shift back on the way down. Refer to the video lesson for an example.
- ▷ Next, you'll try an exercise in G major using the interval of tenths.

TENTHS

m i

P

- ▷ Begin with the 6th string, 3rd fret G and the open 2nd string B. Alternate these tenths with the open G string to give the passage more resonance. Play the tenths with the thumb and middle finger, and the open G with the index finger.
- ▷ Once you get the hang of this, you might try changing up the order of the intervals just played.

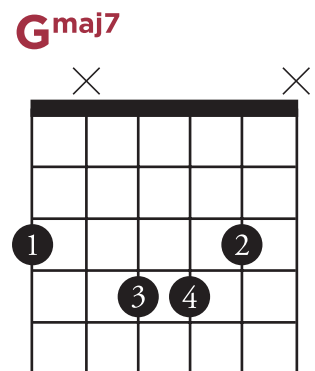
TENTHS — VARIATION

MODULE 3: Chords

- ▷ Jazz harmony (the underlying chords) tends to be richer than the harmony of popular music. One reason is that jazz uses lots of seventh chords. In this module, you'll learn the E-type movable chord shapes for the major seventh and minor seventh chords.

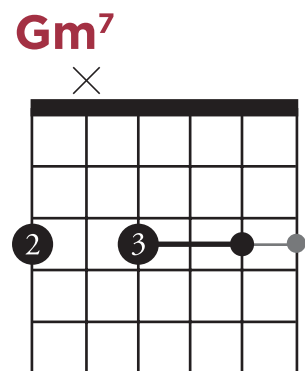
- ▷ A major seventh chord consists of the root, 3rd, 5th, and 7th notes of the major scale.
- ▷ In **G^{maj7}**, the root is at the 3rd fret on the 6th string.

- ▷ Place your 1st finger on the root.
- ▷ Place your 3rd finger on the 4th string at the 4th fret.
- ▷ Place your 4th finger on the 3rd string at the 4th fret.
- ▷ Place your 2nd finger on the 2nd string at the 3rd fret.



- ▷ Be careful not to play the 5th or 1st strings. If you're using the fingers of your right hand, that won't be a problem: Just use p, i, m, and a to play the 4 notes of the chord. But if you're strumming with a pick, make sure that your 1st finger on the left hand leans against and mutes those 2 strings.
- ▷ The minor seventh chord consists of the root, 3rd, 5th, and 7th notes of the minor scale. For the **G^{m7}**, you're going to use a 3rd-finger barre.

- ▷ Put your 2nd finger on the root, which is the 6th string at the 3rd fret. Mute the 5th string right next to it by rolling the same 2nd finger on its side.
- ▷ With your 3rd finger, barre strings 4, 3, 2, (and 1 if you like), also at the 3rd fret.



- ▷ Now you know 2 different ways to play each major, minor, major seventh, minor seventh, and dominant seventh chord. See if you can play the following chords:
 - ▷ F major seventh. The root is at the 1st fret of the 6th string.
 - ▷ D minor seventh. The root is at the 10th fret of the 6th string.
 - ▷ C major seventh. The root is on the 8th fret of the 6th string.
- ▷ Learning these chords isn't too difficult. First, memorize the chords' shapes. Then, work on memorizing where the various notes are on the 5th and 6th strings, so that you can quickly find the root of each chord.

MODULE 4: Scales

- ▶ Recall that in the modes of the major scale, each mode contains the same notes as its parent major scale. You just start each mode on a different scale degree. But, because the interval relationships between the notes have shifted, these modes take on vastly different sonic characters.
- ▶ In the key of G major—a common key for guitar—are the following modes: G Ionian, A Dorian, B Phrygian, C Lydian, D Mixolydian, E Aeolian, and F# Locrian.
- ▶ One of the most useful modal scales is Dorian, which is the 2nd mode. It's common in jazz, but also finds a home in blues, rock, and Latin styles. Wes Montgomery, Carlos Santana, Eric Johnson, and Jimmy Page have all used this scale in their soloing.
- ▶ Dorian is a type of minor scale because the 3rd note is the interval of a minor third above the root. So that you can more clearly see the interval pattern, begin by playing an A Dorian scale on just 1 string.
 - ▶ Start on the open A.
 - ▶ Then, go up a whole step (2 frets).
 - ▶ Next, go up a half step (1 fret).
 - ▶ Go up another whole step.
 - ▶ After that, go up another whole step.
 - ▶ Then, go up one more whole step.
 - ▶ Next, go up a half step.
 - ▶ Finally, go up another whole step.
- ▶ That's the A Dorian scale. It has the same notes as G major. Next, you'll play it using the movable pattern for the G major scale.
- ▶ With your 4th finger, start on the 6th string, 5th fret A. From there, add 5th string, 1st finger B (on the 2nd fret), then 2nd finger C (3rd fret), then 4th finger D (5th fret).
- ▶ Moving to the 4th string, play the 1st finger E (on the 2nd fret). From there, add 3rd finger F# (at the 4th fret), then 4th finger G (5th fret).

- ▶ Now, moving to the 3rd string, play the 1st finger A. Then, add 3rd finger B (at the 4th fret), then 4th finger C (5th fret).
- ▶ Continuing with the 2nd string, play 2nd finger D (at the 3rd fret) then 4th finger E (5th fret).
- ▶ On the 1st string, play 1st finger F[#] (at the 2nd fret), then 2nd finger G (at the 3rd fret), and finally 4th finger A (at the 5th fret).
- ▶ If you know the notes in the G major scale, you also know all of its modes. There's no need to learn them separately. But you do need to practice how to use them.
- ▶ The Dorian scale fits perfectly over a minor chord. Here are some licks in A Dorian, played over an A minor seventh chord:

EXERCISE

Am⁷

The image shows three musical staves in treble clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff is labeled 'Am⁷'. Each staff contains a sequence of notes with fret numbers written above them. The first staff has notes: 4 (4th fret), 2 (2nd fret), 1 (1st fret), 4 (4th fret), 2 (2nd fret), 1 (1st fret), 2 (2nd fret), 0 (open), 1 (1st fret). The second staff has notes: 4 (4th fret), 2 (2nd fret), 1 (1st fret), 2 (2nd fret), 1 (1st fret), 2 (2nd fret), 1 (1st fret), 3 (3rd fret), 4 (4th fret). The third staff has notes: 4 (4th fret), 2 (2nd fret), 1 (1st fret), 4 (4th fret), 3 (3rd fret), 1 (1st fret), 2 (2nd fret), 4 (4th fret), 1 (1st fret).

