BEGINNINGS 1

LESSONS FOR THE FRESH GUITARIST

CALIFORNIA ARTS ACADEMY

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Guitar Parts:

**Headstock, Neck & Body**

Since its development centuries ago, the guitar has had these three parts: Headstock, Neck and Body.

**The Headstock** is where the tuners are. Turn them to tighten or loosen the strings in order to tune up.

**The Neck** has the Fingerboard and Frets and is the pathway of the strings as they stretch from the Bridge to the Nut.

**The Body** is the hollow amplifier in acoustic guitars. Acoustics have a sound hole, which is replaced by the pickups on a solid body electric guitar.

**Holding the Guitar:**

Most players rest the guitar on their laps, mostly the right hip, and use their right elbow and body to hold the instrument still. Guitar straps are a good thing. They help stabilize the guitar even if you are sitting down. Wearing the guitar higher rather than lower is also a good thing. The higher the fretting hand is above the elbow the better the hand and wrist will work. It allows the shoulders to relax more as well. Keep the guitar slightly angled away from your fretting hand to keep the neck in your forward field of vision. This will help later when reading music.

**Tuning** is absolutely the most important thing you will do with your guitar. I would rather see people play “Air Guitar” than out of tune guitar because air guitar sounds good.

Notes are labeled with the musical alphabet, A through G over and over again, going higher. A Note can be too low in pitch or “flat” or it can be too high or “sharp”. The goal is to match the pitch correctly. We want the pitch to be not too high or too low but just right.

**Out of tune sounds BAD.**

**In tune sounds GOOD.**

**Electronic tuners:** These wonderful devices keep the modern musical world in tune. There are two main types of electronic tuners: The Guitar tuner and the Chromatic Tuner.

**Guitar Tuners** recognize only the notes of the open strings of the guitar/bass.

**Chromatic Tuners** can tune any note. In either case the display shows which note it thinks it is hearing and if that note is flat or sharp. Electronic tuners use LED light displays and/or a virtual needle which swings to the left of center when flat and to the right when it is sharp.

If you are tuning the low E or 6th string and the display says it is a “D” your 6th string is flat and needs to be tightened and brought up until the display says it is an “E”. If the display says it is a “G”, or using a Chromatic Tuner, an “F” then the note is sharp and needs to be loosened until it correct and centered.
Tuning by Ear: The 5th & 4th Frets

Electronic tuners are great, as are tuning forks, pitch pipes, keyboards and pianos, for getting a true note to tune to. But you will need to tune by ear alone.

Tuning by ear is moving an open string note up or down until it sounds exactly like the same note fretted on the next lower string.

The strings are numbered 1 through 6, from skinny to thick and the frets are numbered from the nut to the body. The Note at the 6th string 5th fret is the same “A” as the open 5th string. This is done by turning the tuners counter-clockwise for higher pitch and clockwise for lower pitch.

In Standard Tuning all strings are tuned at the 5th fret except the 2nd string which is tuned from the 3rd string 4th fret “B”.

The Wobble

Tune the low “E” string to a tuner or a piano. Press the 6th string down at the 5th fret. Pick the 6th and open 5th strings and let them ring together. Listen for the “Wobble”. This sound is always present when strings are out of tune. As the two pitches get Closer the wobble becomes Slower like a wave. When the wave slows to a stop the string is in tune. If they get farther apart the “Wobble” becomes Faster.

The First Question: Is it out of tune? If the two strings “Wobble” at all, the answer is yes! If it a slow wave you are very close!

The Second question: Is it too high (Sharp)? Or too low (Flat)?

Hint #1) Sing each of the strings’ notes and listen to the pitch of your own voice.
Hint #2) Listen to changes in the speed of the “Wobble”.
Hint #3) Reach across and turn the tuner with your picking hand and listen for the speed change. Do not turn the tuner unless you can hear both strings. Otherwise you can’t tell where the note went. Remember: Slower is closer, Faster is Farther away. When the wave stops you are in tune!

Electronic tuners: crutch or tool?

If you tune the low “E” to your Electronic Tuner then tune the rest of the strings by ear you can use the Electronic tuner to check your ear’s accuracy. Most people fall into two groups. One group thinks the note is too high and ends up tuning too low while the other group thinks the note is too low and ends up too high.

Holding the Pick

Hold the Pick between the Thumb & side of Forefinger. Touch as much of the surface of the pick as you can. Squeeze the pick gently letting it bounce a bit under your thumb. Keep the pick pointed straight at the top of the guitar. Strike the string(s) gently.

“Picking” is plucking individual notes on individual strings one at a time. Move the pick only enough to strike the string, Pick each string Down / Up.

“Strumming” is striking two or more strings at once. Strum two strings Down / Up then three strings, four strings, five strings and, finally all six strings Down / Up.
Fingering:

Touch the string as close to the fret as possible with the fingertip only. Keep your knuckles arched, fingers spread apart and your thumb at the back of the neck (not hooked over the top!).

Squeeze the string to the neck as lightly as you can & still get the sound. Do Not Flop the Fingertips! We want clear sustained notes with No buzzing strings!

4 Fingers 4 Frets

This is the basic philosophy of Good Lead Guitar and a great exercise for the left hand. Start with the thumb arched back and placed at the center of the neck with the fingers curled and pointed at the fingerboard.

Spreading the fingers apart, strengthening and supporting the 4th finger are critical. Lean the hand into the curled up 4th & 3rd fingers. The 1st finger has a capability to stretch back.

Go For a Walk with each pair of fingers stepping up with each finger once on each string. Remember that when you walk one foot is always on the ground while the other is lifting off. Each pair of fingers must be exercises.

Caution!!! If you are 12 years old or younger start this exercise at the 7th fret. Your hand is too small to play any lower on the neck. Small or tight-handed adults can start there as well and work their way down the neck learning to stretch the fingers farther apart as they go to lower frets.

1st to 2nd: Going up! Place the 1st finger at the first fret 6th string and pick that note, place the 2nd finger in front of the 1st at the second fret, pick it and lift off the 1st finger.

Place the 1st finger at the first fret 5th string and pick that note, place the 2nd finger in front of the 1st at the second fret, pick it and lift off the 1st finger. Keep it Up!

Going Down! Place the 2nd finger at the second fret 1st string and pick that note, place the 1st finger behind the 2nd at the first fret, lift the second finger and pick the first finger’s note.

Place the 2nd finger at the second fret 2nd string and pick that note, place the 1st finger behind the 2nd at the first fret 2nd string, lift the second finger and pick the first finger’s note.

Pick each string cleanly Go Slow & Deliberately.
The Neck Map  Think of the neck of the guitar as six long main streets (strings) and twelve cross streets (frets). At each intersection (address) a note lives! Each String is laid out like a Piano or a Xylophone. Think six pianos offset by a few notes. There are Three Bass Strings and Three Treble Strings. Stay in standard tuning, E6 A5 D4 G3 B2 E1, and these note locations will never change.

Musical Notes are arranged in patterns of “intervals” (distance between notes) the two smallest of which are the “half step or minor 2nd” (1 fret) and “whole step or major 2nd” (2 frets) Notes are labeled with The Musical Alphabet: ABCDEFG without duplicate letters. Every Natural Note is a whole step apart except E & F and B & C. These are the only two “Natural Half Steps”. The notes in between every other pair of Alphabet notes are the sharps and flats.

