

TORRINS



GUITAR LEVEL 1

transcribed from lessons by **Bobby Koelble & Michael Walker**

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Musical examples by Bobby Koelble.
Additional musical examples by Michael Walker and Cam Freeman.
Layout & Images by Cam Freeman.

About Torrins

Over the last decade, Torrins has become a recognized name in the online music education world. Torrins' mission is to use technology, innovation, and passion for music to spread awareness and music education all over the world. Through its website, www.torrins.com, Torrins provides video-based instructional lessons on a variety of musical instruments, topics, styles, and genres to a variety of audiences. In addition to music lessons produced with world-class instructors and renowned music artists, the website features state-of-the-art video player controls, which has brought flexibility, convenience, and a personalized learning experience for music enthusiasts all over the world.

Since 2015, Torrins has developed a novel music education program for schools built on the mantra to bring learning to people instead of people to learning. The program includes a combination of classroom-based instruction by trained instructors, and online sessions via web-based applications. This instructional manual is part of the curriculum and is intended to be used as a reference together with the video lessons.

About The Authors - Bobby Koelble

Bobby is a graduate of Berklee College of Music with a degree in performance. He has been an adjunct professor of Jazz Guitar at Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida since 1998. He also taught at the Seminole Community College from 2003 to 2005, and has been part of the music faculty at University of Central Florida since 2007.

After graduation, Bobby had the honor of playing alongside Chuck Schuldiner and Gene Hoglan in the world-famous metal band *Death*, where he featured on the Roadrunner release, *Symbolic*. During his music career over the last 20 years, he has performed with several world-class musicians including Sam Rivers, Danny Gottlieb and Chris Potter. Bobby is also an accomplished song writer, bringing his talents to fore with various bands, namely, *Junkie Rush* and *The Absinthe Trio*.



Bobby has been associated with Torrins for over 10 years, developing new techniques and learning methods for teaching guitar to musicians all over the world.

About The Authors - Michael Walker

Michael Walker is a Grammy award winning musician, producer, and composer with over twenty five years of experience in the music industry.

A sought-after studio musician, he has recorded over six hundred tracks in various styles of music and worked with many of the industry's finest.

Mike has been associated with Torrins for over 10 years and continues teaching on several fronts, including guitar, vocals and ukulele.



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Torrins Guitar **LEVEL 1!**

You're about to start the awesome journey of learning to play guitar, a journey that is both challenging and rewarding! Whether you want to jam in a rock band or swing in a jazz combo, this series of lessons will get you ready to play the guitar with skill and confidence!

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

LEVEL 1 is geared towards beginners and assumes you might be picking up the guitar for the first time. Even if you do know a little about the guitar, you're still sure to find some useful new stuff in these lessons!

LEVEL 1 covers the following topics:

- *The parts of the guitar*
- *How to hold and play the guitar*
- *Music notation and reading rhythms up to quarter notes*
- *Operating equipment such as a tuner and a metronome*
- *Chords, progressions and strumming*
- *Playing melodies*
- *Learning songs to play with other musicians*

By the end of this Level, you will be able to move on to more advanced concepts to further boost your creativity!

HOW TO PRACTICE AT HOME

There are written exercises that accompany many lessons. It's perfectly understandable that you are anxious to get your skills together quickly, but learning guitar takes time. These exercises reinforce the concepts and techniques shown throughout the course, so be sure to take your time and practice them cleanly and slowly.

We'll be going over these exercises during the lessons, but it's also important that you go over the material in between meeting times.

Slow and accurate practice provides greater benefits and will make sure that you have a good foundation to build upon! Most importantly, remember to have patience with yourself and allow for enough time to let these new ideas and techniques sink in.

Also, be sure to practice a little each day. It's always better to practice a little every day instead of trying to cram a lot into one practice session. You'll have great results with just 30 to 60 minutes of practice a day!

PRACTICE SPACE

You must find a good place to practice, where you will have some uninterrupted time daily. You must also be able to sit with your guitar, in the proper position for your arms and hands.

You will need access to a metronome, this book, and potentially the internet in your practice space. Find a regular space if possible, and set it up in advance so that you can use it quickly and easily.

METRONOME

A metronome is a device that keeps a steady beat. It's a good idea to get a metronome and practice with it as much as possible! Just be sure you can hear it as you play along.

If you can't get your hands on a separate metronome, there are plenty of smart phone apps that you can use instead (many of them free), or websites that provide controllable metronomes online.



SECTIONS AND ICONS USED IN THIS BOOK

GEAR 101

These sections focus on providing you information about the structure and different parts of the guitar as well as other useful tools that can help you out with your practice and development.



THE WOODSHED

These sections cover specific techniques and concepts about playing the guitar effectively.



THE READING ROOM

In these sections, we highlight and explain the concepts of music theory which will help you understand and create music. We also focus on reading music notation.



LAY IT DOWN

These sections are various exercises and activities that allow you to directly apply the various techniques and concepts learned in the lessons.



CHECK UP

These sections are for different quizzes, dictation, and sight-reading exercises that test your knowledge and understanding of music theory and the concepts shown throughout the lessons.



HIT THE ROAD

These sections are activities for you to work on at home during your own personal practice time, because it's vital that you work on the material between lesson times. You will notice a direct improvement in your skills if you take the time to practice at home.



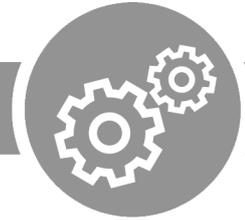
TALENT SHOW

These sections are activities that let you show your stuff! Performances in class can be challenging and exciting!



Lesson 1 - Getting Started

GEAR 101



PARTS OF THE GUITAR

There are 3 main parts of the guitar, which correlate to the human body:



HEAD / HEADSTOCK

The HEAD has 6 TUNERS to manipulate the pitch of the strings

TUNER

NECK

The NECK contains the fretboard



BODY

The BODY has other parts such as the bridge, saddle, pick-guard and sound hole.

OTHER PARTS OF THE GUITAR



NUT

The **NUT** is where the neck and the head meet. It has grooves where the strings fit.

FRET BOARD - against which we press the strings to choose a note



BRIDGE

which houses the **SADDLE**



SADDLE

where the strings end, coming down from the headstock



PICK GUARD

protects the body of the guitar from pick scratches



SOUND HOLE

amplifies the sound of the guitar



THE WOODSHED



SITTING WITH THE GUITAR

There are two basic positions that you can use to hold and sit with the guitar. They are:

1: STANDARD / COMFORTABLE POSITION



Some people refer to this as the *folk position*.

Here, the guitar rests on your right leg, wherein the lower curve of the guitar's body fits nicely on your right thigh (for right-handed players).

The guitar will then lean back against your chest by an angle of about 10 degrees. The right arm will rest on top of the lower bout of the guitar.

The picking hand will be positioned primarily between the sound hole and the bridge.

Make sure that the neck of the guitar is not angled down towards the floor. Such a position will make chords and melodies much more difficult to play and stretches nearly impossible. It also may cause wrist injuries in the long run.

Ideally, the neck must be either parallel to the ground or angled upward.



2: CLASSICAL POSITION



This is the position used by classical guitarists.

For this position, elevate the left leg by placing it on a footstool.

You can use a guitar case as well if you don't have a footstool.

The point is that your left leg must be elevated by at-least 6 to 8 inches off the ground, and rested.

Place the curvature of the guitar on the left leg, and let the bottom end of the guitar rest on the right thigh.

The back edge of the guitar should rest against your chest.

The headstock should be approximately at eye level. This position places the neck at an upward angle and makes it easy to access the entire fretboard. You can try both sitting positions and decide which one you like best or feels most comfortable. It's really up to you.

Regardless of which position you choose, it is important to make sure that you constantly maintain good posture.

Do not slump over the guitar or let your shoulders come up!

THE READING ROOM



MUSICAL ALPHABET

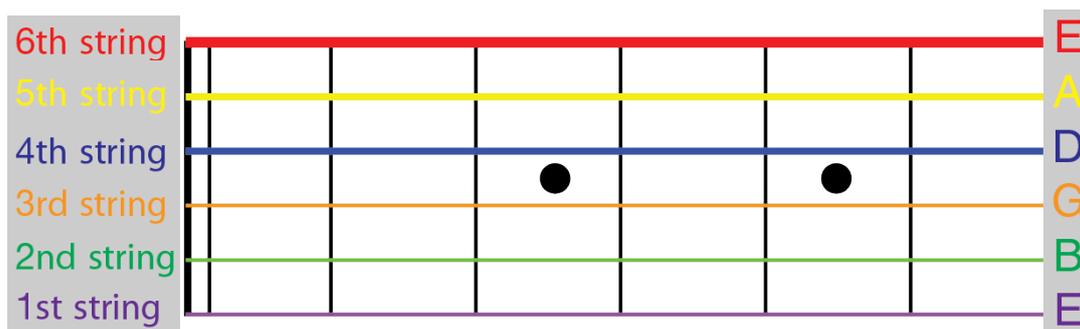
The musical alphabet is very simple, and easy to learn. Take the first 7 letters from the English language: *A, B, C, D, E, F,* and *G*. These are the **NATURAL NOTES**.

These are what we use to indicate musical notes. In total, we have 12 musical notes, obtained from the first 7 English alphabet letters, but that requires using symbols called *sharps* and *flats* (“accidentals”). We shall discuss those later. For now, our focus is on the seven “natural” notes as we shall now call them.

The open, un-plucked strings of the guitar have note names that we use to tune the guitar.

Starting from the thickest, or lowest string on the guitar, the note values of each string are:

- 6th string – E – lowest pitch– thickest
- 5th string – A
- 4th string – D
- 3rd string – G
- 2nd string – B
- 1st string – E – highest pitch – thinnest



E A D G B E, starting from the lowest (thickest) to the highest (thinnest) string is the order of note names to indicate the open strings.



A good way to remember this is to use a mnemonic:
Eat A Darn Good Breakfast Everyday.

GEAR 101

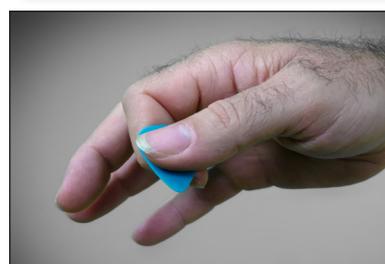
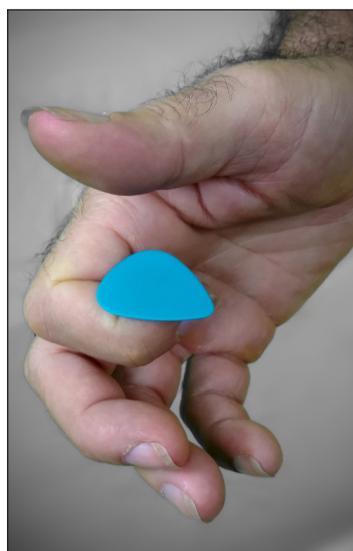
**HOLDING THE PICK**

Classical guitarists use their fingers to pluck the strings. That is a technique known as fingerstyle playing.

For these lessons, however, we shall be focused on using the **PICK** (or *plectrum*) for plucking the strings. This is pick-style playing. This is a very simple technique whereby you can pluck or pick the string with the pointed end of the guitar pick.

It is very important to hold the pick properly in order to have good technique!

Place the thumb across the pick, at a perpendicular angle to the pointed end, so that the point is sticking out. Then, curl the first finger around to complete the grip on the other side of the pick. Let the other fingers relax.

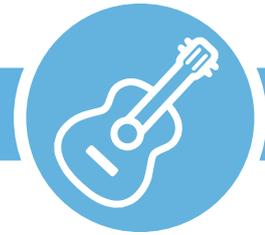


Now, place the tip of the pick on any string and use a little downward motion of the wrist to produce a sound from the string.



You don't want too much of the pick to stick out - this will make it easier for you to hit unwanted strings.

LAY IT DOWN



DOWNSTROKES ON THE 1ST STRING

For this very simple exercise, rest your pick on top of the **1st string**.

Turn your hand slightly to slant the wide, top end of the pick down towards the floor.

This allows the pick to come off the string with less friction.