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▶ This lesson's tune is called "Dorian Blue." It's 12 bars long, and it's a blues song. But because it contains minor seventh chords, it's a variation called a minor blues. Take a listen to jazz saxophonist John Coltrane to hear some fantastic minor blues playing.
- ▶ The melody uses the interval of a sixth throughout, and you'll keep the bass line with your thumb on the right hand. The thumb plays steady quarter notes, and the upper lines are always on the offbeat, played with the index and ring fingers. You might want to try practicing the bass line and upper notes separately at first.

- Once you've played the melody twice through, you can practice soloing over the chord changes: A minor seventh, D minor seventh, and E major seventh. Use A Dorian for A minor seventh, D Dorian for D minor seventh, and E Dorian for E major seventh.

~ DORIAN BLUE ~

Am⁷

1 — 1 4
2 — 2 3

Dm⁷

1 — 1 4
2 — 2 3

Am⁷

Musical notation for the Am⁷ chord progression. The top staff shows a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a melody of eighth notes. The bottom staff shows a guitar fretboard with strings T, A, and B, and fret numbers 1, 3, 3, 3, 5, 5, 5, 3, 3, 3, 1, 1, 1, 3, 3, 3, 5, 5, 5, 3, 3, 7, 4, 4, 0.

E⁷

Am⁷

Musical notation for the E⁷ and Am⁷ chord progression. The top staff shows a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a melody of eighth notes. The bottom staff shows a guitar fretboard with strings T, A, and B, and fret numbers 4, 4, 3, 3, 3, 2, 2, 2, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 3, 3, 3, 5, 5, 5, 3, 3, 3, 1, 2, 2, 2, 4, 4, 4, 5, 5, 5, 4, 4, 4, 2.



LESSON

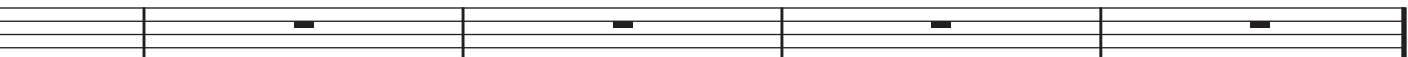
23

DADGAD Tuning and Lydian Mode

Michael Hedges is one of the most influential acoustic guitarists who ever lived. He combined hammer-ons, pull-offs, harmonics, percussion, and dozens of different tunings to cover more sonic ground on the guitar than anyone who came before him. In this lesson, you're going to learn one of the alternative tunings that Michael Hedges sometimes used. It's called DADGAD, which you get by tuning the 6th, the 2nd, and the 1st strings of your guitar down 1 whole step, to D, A, and D, respectively.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ It's not hard to alternate pick quickly on 1 string. But as soon as a guitarist plays a passage that moves rapidly across strings, it gets much harder to play accurately. This module looks at an exercise that develops your facility to pick accurately while moving across different strings.
- ▶ There are 2 variations. The first uses a left-hand shape with the 1st finger on the 4th string, and the 4th finger on the 1st string. The second variation inverts this shape, so that the 1st finger is on the 1st string, and the 4th finger on the 4th string. It's very important that you consistently alternate pick.
- ▶ For the first variation:
 - ▶ Place your 1st finger on the 4th string at the 1st fret. Pick downward.
 - ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the 3rd string, 2nd fret and pick upward.



- Place your 3rd finger on the 2nd string, 3rd fret and pick downward.
 - Place your 4th finger on the 1st string, 4th fret and pick upward.
 - Shift the 4th finger up 1 fret and pick downward.
- Come back down the strings, using the same left-hand shape you just played. Pick in the upward-downward-upward pattern. Shift the 1st finger up 1 fret, pick down, and repeat as you shift up the neck. When you get to the 9th position, turn around and come back down the neck. You'll always be alternate picking, so you'll be shifting on both the 1st and 4th fingers.
- You can also try this on a different string grouping: 5, 4, 3, and 2, for instance, or 6, 5, 4, and 3. For an extra challenge, skip a string. For example, try 5, 4, 2, and 1.

EXERCISE

- For the second variation, alter the shape of the chord so that your 1st finger is now on the 1st string, and the 4th finger is on the 4th string. For most players, this shape is a little more challenging. The alternate picking pattern stays the same: downward-upward-downward-upward.
- Next, shift your 1st finger up. Come back down, and follow the same procedure.

