



Introduction Tuning and month one

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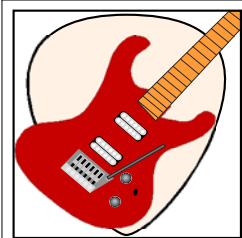
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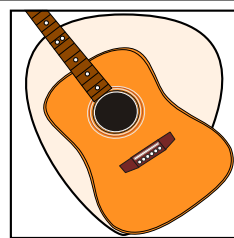
Month Twelve

- Week one
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Introduction

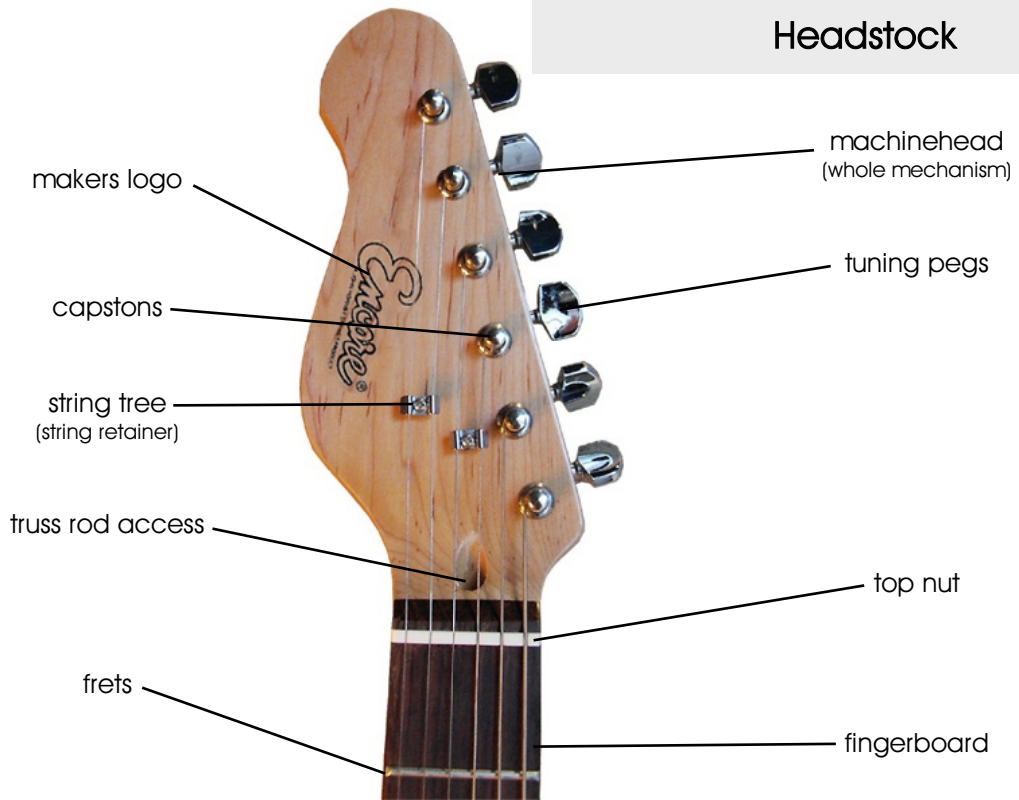
In order for any guitar course to be successful,
you must practise.
practise practise practise practise practise practise



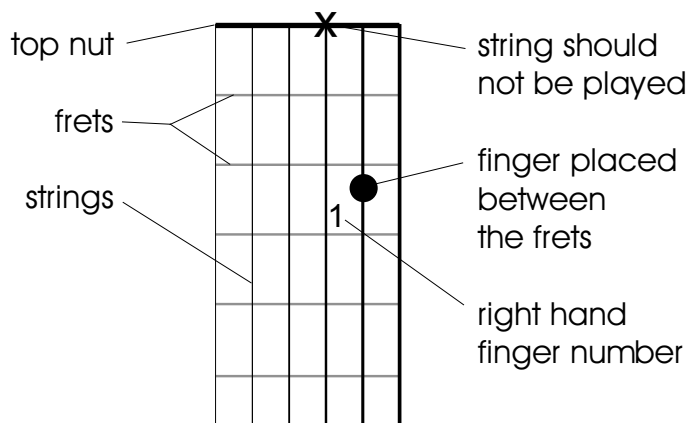
Getting started



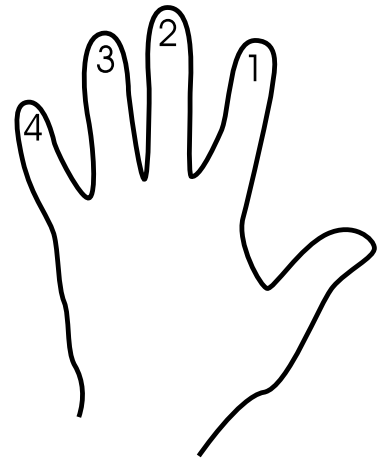
Headstock



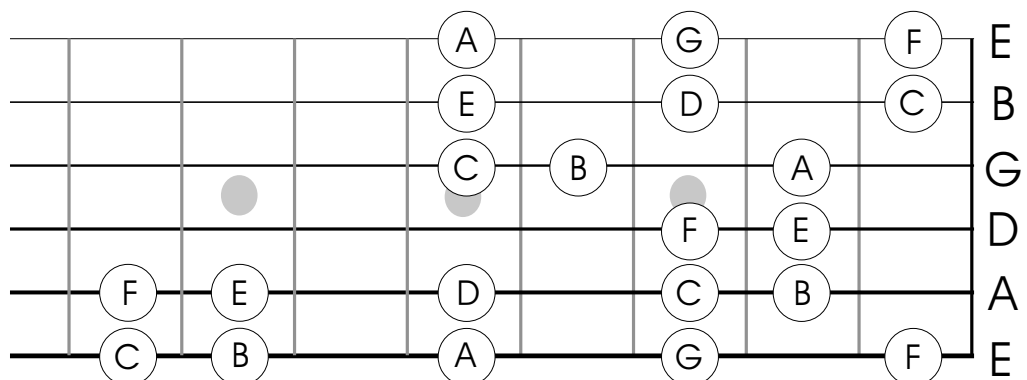
fingering map



right hand



fret map



Tuning

Before you start, it is important to tune your guitar. Even if you're playing correctly the guitar will sound wrong if it is out of tune. As time goes by you will start to recognize when your guitar is out of tune yourself.