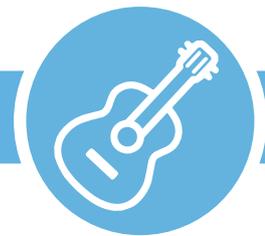


Now pluck the string with a relaxed motion of the wrist.

From now on we shall refer to this relaxed motion of the wrist as a **DOWNSTROKE**.



LAY IT DOWN



DOWNSTROKES ON ALL THE STRINGS

This exercise is same as the last one. The only difference is that instead of picking just one string, you are now going to pick all the strings, one by one.

Start by picking the highest string, and then move upwards to the lowest string. Do this slowly.



Try not to bend your wrist upwards when moving up to the low strings. Instead, use your elbow to position your wrist over every string, so as to maintain proper wrist motion.

CHECK UP



NAMING ALL STRING NUMBERS AS YOU PLAY

Practice calling out the string numbers before you play them. This will help associate the string placement with the string number.

Try playing the patterns we learned in the last section and call out the string number before you play them.

HIT THE ROAD



DOWNSTROKE PATTERNS

Let's try to pick the strings in a few different patterns with only downstrokes:

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

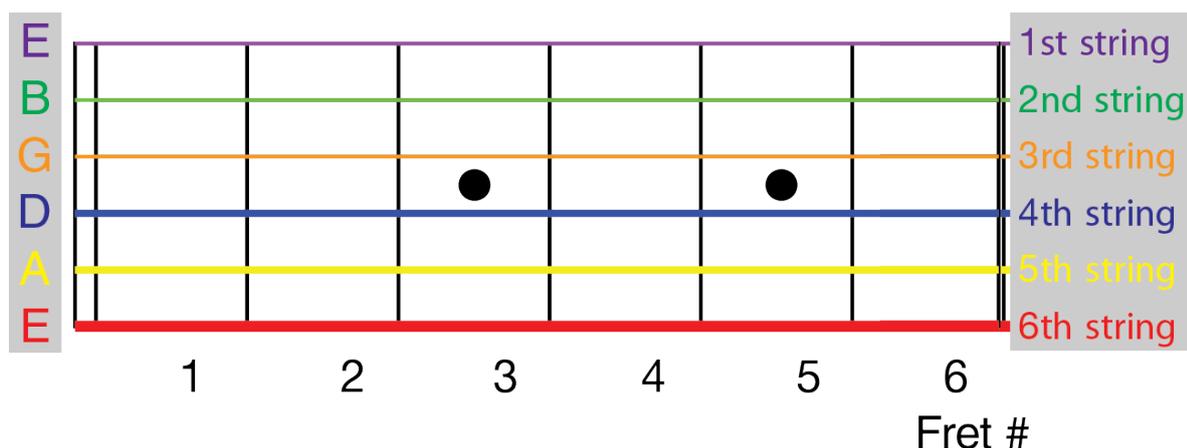
PATTERN 2: 3rd string, 2nd, 1st, 6th, 5th, 4th, 3rd

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

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

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

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



HIT THE ROAD



“NOTHING ELSE MATTERS” (METALLICA)

An open string is the string played by itself, without fretting or pressing down on any note on the string.

This example is the intro section from the band Metallica’s ballad “Nothing Else Matters”. It utilizes only open strings.

This is a very simple and fun piece of music to play and develop your wrist technique with.

Just pick the low E string, then the G, then B and then the high E, and then back to the B, and then G.

Keep repeating this with only downstrokes until you get comfortable with it.

NOTHING ELSE MATTERS:

Open **6th** string, **3rd**, **2nd**, **1st**, **2nd**, **3rd**



Make sure your wrist motions are small, and relaxed, and keep your hand close to the strings.

Lesson 2 - Left Hand Technique

THE WOODSHED



LEFT HAND BASIC TECHNIQUE

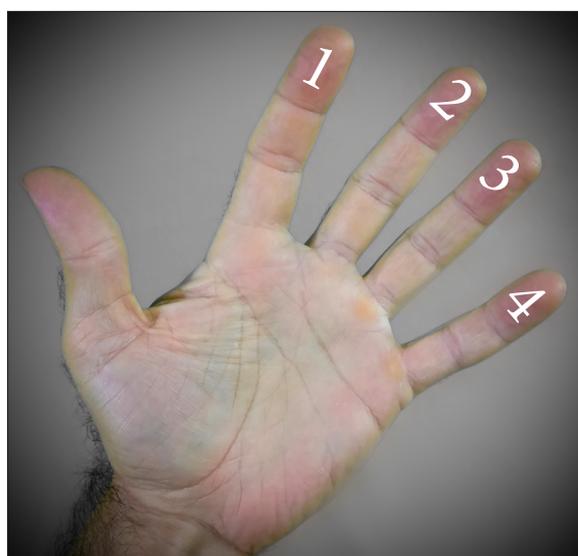
FRETTING HAND – The hand we use to press the strings down on the fretboard of the guitar's neck. For right-handed guitar players, this is usually the left hand. For left-handed guitar players, it's typically the right hand.

Let's look at the 4 fingers on our fretting hand:

Each of these fingers is given a numerical notation to specify which finger we are referring to.

These values are as follows:

- Index finger – 1
- Middle finger – 2
- Ring finger – 3
- Pinky finger – 4



The metal wires on the guitar neck that are placed perpendicular to the strings are known as **FRET WIRES**.



The gap between two consecutive fret wires is known as a **FRET**.

If you observe the fretboard, you'll see that there are dots on some frets. These dots are **FRET MARKERS**.

Some guitars have different fret markers, while some guitars don't have them at all.

You can use these fret markers to find the frets more easily and quickly. As an exercise, quickly try to locate the **5th fret!**

FRETTING THE STRING

Now that we have the basic information about our fretboard and finger numbers, let us learn how to use our fingers to play over the fretboard.

Make a “thumbs up” gesture with your fretting hand.



Now in this position, place the pad of the thumb on the middle of the back of neck, directly behind the **6th fret** wire.



Curl the first finger, and place it on the first string, just to the left of the **5th fret wire**.

Very gradually apply pressure on the string and press it down against the fret, with your fingertip.

Keep picking the string until the buzzy sound turns into a full ringing note. This is the sound you want: a clear tone.



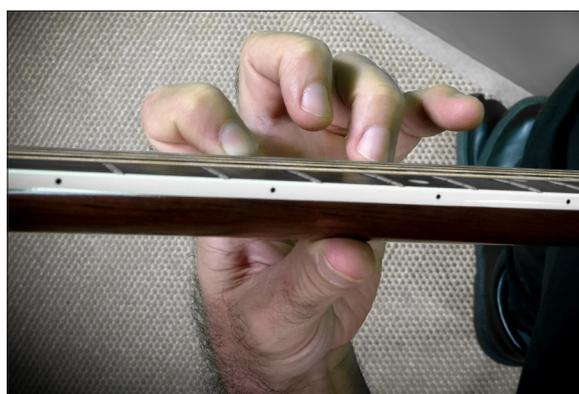
You can use a little pressure from the thumb to properly squeeze the string against the fret.

Remember, if the sound is too buzzy, then that means:

- a. Your finger is too far away from the fret or**
- b. There is not enough pressure on the string.**

Now, try the same with the third finger, on the **7th fret**.

And remember to keep your thumb behind the fret where the second finger might rest; in this case, that would be the **6th fret**.



LAY IT DOWN



BALANCE (INDEX AND RING FINGER)

After playing these notes individually, the next step will be to try and play them in succession or one after another.

Press the **5th fret** on the first string, using your first finger, and pick the string.

Remember to use the fingertip. Leave the finger there, and then press the **7th fret** on the same string, using your third finger.

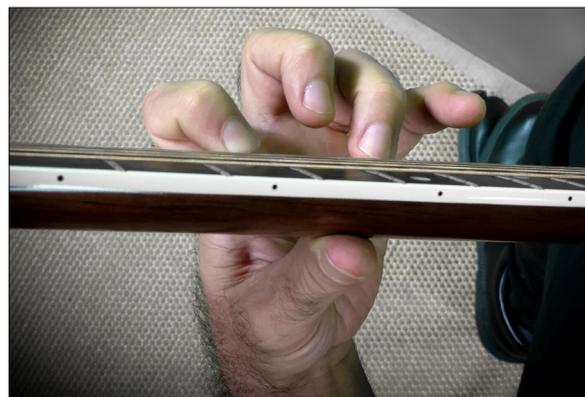
If you've kept your thumb in the right position while doing this, then your fretting hand, at this point, is in a balanced position.

Now, raise the third finger off of the string, and play the note that your first finger was already holding down.

Then bring the third finger back to the string and play that note again.

This gives you a simple two note pattern.

Keep practicing this back-and-forth pattern to get your fretting hand used to this balanced position.



Make sure your finger is slightly behind the fret wire with enough pressure to allow the note to ring clearly.

LAY IT DOWN



CHROMATIC ASCENDING AND DESCENDING

Playing “chromatically” is simply moving up 1 fret at a time and playing each note along the way.

In this exercise, start with your index finger on the **1st fret** of the 1st string and play the note.

Then move to the **2nd fret** on the same string and play that note.

Do this all the way up the fretboard until you’ve played the **12th fret**.

Repeat this exercise with the 2nd finger, then the 3rd, then the 4th to help strengthen the muscles and build calluses on the finger tips.

To further this exercise, start on the **12th fret** and work your way back down to the **1st fret** on the 1st string with all fingers, one at a time.

Pressing down on the strings may cause some discomfort on your fingertips, and might even be a bit painful.

But that’s okay. It happens in the beginning, and as your fingertips harden up after a few weeks of playing, the feeling of discomfort will subside.

LAY IT DOWN



OPEN STRING EXERCISE

(0-1, 0-2, 0-3)

This exercise will help coordinate your fingers to the frets in a steady position.

Align your first finger to the **1st fret** of the 1st string but don’t grip the fret yet

Play the open string then place your finger on the **1st fret** and play the string again.

Then play open again, place your 2nd finger on the **2nd fret** and play.

Open again, then place your 3rd finger on the **3rd fret** and play.

Do this exercise again in reverse: Open then **3rd fret**, open then **2nd fret**, open then **1st fret**.

For practice, combine both patterns.

LAY IT DOWN



BALANCE EXERCISE ON EVERY STRING

(OPEN, INDEX, AND MIDDLE)

This is a very basic exercise that you can perform on all 6 strings, and it involves just 3 notes.

On the first string, pick the open string. Then, pick the note on the **5th fret** using your first finger, and then pick the **7th fret** using your third finger while still holding your first finger down.

Once this is feeling easy to do, move down 1 fret and play open, **4th fret**, then **6th fret**.

As the exercise begins to feel easier, try moving it closer to the headstock one fret at a time.

This exercise is performed between the 5th and **7th frets** so as to develop our fretting hand, without the strain of over-stretching and causing injuries.

Keep in mind all the points about thumb positioning that we have discussed in the previous exercises.

LAY IT DOWN



OPEN STRING EXERCISE - MOVING UP THE STRINGS

(0-1, 0-2, 0-3)

Just like the previous version of this exercise, we are going to go open string to **1st fret**, open string to **2nd fret**, open string to 3rd but this time we are moving from the 1st string through each additional string until we get to the 6th string.

Your fingers may not be strong enough to get a good sound on the thicker strings but don't worry.

Go as far as you can and practice until your fingers are tired but not hurting.

Then, after some rest, come back to the guitar and try again.

Soon you will be able to do all 6 strings with no trouble.

HIT THE ROAD



SIMPLE SONG - "FADED" (ALAN WALKER)

The simple version of this song is played all on the 1st string using just the 1st finger.

The first note is the **11th fret**.