EXERCISE

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▷ One factor that makes note reading on the guitar more challenging than with other instruments, like the piano, is that guitarists have multiple options for playing each note.
- ▷ For example, the notes E, F, and G on the 1st string can also be played the following ways:
 - ▷ On the 2nd string, starting on the 5th fret.
 - ▷ On the 3rd string, starting at the 9th fret.
 - ▷ On the 4th string, starting at the 14th fret.
- ▷ Guitarists also have the ability to change the timbre (or tone color) of a note or melody. The notes E, F, and G sound different on the 1st string than they do on the 4th string. On the 4th string, you'll get a darker, more mellow sound, and that might be desirable in some circumstances.
- ▷ The position on the neck where you decide to play a certain passage depends on the context of the music and what you want to accomplish with it. For instance, if you're playing lots of high notes, you might not want to shift all the way down the neck to play other lower notes. This underscores the need to learn the notes all the way up the neck.
- ▷ Learning the notes on the higher frets is called positional reading. Frets 1 through 4 are called 1st position because your 1st finger is at the 1st fret, and you normally use 1 finger for each fret. Notes on the 2nd fret are played with the 2nd finger, notes on the 3rd fret with the 3rd finger, and notes on the 4th fret with the 4th finger.
- ▷ If you shift your hand up to the 2nd fret, you're now in 2nd position. Shifting your hand so that your 1st finger is at the 5th fret will put you in 5th position. Remember that in written guitar notation, the positions are indicated with Roman numerals. Once you've learned to play in all the different positions, you can see the totality of the neck and all of the notes on it.
- ▷ As an example, start in 5th position. This is a nice area in the middle of the neck. Your 1st finger will be on the 5th fret, your 2nd finger on the 6th fret, and so on. Here are the notes on each string:
 - ▷ 6th string: A, A[#]/B^b, B, C.
 - ▷ 5th string: D, D[#]/E^b, E, F.
 - ▷ 4th string: G, G[#]/A^b, A, A[#] /B^b.

- ▶ 3rd string: C, C[#]/D^b, D, D[#]/E^b.
- ▶ 2nd string: E, F, F[#]/G^b, G.
- ▶ 1st string: A, A[#]/B^b, B, C.

NOTES IN 5TH POSITION

Diagram showing fingerings for notes in 5th position on the strings:

- 6th string: 1 2 2 3 4
- 5th string: 1 2 2 3 4
- 4th string: 1 2 2 3 4 4
- 3rd string: 1 2 2 3 4 4
- 2nd string: 1 2 3 3 4
- 1st string: 1 2 2 3 4

The exercises are shown on a treble clef staff with notes and fingerings. Some notes have sharps or flats, and some have "or" indicating alternative spellings.

- ▶ Next up is a melody in the key of F major that will help you learn the 5th position. Play this entirely in 5th position, even if you know where the note is in 1st position. The exercise has string and left-hand finger numbers to help you out.

EXERCISE

Diagram showing fingerings for the exercise in 3/4 time:

- 4th string: 3
- 3rd string: 1
- 2nd string: 2
- 2nd string: 1 2 1
- 3rd string: 3 1
- 4th string: 3 4 1 1
- 1st string: 1 2 1 4 2
- 3rd string: 1 3 4
- 4th string: 1 4 3 4
- 5th string: 4

The exercise is shown on a treble clef staff in 3/4 time, with notes and fingerings.

MODULE 3: Scales

- ▶ This lesson's order is slightly different. Its workshop on scales is ahead of the module on chords, leading into the song that puts it all together.
- ▶ This module introduces a new scale: the Lydian mode. Lydian is closely related to the major scale. Try it on the 3rd string so that you can see (and hear) the interval pattern. Since you're starting on G, this will be a G Lydian scale.
- ▶ If you compare G Lydian and G major side-by-side, you'll see the Lydian scale has just 1 note that is different: C[#] instead of C. So it can be described as a major scale with a raised fourth. That raised fourth gives Lydian its distinctive sound.
- ▶ G Lydian (with its C[#] and F[#]) contains the same notes as the D major scale. Therefore, G Lydian is called the 4th mode (or permutation) of D major, because G is the 4th note of the D major scale.
- ▶ Here are some licks in C Lydian played over a C major seventh chord. The first 2 are in 5th position, so follow the fingering indications.

EXERCISE

The image displays two musical exercises for guitar, each consisting of a treble clef staff and a guitar-specific staff (T, A, B strings).

Exercise 1: The treble staff shows a G Lydian scale lick in 5th position. The notes are G4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G5. Fingerings are indicated as ① 4 3 1 3 1 and ② 4 1 3 4. The guitar staff shows the fretting for the T, A, and B strings, with a circled 8 indicating the 8th fret.

Exercise 2: The treble staff shows a C Lydian scale lick in 5th position. The notes are C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C6. Fingerings are indicated as ③ 1 3 1 and ① 1 4 3 1, and ② 4 3. The guitar staff shows the fretting for the T, A, and B strings, with a circled 7 indicating the 7th fret.

The image shows a musical score for guitar. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a melodic line with notes on the 3rd, 2nd, 0th, 1st, 0th, 3rd, 2nd, 3rd, and 0th frets. A circled '3' is above the first measure. The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line with notes on the 3rd, 2nd, 0th, 1st, 0th, 3rd, 2nd, and 3rd frets. A circled '0' is at the end of the bass staff. The strings are labeled T, A, and B on the left side of the bass staff.

MODULE 4: Chords

- ▶ Until now, in this course, you’ve been working in standard tuning: EADGBE. But as Michael Hedges discovered—and as the world has been proving ever since—the guitar is capable of amazing versatility.
- ▶ Anything other than standard tuning on the guitar is called altered tuning. The Italian musical term for this technique is *scordatura*.
- ▶ Composers have been writing *scordatura* for string instruments since the 17th century. The purpose is to allow for different chords and melodic patterns, particularly using the open strings. Some of these tunings are very resonant.
- ▶ Often the adjustments are subtle, but they open a door to new possibilities. For example, if you tune the G string down half a step to an F[#] and then put a capo on the 3rd fret, you’ll have the exact same tuning as a Renaissance lute. Or, lowering the bottom E string down 1 whole step—to D—generates much more bottom end. It doubles the D bass and brings more resonance and power to chord voicings.
- ▶ Some tunings are even more involved, changing the pitches of 2, 3, or more strings. For instance, the open D major tuning is D, A, D, F[#], A, D. And the contemporary French composer Tristan Murail came up with this unusual tuning for his piece “Tellur”: C[#], A, E^b, G, B, E.
- ▶ The tuning DADGAD is also known as Celtic tuning. When DADGAD is strummed, the open strings produce what’s called a D suspended four chord. This is a combination of open string resonance with a hint of tension, so it’s not quite resolved. Playing arpeggios and harmonics on the open strings sounds very nice. You’ll be using this tuning in this lesson’s final piece.