The Treble Clef and Staff

Lines and Spaces - 2 Sayings There are a couple of traditional sayings used to help memorize the lines and spaces of the treble clef and staff: Every Good Boy Does Fine and FACE. But I prefer the funnier sayings: Elvis’ Guitar Broke Down Friday and Fat Alley Cats Eat Garbage,

The note names are arranged in alphabetical order, Line to Space to Line, going up the staff and reverse order, of course, coming down the staff. Note heads get placed either In the Space, not overlapping the lines on either side or On the Line, not touching the lines on either side. Stems go up on the right if the note head is below the middle line and down on the left if the note head is above. Stems are a vertical line one octave long, for example, from “Guitar-G” the stem would stretch up to “Garbage-G”.

The Neck Map

Musical Notes

The Treble Clef and Staff
4/4 Time and Beat Counting

The most “Common” Time Signature is “C” or “4/4” meaning four quarter notes per measure or bar. The Top Number indicates “How Many” notes. The Bottom Number tells us “What Kind” of note gets the beat count. If the Tempo (speed) is slow enough you should be able to make the chord change on time for the next beat.

Note & Rest Values show note timing and duration.

Notes are sounds while Rests are silences. A Whole Note and Whole Rest are counted with four beats. Half Note, Quarter notes and Eighth notes in 4/4 time works exactly like fractions of an inch.

Practice drawing the Treble Clef by drawing a vertical line extending above and below the staff. Then draw “the squiggle”. Practice drawing bar lines by drawing a vertical line going from the top edge to the bottom edge of the staff. Practice drawing note heads both hollow and solid. And practice drawing stems on those note heads.
CHORDS  A and E

Finger Hopping

1) Lift the first finger
2) Hop the second & third fingers together to 5th & 4th strings
3) Place the first finger on 3rd string at the 1st fret. Move in reverse from E to A.

Make the Changes/Stay on the Beat. Tap your foot and count to four over and over very slowly. Strum the A chord four times and change quickly to the E chord. Strum the guitar with your Wrist, Not your Elbow. Strum the E chord four times and change back. Keep the count very slow so you have more time to change chords quickly after beat “four” and before beat “One” comes back around.

Repeat these exercises 50 to 100 times per day and the chord changes will become easier and easier.

The Chord Symbol “A” is for the A Major Chord. The note heads, called “Rhythm Slashes”, are used to indicate a chord strum. The Repeat Sign is the double dots, thin line and thick line at the end of the staff and it tells you to do it over again.

C and G7 Finger hopping a different shape. Start fingering these chords with the third finger first then the second and first fingers. The third finger holds the Bass Note of the chord and gets the highest priority. More about bass notes next.

C to G7 Change 1) lift the 1st finger 2) hop the 3rd & 2nd fingers to 6th & 5th strings 3) place the 1st finger at the 1st string 1st fret by stretching it back to the note. The fingers are spread out over 3 frets.

The Chord Symbol G7 represents the G Dominant Seventh Chord. Chord symbols are placed directly over the specific beat the chord should first be played. Keep playing that chord until there is a new chord symbol.
Bass Notes are on the 4th, 5th & 6th strings. The “Bass Note Rule”: the Primary Bass Note of any chord is the lowest note that has the same note name as the chord. For example: C for the C chord and G for the G7. Land the 3rd finger first on these Bass Notes.

Bass Notes get highest priority because they happen on beat one.

The bass notes of A, D and E are the open 5th, 4th & 6th strings. The Bass note “A” belongs to the Am and A7 chords as well as any other “A” chord (without sharps or flats!).

Bass Notes & Chord Strums

Bass notes are most often played on beat one with strums following on the remaining beats. Pick the Bass note only on beat “One”. Strum the higher strings for beats “two, three & four” 4/4 time (1 & 3 total: four beats)

Draw Pictures of your Chords to help memorize them.
Music Theory

The Key of C Major is made of the C Major Scale and its Triad Chords. It is the Only key with No flats or sharps. Traditionally, scale steps are numbered with Arabic numerals: 1 - 7 and Chords are numbered with Roman numerals: I - VII. The C Major Scale is All of the Plain Alphabet Notes or White Circles on the Neck Map.

Count the Scale! C1 D2 E3 F4 G5 A6 B7 C8 Pick each of these notes alphabetically from the bass note C up to the higher C and you will hear the familiar “Do re mi” major scale. Play it backwards too.

Notes are the individual Alphabet letters and Chords are the words in the language of music.

Triads are three note chords, every other note in the scale from the root. Root, 3rd and 5th C: C E G

Major & Minor:

“Good Guys & Bad Guys” One -Six I - Vim
In the Theatre, Movies and TV, the musical score will usually reflect the characters on the screen. Major Keys & Chords would be played for the Good Guys and Minor Keys & Chords for the Bad Guys.

This Major/Minor sound is the first element of the Psychology of Music.

In a Major Key the Relative Minor is the VI (six) Chord counted from the Major I (one) Chord. Count on your fingers from one to six, no zeros. C1 D2 E3 F4 G5 A6.

In a Minor Key the Relative Major is the III (three) Chord counted from the Minor I (one) Chord. Count on your fingers from one to three, no zeros. A1 B2 C3.

It is all about point of view or center of gravity.

What’s the Relative Minor of G Major?

Shared Fingers

Both the C - Am chord change and the G - Em chord change involve Shared Fingers with the third finger from one side of the second finger to the other.
The Pinky Trick

This G major fingering uses the fourth finger (the Pinky!) and is more versatile than most other fingerings.

1) Keep the Pinky curled up tightly and arched back.
2) Move the hand to the neck and place the fourth finger on the 1st string while keeping it curled.

Arch the fingers back at the hand and operate them like little hammers, always landing on the tips. Think of a claw with talons spread.

We use All Four Fingers of the Left Hand to Play Guitar!

Two Kinds of “A”

“A”, the A major Triad, and “Am”, the A minor Triad, share notes with each other, including the Bass Note “A” (open 5th string) but they are NOT in the same Key. The difference is the C natural note in the Am chord and the C# note in the A (Major) chord. These notes are the minor third and major third of A: A1 B2 C3.

The third note counted from “A” has to be “C” something. In this case the minor third is “C” (1st fret 2nd string) and the major third is “C#” (2nd fret 2nd string). The “G” and “G#” notes in the E and Em chords have the same kind of relationship to “E”.

3/4 Time “The Waltz”

4/4 or common time has four quarter notes per bar, “The Waltz” or 3/4 has three quarter notes.

Count 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3
Strum v v v v v v v v v v v v v
Eighth Notes

Is it half as long or twice as fast? Both statements are true about eighth notes compared to quarter notes. In either case, we are dividing time by 2, cutting each beat into halves.

4/4 Eighth Note count: 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and
3/4 Eighth Note count: 1 and 2 and 3 and

Pick or Strum **down** on the **numbers**, **up** on the “**and**”.

---

Count 1 2 3 4 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 
Strum v v v v Folk v ^ v ^ v ^ v ^ v ^
Rock v v v v v v v v v v v v
The F Chord is the first partial bar chord.