The second note is on the **7th fret**

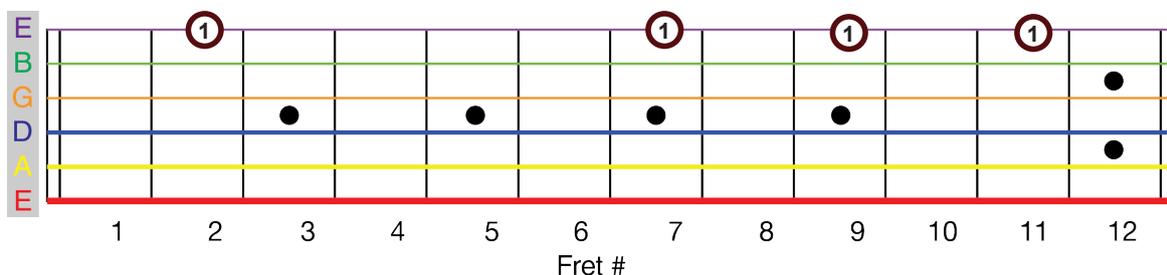
The third note is on the **2nd fret**.

The last note is on the **9th fret**.

Each note gets played 4 times.

FADED

1st String Fret #'s **11 -> 7 -> 2 -> 9** (play 4 times)



Play it slowly until you have it under your fingers, then increase the speed a little bit at a time.



Go slower to get faster!
With any new pattern, the slower and more accurate you play it, the easier it will become to speed up!

HIT THE ROAD



“HAPPY BIRTHDAY” - 1ST STRING

Let’s try playing a familiar tune on the first string.

“Happy birthday” will start by playing the open string and go all the way up to the 12th fret. Just use your 1st finger to play this song for now.

Here are the patterns split into the phrases:

ON THE 1st STRING:
FRET#'s

Open,
Open,
2,
Open,
5,
4

Fret #

Open,
Open,
2,
Open,
7,
5

Fret #

Open
Open
12,
9,
5
4
2

Fret #

10,
10,
9,
5,
7,
5

Fret #

Lesson 3 - Three String Chords

GEAR 101



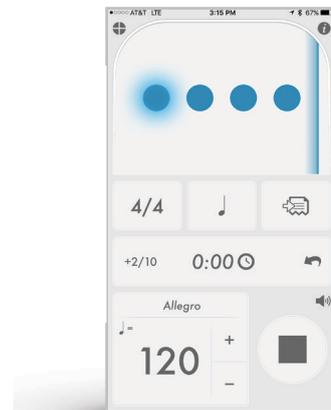
THE METRONOME

A metronome is a device that keeps a steady beat. It's a good idea to get a metronome and practice with it as much as possible! Just be sure you can hear it as you play along.

If you can't get your hands on a separate metronome, there are plenty of smart phone apps that you can use instead (many of them free) or websites that provide controllable metronomes online.

When we use our metronome, we set it to a quarter note rhythms in 4/4 time. If you don't know what that is, don't worry. Just be sure to disable any accent beats (or different sounding clicks) and make sure you see the "4/4" number on your screen.

Then, it's just a matter of putting in the number we tell you at the beginning of the exercises.



THE READING ROOM



WHAT IS A CHORD?

A **CHORD** is a collection of 3 or more notes, played at the same time.

The guitar is often used as an accompanying instrument, and for that purpose a great deal of guitar playing is chordal and rhythmic.

CHORD DIAGRAMS

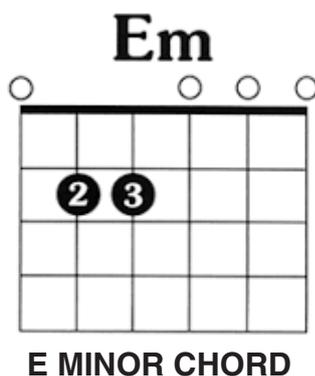
As you can see in the picture, the box shape represents a **CHORD DIAGRAM**, wherein the horizontal lines represent the frets, while the vertical lines are the strings. The thick line at the top represents the nut. This diagram shows you a cross section of the first 4 frets.

The Xs on the top side depict strings that's should not be played, while the Os represent the *Open Strings* that should be included in the chord.

The notes of the chord are depicted by the black dots on specific strings and frets. Furthermore, the numbers on the dots show you which finger you should use to grip the chord.

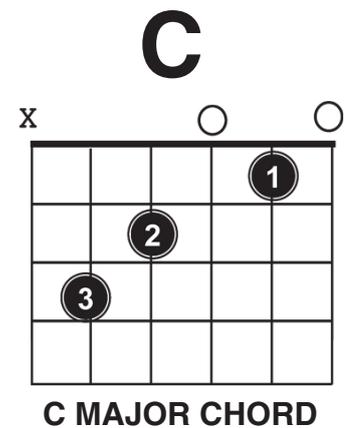
The letter at the top of the diagram tells you the name of the chord.

If it is just a single letter chord, (like the C chord in the diagram) then it would be called a **MAJOR** chord.



If there is a lower case “m” next to the chord, it will be called a **MINOR** chord.

Right now, we won't discuss **MAJOR** and **MINOR** chords too heavily

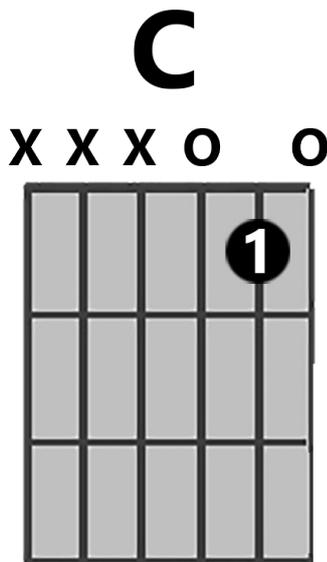


THE WOODSHED

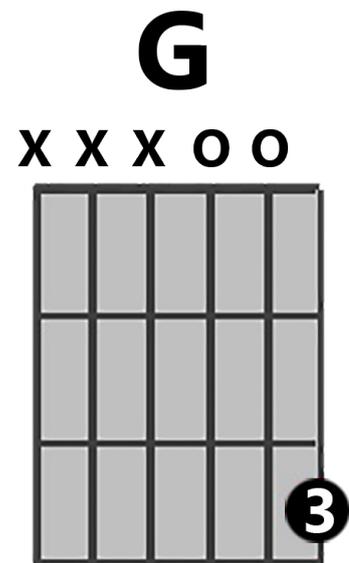


4 SIMPLE CHORDS (G, C, G7, E)

The chords in this lesson are very simple and can be played using just one finger.

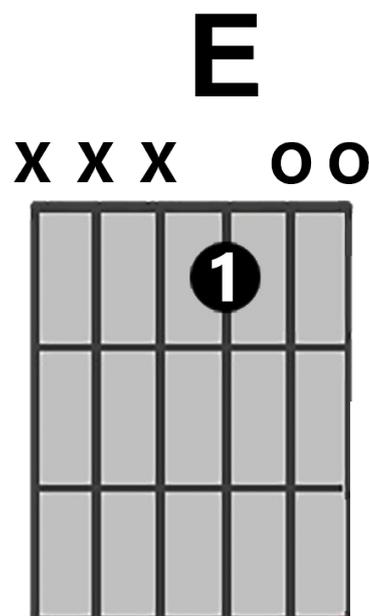
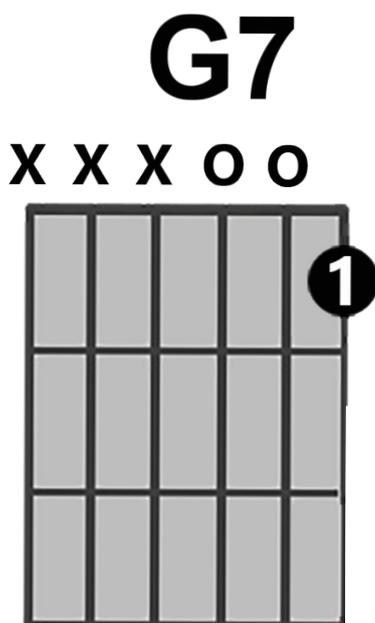


Left hand: make sure to stay on your fingertips and avoid letting your fingers touch the adjacent strings (therefore silencing them).



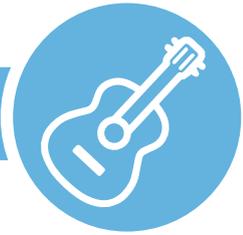
Right hand: *strum* these chords with the pick from the 3rd string down to the 1st. Be sure to slant your pick down slightly, as we have been doing, to reduce friction while crossing the strings.

We use a little bit of the wrist to strum the chords downwards but it is the elbow which should be the dominant factor in causing the movement.



MUTING is a technique used to silence the strings when finished playing a chord. Place the bottom edge of your rhythm hand gently against the strings to stop them from ringing.

LAY IT DOWN



STRUMMING TECHNIQUE

(SWITCHING BETWEEN THE CHORDS)

Practice going back and forth between the four chords. Do this slowly. Make sure to keep the rhythm consistent.

You can use a metronome set to 60BPM to keep count while playing - strum the chord and then change to the next chord after 4 clicks / beeps. (**strum-2-3-4, strum-2-3-4**)

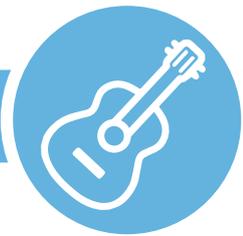
Count "1-2-3-4" along with the metronome tones.

Be sure you use your fingertips to press down on the notes, and keep your strumming smooth with a relaxed downward motion. The notes must sound as though they are being played at the same time, and not separately.

Practice *muting* the strings between each chord as you play. Practice moving between 2 chords at a time then move between 2 more.

Eventually, get comfortable moving between all 4 chords we've learned.

LAY IT DOWN



EXERCISE USING 4 CHORDS

Let's try playing a short exercise using the 4 chords we've learned. Strum each chord and hold for 4 clicks of the metronome, just like our practice before. Let's try to play with the metronome at 70BPM.

G	C	E	C	G ⁷	E	C	G

strum-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4

HIT THE ROAD



“LET IT BE SUNG” (JACK JOHNSON)

The first minute of the song *Let it be sung* by Jack Johnson is just two chords we've already learned: C and G.

Since we'll be playing with the song and not a metronome, it might be harder to find the count, so listen first and see if you can hear the chord changes before playing.

To help follow along, the lyrics are written above the chord changes when the singing starts.

Try playing along with the original recording by strumming the chord and holding for 4 beats / clicks.

LET IT BE SUNG

	C	C	G	G
5	C	C	G	G
9	<i>There must be a</i>	<i>forecast</i>	<i>That you won't let yourself</i>	<i>see</i> <i>So you keep</i>
	C	C	G	G
13	<i>watching as you're</i>	<i>driftin'</i>	<i>Sail a-way from what you</i>	<i>need</i>
	C	C	G	G
17	<i>Why don't I just</i>	<i>give you</i>	<i>Every-thing you'll take from</i>	<i>me</i> <i>'Cause</i>
	C	C	G	G
21	<i>nobody owns</i>	<i>anything If</i>	<i>everyone is</i>	<i>free</i>
	C	C	G	G

LAY IT DOWN



STRING EXERCISE

(1-2, 1-3, 1-4)

On the 1st string, using proper fingering, pluck the notes on the **1st fret** then the **2nd fret**. Continue this exercise going from the **1st fret** to the **2nd fret** and then the **1st fret** to the **4th fret**.

Make sure you're using all 4 fingers during this exercise.

Once it's comfortable, repeat the exercise but in descending order (4-1, 3-1, 2-1).

STRING SKIPPING EXERCISE

WITH UPSTROKE

Play each string twice - once down and once up.