IMPORTANT NOTES ON TUNING

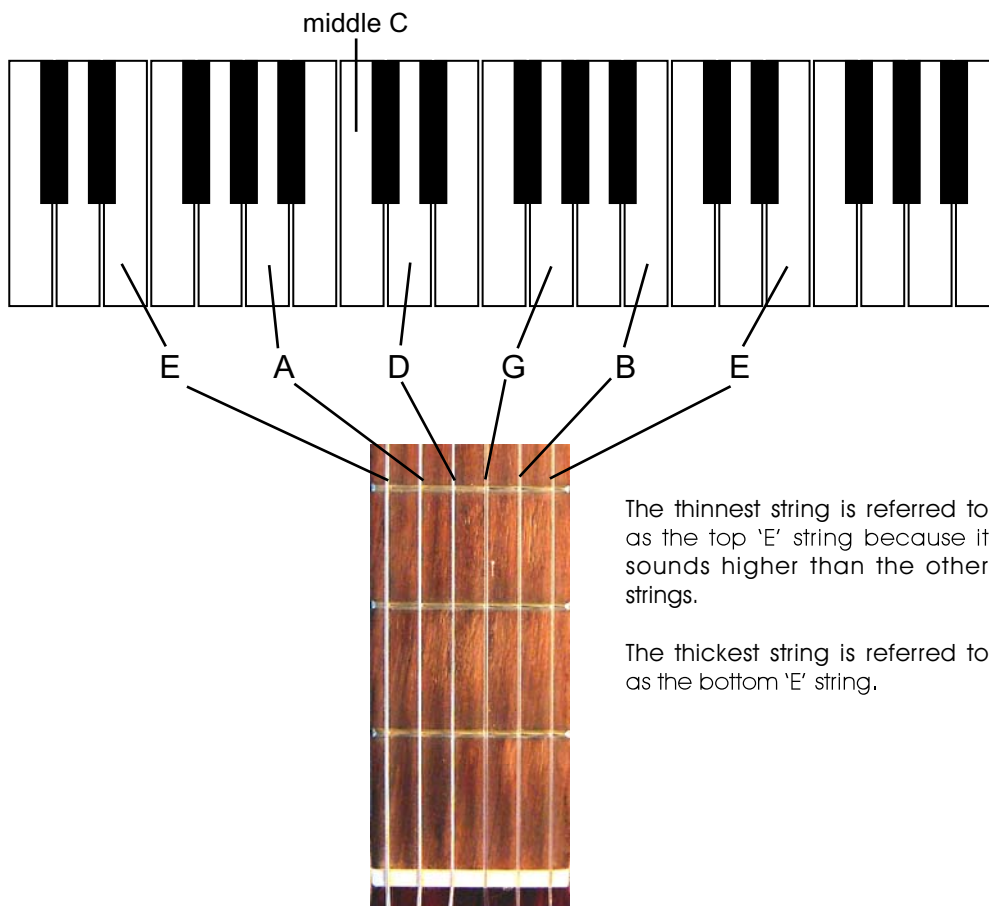
If it is possible, get someone with experience to tune your guitar for the first few times. This will give you time to become accustomed to the sound of the instrument when it is in tune before you attempt to tune it yourself.

When tuning your guitar remember to turn the tuning pegs by very small amounts and then re-pluck the string to see if it is in tune. If you turn your tuners too fast, too far, you will break the strings. It's a good idea to pluck the string before turning the tuning pegs, so you can hear the effect it is having on the pitch.

Listen for the pitch of the string, not the tone. This can cause confusion because the string you are tuning and the reference note may sound different, even though they are in tune with one another.

Tuning to reference notes

Using a reference note is the oldest way to tune a musical instrument. You can either use a single note to tune one string too and then tune the other strings to that string, or you can use a reference note to tune each string. Some reference note sources are a tuning fork, Tuning pipes, a piano or keyboard, another in tune bass guitar, an electronic tone generator or a guitar tuner. Using reference tuning helps you learn to tune your guitar by ear.



Hint. To remember the names of the strings you can use one of these silly sayings.

Every Angry Dog Growls and Bites Eventually
Elephants And Dogs God Blesses Everything
Eddy Ate Dynamite Good Bye Eddy

tuning the guitar to itself

Sometimes only a one or two strings will be out of tune or you may not have access to tuner or a reference note from which to tune your guitar. In either of these instances you can tune the guitar to itself, using the other strings as a reference point to tune from. This is the most common method for doing a quick tune of the guitar.