Slant shaped like C, the F chord needs the first finger to press down two strings at once. The finger’s first segment should be allowed to fall down and press both strings at 1st fret.

**Fingers should fall over on purpose, Never by accident.**

The D minor chord, or Dm, is the Relative Minor of F major. Using the fourth finger for the 2nd string D note is essential to this alternate voicing with the 3rd finger on the F bass note. Remember that the 2nd finger is a shared finger between F and Dm and should not be lifted.

This also introduces a new kind of chord symbol: the slash chord. The Bass Note Rule makes the Lowest D note the bass note of the Dm chord. By placing a backslash and an F Note name aftange the bass note to an F note while keeping the Dm chord above it. It is called “Dm over F”.

**Guide Fingers**

Some chord pairs have a finger that shares the same string at a different fret. This is a Guide Finger which slides to the next fret. This also introduces D major Chord.

- **A to D:** Lift 1st & 2nd fingers, Slide the 3rd finger up one fret on the second string, then place 1st & 2nd behind the 3rd finger but split apart on the third and first strings.

- **D to A:** Lift 1st & 2nd fingers, Slide the 3rd finger to the second fret of the second string, place 1st & 2nd on the fourth and third strings.

- **E to D:** Lift 2nd & 3rd fingers, Slide the 1st finger up one fret, then place 2nd & 3rd fingers “into the corner and on the point” of the “D” triangle.

- **D to E:** Lift 2nd & 3rd fingers, Slide the 1st finger to the first fret, and then place 2nd & 3rd fingers on the fifth and fourth strings behind the second fret.

Any finger can be used as a guide finger. The target note just has to be on the same string the finger is. **How would E to F work?**
Four Fretting Strategies

These strategies are listed from easiest to hardest.

1) **Shared Fingers** is the “If it ain’t broke don’t fix it” rule. Just don’t move that finger!

2) **Guide Finger** is like a Shared Finger but it slides keeping contact with the string.

3) **Finger hopping** is like “flying in formation”. D to G and D to C also use this plan.

4) **Follow the Leader** is the last fretting strategy. If there are no Shared Fingers, Guide finger or Finger hopping shapes we are left with a leader finger. The Bass Note, if fingered, is the Leader.

**Rests and Fretting Hand Muting**

The **Chicken Principle**
The lethal and stupid game of “chicken” can be an analogy for how to move the fretting hand. The car and pedestrian version works best. The pick is the car. The fingers are the pedestrians. Jump out of the way at very last moment. Jump in at the very last moment.

This creates a **legato** or long sound. Each note rings for its entire time value. The opposite of this sound is called **staccato** or short. Each note is immediately muted after being struck.

Make the movements of both hands as simultaneous as possible. Play slowly and keep the notes ringing as long as possible. Legato is hard to do while Staccato is almost too easy.

**Rests are moments of silence.** There are rests for every size note from Whole Notes to sixteenth and even smaller. Rests can be created by either hand but Picking Hand muting, palm muting, is usually more of a special effect. Fretting Hand muting is the best technique for making a rest.
Pinky Muting, Fall Over Muting and Don’t Squeeze Muting

For chord such as D, E, A or any chord with lower open strings, extend the 4th finger across the fingerboard and touch the string to stop the vibrations: the Pinky Mute.

For chords such as G, C or any chord with open interior strings, release the pressure on the strings without lifting and let the fingers Fall Over onto the open strings: the Fall Over Mute!

For Bar Chords and Single notes, leave the finger(s) in place and release the pressure but don’t lift to create silence: the Don’t Squeeze Mute.

The first thing to do is to play a whole note long chord then stop it with a whole rest. Repeat until it is smooth and accurate. Next we play a two beat long Half Note chord and rest for two beats, counting all the time as we do this.

Whole

\[
\begin{align*}
1 & \quad 2 & \quad 3 & \quad 4 \\
\text{Rest} & \quad & \text{Rest} & \quad \text{Rest} \quad \text{Rest} \\
1 & \quad 2 & \quad 3 & \quad 4 & \quad 1 & \quad 2 & \quad 3 & \quad 4 \\
\end{align*}
\]

Half

\[
\begin{align*}
1 & \quad 2 & \quad 3 & \quad 4 & \quad 1 & \quad 2 & \quad 3 & \quad 4 \\
\end{align*}
\]

Quarter

\[
\begin{align*}
1 & \quad 2 & \quad 3 & \quad 4 & \quad 1 & \quad 2 & \quad 3 & \quad 4 \\
\end{align*}
\]

One of the most common usages of these Muting techniques is for “the Backbeat Choke”. In Blues, Rock and Country and R&B music, the Snare drum will very often fall on beats 2 and 4 while the Kick Drum is on or around beats 1 and 3.

Beats 2 and 4 are called the Backbeats.
Strum beat one then strum beat two and mute the chord immediately after you strum, creating a short percussive sound almost like a slap.

Do the same with beat three and four: beat three strummed and beat four strummed then choked off.

Try it with beats one and three being two eighth notes and beats two and four being the choked off eighth note and rest.

**Chord Changes**

**Chord Velocity** is all about how fast the next chord must be played. Slow Changes would be two or more measures per chord Quick Changes would be one bar or maybe one beat per chord.

**Any Chord to Any other chord**

Chord progressions happen in patterns using relationships like as Relative Major and Minor. But they can potentially move from any chord to any other chord. Chords from the same key sound “Inside”. Chords from different keys sound “Outside”.
Chord Progressions

Many songs share the same chords, sometimes, even in the same order. These are some of the more traditional chord progressions used in American music. As you play each set of chords, listen to it and try to imagine a tune being played over it. Does anything sound familiar?

Chords are for musical accompaniment, the behind the singer or soloist.
Draw Pictures of your Chords
Three Chord Rock One Four Five (I - IV - V)

Millions of tunes, from classical to country, from jazz to rock and blues use this three chord structure.

The I - IV - V is part of Both the Harmonized Major Scale and Harmonized Minor Scale. All Major and Minor Keys have the same harmonized chords.

Major: IIm IIm IIm IV maj V maj VIIm VII dim
Minor: I Im IIm IIm IVm Vm VIIm maj VII maj

Guitar works easiest in the Sharp Keys, mostly chords you already have. Count the Musical alphabet from one to five on your fingers.

Remember A follows G and there is no “Zero”.

Figure out and play “This Land is Your Land” with the C, F & G. Start with the C chord, strum it over and over with a basic four/four beat.

Try to find the first notes of “This Land is Your Land” with your voice. Start singing the tune. At the word “your” the chord changes and you need to figure out which other chord it went to. Is it F or G? From that chord the next change presents the same kind of choice except between another pair of chords. From F chord the choices are C or G. From G chord the choices are F or C.

Other tunes are; “You are My Sunshine” and “Silent Night”.

How about “Wild Thing” with A, D & E majors? You can play it in the Key of C but it will sound more like “La Bamba” which has the same chord progression. What is the number order of these chords? How about “All the Pretty Horses”, “Sinner man” or “Scarborough Faire” in minor? If a minor chord doesn’t work perfectly but sounds better either of other two chords try its Relative Major.
Play Changes By Ear!

These two charts, the Guitar Keys and The Horn Keys, have the Major chords of each key listed in I IV V order along with the Relative Minor Key.