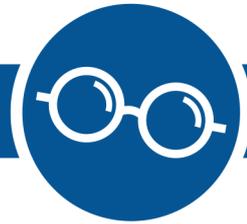
The order of the playing the strings is as follows:

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

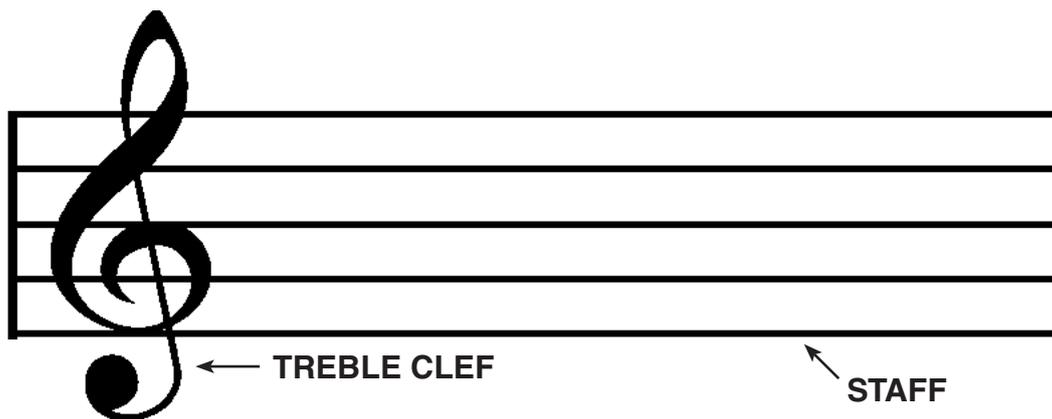
Try this at a low speed or use whole notes / half notes until you can work your way up to quarter notes at 80BPM.

Lesson 4 - Reading Music - Rhythm Pyramid

THE READING ROOM



NOTATION AND STAFF



STAFF – a **staff** is a group of 5 horizontal lines which we use to write music.

Music is notated by placing small, circular shapes on the lines or on the spaces between them. These shapes are the **NOTES**.

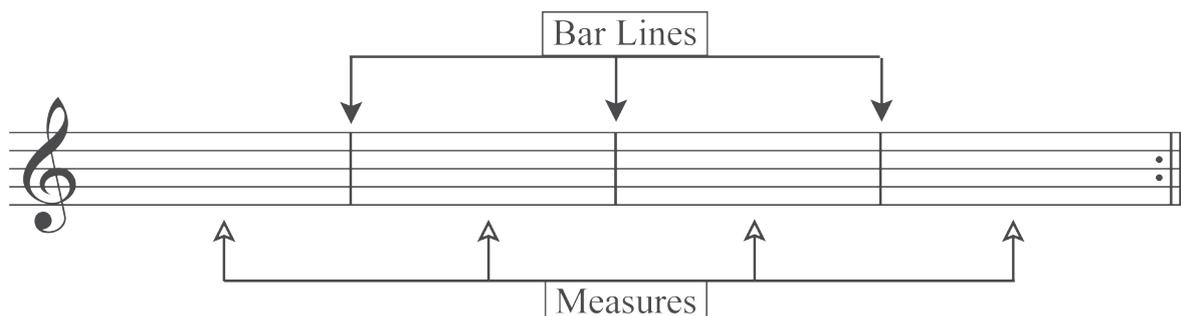
The symbol at the beginning of the staff is called a **TREBLE CLEF**, also called a **G CLEF**. We'll be discussing how the **treble clef** functions in a later lesson.

READING RHYTHM

Clap a steady beat and count it in groups of four, like this: 1-2-3-4.

This is an example of basic timekeeping in music. We've already been counting with our metronome and hopefully, each count is at an equal time interval from the preceding count.

Now, for our example, every 4 beat count makes up a **MEASURE**, also called a **BAR**.

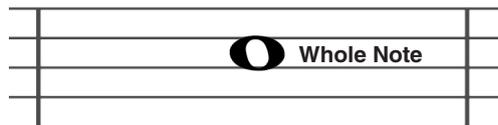


Bars and Measures are the same thing and they are divided on the staff by **BAR LINES**. The double line at the end of a piece of music is called the **END BAR LINE**.

WHOLE NOTES

WHOLE NOTES take up an entire measure (or the *whole measure*). So, the whole note is worth 4 beats.

We've already learned how to count whole notes from our last lesson (**strum-2-3-4**) but now you will be able read them on the staff.

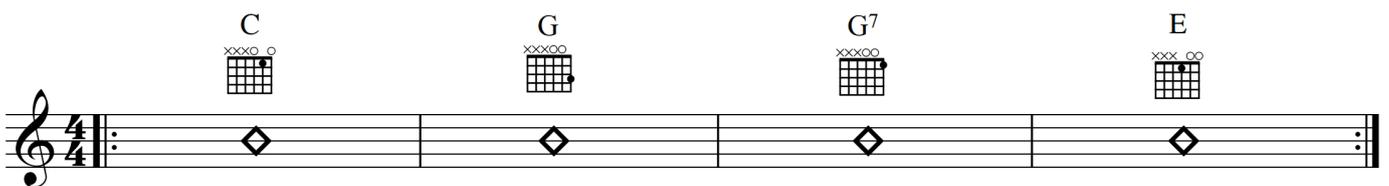


The metronome set to quarter notes means each 4 clicks / beeps equals a whole note.

LAY IT DOWN



WHOLE NOTE STRUMS WITH REPEAT

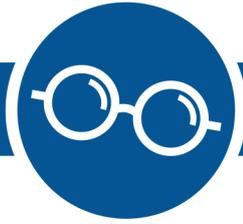


The double line with two dots at the start and end of the measures are **REPEAT** signs which means you repeat the music between the signs once (unless otherwise indicated).



Play through the chords above then repeat them once.

THE READING ROOM



HALF NOTES

HALF NOTES are notes that take up half the measure, or 2 beats.

They look somewhat like whole notes with what we call a **STEM** attached. The stem can go either up or down, depending on the note's position on the staff.



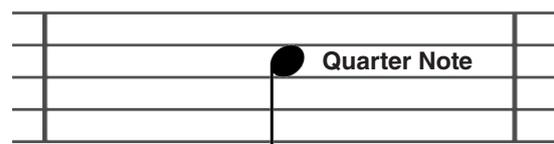
Diagram showing four chords (C, G, G7, E) on a staff with half notes. Above each chord is its name and a guitar chord diagram. The staff shows a sequence of half notes: C (open diamond), G (open diamond), G7 (open diamond), and E (open diamond), each followed by a stem.

For now, when playing chords on the staff, we just use the name above and notice if they have an open diamond (representing whole notes) or an open diamond with a stem (representing half notes).

QUARTER NOTES

QUARTER NOTES are notes that take up a quarter of the measure, or 1 beat. They are represented by a black dot with a stem.

When playing with a metronome, the quarter note is equal to one click.



QUARTER NOTE STRUM

Our quarter note strums are represented with a slash and a stem underneath.

Diagram showing four chords (C, G, G7, E) on a staff with quarter note strums. Above each chord is its name and a guitar chord diagram. The staff shows a sequence of quarter note strums: C (slash), G (slash), G7 (slash), and E (slash), each followed by a stem.

MIXED NOTE STRUM

Diagram showing four chords (C, G, G7, E) on a staff with mixed note strums. Above each chord is its name and a guitar chord diagram. The staff shows a sequence of mixed note strums: C (open diamond), G (open diamond), G7 (slash), and E (open diamond), each followed by a stem.

HIT THE ROAD



SIMPLE VERSION OF "LOVE ME DO" (THE BEATLES)

This is a simple version of the Beatles hit *Love Me Do*, which utilizes the same chords that we've just learned.

Try this song at 80BPM and keep the strumming as smooth & relaxed as possible.

Don't Forget the **repeat** sign.

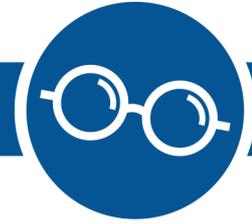
LOVE ME DO

The musical notation for the guitar part of "Love Me Do" is as follows:

- Staff 1: Treble clef, repeat sign, four measures. Chords: G, C, G, C.
- Staff 2: Treble clef, two measures. Chords: G, C.
- Staff 3: Treble clef, three measures. Chords: G, C, G.
- Staff 4: Treble clef, one measure. Chord: C. Ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Lesson 5 - Reading Music - Notes on the Staff

THE READING ROOM



NOTES ON THE TREBLE STAFF



TREBLE CLEF
(it is shaped like a cursive G)

The **treble clef / G clef** dictates which notes on the staff we'll be able to play. It tells us the range of pitch.

Each line and space on the staff is assigned a **NOTE NAME** (ABCDEF G).

NOTE VALUE refers to the duration of the note (*whole, half, quarter*)

Starting from the bottom line, to the top, the lines are named **E G B D F**.

Starting from the first space (on the bottom) to the

You'll notice the circle at the bottom of the **treble clef / G clef** wraps around the **G** line on the staff. That is why the treble clef is called the G clef. If we forget which notes are on the lines and spaces, we can always start by finding the G line in the middle of the circle of the treble clef.



An easy way to remember the lines of the treble staff is **Every Good Boy Does Fine**

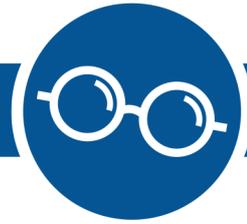


E F G A B C D E F G

If you look at all the line and space notes together, then they are aligned in a very obvious alphabetical order: E F G A B C D E F.

Notice that the high G note sits on top of the staff.

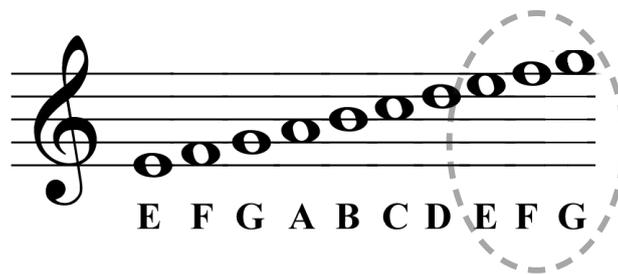
THE READING ROOM



NOTES ON THE 1ST STRING

Now, as you can observe in the previous example, the notes **E**, **F**, and **G** are placed on the lower register of the staff, as well as the higher register.

When playing them on the 1st string, we are playing the higher notes (circled on the staff).



LAY IT DOWN



WHOLE NOTES ON THE 1ST STRING

We'll perform the previous Reading Room example of playing E, F, and G on the first string with the metronome set at 60BPM. Hold each note in the exercise for 4 beats, or 1 whole note.

Please note that the number above each note represents the fret/finger being used, and the circled number below the staff indicates the string number.

EXERCISE 1

count: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

□ = downstroke

EXERCISE 2

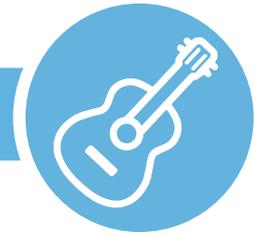
Tempo: 60BPM

Remember to keep the first finger on F when going to G and have the first finger ready to come back to F.

The idea is to keep our movements economical - small movements and no wasted motion.

EXERCISE 2

LAY IT DOWN



MIXED NOTE VALUES ON THE 1ST STRING

Tempo: 60BPM

Now, let's try some quarter, half, and whole notes on the 1st string.



TALENT SHOW



PRACTICING AND IMPROVISING FREELY BETWEEN E, F AND G

Try switching randomly between the 3 notes you've learned so far.

And try to sing the notes as you play them, or even naming the notes.

This helps reinforce the sound of the note and its position in your mind.

Start with the metronome at 60BPM, and gradually increase it in increments of 4 or 5 BPM as the exercise becomes easier.

HIT THE ROAD



“HAPPIER” (ED SHEERAN)

Group 1 notes: 1st string - **5th fret** (half note), **1st fret** (half note), **8th fret** (whole note)

Group 2 notes: 1st string - **8th fret** (half note), **5th fret** (half note), **12th fret** (whole note)

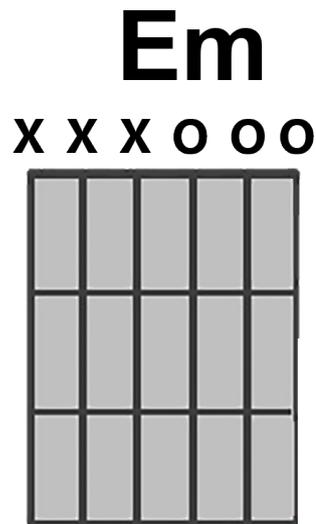
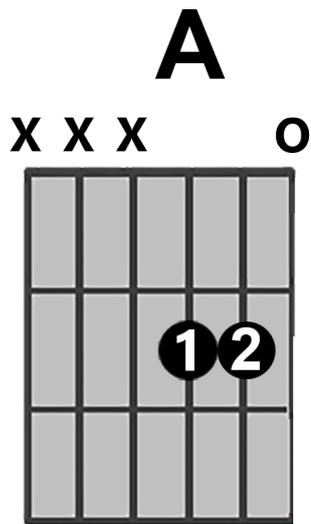
Both groups can play both parts at the same time for a fun effect!