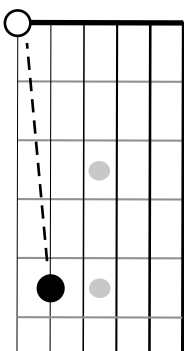
INSTRUCTIONS

1. Until you have more experience of tuning your guitar you will need to use your tuner or a reference note to get a string in tune, preferably, the top 'E' string (the thinnest string). Some people like to tune from the bottom 'E' string, but the human ear is less sensitive at this frequency so we will stick to the top 'E'.
2. Place your finger in the FIFTH fret of the next string down the 'B' string. Play this note shortly followed by the top 'E' string and repeat this several times so you can compare the notes. If the 'B' string is in tune, the two notes will sound the same. If the notes are different, then you will need to adjust the 'B' string and then repeat the process until the notes sound the same. At the end of this process the 'B' string should now be in tune.
3. Place your finger in the FOURTH fret of the next string down the 'G' string, and play this note shortly followed by the 'B' string and repeat this. If the 'G' string is in tune, the two strings will sound the same. If the strings have a different pitch, then you will need to adjust the 'G' string and then repeat the process until the strings sound the same. The 'G' string should now be in tune.
4. Place your finger in the FIFTH fret of the next string down the 'D' string, and play this note shortly followed by the 'G' string and repeat this so you can compare the pitch of the notes. If the 'D' string is in tune, the two strings should sound the same. If the strings are a different pitch, then you will need to adjust the 'D' string and then repeat the process until the strings sound the same.
5. Repeat this pattern using the FIFTH fret for the last two strings.
6. Compare the top 'E' string and the bottom 'E' string. As they are both 'E', they are 'octaves' and have a unique sound. Firstly listen to them on free tuner provided as we know the tuner is in tune. Eventually you can use this sound as a double check, because if you have made a mistake on any of the other strings the two notes will not sound correct.

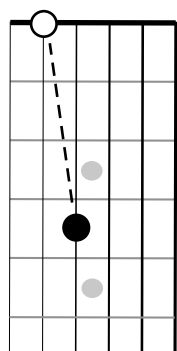
IMPORTANT

Listen for the pitch of the strings and not the tone. The tone of each string will always be a little different. Don't press too hard on the strings, because you might bend the string and this will make it out of tune. Even if you normally use an electronic tuner, it is wise to try this method for a while so you can get used to hearing and comparing the pitch of the strings.

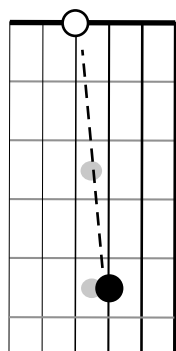
Tuning the 'E' string



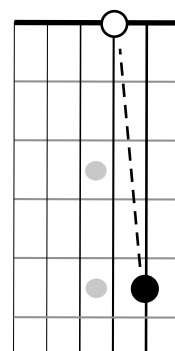
Tuning the 'B' string



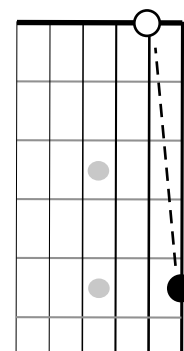
Tuning the 'D' string



Tuning the 'A' string



Tuning the 'E' string



The best way to learn how to tune

There are many free guitar tuners available for desktop computers and mobile devices. It is a good idea to find the one you like the look of and install it or use a hardware electronic tuner. Both these methods are very accurate.

1. If you have the GCH Guitar Academy multimedia course, play the tuner game as many times as it takes for you to get 6 out of 6 several times. The tuner and the guitar in the game have different tones to make it more realistic.
2. Try tuning your guitar using reference notes first rather than a digital or electronic tuner that tells you what to do. This will help to train your ears to hear when the guitar is out of tune.
3. Finally check your guitar with a digital tuner that tells you if the note is sharp or flat. The digital tuner is the most accurate way to tune, but if you only use the digital tuner you will take longer to hear when your guitar is out of tune.

Tuners

A guitar tuner is a device to help you tune your guitar. Tuners are available in many forms, such as tuning pipes, a tuning fork, electronic tuners and software tuners. Electronic and software tuners come in two main forms, the type that listens to the guitar note and then indicates whether or not the guitar is in tune, and the type which produces a reference note for you to tune from. Even if you have an electronic tuner that tells you if the string is sharp or flat, I would recommend using the old style reference note tuner because helps you develop your ear. Once you've developed an ear for the guitar you should be able to tell when your guitar is out or tune straight away.

How to use the GCH Guitar Academy tuner

Select the tone you prefer or which sound the most like your guitar. Click the tuner on the string you want to tune and then compare the sound produced by the tuner with the sound produced by your guitar. Remember that the guitar and tuner can sound different even though they are in tune with each other. This is because the tone is different, not the pitch. When tuning your guitar remember to turn your tuning pegs by very small amounts and re-pluck the string to see if it's in tune, if you turn your tuning pegs to fast, to far, you will break your strings. It can be a good idea to play the string before turning the tuning pegs so you can hear the effect on the pitch straight away.