LESSON

24

Taking the Guitar to the Next Level

To make it as a professional musician, it helps to start with talent. But hard work and steady effort are more important. You have to be opportunistic and resilient, and you need business sense to turn an avocation into a vocation. You can be no less professional as a musician than in any other career. In fact, in many ways—from self-motivation, to technique, to the ability to get along with others—you have to be more professional than in almost any other job. This lesson opens with some tips on moving forward as a guitarist, then introduces some advanced performance techniques, and closes with a flamenco-inspired song.

MODULE 1: Technique

- ▶ This module looks at an advanced performance technique called artificial harmonics. These differ from natural harmonics in that they are pitches that can't be found on the nodes of an open string.
- ▶ You learned in Lesson 21 that the natural harmonics on an open string are found at certain nodal points corresponding to proportional distances of string length. The strongest natural harmonics are at the 12th fret (halfway along the string between the nut and the saddle); the 7th fret (a third of the way along the string length from the nut to the saddle); and the 5th fret (a quarter of the way along the string length from the nut to the saddle).
- ▶ The 12th-fret harmonic is 1 octave above the open string. The 7th-fret harmonic is an octave plus a fifth. The 5th-fret harmonic is 2 octaves above the open string.



Seven Tips

Before embarking on this course's final modules, here are 7 tips that can help you become a more successful guitar player:

- 1** Find a mentor—someone who can help you as a teacher or as a fellow performer. Look for someone who can help raise your musicianship. It's hard to lift yourself in a vacuum.
- 2** Find a stage. Get out there and play—at a coffee house, a church, wherever you can. Testing yourself onstage, in front of listeners, is the best way to galvanize your craft.
- 3** Increase the intensity of your practice. Take the exercises you've learned in this course and practice them with a metronome to build speed and dexterity. Practice them daily to master these skills.
- 4** Be consistent. If you're serious about your craft, practice every day. Find the time. Find the motivation.
- 5** Stay organized. Write down and arrange your practice objectives with an eye to accomplishing them. One strategy is to break down your practice commitments into 30-minute blocks, and then try to work efficiently within each.
- 6** Listen to lots of music, especially live music. Musicians learn to play by listening and watching others.
- 7** Be emotionally engaged in your life and in your music. People can tell if you're living in the moment, or if just some part of you has showed up.

- ▷ With artificial harmonics, you can play a harmonic tone anywhere on the fretboard. But the technique is a bit different than with natural harmonics.
- ▷ Start with your right hand. Play the natural harmonic found at the 12th fret on the open B string, but do this using the right hand only. Place the tip of your index finger directly over the 12th fretwire, lightly touching the string. Then, pluck the string using the a (ring) finger. After you pluck, lift the index finger off the string so that it rings.
- ▷ Using this technique, you can fret any pitches with your left hand, and play an artificial harmonic 1 octave (that is, 12 frets) above it.
- ▷ For example, finger the note C on the 1st fret of the 2nd string. And with the right hand, play the harmonic an octave above that. You'll find it at the 13th fret.
- ▷ What about the 3rd fret D? This harmonic is played at the 15th fret.
- ▷ Next, try those 3 notes in succession on the 2nd string: the open B, 1st fret C, and the 3rd fret D. Any scale or melodic pattern that you play in a lower position can also be played with artificial harmonics.
- ▷ A useful application of this technique is to arpeggiate chords. Finger any open chord with the left hand, E major, for example. Now, play every note in the chord 1 octave above as an artificial harmonic. That's 12 frets above the normal note. For the E major chord, here is where we find those:
 - ▷ 6th string: 12th fret.
 - ▷ 5th string: 14th fret.
 - ▷ 4th string: 14th fret.
 - ▷ 3rd string: 13th fret.
 - ▷ 2nd string: 12th fret.
 - ▷ 1st string: 12th fret.
- ▷ This is especially effective when you're accompanying someone and want to do so in a subtle, gentle way. For an example, take a listen to Johnny Smith playing behind the bass solo in the title track from his 1952 album *Moonlight in Vermont*.

MODULE 2: Note Reading

- ▶ An area in the middle of the neck where guitarists tend to play often is the 7th position. This is especially good for the keys of C, G, and D major. The notes on each string in 7th position are as follows:

NOTES IN 7TH POSITION

The image shows four lines of musical notation, each representing a guitar string. Above each line are fingerings and fret numbers. The notes are written on a treble clef staff.

- String 6:** Fingering: ⑥ 1 2 3 3 4. Notes: B (7th fret), C (8th fret), (C# or D♭) (9th fret), D (10th fret), E (11th fret), (E# or F♭) (12th fret).
- String 5:** Fingering: ⑤ 1 2 3 3 4. Notes: C (7th fret), D (8th fret), (D# or E♭) (9th fret), E (10th fret), F (11th fret), (F# or G♭) (12th fret).
- String 4:** Fingering: ④ 1 2 2 3 4. Notes: D (7th fret), (D# or E♭) (9th fret), E (10th fret), F (11th fret), F# (12th fret), G (13th fret).
- String 3:** Fingering: ③ 1 2 2 3 4. Notes: E (7th fret), F (8th fret), (F# or G♭) (9th fret), G (10th fret), G# (11th fret), A (12th fret).