The simple choice between the I IV and V chords really only works in simpler music like kid’s tunes and folk songs.

Most music shifts from Major key to Minor key and back or from Minor to Major and back, sometimes for only one or two chords.

Why do we have different Keys?

Have you ever tried to sing a song and it was either too high for your voice or too low? Didn’t you wish you could fix that, maybe by making it a little lower or higher?

The basic reason for keys is that our voices have limited ranges. Try “She’ll Be Coming ’Round the Mountain” Starting on a G Chord using the G, C and D (I IV V) then start on the A chord with A, D and E.

The notes are in alphabetical order going higher and reverse alphabetical order going lower. Try the Key of C with C, F and G. It should feel much higher by now.

V Can Be V7 / Dominant Seventh

The Major and Minor Chords so far have been Triads or Three Note Chords. Four Note Chords are called Seventh Chords. They are Major 7th, Minor 7th, Dominant 7th and minor 7th flat 5.

The “7” is important. The note added to G to make a G7 is the note “F”. It has to be “F” something because it is the seventh note counted from “G”. What is the 7th note of “E” or “D”?

Of these extended Seventh Chords, only the Dominant 7th gets used with Triads often. The only “Natural” Dominant 7 is the fifth chord of the MAJOR AND MINOR harmony: the”V7”.

The Five of Five (V of V) Secondary Dominant

In the Key of C, the second chord (II), is a minor chord: “Dm”. If you see a “D7” we are not in “C” anymore. D7 is the V7 of “G”; G7 is the V7 of “C”. D7 is the “V of V” AKA Secondary Dominant.

This a Key Center Change to a neighboring Key. If we are in the Key of “C” then the new Key is “G” or “Gm” and the “V7” of “G” or “Gm” is D7. This also helps determine which scale(s) the lead player uses for soloing and is one of the key tricks of the blues.

G7 is the V7 of C or Cm  E7 is the V7 of Am or A  A7 is the V7 of D or Dm
D7 is the V7 of G or Gm  C7 is the V7 of F or Fm  B7 is the V7 of E or Em

The Rule of “Nine”

If you need to know what Key you’re in, count the scale backwards five steps to find the root of the I or Im chord. Or you can count up four steps to get the same note.

Up 4 or down 5, it adds up to NINE!

If you go to the Fifth of any chord, you can create a Secondary Dominant Chord that leads back to that chord and each time it is in a new Key. Other chords from that Key might show up now too, particularly the II Chord.

You can play a chain of Secondary Dominants. The V of V of V etc. The Old Timers called this “going around the Horn”.

Key of "C" Secondary Dominants

D7  G / A7  Dm / E7  Am / B7  Em / C7  F

II  V / VI  II / III  VI / VII  III / I  IV
The Blues and the Dominant Seventh

The Three chord harmony just described is the basic rules of European Traditional Music. American Blues breaks every one of those rules. All Three are Dominant Seven, not just the V.

I7 - IV7 - V7 Chord Progressions “dominate” the Blues and Early Rock & Roll. One progression, the 12 Bar Blues, is used in all of American Music.

1) Memorize the I-IV-V chords

2) Convert All chords to “7” chords.

3) Play the Blues


Key of "C" Secondary Dominants cont.

E7  A7  D7  G7  /  B7  E7  A7  D7

The Blues and the Dominant Seventh

The Three chord harmony just described is the basic rules of European Traditional Music. American Blues breaks every one of those rules. All Three are Dominant Seven, not just the V.

I7 - IV7 - V7 Chord Progressions “dominate” the Blues and Early Rock & Roll. One progression, the 12 Bar Blues, is used in all of American Music.

1) Memorize the I-IV-V chords

2) Convert All chords to “7” chords.

3) Play the Blues

Write a Chord Chart for a 12 bar blues in the Key of A.

Triplets & Compound Meter

Three is the other division of rhythm in music. In 4/4 time, Triplets are indicated by the “3” over or under the group of three notes. This is called a “Triplet sign” and squeezes three notes into the time normally reserved for two (eighth notes).

Quarter Notes | Eighth Note Triplets
---|---
\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\text{1} & \text{2} & \text{3} & \text{4} & \text{1} & \text{trip}-\text{let} & \text{2} & \text{trip}-\text{let} & \text{3} & \text{trip}-\text{let} & \text{4} & \text{trip}-\text{let}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\text{V} & \text{A} & \text{V} & \text{V} & \text{V} & \text{V} & \text{A} & \text{V} & \text{V} & \text{V} & \text{V}
\end{array}
\]

Triplets can be fixed as the normal division of rhythm with Compound Meters such as 6/8 & 12/8. These “Time Sigs” have a “Main Pulse” at beat 1 & 4 (in 6/8) and 7 & 10(in 12/8) All Rhythms are based on Groupings (Time Sigs) and Divisions (1/8 notes, triplets & more!).

Eighth Notes | Dotted Quarter Notes
---|---
\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\text{1} & \text{2} & \text{3} & \text{4} & \text{5} & \text{6} & \text{1} & \text{4} & \text{1} & \text{4}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\text{V} & \text{A} & \text{V} & \text{A} & \text{V} & \text{A} & \text{V} & \text{A} & \text{V} & \text{A} & \text{V} & \text{V} & \text{V}
\end{array}
\]

Eighth Notes | Dotted Quarter Notes
---|---
\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\text{1} & \text{2} & \text{3} & \text{4} & \text{5} & \text{6} & \text{7} & \text{8} & \text{9} & \text{10}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\text{V} & \text{A} & \text{V} & \text{A} & \text{V} & \text{A} & \text{V} & \text{A} & \text{V} & \text{A} & \text{V} & \text{V} & \text{V}
\end{array}
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NOTES

The 1st and 2nd String

The 1st String open is the E as in “Eat”, the 1st string 1st fret is the F as in “Friday” and the 1st string 3rd fret is the G as in “Garbage”.

The 2nd String open is the B as in “Broke”, the 2nd string 1st fret is the C as in “Cats” and the 2nd string 3rd fret is the D as in “Down”.

Finger Seating: Keep the 1st finger at the first fret while pressing the 3rd finger at the third fret.

Lazy Guitarist Credo: “If I don’t need to lift a finger... I won’t”.

Mystery Tunes!

Here’s a part of a tune. Can you figure out the rest of it?

NAME THIS TUNE!
Another Mystery Tune

Draw note heads randomly on the staff. Make sure each note head is clearly “on the line” or “in the space”. Fill up a line. Start from the beginning and identify each note by name and write it below that note. Don’t forget a Treble Clef at the start of each staff.
Flats, Sharps & Naturals:

The Note Map in the front of this book has **White Circles** for the **Natural Notes** and **Black Circles** for the Accidentals: Flats & Sharps.

Every other key than C/Am uses at least one flat or sharp.

The Key of G/Em uses F# or the raised 7th and the Key of F/Dm uses Bb or a lower 4th. They are indicated by a **Key Signature**: one or more sharps or flats placed after the clef.

They can also be added on a note by note basis and after a double bar line to indicate a Key Change.

A Flat makes the note one half step lower than normal pitch and a Sharp makes the note one half step higher than the normal. A Natural is a Sharp or Flat fixer! It is a reset to the normal named note.