Lesson 6 - New Chords & Reading Music (pt. 3)

THE WOODSHED



2 NEW SIMPLE CHORDS (A & Em)



Try switching between the **A chord** and the **Em chord** with whole, half, and quarter note strums.
Set the tempo to 70BPM.

A Em A Em A Em

CHECK UP



ALL CHORD EXERCISE

Tempo: 80BPM

Chord diagrams for G, G7, C, E, Em, and A are shown above the staff. The staff contains two lines of music in 4/4 time, each with a diamond symbol in the first measure of each bar, indicating where to play the chords.

RANDOM CHORD EXERCISE

Tempo: 80BPM

Chord diagrams for G, C, E, G7, E, and Em are shown above the staff. The staff contains two lines of music in 4/4 time, each with a diamond symbol in the first measure of each bar, indicating where to play the chords.

LAY IT DOWN

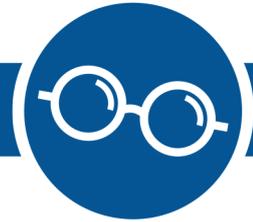


MELODY WITH SINGLE NOTES AND CHORDS

Chord diagrams for G and C are shown above the staff. The staff contains a single line of music in 4/4 time, with single notes in the first two bars and chords in the last two bars, indicated by diamond symbols.

Lesson 7 - Reading Music (pt. 2)

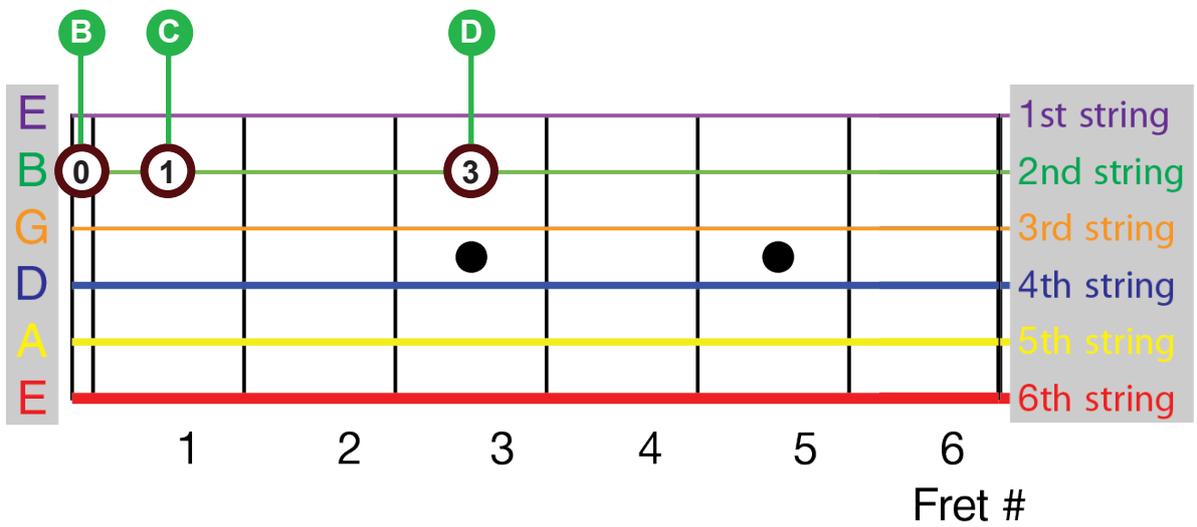
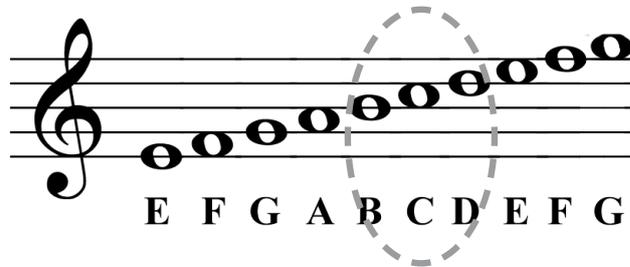
THE READING ROOM



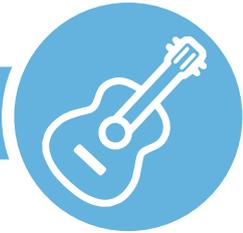
NOTES ON THE 2ND STRING

For the notes we're going to play on the 2nd string, we'll be using the same fingering as the notes we played on the 1st string (ref: Lesson 3).

The NATURAL NOTES on the 2nd string are **B, C, D**



LAY IT DOWN



EXERCISES WITH WHOLE NOTES

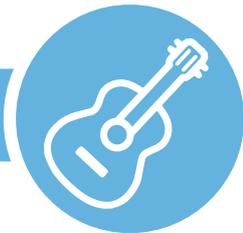
Play these notes on the 2nd string (B string). Use a metronome at 70BPM.

B 0 C 1 D 3



Hold each note for its full duration, and simultaneously pick and fret the new note as soon as the old one ends.

LAY IT DOWN



6 NOTE NATURAL SCALE

Play all natural notes we've learned so far from B on the 2nd string through G on the 1st string.

Play it forwards and backwards using quarter notes at 60BPM.

B C D E F G G F E D C B

TALENT SHOW



RANDOM NOTE AND VALUES

Time to play notes on the staff with different durations.

Set the tempo to 60BPM and remember to count as you play.



THE READING ROOM



TIME SIGNATURES

In every staff notation, the treble clef is followed a fraction-like number.

This is the time signature and it informs us about beat duration and the number of beats per measure used for the music.



The number at the bottom tells us of the type of note which receives the beat. 4/4 time signature would have 4 quarter notes per measure.

The number at the top indicates the number of beats per measure. For example, a 4/4 time signature will have 4 beats per measure - or 4 quarter notes per measure. But it could be a combination of notes, as long as they equal 4 beats.

The most common time signature used in Western music is 4/4.

Another example is the 3/4 time signature, in which we have 3 beats per measure and each beat is worth a quarter note.



HIT THE ROAD**“ODE TO JOY” (BEETHOVEN)**

This is a very famous and simple melody - the theme from *Beethoven's 9th Symphony*.

It employs some of the notes and note values that we've discussed so far.

Play at 60BPM and try to increase to 80BPM.

ODE TO JOY



Lesson 8 - New Chords

THE WOODSHED

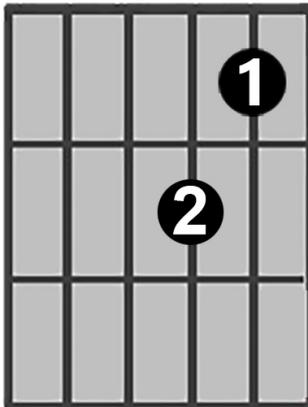


3 NEW CHORDS (Am, D7, & Em)

This lesson, we introduce our first 4 string chords - the D7 and the 4 note Em.

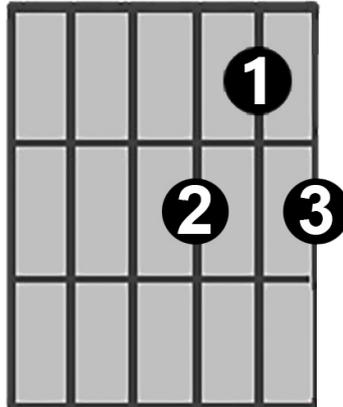
Am

X X X O



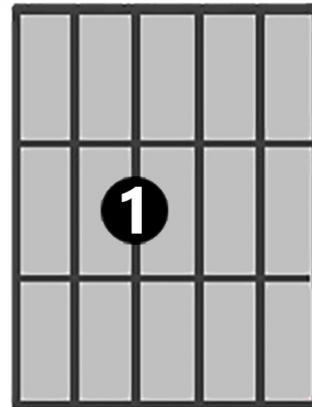
D7

X X O



Em

X X O O O



LAY IT DOWN

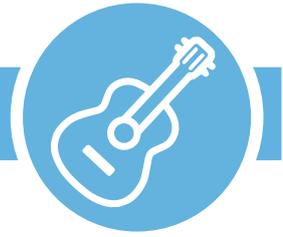


APPLYING D7

4/4

G C D7 G

LAY IT DOWN



ALL CHORDS LEARNED IN WHOLE AND HALF NOTE STRUMS

WHOLE NOTE STRUM

Start at 60BPM

Remember to count with the rhythm and say the chord name as you switch between them.

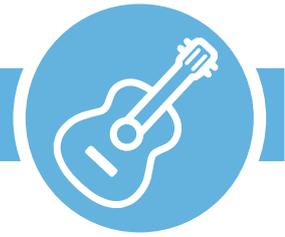
Remember the fundamentals of strumming from Lesson 5 and be sure to follow them.

HALF NOTE STRUM

Start at 60BPM

On your own, try to do quarter note strums of all these chords at 60BPM and gradually increase to 90BPM.

LAY IT DOWN



ALL CHORDS WITH DIFFERENT NOTE VALUES

Two staves of music in 4/4 time, showing various chords and note values. The first staff contains: G (quarter note), G⁷ (quarter note), C (quarter note), and Am (quarter note). The second staff contains: D⁷ (quarter note), E (quarter note), A (quarter note), Em (quarter note), and G (quarter note). Slanted lines represent chords held for a whole note.

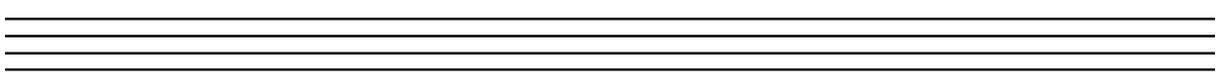
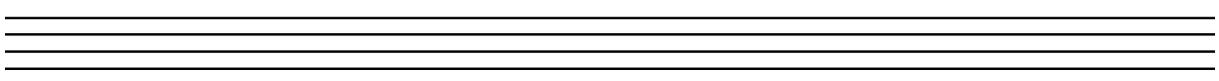
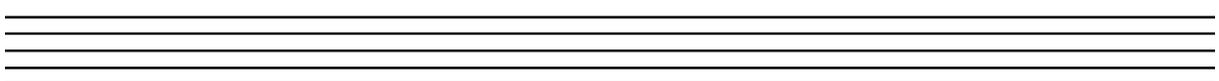
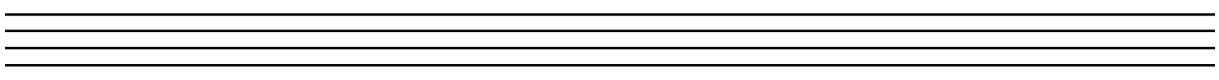
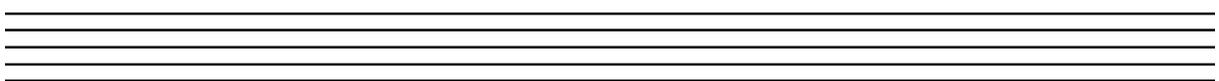
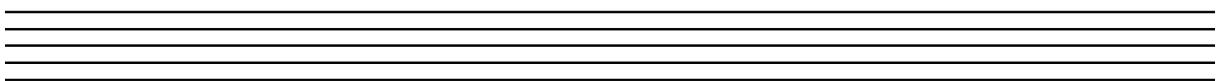
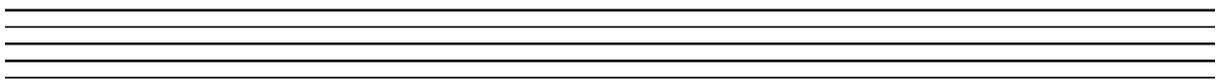
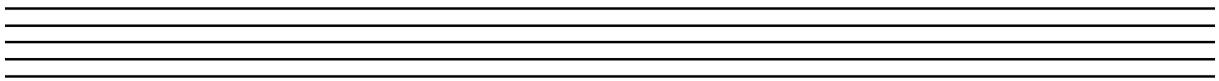
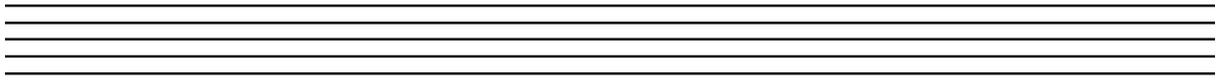
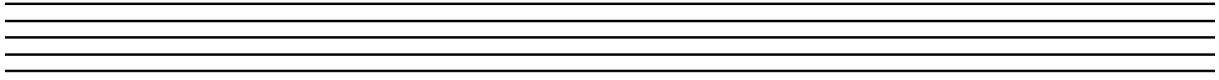
CHECK UP



CHORD QUIZ

The chord name will be given, then you have 4 beats to find the chord and play it for a whole note.