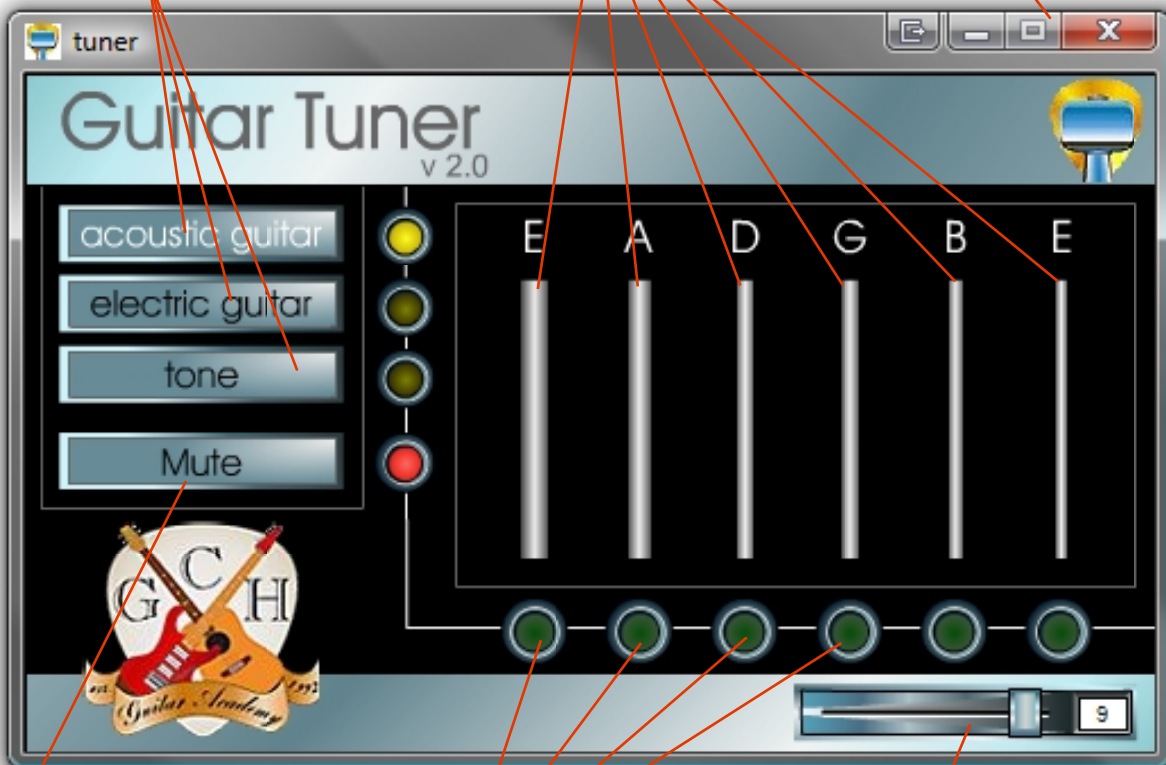
Tone selection

Click on the tone selection button to change the sound. Select the sound you find the easiest to tune from.

String buttons

Click on a string to hear it played

Standard windows top bar



Mute
Silences the tuner

Virtual LEDs
Indicates which string is playing

Volume Control
Use the slider to alter the volume

using a pick (plectrum)

There's no right or wrong way to hold your plectrum because everyone has their own preferred method. There is however a recommended start point which is illustrated on the right. Don't feel you need to copy this method exactly it is just a starting point.

1. Bend your fingers into a fist.
2. Lift the thumb but leave the fingers bent.
3. Place the plectrum on the first knuckle of your index finger so that it points towards the guitar.
4. Hold the plectrum in place with your thumb and adjust it.

When playing single notes or strings with a pick the motion should come from the wrist, the whole arm should not move up and down. When strumming the motion comes more from the elbow.

For stability and to aid with locating the strings without needing to look down, some players either rest the hand or arm on the guitar. Another approach is to rest your fingers on the guitar scratchplate, screws, or on a pickup if you have an electric guitar.

IMPORTANT

As you get use to the pick look at the position you're holding it in every time you practise. If the pick position changes every time you play it will take you a lot longer to get used to it and play to the standard you want to reach.



Which plectrum to use.

Plectrums come in all sorts of shapes and sizes, but they are usually marked with the thickness, which is helpful. Remember though that the thickness is just a guide, plectrums will play differently depending on what material they are made of. At this stage of your learning it is probably a good idea to buy a several to find out which one is best for you.

1mm is a common thickness of plectrum. It is a good all round plectrum.

Plectrums over 1mm will not bend very much, if at all. They produce a more bassy tone and they can be more difficult for strumming.

Plectrums under 0.7mm can bend a lot. They produce a brighter tone and are ideal for strumming as they are more forgiving if your plectrum accuracy isn't perfect. However they can sound clicky



fig 1



fig 2



fig 3



fig 4

tunes

Introduction

Below is a BAR. A bar is a representation of time used in music, so all music is made up of bars. To start with, the bars we are using contain 4 beats (this is 4/4 time). It is important that the length of time for each bar remains the same and therefore I recommend downloading the a metronome and practicing trying to play the chords as accurately as possible on the first beat of the bar.

beats	1	2	3	4
bar	G			

Try the following;

G				G				G				G			
---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--

Remember that there is no break between the bars, every beat should remain the same, and therefore the beat should sound constant.

Sometimes you will find that there is more than one chord in a bar, in this instance play the second chord on the THIRD beat of the bar (for now). As you get better and start to play more advanced pieces, you will find any number of chords in a bar.

For example

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
D7		A7		A7				

The arrangement

Every tune has an arrangement. An arrangement is the order in which a tune is played. For example, verse, chorus, verse, chorus. By listing arrangements the tunes are kept smaller, neater and easier to follow. You will also gain a better understanding of music for when you eventually want to write your own. Music can be made up of any number of sections in any order, here are some of the section names.

Intro (introduction), Verse, Chorus, Bridge, transition, Solo, Coda (end).

Using the backing tracks

When using the backing tracks, remember to follow the beat of the drum rather than the tune and you find that you can play along. Even tunes that you don't know or are unfamiliar with shouldn't be a problem if you follow the beat. To start with you may have trouble keeping up, but with practise you will soon find that speed becomes less of an issue.

Here are some rules to help you play along with the backings.

1. There are always two bars before the music starts.
2. Follow the beats and not the tune.
3. If you miss a chord, leave it and try to join in later. Don't try to catch up.
4. Just strum the chord once, we will add rhythms later.
5. If you have trouble changing between two chords, practise the change.

using the metronome

A metronome is a device that produces a beat with a constant tempo. The tempo of the metronome can be adjusted to the speed you want. It is not essential for you to practice with a metronome, but it is a good idea to practice with one sometimes. If you practice with a metronome it will aid you to achieve and maintain a constant tempo. This will help make playing with a backing tape or other players less of a challenge.

Metronomes come in numerous forms such as clockwork, electronic or computer software but they all do the same basic job, producing a regular beat.

To start the metronome

Clicking on a number starts the beat playing.