- ▶ On the 6th string: Play B at the 7th fret with the 1st finger.
 - ▶ Play C on the 8th fret with the 2nd finger.
 - ▶ Play C # or D♭ on the 9th fret with the 3rd finger.
 - ▶ On the 10th fret, play D with the 4th finger.

- ▷ On the 5th string, play E at the 7th fret with the 1st finger.
 - ▷ Play F on the 8th fret with the 2nd finger.
 - ▷ Play F[#] or G^b on the 9th fret with the 3rd finger.
 - ▷ On the 10th fret, play G with the 4th finger.

- ▷ On the 4th string, play A at the 7th fret with the 1st finger.
 - ▷ Play A[#] or B^b on the 8th fret with the 2nd finger.
 - ▷ Play B on the 9th fret with the 3rd finger.
 - ▷ On the 10th fret, play C with the 4th finger.

- ▷ On the 3rd string, play D at 7th fret with the 1st finger.
 - ▷ Play D[#] or E^b on the 8th fret with the 2nd finger.
 - ▷ Play E on the 9th fret with the 3rd finger.
 - ▷ On the 10th fret, play F with the 4th finger.

- ▷ Moving to the 2nd string, play F[#] or G^b at 7th fret with the 1st finger.
 - ▷ Play G on the 8th fret with the 2nd finger.
 - ▷ Play G[#] or A^b on the 9th fret with the 3rd finger.
 - ▷ On the 10th fret, play A with the 4th finger.

- ▷ Finally, on the 1st string, play B at the 7th fret with the 1st finger.
 - ▷ Play C on the 8th fret with the 2nd finger.
 - ▷ Play C[#] or D^b on the 9th fret with the 3rd finger.
 - ▷ On the 10th fret, play D with the 4th finger.

- ▶ Next, you can try a note-reading exercise in 7th position. It's in C major and moves across all 6 strings. Be sure to follow the left-hand fingering indications. It will make learning the notes in 7th position much easier.

EXERCISE

VII

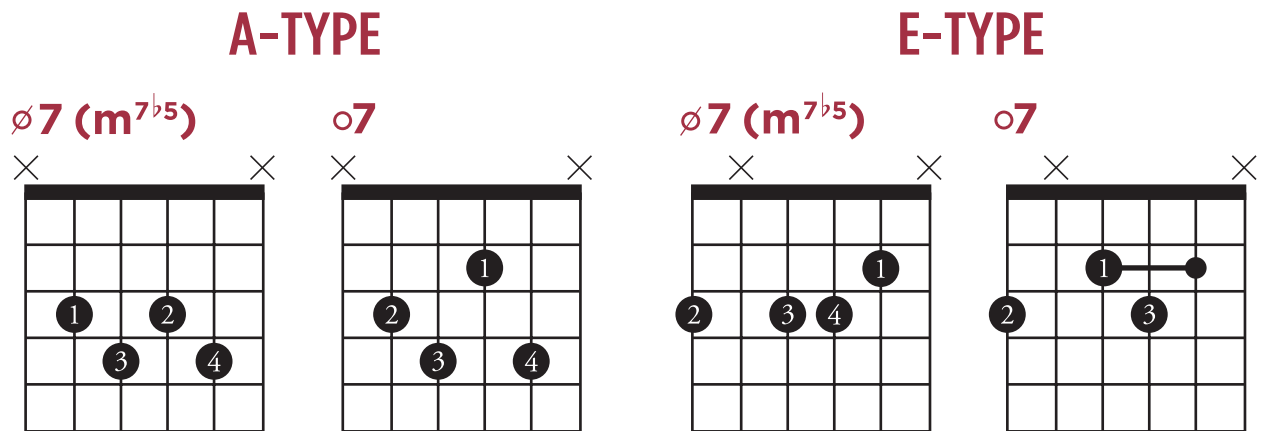
④ ③ ② ③ ④ ① ② ③ ④ ③
4 3 2 4 2 4 3 4 4 1 2 1 2 3 4 1

② ③ ④ ⑤ ④ ⑤ ⑥
2 4 3 1 4 1 2 1 4 2 1 4 2 1 2

MODULE 3: Chords

- ▶ So far, this course has covered 3 kinds of seventh chords: dominant seventh, major seventh, and minor seventh.
- ▶ This lesson will add 2 more: the half-diminished seventh (also known as minor seventh, flat five); and the fully diminished seventh. These are not often found in popular music, but they are ubiquitous in jazz and bossa nova.
- ▶ The major seventh chord contains the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th degrees of a major scale. Using C as the root, that would be: C, E, G, and B.
- ▶ A dominant seventh chord contains the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and flat 7th (that is, lowered by a half step) notes. Using C as the root, that would be C, E, G, and B \flat .
- ▶ A minor seventh contains the 1st, flat 3rd, 5th, and flat 7th. With C as the root, that's C, E \flat , G, and B \flat .
- ▶ The half-diminished seventh contains the 1st, flat 3rd, flat 5th, and flat 7th notes. Compared to the minor seventh, the only difference is the flatted 5th note. That's why this chord is also called the minor seventh flat five.

- ▷ Finally, the diminished seventh chord contains the 1st note, flat 3rd note, flat 5th note, and the double-flat 7th note (lowered by a full step). For a C diminished seventh, that would be C, E \flat , G \flat , and B $\flat\flat$. That's the correct theoretical spelling of the chord, but B $\flat\flat$ is the same as the note A, so it might be easier to think of it that way.
- ▷ One of the beautiful things about the guitar is that you don't necessarily need to know all the notes in a given chord if you know the movable shapes. The movable E-type and A-type shapes for the half-diminished and diminished seventh chords are shown below.