Feel free to write down some of your own ideas!
STAFF PAPER



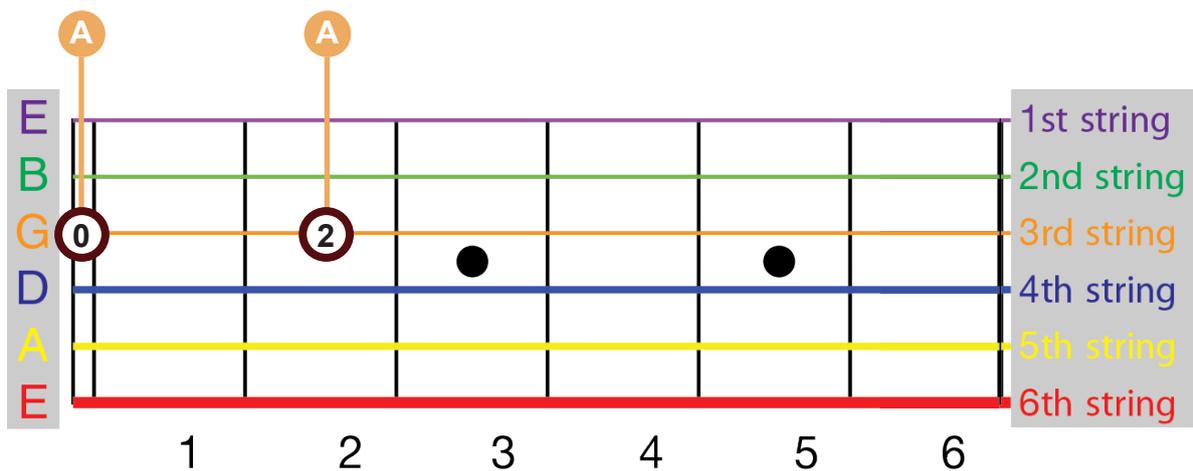
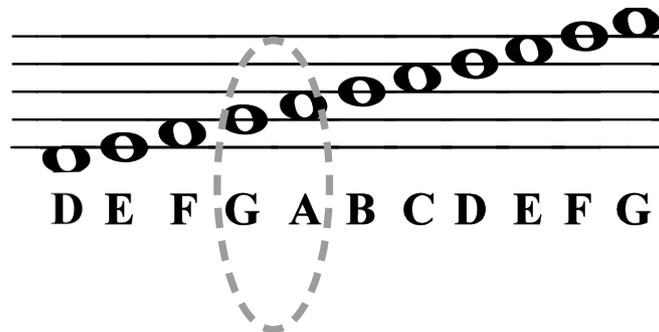
Lesson 9 - Notes on the 3rd & 4th String

THE READING ROOM

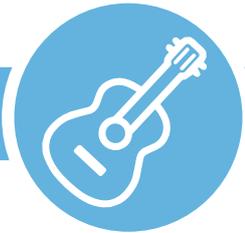
NOTES ON THE 3RD STRING

The NATURAL NOTES on the 3rd string are **G** and **A**.

We now play the open string for **G** and **2nd fret** with the 2nd finger for **A**.



LAY IT DOWN



NOTATION EXERCISES ON 3RD STRING

G A

0 2

Naming the notes or singing them while playing will reinforce their sound and position better in your mind.

THE READING ROOM



NOTES ON THE 4TH STRING

The NATURAL NOTES on the 4th string are **D, E, and F**.

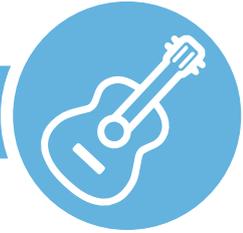
The fingering is slightly different than previous strings. We now play the open, 2nd and **3rd fret**.

D E F G A B C D E F G

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

1 2 3 4 5 6

LAY IT DOWN



OPEN D NATURAL SCALE

Remember your fingering when playing through the Open D Natural Scale.

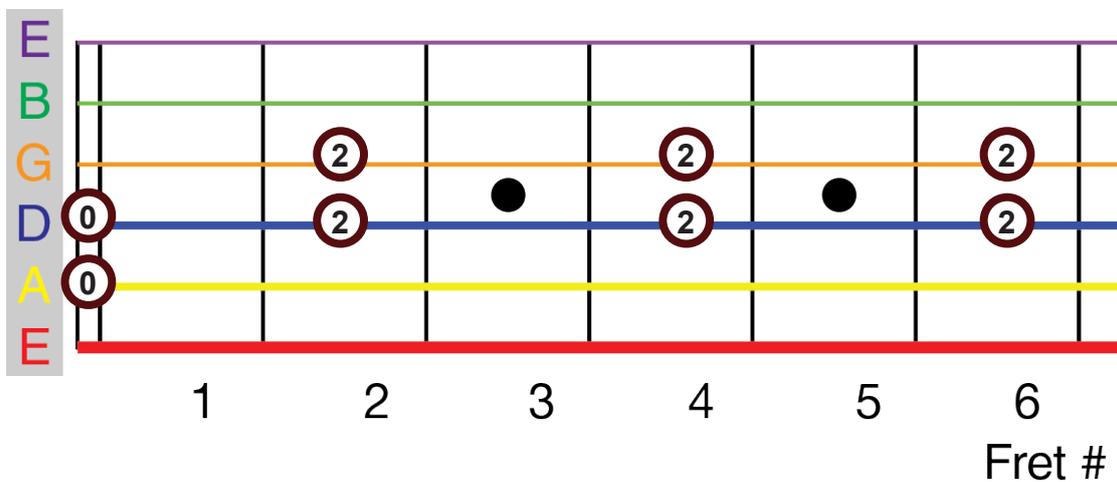


THE WOODSHED

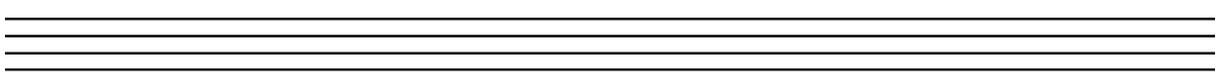
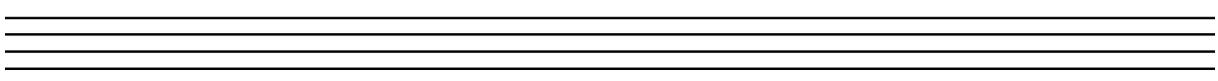
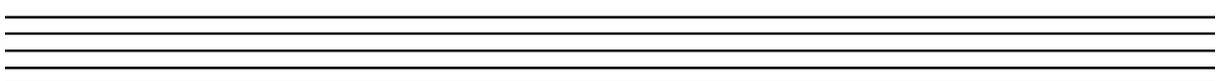
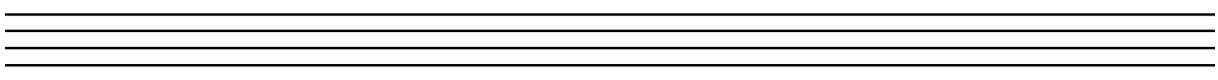
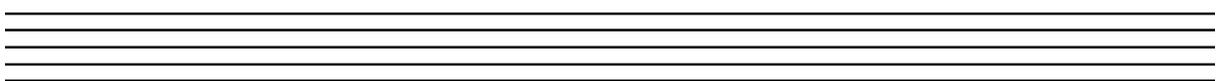
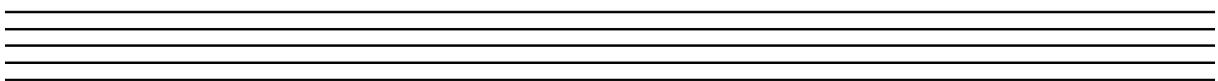
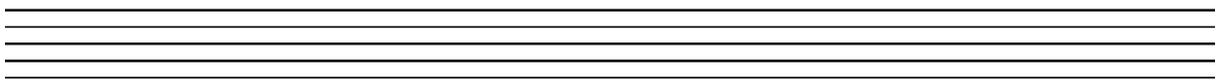
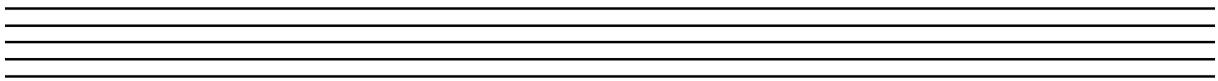
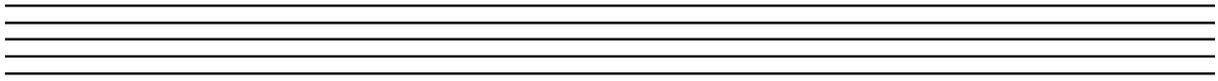
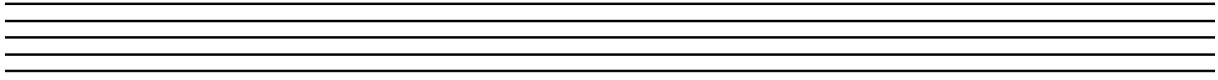


OPEN BLUES PROGRESSION

Playing the **2nd fret** on the 4th string with the 2nd finger and the open 5th string, move the 2nd finger up to the **4th fret** then the **6th fret**. Do the same shape on the 3rd string with the open 4th string



Feel free to write down some of your own ideas!
STAFF PAPER



Lesson 10 - Notes on the 5th & 6th String

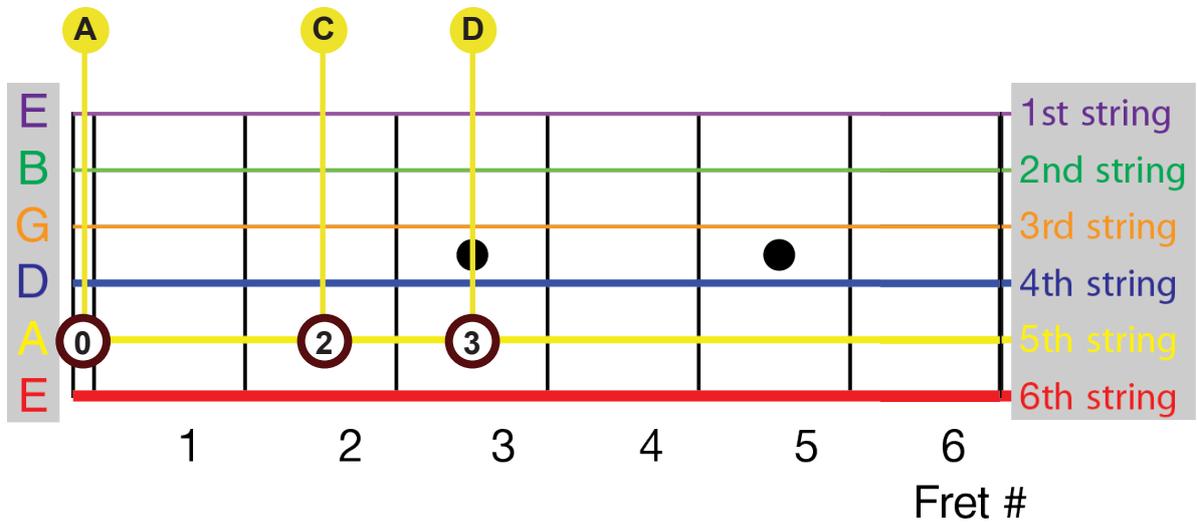
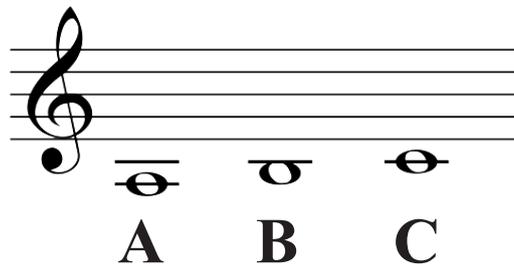
THE READING ROOM



NOTES ON THE 5TH STRING

The NATURAL NOTES on the 5th string are **A**, **B**, and **C**.