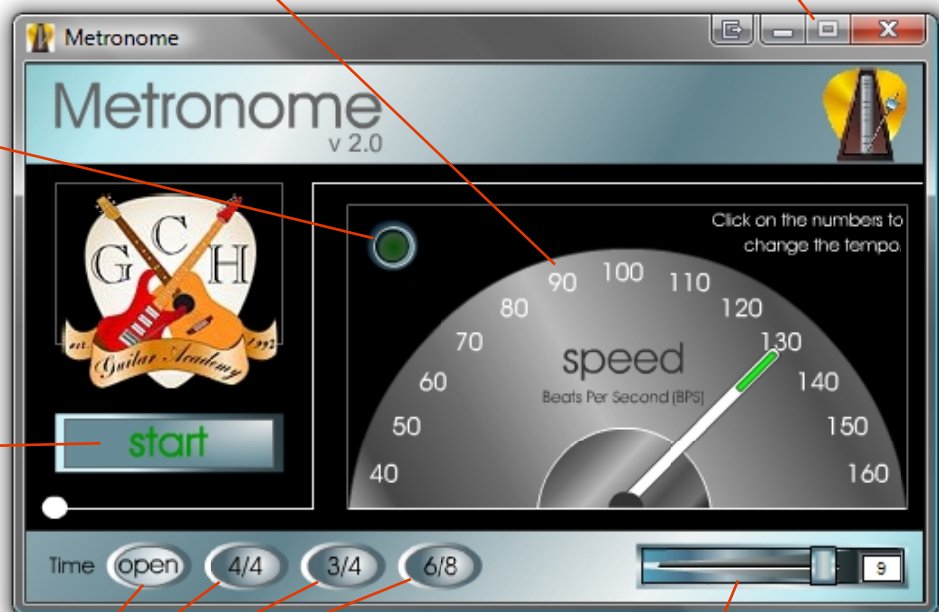
The numbers are BPM or Beats Per Minute.

The larger numbers are faster tempos, and the smaller numbers are slower beats.

Virtual LED
to show when the metronome is active.

Start/stop button
Click this button to start and stop the beat once a tempo has been selected.

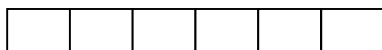
Standard windows top bar



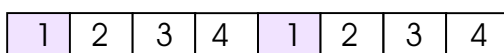
Volume Control
Use the slider to alter the volume

Time signatures

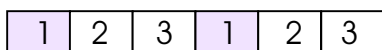
open = open time, no bars or accent notes



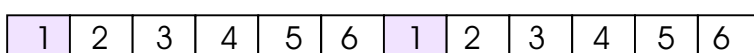
4/4 = common time, 4 beats per bar. The accent is every one of four beats

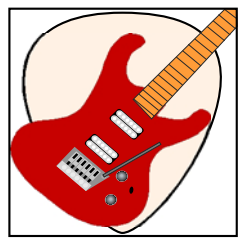


3/4 = 3 beats per bar. The accent is on every one of three beats



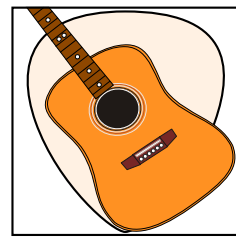
6/8 = 6 beats per bar. The accent is on every one of six beats



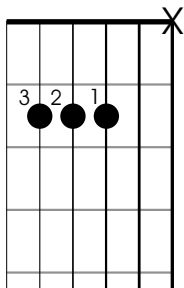


Lesson One

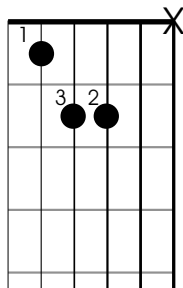
open chords



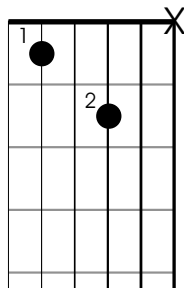
A



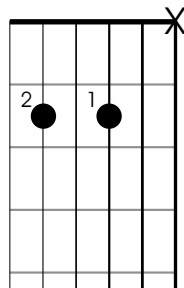
Am



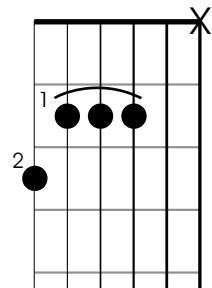
Am7



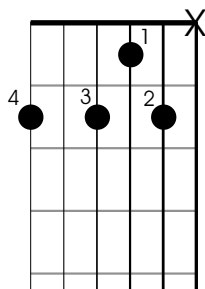
A7



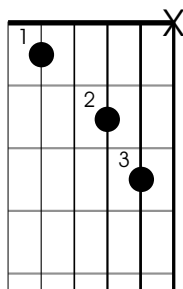
A7



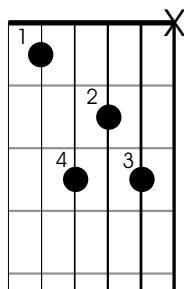
B7



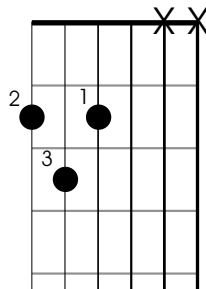
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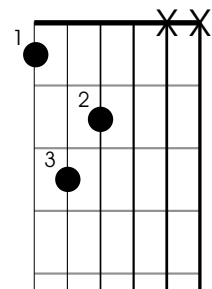
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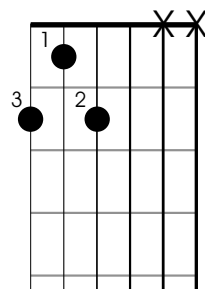
D