The 1st string has an F#/Gb at the 2nd fret and G#/Ab at the 4th.

The 2nd string has a C#/Db at the 2nd fret and a D#/Eb at the 4th.

It is important to remember that you can sharp an open string note but you cannot flat one.

Notes on The 3rd & 4th Strings

The 3rd string has two natural notes: “G” & “A” or “Guitar Alley”.

The 4th string is your highest Bass String and has three natural notes: “D”, “E” & “F”. The 4th string has Bass Notes of chords. This could be spelled out using: “Dead Elvis Fat”

Remember to keep the fingers down, near the fret and your knuckles arched and spread apart.

---

It is important to remember that you can sharp an open string note but you cannot flat one.
More Flats & Sharps

The 3rd string first fret is G#/Ab, the 3rd string 3rd fret is the A#/Bb, and the 3rd string 4th fret is a duplicate B (same as open 2nd string).

The 4th string 1st fret is D#/Eb and the 4th string 4th fret is F#/Gb.

F# is in all sharp keys
Bb is in all flat keys

Draw these new sharp and flat notes on the upcoming blank staves along with the natural notes you already know, using the Natural sign. Do it as randomly as you can. Don’t forget a Treble Clef. After you have drawn them write the name of the note under each note head and then play them on your guitar.

Mixed 1/4 & 1/8 note rhythms

These rhythms are mixes of quarter notes and eighth notes. Play each of these exercises with your chord changes and with your notes as well. Use some of the upcoming blank staff to experiment with 4/4 and 3/4 time signatures and these note values. Remember that the Time signature sets the number of beats per measure. 3/4 has time for 3 quarter notes or 6 eighth notes and no more.
Dots & Ties: Ties are Rhythmic Glue. Tying a half note to a quarter note makes a three beat note. Dotting a Half note also makes it three beats long. Dots add 1/2 value.

Tying a quarter note to an eighth note makes it worth one and a half beats. Dotting the Quarter Note also makes it worth one and a half beats.

Dots work only within the Measure. Ties can cross the Bar Lines. The number of beats tied is calculated by basic addition.

This is a very popular beat! The “and” of beat two is tied to beat three, and then the “and” of three is struck leading into beat four. This is called “Syncopation”. We emphasize the off beats!

Picking: Start with the 1st string, moving the pick only enough to strike the single string. If the pick moves more than twice the width of the string you are picking too wide. Chant the exercise count slowly out load a couple of times before you imitate it with your pick. Use all down strokes at
first then switch to down/up strokes. Remember: Down on the numbers up on the “ands”. Keep the saying the count as you go. Move to the next lower string and keep the count. Work your way down to the 6th string then come back up to 5th and then 4th strings and so on back to the first string. Keep it slow and keep your eyes on the picking hand. Here are some 1/8 notes exercises for your 1st and 2nd strings.

**Strumming:** Start with an Am and a C chord. Strum only the upper five strings. Chant the rhythm as in the picking exercise and use one chord only until you can get the count to groove. After you feel comfortable counting your strums begin changing chords. Use all down strokes at first then switch to down/up strokes. Strum down on the numbers up on the “ands”. Watch your picking hand to make sure you are hitting the correct number of strings for each chord. Do the exercise with Em and G using all six strings. The C to G7 requires changing the strum from five strings to six strings. Don’t Rush or Drag!

**More Mystery Tunes**

These two tunes have a **Key Signature: F # for the Key of G/Em.** It means that Every F is Sharped.
The next tune uses a half beat Pick Up Note whose count is the “and of two” and leads into beat “one”. The time is stolen from the last bar of the tune.
This tune has another new Key Signature: a Bb for the Key of F/Dm. It means that Every B is Flatted. There is also a note lower than “D”. What is that note? And where is it?
Notes on the 5th & 6th Strings

These are the very lowest notes on the Guitar, the Bass Notes. The 5th String has the open natural notes: A, B at the 2nd fret and C at the 3rd. The 6th String has open natural notes: E, F at the 1st fret and G at the 3rd fret.

Count the Ledger Lines

Three Lines Down is F, Hanging from it is E.
Two Lines Down is A, Hanging from it is G.
One Line Down is C, Hanging from it is B.
Counting Lines is the quickest way to read Ledger Lines.
To read music well you will need to read a lot of notes. For more notes to read buy a Clarinet book. Its written range is the same as guitar. They just can’t play chords.
For chord reading try a beginning piano book.

Flat & Sharp Bass Notes

The 5th String Bb/A# is at 1st Fret and C#/Db is at 4th Fret.
The 6th string has F#/Gb at 2nd fret and the G#/Ab at the 4th fret.
All Bass notes are very important to memorize because of their importance in using Moveable Power Chords and Full Bar Chords.
Bass Notes get highest priority because they happen on beat one.

The bass notes of **A, D and E** are the open 5th, 4th & 6th strings. The Bass note “A” belongs to the Am and A7 chords as well as any other “A” chord (no sharps or flats!).

**More Bass Notes & Chord Strums**
**Sixteenth Notes**

The count is 1 e & a, 2 e & a, 3 e & a, 4 e & a. The picking is always Down / Up. These double beam or flag notes make the groove happen in Funk and R & B.

Counting sixteenth rhythms is one of the most rewarding challenges of music.

---

**Eighths & Sixteenths**

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\text{Count} & 1 & + & 2 & + & 3 & + & 4 & + \\
\text{Strum} & \text{\textbullet} & \text{\textbullet} & \text{\textbullet} & \text{\textbullet} & \text{\textbullet} & \text{\textbullet} & \text{\textbullet} & \text{\textbullet} \\
\end{array}
\]

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### Basic Divisions of Rhythm:

- **Eighth Notes** (Divide by 2)
- **Eighth Note Triplets** (Divide by 3)
- **Sixteenth Notes** (Divide by 4)

Draw a few 1/4, 1/8 and 1/16 combinations.
Even More Mystery Tunes!
Draw your chords as Note Maps
Notate Your Chords
Cheap Tricks are simple moves on the guitar which make great sounds. They also show us how chord names work. Just remember to count from the root note as “one” not “zero”.

### D Tricks

1) Lift the 2nd finger from the 1st string and expose the open E note. E is the 2nd note in the Key of D Major: the Major 2nd. The chord becomes Dsus2 (Suspended second). Placing the 3rd finger on the 1st string 3rd fret suspends the Perfect 4th G and creates the Dsus4 (Suspended fourth) chord.

2) Lifting the 3rd finger exposes the Major 6th and creates the D6 chord. Lifting the 1st finger makes Dadd4 (the third, F#, is still in the chord and is not “suspended”)

3) Adding the 4th finger on the 3rd string “B” is another D6.

4) Moving the 1st finger to the 2nd fret 4th string adds an “E” bass note for a D/E chord and the “F#” bass note for a D/F# chord.

### Tricks for A Major

1) Place the 4th finger on the 2nd fret 1st string for F# and the A6 chord then move it to the 3rd fret for the seventh “G:” and the A7 chord.

2) Lift the 3rd finger from the 2nd string opening the “B” note, the Major 2nd, to make Asus2 then place the 4th finger on the 3rd fret 2nd string for the Perfect 4th D and the Asus4 chord.