We play the string open for A, 2nd finger on the **2nd fret** for B and 3rd finger on the **3rd fret** for C.

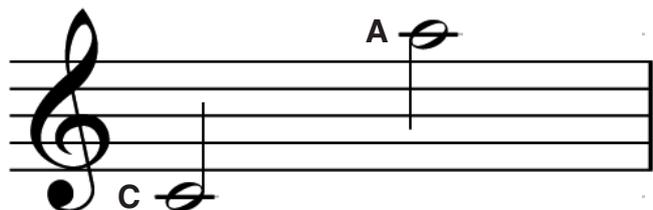


LEDGER LINES

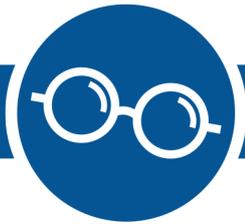
A **LEDGER LINE** is an extension of the 5 lines of the staff.

They're used for placing notes that may go either below or above the staff.

As you see above, the 1st note of the C major scale is below the staff and so it's placed on a ledger line. The A note is above the staff, so a ledger line is added as well.



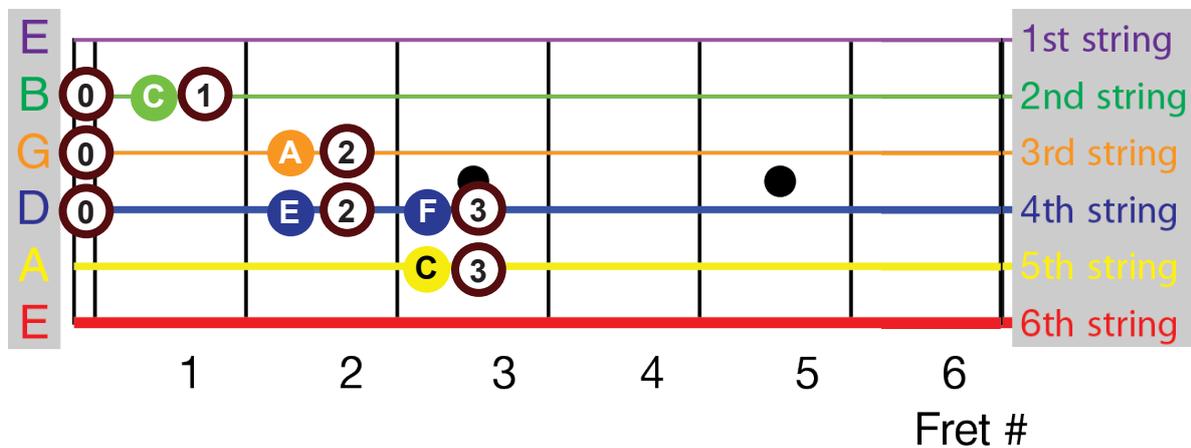
THE READING ROOM



C MAJOR SCALE / C NATURAL SCALE



C MAJOR SCALE FINGERING



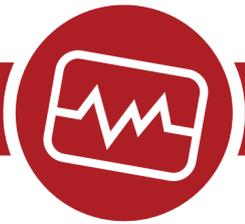
PLAY THE C MAJOR SCALE

Play the **C MAJOR SCALE** ascending and then descending, starting at 60BPM for about 3 minutes.

Take a 3 -5 minute break then increase the metronome speed to 70BPM and play again for about 3 minutes.

You can continue to do this exercise with increasing speed as long as you are playing cleanly and on beat.

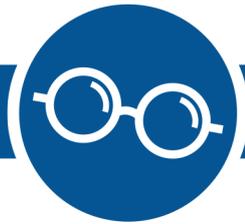
CHECK UP



NOTES QUIZ

Listen to the name of the note given and find it in the open position. Remember the correct finger for each note.

THE READING ROOM

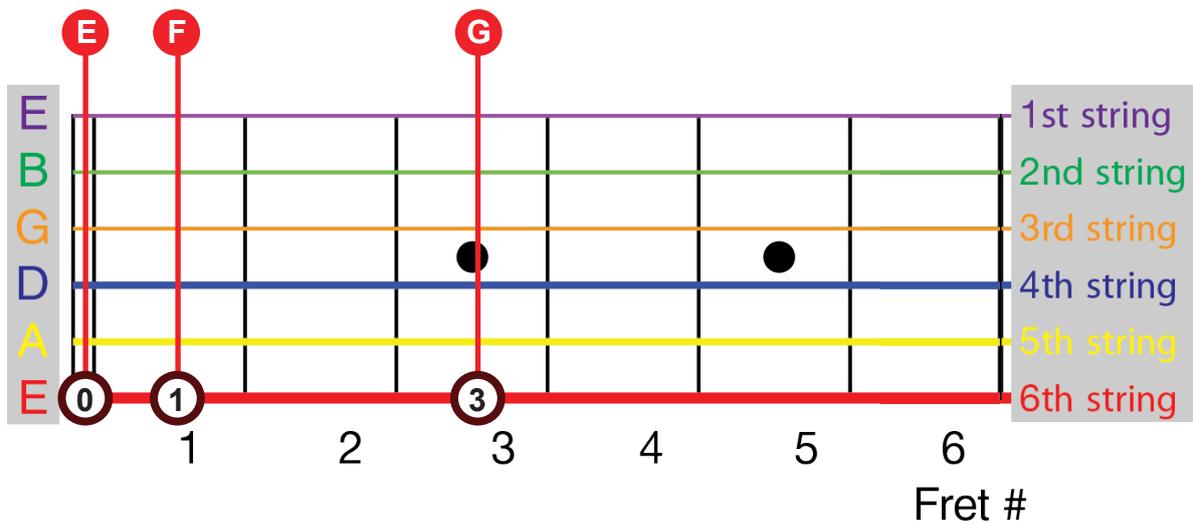
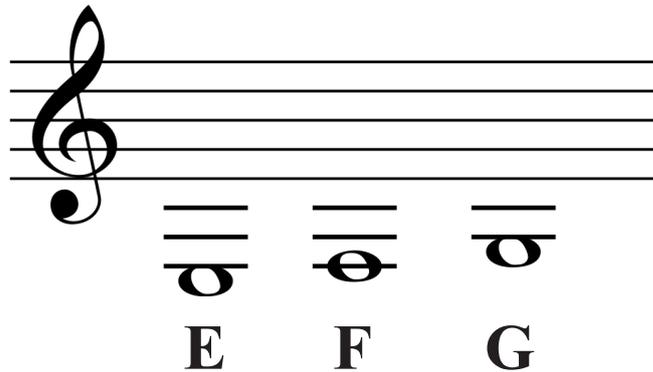


NOTES ON THE 6TH STRING

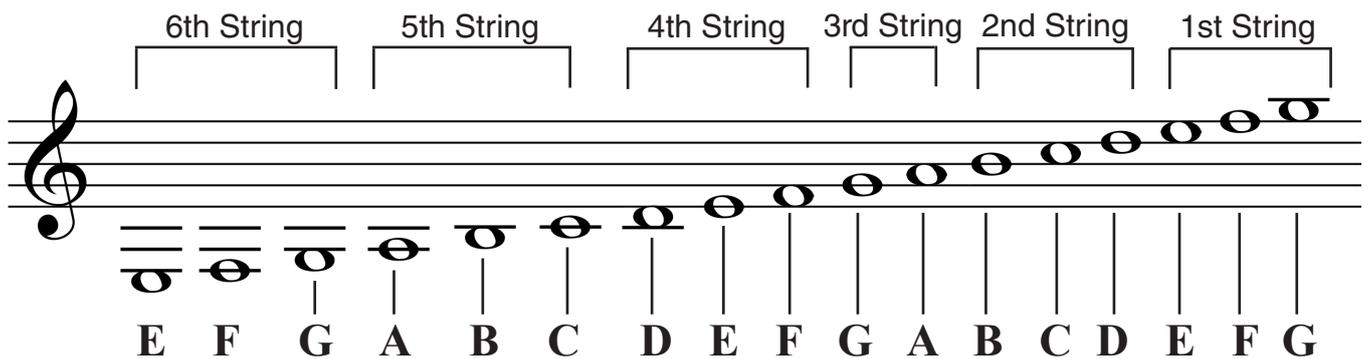
The NATURAL NOTES on the 6th string are **E, F, and G**.

We play the string open for E, 1st finger on the **1st fret** for F and 3rd finger on the **3rd fret** for G.

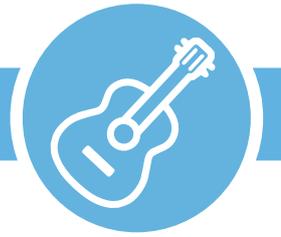
We can see the notes below are on *ledger lines* under the treble staff.



ALL NATURAL NOTES ON 6 STRINGS



LAY IT DOWN



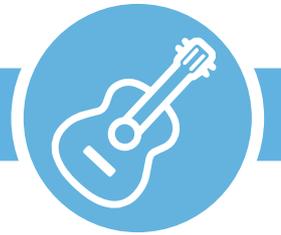
FINGER EXERCISE

(1-2, 1-3, 1-4)

1 - 4 is going to be the widest we've had to stretch our fingers so take your time and if it hurts, let your hand rest and come back to it.

The 6th string is going to be the most difficult to press down - if you need to start with the thinner strings and work your way up, that's fine.

LAY IT DOWN



ALL NATURAL SCALE SEQUENCE

The following sequence plays through all of the natural notes we've learned on all of the 6 strings.

Notice there are finger numbers next to the notes so you know which fingers to use. Try playing these at 70BPM on the metronome.

SEQUENCE 1 - Ascending

E F G A F G A B G A B C A B C D B C D E

6 C D E F D E F G E F G A F G A B G A B C

11 A B C D B C D E C D E F D E F G

Detailed description: The image shows three staves of musical notation for a guitar exercise. Each staff is in 4/4 time and uses a treble clef. The notes are quarter notes. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 0, 1, 2, 3 below the notes. The sequence consists of 15 measures: measures 1-5 (E-F-G-A, F-G-A-B, G-A-B-C, A-B-C-D, B-C-D-E), measures 6-10 (C-D-E-F, D-E-F-G, E-F-G-A, F-G-A-B, G-A-B-C), and measures 11-15 (A-B-C-D, B-C-D-E, C-D-E-F, D-E-F-G).

SEQUENCE 2 - Descending

G F E D F E D C E D C B D C B A C B A G

6 B A G F A G F E G F E D F E D C E D C B

11 D C B A C B A G B A G F A G F E

HIT THE ROAD



“TWINKLE, TWINKLE” - MELODY

A familiar melody, “Twinkle, Twinkle” will help you associate the melody you already know in your head with your fingers as you play it on the strings.

It will also help your ability to switch notes on different strings.

Try this at 70BPM and then try to increase the speed once you’ve got it down!