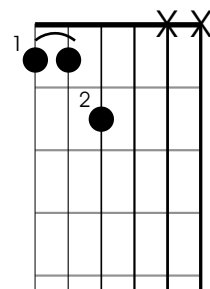
Dm



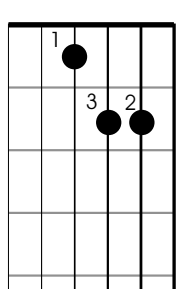
D7



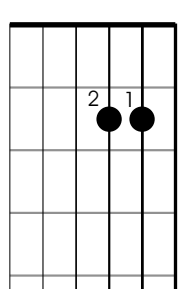
Dm7



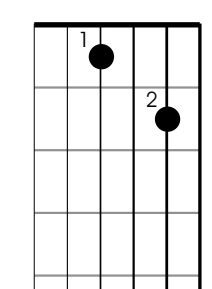
E



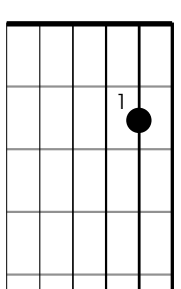
Em



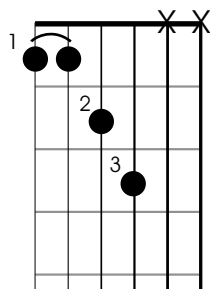
E7



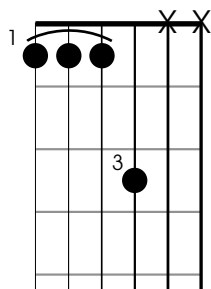
Em7



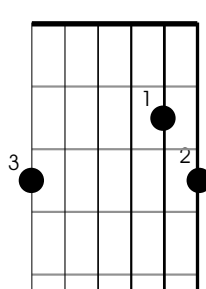
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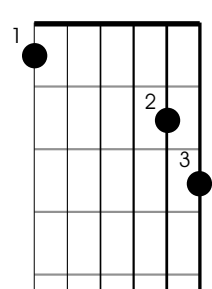
Fm



G



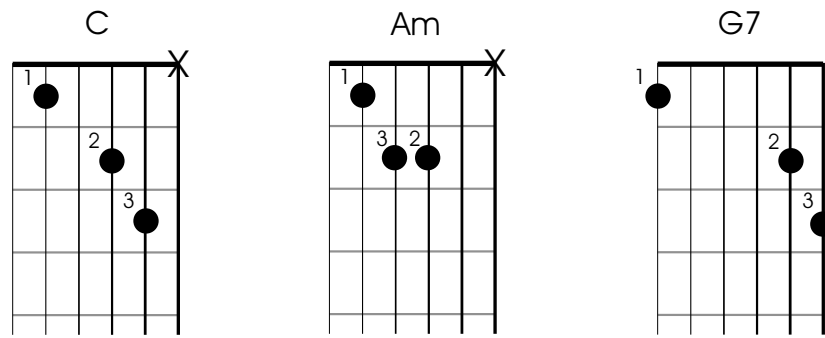
G7



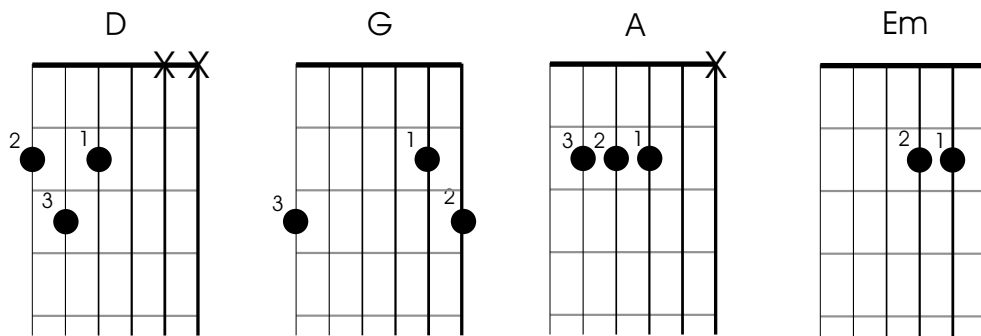
exercises

Play the following open chord exercises.

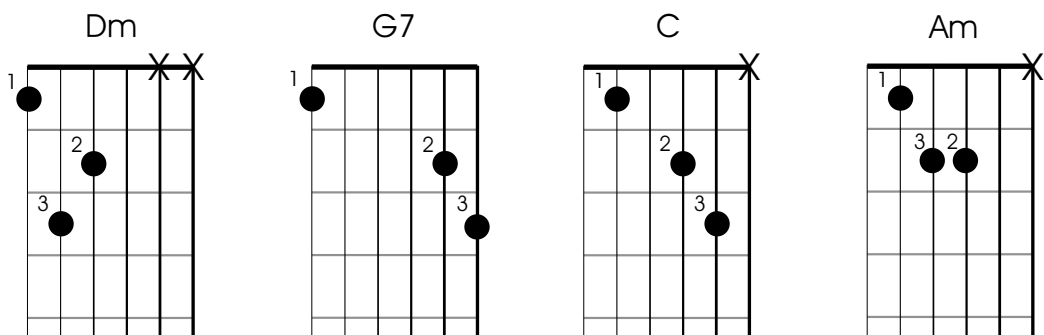
Then repeat them until the chords sound clean and the changes sound smooth.



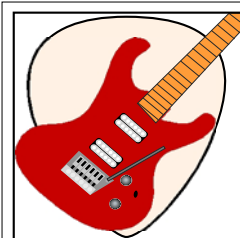
C - - - Am - - - C - - - Am - - - C - - - G7 - - - C - - - Am - - -



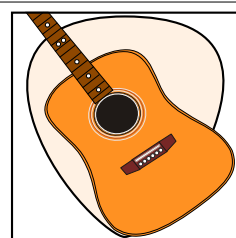
D - - - G - - - D - - - A - - - D - - - G - - - D - - - Em - - -



Dm - - - G7 - - - C - - - Am - - - Dm - - - G7 - - - C - - - C - - -

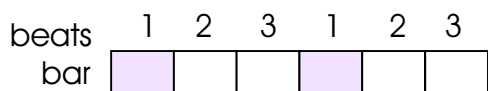


month one Week One



tune

These tunes are in 3/4 time, which basically means that their are THREE beats per bar. Because the tunes are in 3/4 time you will notice that the usual score boxes now have a purple box every three beats instead of every four beats.



Try this tune with the metronome set on 3/4. You can set the metronome to play a 3/4 beat by clicking the 3/4 button at the bottom.