- ▷ For C half-diminished seventh, with the root on the 6th string, start with the 2nd finger on the 8th fret. That's C.
 - ▷ Then place your 3rd finger on the 4th string at the 8th fret. That's for the note B \flat .
 - ▷ Place your 4th finger on the 3rd string at the 8th fret. That's E \flat , the 3rd of the chord.
 - ▷ Place your 1st finger on the 2nd string, 7th fret (for G \flat , the flatted 5th).
 - ▷ Mute the 5th and 1st strings.
- ▷ To make it a diminished seventh:
 - ▷ Keep the 2nd finger where it is on the root.
 - ▷ Barre strings 4, 3, and 2 with the 1st finger on the 7th fret.
 - ▷ Then, place your 3rd finger on the 3rd string at the 8th fret.

- ▷ Here's how to play those same chords with the root on the A string.
 - ▶ Start with C. That's played on the 3rd fret of the 5th string with the 1st finger.
 - ▶ Place the 3rd finger on the 4th string at the 4th fret for G^b.
 - ▶ Place the 2nd finger on the 3rd string at the 3rd fret for B^b.
 - ▶ Place the 4th finger on the 2nd string at the 4th fret for E^b.
 - ▶ When you look at this chord on the fretboard, it resembles the shape of a diamond with the 4 fingers. Be careful not to play the 6th or 1st strings.

- ▷ To play the diminished seventh with the root on the 5th string, follow these steps:
 - ▶ Place your 2nd finger on the root (3rd fret C).
 - ▶ Place your 3rd finger on the 4th string for E^b.
 - ▶ Place your 1st finger on the 3rd string at the 2nd fret for B^b, or A.
 - ▶ Place your 4th finger on the 2nd string at the 4th fret for E^b.
 - ▶ Again, don't play the 6th or 1st strings.

MODULE 4: Scales

- ▷ This module looks at the Mixolydian mode. This is the 5th mode of a major scale. For example, D Mixolydian has the same notes as G major: D, E, F[#], G, A, B, and C.
- ▷ If you look at D Mixolydian and D major side-by-side, just one note is different: C instead of C[#]. It could be described as a major scale with a lowered seventh.
- ▷ Because the dominant seventh chord also contains a lowered seventh, Mixolydian fits well over it. This scale is used in jazz, funk and blues. In a blues progression, it's a nice alternative to playing the minor pentatonic and blues scales.

- ▷ Here are some licks in D Mixolydian played over a D seventh chord. All 3 are in 7th position.

≈ EXERCISE ≈

D⁷

D⁷

D⁷

MODULE 5: Putting It All Together

- ▷ This course’s final tune, “Beautiful Gypsy,” is a jazzy, flamenco-inspired jam. The chords are all sevenths: E minor seventh, A minor seventh, G major seventh, C major seventh, F# half-diminished seventh, and B seventh. The melody is played in 7th position.
- ▷ You will use the D mixolydian scale over the D seventh chord. The G major scale works over the entire tune. But on the minor seventh and dominant seventh chords you can also use Dorian or minor pentatonic.

~ BEAUTIFUL GYPSY ~

Em⁷ Am⁷

1 4 2 1 2 4 2 1 3

D⁷ G^{maj7}

2 1 4 2 1 3 1 4 3

C^{maj7} F#m^{7b5} B⁷

4 3 2 1 4 2 1 3 2



Guitar Books for Further Study

Biscaldi, Luigi. *Esercizi Speciali di Virtuositismo*. Vols.1–3. Ancona: Bèrben, 1987–1991. Advanced right-hand exercises for the classical guitar.

Bridges: A Comprehensive Guitar Series. Oakville, Ontario: Frederick Harris Music Co., 2011. Graded pieces for classical guitar, available in 9 volumes, from preparatory to level 8. An excellent range of repertoire from the Renaissance to the present. Well edited.

Coker, Jerry, Bob Knapp, and Larry Vincent. *Hearin' the Changes*. Rottenburg, Germany: Advance Music, 1997. Understanding and assimilating essential jazz chord progressions.

Dodgson, Stephen and Hector Quine. *Progressive Reading for Guitarists*. London: G. Ricordi & Co., 1975. Positional reading exercises. A great resource for learning the notes in all positions on the neck. Intermediate to advanced level.

Duncan, Charles. *Easy Classical Guitar Duets*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 1993. Graded duos for 2 guitars. Excellent for note-reading practice. Beginning level.

Fewell, Garrison. *Jazz Improvisation for Guitar: A Melodic Approach*. Boston: Berklee Press Publications, 2005. An introduction to jazz improvisation for the guitar. Includes brief examples on the stylistic interpretations of several well-known jazz guitarists.

Greene, Ted. *Jazz Guitar: Single Note Soloing*. Vol. 1. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred, 1985. The principles of jazz soloing. Includes hundreds of musical examples. Not for the faint of heart. Intermediate level.

Hoover, Renard D. *Right-Hand Development for Jazz Guitar*. Hialeah, FL: Columbia Pictures Publications, 1981. Comprehensive open-string patterns to increase picking proficiency.

Iznaola, Ricardo. *Kitharlogos: The Path to Virtuosity—A Technical Workout Manual for All Guitarists*. Heidelberg: Chantarelle, 1997. Comprehensive technique exercises for both left and right hands by one of the leading pedagogues for the classical guitar. Intermediate to advanced level.

Jaffe, Andy. *Jazz Harmony*. 3rd ed. Rottenburg, Germany: Advance Music, 2009. Understanding jazz scale and chord theory from beginning to intermediate level. Covers chords, modes, and common jazz forms.

Josel, Seth and Ming Tsao. *The Techniques of Guitar Playing*. Basel: Bärenreiter, 2014. A comprehensive overview of the wide range of playing techniques available to the classical guitarist. Advanced level.

Leavitt, William. *Melodic Rhythms for Guitar*. Boston: Berklee Press Publications, 1969. Single line melodies and chords in a jazz idiom. A classic. Intermediate level.