3) Open the 3rd string “G” for another voicing of the G7 chord.

4) Lift the 1st finger exposing the “D” and making the Aadd4 chord.

### What About Am?

1)
1) The 4th finger can grab the 6th “F#” and the 7th “G” creating the Am6 and the Am7 chords.

2) The note numbers remain the same as in A Major with the same B and D notes being 2nd and 4th. The difference is that they resolve to the major 3rd C# in the key of A Major and the minor 3rd C in the key of A Minor. The third of “A” has to be “C” something! natural, flat or sharp! It can’t be a “B” or “D” something because they are 2nd and 4th in the key.

3) The 3rd string open is the minor seventh creating a deeper sounding Am7 chord

4) The fourth string lift adds the 4th.

5) The 5th string moves add B and C bass notes.

**Cheap Tricks** is about experimenting with chord sounds.

1) Lift a finger or place a finger then listen to the sound.

2) Find out which note you are adding or exposing.

3) Figure out what the chord name should be.

**The Hammer On & the Pull Off** is the the most important left hand technique for Cheap Tricks

A **Hammer On** is landing the finger very hard on the string behind the fret.

A **Pull Off** is plucking the string with a finger of the left hand.
Name these chords made with “G” tricks. Note that the note G is now the root note of the chord not the 4th of D or the 7th of A.

Draw the “C” tricks then notate them.
The Major Minor Yin Yang

The pairing of a Major Key with a Minor Key is as stark a contrast as black & white or Good and Evil. These sounds have been used for centuries to indicate to audiences exactly those moods and qualities. Six is the bad guys’ number and three is the good guys’ number.

1) The Relative Minor VIm chord of a Major Key becomes the Im chord of the Minor Key.

   The Relative Major III chord of the Minor Key becomes the I of the Major Key.

2) The Major Key has three Major Chords and the Minor Key has three Minor Chords.

3) Both V chords can be Dominant Seventh V7.

In Major Keys, II, III and VI are minor chords and VII is a half-diminished or minor seven flat five chord.

In Minor Keys, II is the m7b5 (half-diminished chord) and III, VI and VII are Major.

Playing chords in numerical/Alphabetical order is called playing a scale in chords or a “Chord Scale”.

Chord Progressions are a series of Number within a Key: “Play By Number” instead of “Paint by Number”.

Both Major and Minor Keys have the same basic I-IV-V structure But the other chords: II, III, VI and VII are very different when comparing major keys and minor keys.
1st Position C major Scale

The chords of the Key of C are all made out of the notes in the C major/A minor scale. These are the Natural Notes you have learned. There are no Flats or Sharps in this scale. The C Major scale is all the white dots on the neck map and all the white keys on the piano.

You now know the complete 1st position C major scale. A number in a circle indicates which string to play that note on. Playing each note in Alphabetical Order is called playing an Ascending Scale. While playing the note in reverse Alphabetical order is known as a Descending scale.

Key/Chord/Scale Relationships
Composition and Improvisation

This Key/Chord/Scale relationship is the traditional starting point of composition in the Keys of C Major and A Minor. It is also the starting point of all improvisation (which I like to think of as automatic composition). Have a partner play a C chord while you play around with the scale while listening to how your notes sound against the C chord. By play around I mean not just ascending or descending the scale tones but skipping and leaping around from note to note. Don’t forget to reverse direction often. Look for the good sounding notes and runs (a series of notes). If you like the sounds repeat it and remember it for future use.
All Keys have exactly the same set of relationships. They just start with a different note and they will all have at least one sharp or flat. The Key of F has Bb and is the first of the Flat keys. The Key of G has a F# and is the first of the Sharp Keys.

Here are a few of the Classic Progressions and their popular names. If you go on a bandstand in America and the leader yells out, “It’s an Oldie in C” you will be playing C Am Dm G7.
FINGERSTYLE, BASS LINES AND BLUES

Finger picking:

The right hand fingers can be used to pluck the guitar’s strings instead of the pick. Generally the lower strings are thumb territory and the higher strings are finger territory. Fingers can pluck lower and higher strings simultaneously while leaving strings in between unplayed. This is a real advantage over a pick.

The Classical Guitar System of PIMA is my preference due to the great number of pieces written for Classical Guitar with these fingerings.

PIMA represents the Spanish words for the right hand fingers: Pulgar, Indice, Medio y Anular.

Besides playing chord Arpeggios, the fingers can play scale lines by using alternating fingers: i m i m is the favorite but we also use m i m i, m a m a, a m a m, am i, im a. Any possible combination can be seen.

Rest Strokes: Play the first string with the i m i m technique. rest the fingertip on the second string after plucking the first. This allows you to play very loud by pressing the first string.
harder before releasing through to rest on the second.

**Free Strokes:** pluck the string with a fingertip and stay in the air. do not touch the next string.

**Classical Guitar** is one of the most complete ways to play a guitar with bass lines melody and chord all happening at once. There is also a collection of wonderful music dating back hundreds of years. This is the most technically demanding guitar style.

**Travis Picking (outside-inside roll)**

This classic American Bluegrass pattern uses opposing thumb / finger movement and can become quite speedy. Thanks to the Late Great Merle Travis of Tennessee. There is also the Pinch Roll and the 332 pattern.
Harmonic Minor

You might have noticed that the V7 of the minor key adds a G# to the A minor scale. This sharpening of the seventh step of the natural minor scale is called the Harmonic Minor Scale.

In Classical Music, it is traditionally used as an ascending motion scale only while the Natural minor is used in the descent. Nowadays, we use it more on the E7 chord and, sometimes, the Bm7b5 and Dm but almost never over an Am. This scale is also called Spanish Minor and is very popular in north African, Arabic and Persian music.

Try to locate and play all of the notes higher than those pictured and lower as well. Play with the scale. I’m very fond of all of the half steps.

Full 1st Position Harmonic Minor Scale

This scale pattern is fun to jam with over the Minor Key Chord Progressions found in the YinYang section. Play the full scale with your index and middle fingers using rest strokes (i m). What is the next note above the G# on the first string? Can you play it? Try using a half step as a dramatic turning point leading a change in direction. Try using hammer ons, pull offs and even Trills (repeated hammer on and pull off done very rapidly).
The finger picked **Blues Standard** above shows the blending of Minor Key and Major Key as well as a chord borrowed from another key. That chord is the D Major chord from the Key of G. Major/E Minor (G's Five Chord).
The Four of Four

The opposite of the Five of Five is also a Key Change only to the Key of the Four chord instead of the Key of the Five Chord. In the Key of “C” Major this would be a Bb chord, the four chord of the Key of “F”. This is a relatively popular Chord change in Major keys and is usually called a “Flat Seven chord”. Normally the seventh chord of “C” would be a Bm7b5 Chord or a G/B. If we “Flat the Seven” we get a Bb major. The “Hey Joe” chord changes start with the bluesy E, really E7, as the Five of the Key of A Major. It then cycles through the Four of Four of Four, C to G to D, and then to the A major chord. C is the Four chord of G, G is the Four Chord of D and D is the Four Chord of A.

The four of four rarely happens in Minor Keys but is pretty common in Major.