G G D D E E D C C B B A A G D D C C B B A

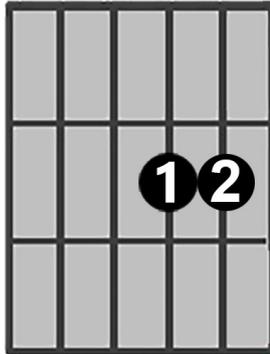
7 D D C C B B A G G D D E E D C C B B A A G

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3 STRING CHORDS

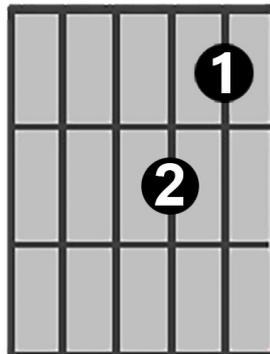
A

X X X O



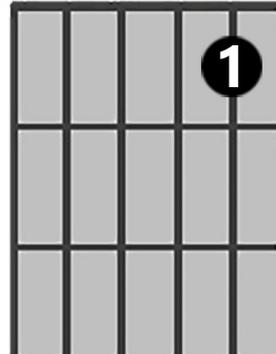
Am

X X X O



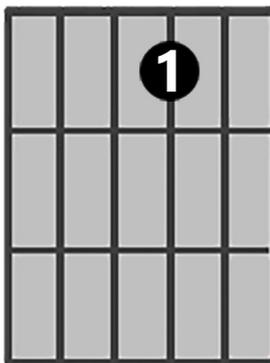
C

X X X O O



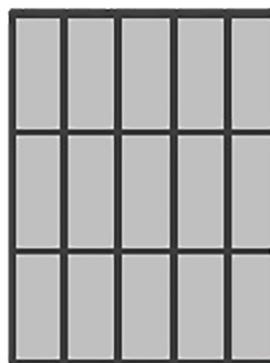
E

X X X O O



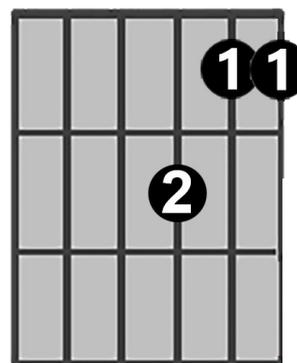
Em

X X X O O O



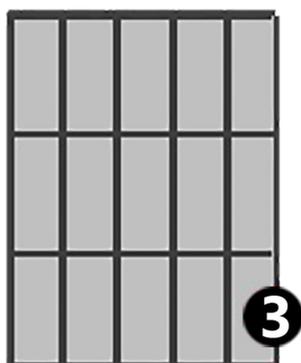
F

X X X



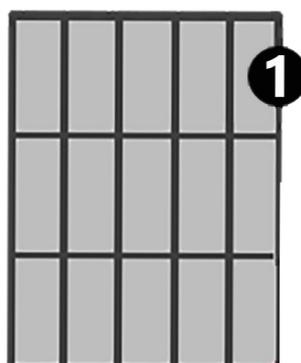
G

X X X O O



G7

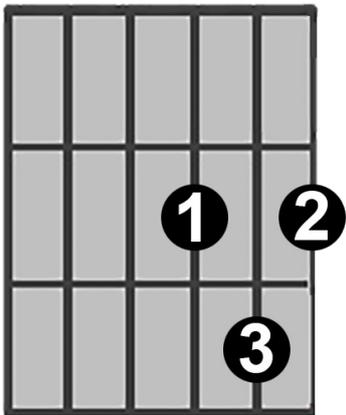
X X X O O



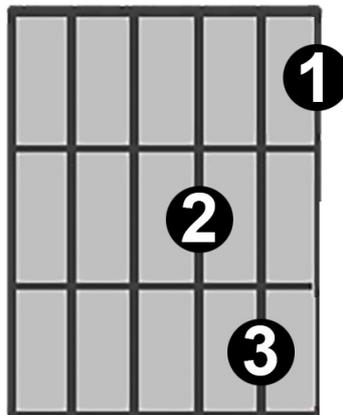
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4 STRING CHORDS**D**

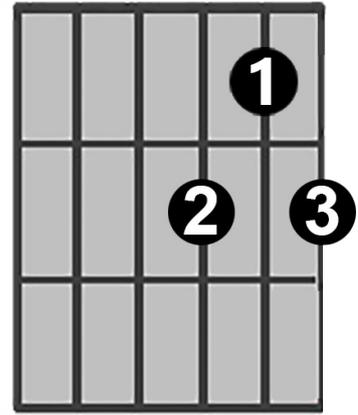
X X O

**Dm**

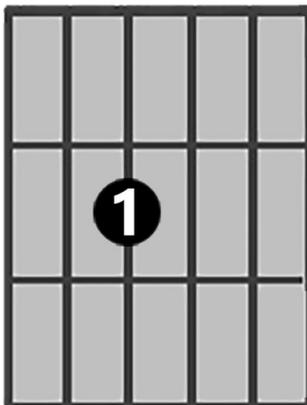
X X O

**D7**

X X O

**Em**

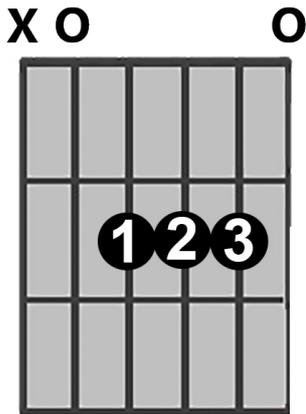
X X O O O



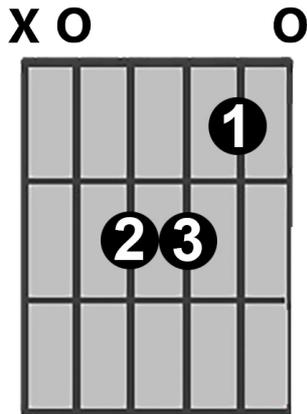
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FULL OPEN CHORDS

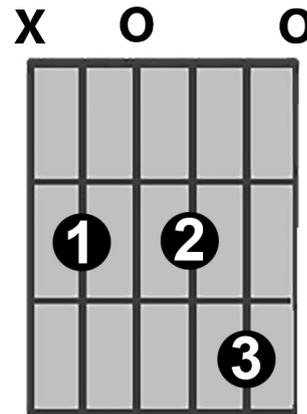
A



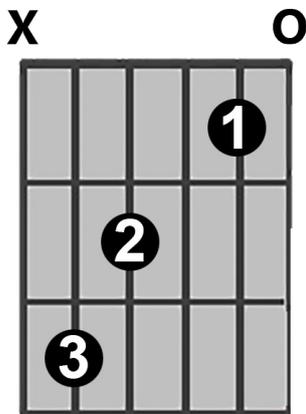
Am



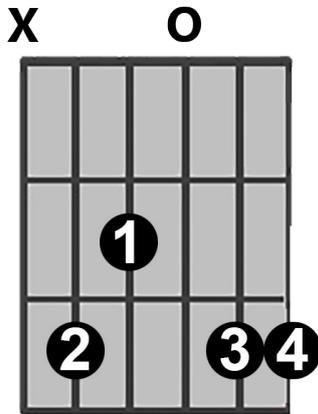
Bm7



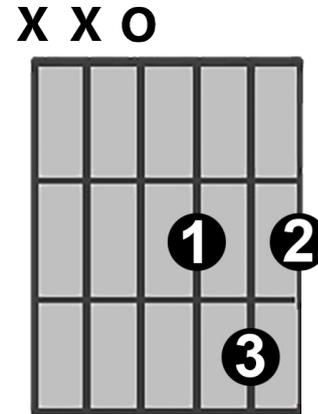
C



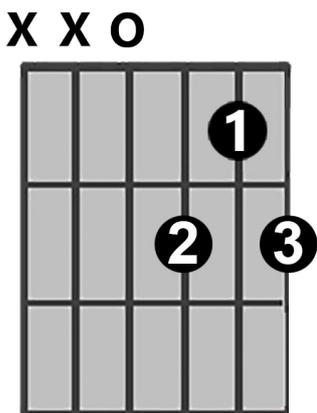
Cadd9



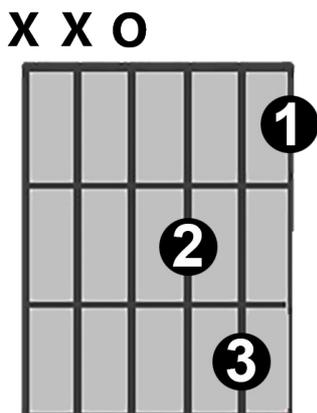
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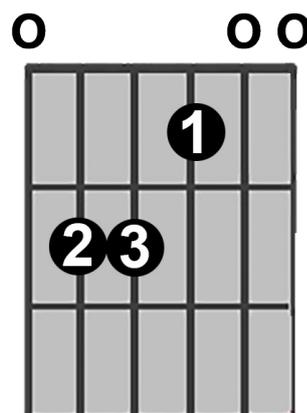
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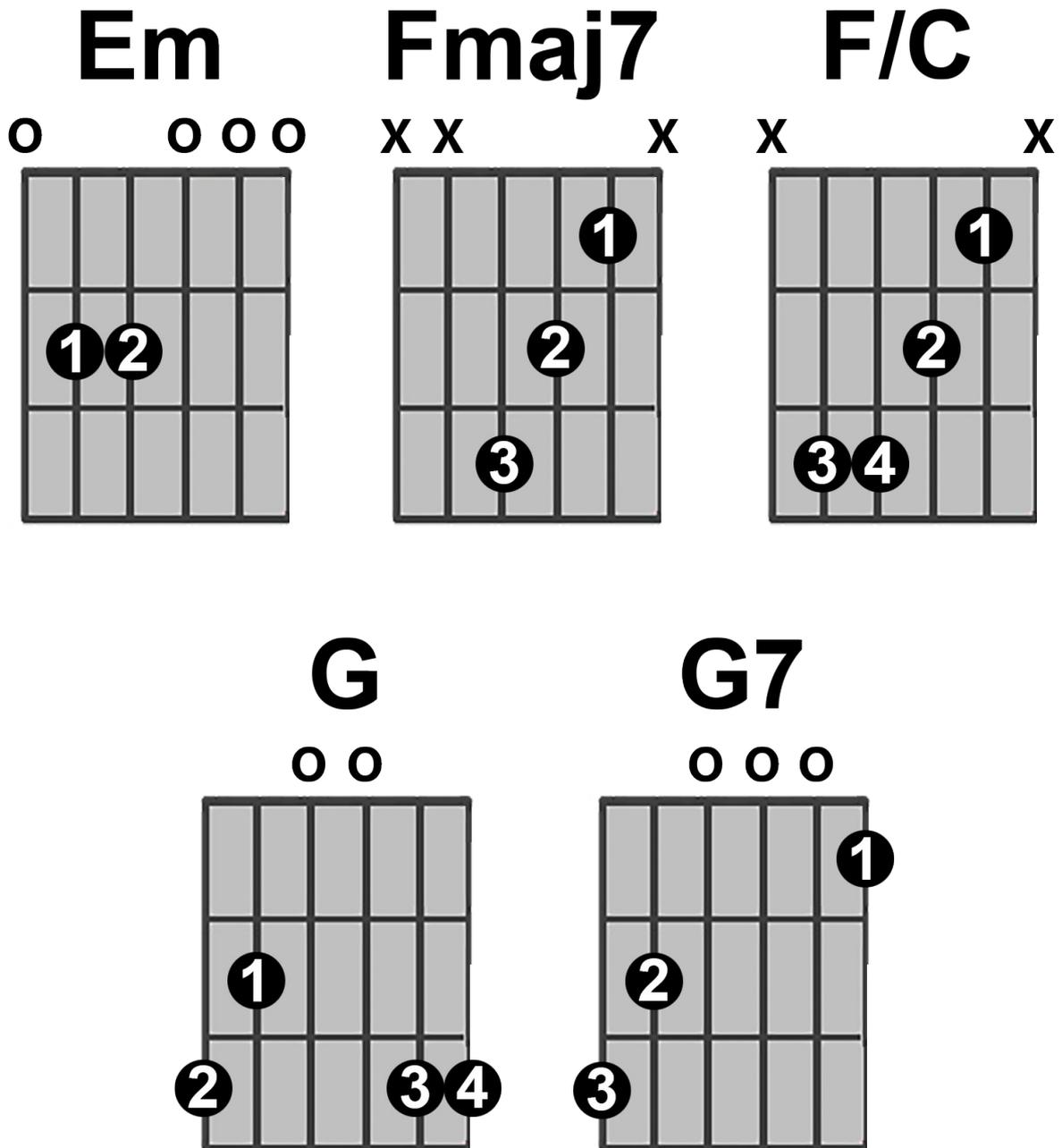
Dm



E



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FULL OPEN CHORDS - CONT.

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FRETBOARD NOTES