McAllister, Colin. *The Vanguard Guitar: Etudes and Exercises for the Study of Contemporary Music*. Saint-Romuald, Quebec: Les Productions d'Oz, 2004. Contains 12 original pieces in a contemporary idiom as well as preparatory exercises. Organized in 3 chapters: "Expanding the Tonal Frame," "Developing the Sense of Time," and "Developing the Expressive Palette." Intermediate level.

Noad, Frederick. *Solo Guitar Playing Book 1*. 4th ed. New York: Music Sales Corporation, 2008. A beginning method for classical guitar. Very good for note-reading practice.

The Real Book. 6th ed. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2004. A collection of over 400 tunes from the standard jazz repertoire. Contains melody lines and chords.

Sandole, Dennis. *Guitar Lore*. Revised ed. King of Prussia, PN: Theodore Presser Company, 1981. A slim volume packed with valuable information on technique, scales, chords, rhythms and more. Mostly exercises, not much explanation. Intermediate to advanced level.

Tedesco, Tommy. *For Guitar Players Only: Shortcuts in Technique, Sight Reading, and Studio Playing*. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred, 2008. Just like the title says, this is a handbook of advice by a legendary studio guitarist. Intermediate level.

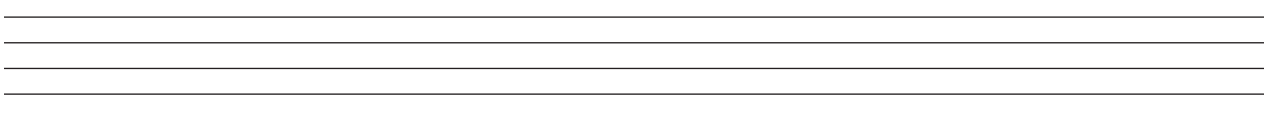
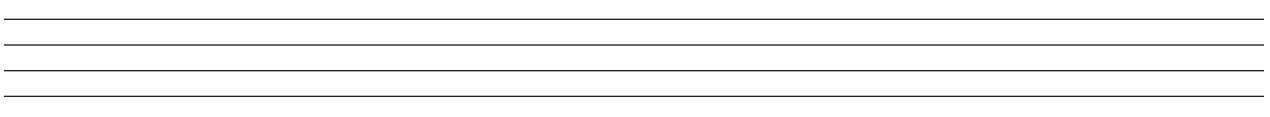
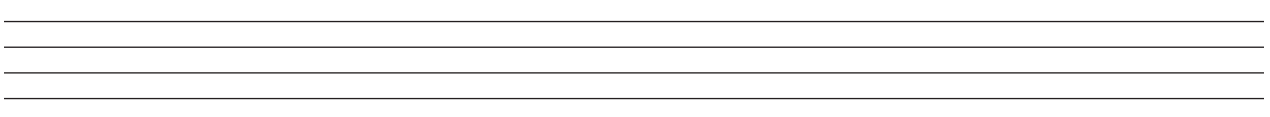
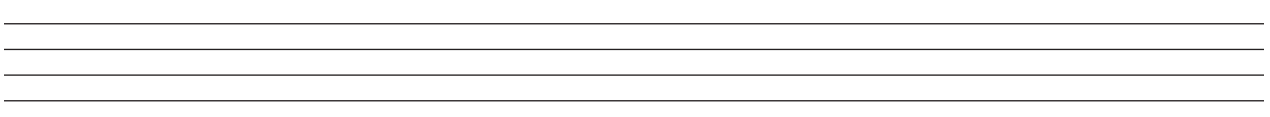
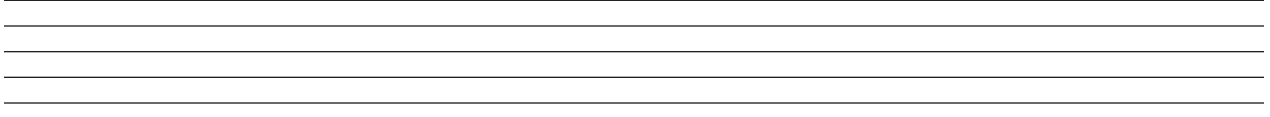
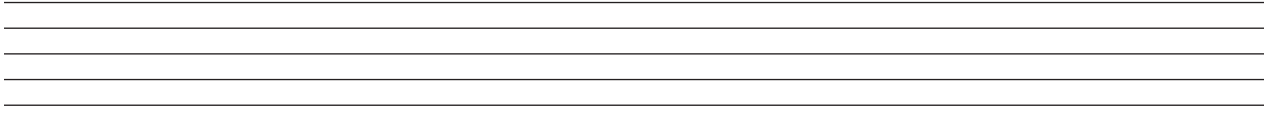
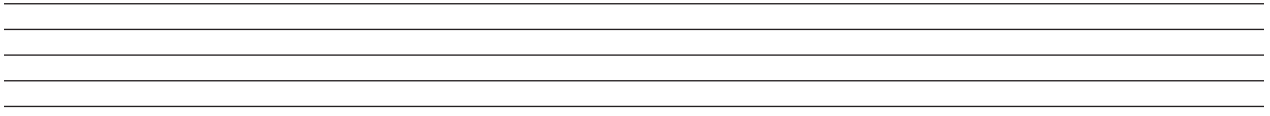
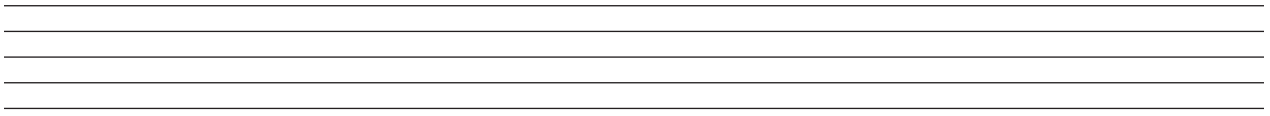
Tennant, Scott. *Pumping Nylon: The Classical Guitarist's Technique Handbook*. 2nd ed. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred, 2016. Easy-to-understand exercises for left and right hands. Beginning to intermediate level.