Four can change to Four Minor

Kind of a mirror of the Five can be a Five Seven chord change, the Four chord can become a Four Minor chord. It is a change to the direct minor key of the chord: from A as the Four chord of E to Am as the One chord of A Minor. It is almost never the Four chord of E minor as the original Key is E Major.

This classic eight bar blues pattern in E major starts on the One chord, E, moves to the Five of A Major, E7, then to the One chord of A major, A, and the One chord of A Minor, Am, before going back to the E.
Transposition

On the blank staff below write down the one-six-two-five Chord Progressions in the key of G. This is called Transposition. Changing the Key of a chord progression is very handy when playing live.
8 Bar Country

People have used this chord progression more than any other for Folk and Country songs. Like many songs, it is an eight measure repeating pattern. Play in both Major & Minor Keys. Eight bars (measures), sixteen and thirty two bars sections are very common in music.

Bass Lines

Music is full of Bass Lines moving from Root to Fifth. The Root is the Primary Bass Note. The Fifth is the Secondary Bass Note. It is called C/G and is a 2nd inversion chord (more about 1st inversion in passing chords!).

Pick the Primary Bass Note and strum the upper part of the chord then pick the Secondary Bass note and strum the upper part of the chord again.

This is a good time to introduce the time signature for CUT TIME: a C with a line slicing through it vertically. This indicates a 2/2 count instead of a 4/4 count. It means quarter note get counted like eighth notes.

This the Most Popular Bass line in the world!
Walk Up and Walk Down Bass Run

This bass run uses a standard Walk up the Scale to the next Root when changing chords. When moving from the C to an F chord the first two quarter notes are a Primary C bass note and an upper chord strum and the last two quarter notes are used for the climb from Note D to E leading up to the F bass note and chord.

When coming back down we play the Primary F bass note, the upper chord strum and the E and D on the last two quarter notes of the bar leading back to the C bass note on beat one of the next bar.

When moving from the C to an G chord the first two quarter notes are a Primary C bass note and an upper chord strum and the last two quarter notes are used for the drop from Note B to A down to the G bass note.

When coming back up we play the Primary G bass note, the upper chord strum and the A and B on the last two quarter notes leading back up to the C bass note on beat one of the next bar.

This exercise follows the 8 bar country format but stretches the chord velocity out with 16 bars. Note the quick change in the last four bars.
Right Hand Palm Muting is one of the most important techniques in Rock and Blues even though it is misnamed. It is really the Heel of the hand resting on the bridge of the guitar that causes that muffled thumping sound. Slide the hand onto the strings for more muting and onto the bridge for more note.

In the Key of G Major, moving from G down to D requires a jump up to the 4th string open D after playing the F# and E below the G. In reverse we play the 4th string first then drop to Low 6th open E to climb up to F# and G.
A to D Bass run and E to A Bass Run

The Key of A has F#, C# and G# in the key signature and, of course, the bass note runs have them too. The 2nd and 4th fingers are the most practical for this job.

Can you fill in the second 8 bars of the Key of A Exercise? How about the Key of D?
The **Shuffle and Swing**

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A triplet without the “trip” is the best way of describing basic “Swing”. This fascinating rhythm is the heartbeat of American Music.

**Straight Eighths are even** and clock like “tic tock tic tock (1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +).

**Swing Eighths are a heartbeat** “lub Dub lub Dub”(1 -let2 -let3 -let4 -let).

Swing Feels can be indicated at the beginning of the tune with the Swing Indicator telling the musician to play all Eighths as Swing Eights or all Dotted Eighth Sixteenth pairs as Swing Eights.

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**Open Power Chords & The Blues**

The A5 chord name indicates A and it’s **fifth**: E. Played together they are an Open Power
Chord because open A is the bass note. Yes, E is the same 5th as in the one five bass line. The A5, D5 and E5 Power Chords are used in Blues, Country and Rock & Roll.

The 3rd finger movement to the fourth fret 6th is called the Extension.

The Extension occurs traditionally on beats 2 and 4, which are known as the back beats.
The E5 and D5 work the same way as the A5 with the extension on the back beats. The difference is that the E5 Bass Note is one string lower (open 6th string) while the D5 Bass note is one string higher (open 4th string). Note the second finger at the 3rd fret second string in the D5 make sure its there!

Here’s another very popular basic riff using the 6th and the 7th.
Mississippi One Chord

This is one of the most basic form of the blues. The standard for this blues form was set by Muddy Waters, Howling Wolf, and John Lee Hooker.

8 Bar Blues Progression

This 8 Bar Blues is a seldom used but neat chord progression. Related to the 8 Bar Country
Changes & 12 Bar Blues, these “changes” are used in traditional Gospel Music.

We’ve already learned the **12 bar blues progression**. Here’s a set of changes with a **Quick Change to the IV** at bar 2 and the traditional way to play them.

**C/Am Pentatonic Scale**

The Diatonic or Major/Minor scale and harmony is the foundation of European Music. The Pentatonic Scale (5 tones) is the main scale of all styles of American Music. This scale pattern is related to the **G/Em** chord shapes. This scale is used for both The Blues in Keys of Am and A but also for Country/Folk music in the Key of C Major.

Note the 5th position markings. This is the most popular scale pattern in American popular music.
Blues is a Language-1st Word

Drag Bend

The lowest notes in the 5th position Am Pentatonic scale are the root “A” and the Minor third “C” on the 6th string. Play the “A” first with a 1st finger then the “C” with your fourth finger. After you pick the “C” release the “A” and pull the string down while keeping the pressure. You should hear the note being bent upwards. This is called a Drag Bend. You drag the note down and the pitch goes up. The sixth string notes can only be bent in this way. Release the bend then play the “A” again with the 1st finger.

The next higher “A” is at the 7th fret 4th string; use your third finger to play it. Reach back to the “C” at the 5th fret on the 3rd string. Play it, releasing the 3rd finger, and drag the string down to bend the note. Step back to the 3rd fingers’ “A” and release the 1st finger.

Push Bend

The 1st string has the same two notes “A” and “C”. The “C” played by the 4th finger has to be pushed higher across the neck. You cannot Drag Bend a 1st string note. Push Bends need a back up finger. If you are bending with the 4th finger place the 3rd behind it and push with both fingers.
If you are push bending with the 3rd finger place the 2nd finger behind it and push with both fingers.

**2nd Word in Blues**

The **2nd Word** in Blues adds the next note in the Am Pentatonic Scale: “D”. Play the “A” and “C” then the “D”. Bend it then step back down to the “C”, bending it as well and finally the “A”.

**3rd Word in Blues**

**Traditional Bluesmen** learned by doing. They didn’t read music notation or go to school to play music. They played by ear and by feel. If you bent an note too fast they’d say “squeeze it slower so every one can taste it.” The Blues is the underpinning of all of American Popular Music. If you play the Blues well every other kind of music you will ever play will sound more soulful.
Movable Power Chords are basic in Rock, Blues & Heavy Metal. There is a Two String and a Three String Fingering. Keep the 1st finger flat. The Root of the Chord is under the 1st Fingertip and, in the Thick voicing, under the 4th finger as well. Place your 1st finger on any bass note and form that Power Chord. I recommend you flop the first finger to get the A type Bass note or find some way to mute the 6th string. Do not leave it open.