3/4 select button

Amazing Grace

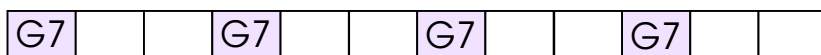
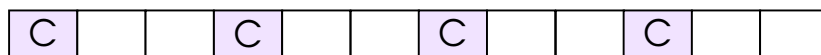
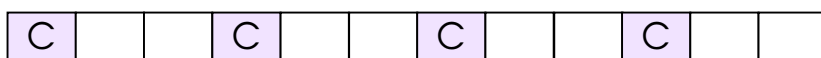
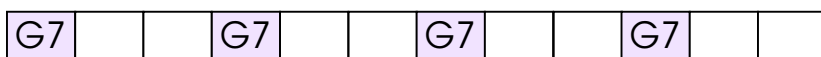
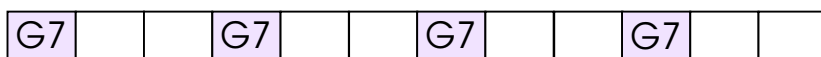
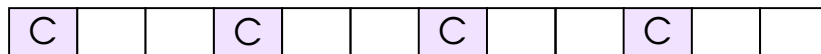
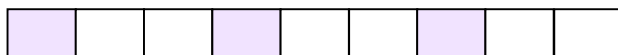
G			G			C			G		
G			G			D7			D7		
G			G7			C			G		
G			D7			G			G		

chords

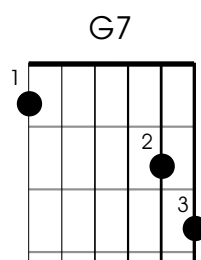
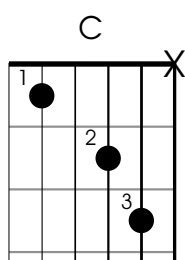
G	C	D7	G7

tune

Down in the valley (American folk song)



chords

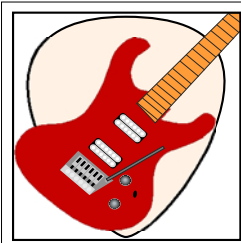


IMPORTANT HINT

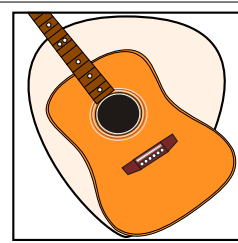
Chord push-ups

If you're finding a particular chord change difficult or slow, practise going between just the two chords over and over again. This will speed up the learning process and your chord changes should improve more quickly.

For example. If you find the change between D and G difficult, then practise.
D, G, D, G, D, G, D, G, D, G, D, G, D, G, D, G
over and over for several minutes.



month one Week Two



tune

Now, let's try and put together some of what you have learned to play our first piece of music with an arrangement. These tunes are in 4/4 time, so there are FOUR beats per bar.

1. Play the chords a few times until you are happy with the changes.
2. Try playing with the metronome in 4/4 time, using a slow setting (between 40 & 80)
3. Try playing with the backing tracks

She'll be coming 'round the mountain

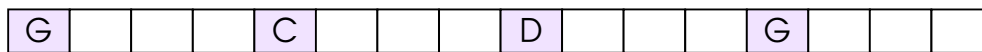
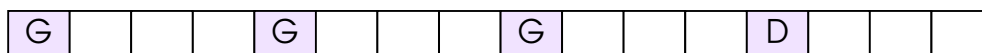
This tune is in 4/4 time and the bars are counted 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 etc. The red numbers below are the beats and the black letters are the chord names

One chord should be played every four beats on the first beat of the bar. In other words a chord should be played at the beginning of each bar. You can practice this tune with the metronome to help you build up the speed of your chord changes. But to start with, it is a good idea just to practice the chord changes.

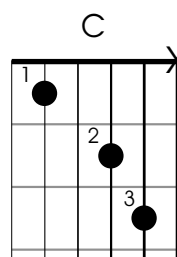
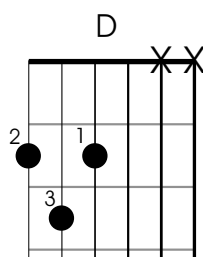
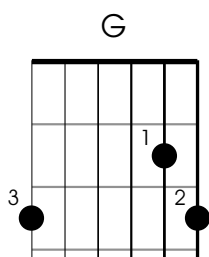
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
 G - - - | G - - - | G - - - | D - - - |

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
 G - - - | C - - - | D - - - | G - - - |

How tunes will look in the future.



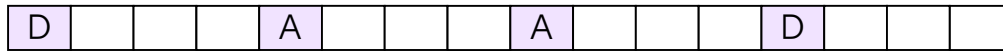
chords



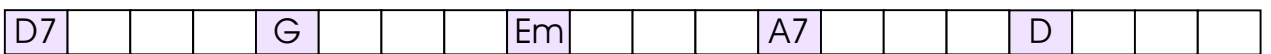
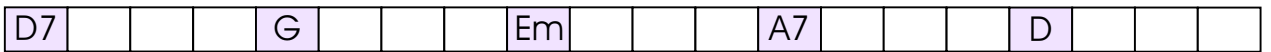
tune