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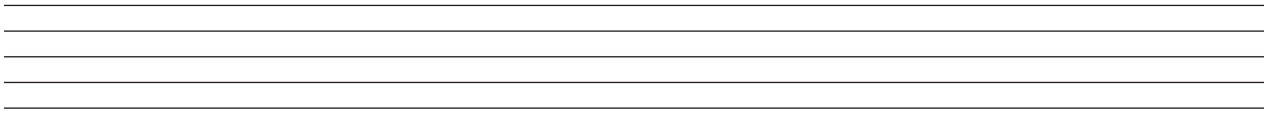
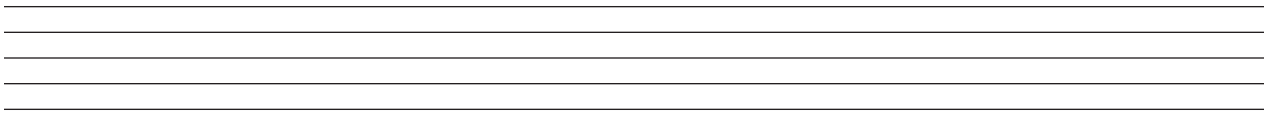
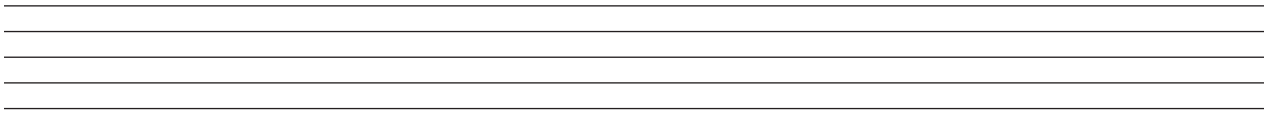
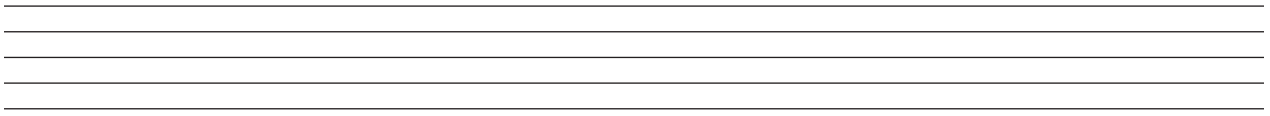
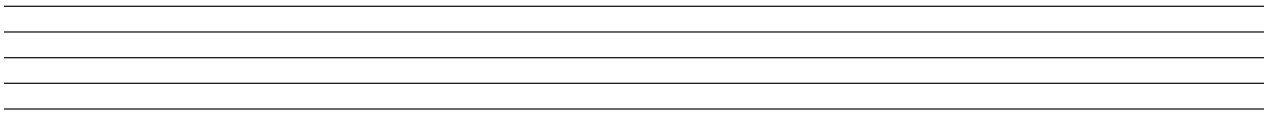
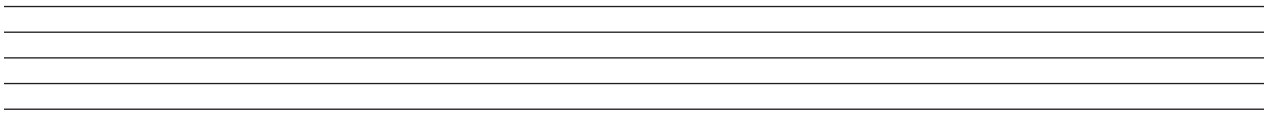
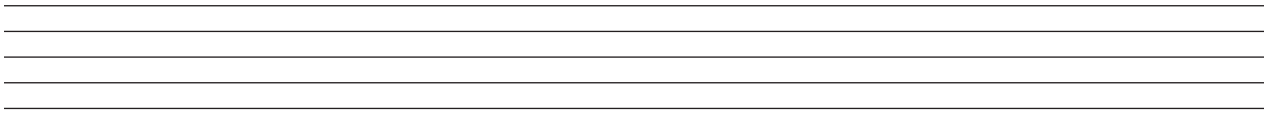
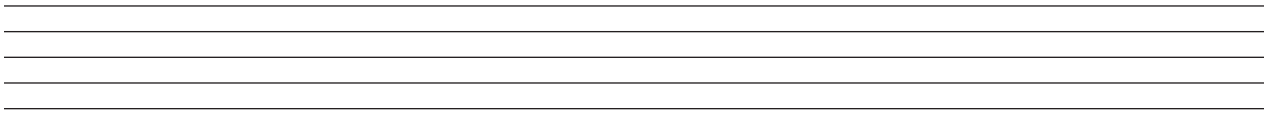
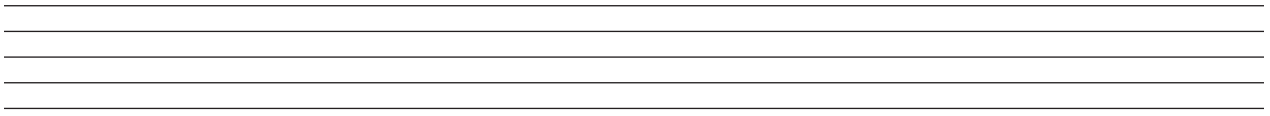


 **NOTES**

NOTES



The page contains 12 sets of blank musical staves, each consisting of five horizontal lines. These staves are arranged vertically down the page, providing space for writing musical notation.

 **NOTES**

NOTES



The page contains 12 sets of five horizontal lines each, arranged vertically down the page. These lines are intended for writing musical notes.

 **NOTES**