Memorizing the Notes along the entire 6th and 5th strings is essential to the easy use of the E type and A type Power Chords. Use the blank chord blocks below to draw the following Power Chords, and then play them, of course.

Ab5, Bb5, Eb5, D#5, F#5, D5, C5, A5, Gb5 and any other note you can think of then try combining chords in two chord groups.

Power Chords can Slide up and down the string and hop from 6th string to 5th string and back.

Blues in “E” with the B5

Write down a Twelve Bar Blues on the blank staff below. Use the B5 Movable Power Chord for the V chord and the open Power Chords E and A for the I and IV chords.
The pentatonic (5 tones) is the main scale of all styles of American Music. Note the 5th fret markings. This scale pattern is related to the G/Em chord shapes.

**Popular Rhythms**

**BASIC ROCK**

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 1 2 + (3) + 4 + 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

**FUNKY ROCK**

1 2 a 3 e + 4 + 1 2 + 3 4 + + + 3 + 4 +

**FAST ROCK**

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

**ROCK SHUFFLE**

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

**SWING**

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 let

Play these rhythms one at a time with the “Any Chord to Any Other Chord” exercise and single notes.

**General Test**
In the Key of C or Am, write a tune using the notes and rhythms you have learned on the guitar. Create a chord progression for that tune. Harmonize the note at each downbeat (beat 1) with a chord that contains that note.

Then create a chord progression in the Key of C or Am then write a melody to fit the chords.
Keys / The Circle of 5ths

Keys other than C/Am are made by Flattening (b) or Sharpening (#) certain notes to maintain the Major Scale pattern. The Do - Re - Mi Scale is Whole - Whole - Half - Whole - Whole - Whole - Half. The Half Steps are between 3 & 4 and 7 & 8. These Keys can be indicated by a Key Signature written right after the Clef in Music notation.

Each Major Key has a Relative Minor Key.

Each Flat Key begins 5 Major Scale Steps Down from the Root note of the Previous Key and keeps any Flats it had. A New Flat is added at the 4th Step.

Each Sharp Key begins 5 Major Scale steps Up from the Root of the Previous Key and Keeps its Sharps. A New Sharp is added at the 7th Step.

The Keys of Db & C#, Gb & F# and Cb & B are Enharmonic Keys.
The Major Key & Minor Key Spelling Charts

These are complete listings of all of the notes in all of the keys. Find the Key you need along the top row and the scale step number along the side. It looks like the Multiplication tables from Elementary School for a reason. This information is just as unchangeable and fixed as the multiplication table.

These charts have been true for Hundreds of years and are best memorized along with the Key Signatures, Time Signatures and much of the rest of the Musical Art. That way you never have to look it up, like not having to look up 5 times 5 because you have it memorized.

### Major Scale Spellings

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<tr>
<th>K</th>
<th>Cb</th>
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<th>Db</th>
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Final Review

Asking the right questions is very important to gaining a truly complete understanding. Here are a few basic ones.

- What is the neck of the guitar?
- Where is the Body of the guitar?
- Where is the Nut? What are Frets? Where is the Bridge?
- How many strings does the guitar have?
- What is tuning a guitar about?
- How is the guitar tuned?
- What are the names and numbers of the open strings?
- What is the “Go for a Walk” exercise?
- How does the Neck map work?
- What is Finger hopping?
- What is common time? How is it counted?
- What is 4/4 time? How is it counted?
- What is the Musical Alphabet?
- What is a Sharp and what does it do?
- What is a Flat and what does it do?
- What are the Natural Half Steps?
- What are the notes in the C Major Scale? What is the staff? How many lines does it have?
- What is the treble clef?
- What is the saying for the Notes on the Lines?
- What is the saying for the Notes in the Spaces?
- What Note Value or How many beats does a Whole Note get? How about a Half Note? ...or a Quarter Note? ...or an Eighth Note? A Note is played at the 3rd fret of the 1st string. What is its Note Name and which finger plays it?
- What is the Lazy Guitarist’s Credo?
- What is the saying for the Notes on the Lines?
- How many Notes are in a Triad Chord? What is 3/4 time? How is it counted?
- What is the Relative Minor Chord and which chord number does it get? e.g.: 1 is C
- What are Shared Fingers?
- What are eighth notes and how are they counted?
- What are Guide Fingers?
- What is the Chicken Principle?
- What does “Legato” mean? How about “Staccato”? What is a Quarter Rest and how long does it last?
- What are the three main Left Hand muting techniques?
- Which is better for basic rests: Palm Muting or Left Hand Muting?
- What is Three Chord Rock and what are the numbers?
- Which of the Three Chords can also become a Dominant Seventh chord?
- How many measures are in the 12 bar blues?
- What are triplets? How do you count them?
- Where is the note Eb? ...or G#? ...or C#? ... or Ab? What does a “Tie” do? What does a “Dot” do? What is a Pick Up Note? What is the Key Signature for the Key of G?
- What is the Major Minor Yin Yang all about?
- By the Numbers, what are the Oldies Changes? What is a Cheap Trick? What does “sus” stand for?
What do the numbers in chord names mean?
What is the bass note of a C chord?
Which beat number is the bass note usually played on?
What are Ledger Lines? Which Bass Note is on the third ledger line below the staff?
How about in the space under the first ledger line?
PIMA is Spanish for what? What do we strike the strings with when finger picking?
What country is Travis Picking from?
How many measures do 8 bar Country or Blues have?
What is Primary Bass Note of an E Chord?
What is the Secondary Bass Note of an E Chord?
What is a Hammer-On?
What is a Pull-Off?
What measure does the “Quick Change” occur on in the 12 Bar Blues?
What is a Power Chord?
What is a Power Chord’s number name and what does it mean?
How many strings are held down by the first finger in the open A Power Chord?
Which finger plays the “Extension” and what beat(s) is it played on?
Which Note Division is the Shuffle related to: Eighth Notes or Triplets? How are the beats counted?
Which sounds like a clock? Which sounds like a heartbeat?
What is a “Swing Indicator”?
What is Palm Muting? Which hand?
Which fret/string coordinate could you choose to place a movable power chord for the chord Ab5?
Are there any alternative locations?
What is the difference between playing G5 and F5?
What is the difference between playing a “I IV V” using moveable power chords in the Key of G instead of F?
How are Sixteenth Notes Counted?
What Beat Division do sixteenth notes create?
How many notes are in a Triad Chord? How many notes are in a Seventh Chord?
What is the most basic rock rhythm?
What is the most basic Swing Rhythm?
What is the Circle of Fifths?
What is a Key Spelling?

Understanding a system is essential to being able to manipulate it to your own ends. The system of Music has a lot to understand but it is not Brain Surgery, Rocket Science or Nuclear Physics.

Folk Musicians have understood this system for centuries and most of them couldn’t even read or write! If you know the alphabet from A to G and can count to thirteen you’ve got it made!

**Variety makes the Musician.** A Good Guitarist needs a variety of techniques to change chords, to learn tunes, to pluck strings, to mute strings, to count the beat and to divide the beat. Gather as many tricks as you can for you bag of tricks.

**Listening makes the Artist.** The most dangerous people in the music industry are those with educated ears. They recognize what they are hearing and they know what to do and how to do it. These people **Listen to Everything! and they can play anything!**