HEY JUDE - The Beatles

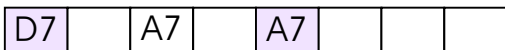
verse



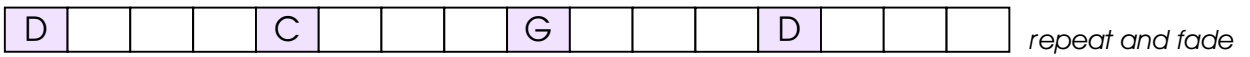
chorus



1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

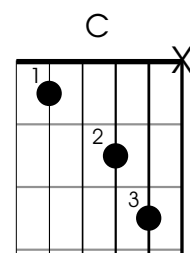
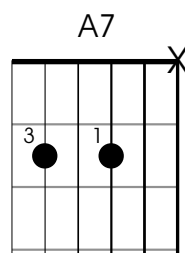
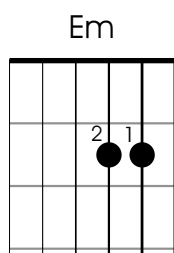
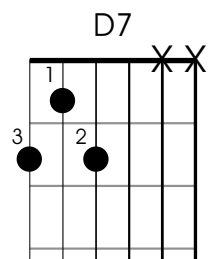
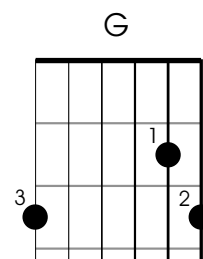
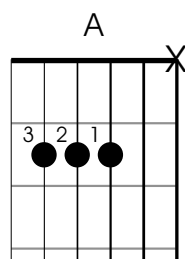
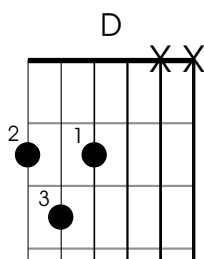


coda



arrangement verse - verse - chorus - verse - coda

chords



exercise - 'G' major scale

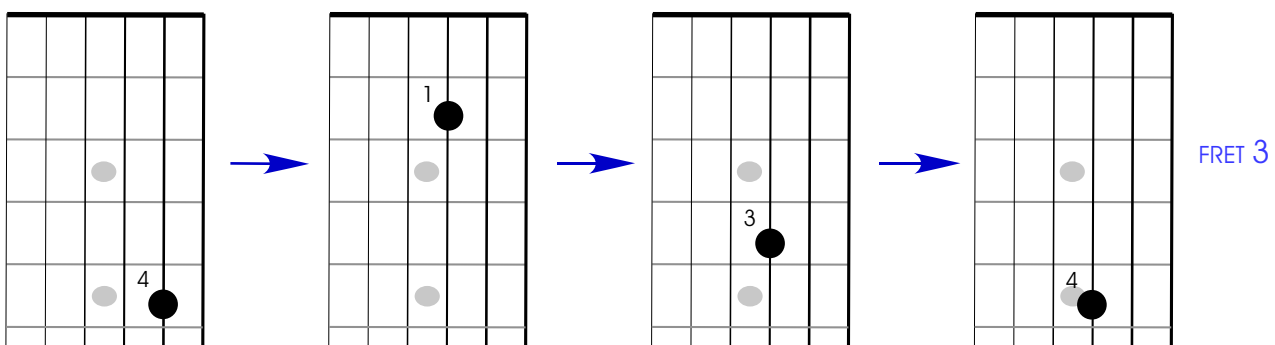
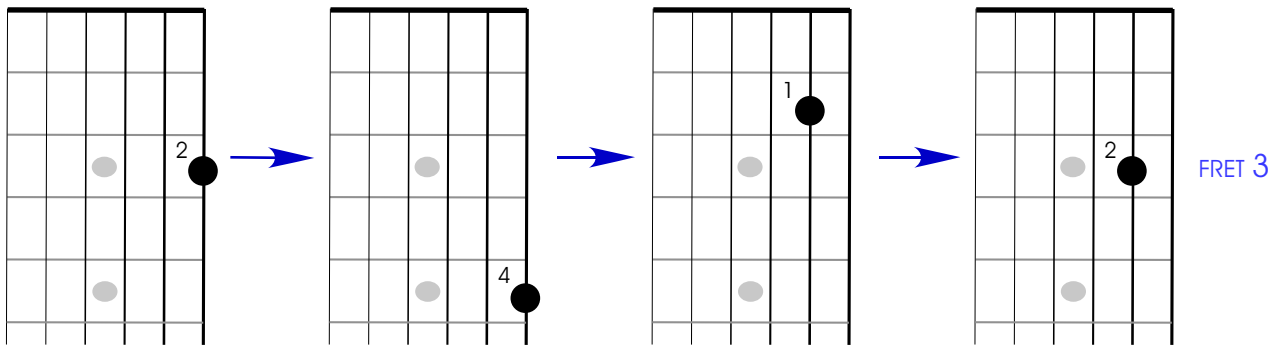
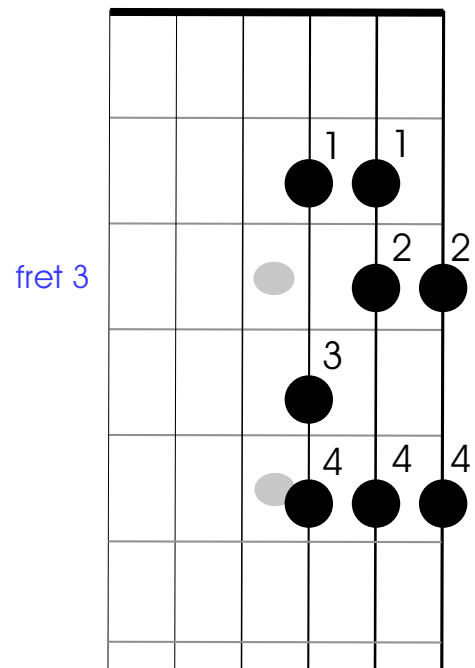
Scales are the DNA of music and everything you do when you play your guitar either directly involves the use of scales or has been derived from a scale. Therefore it is important to give them the attention they deserve and practise them until you can play them reasonably well. In the future, the way you play your scales will have an influence how well you can play or write solos and lead guitar.

Scales are played as single notes in succession, however all the notes will be put together on a 'scale map' to help make the scale more readable and the pattern clearer.

A scale map looks a lot like a chord map, however beware to look for any fret number indicators as it is a common occurrence for scales to be played further up the neck. For example the 'G' major scale starts on the 3rd fret.

To play the 'G' major scale, play the notes in order one by one as shown below. Once you can play the scale, practise it, memorize it and try to increase speed, accuracy and flow.

'G' major scale map



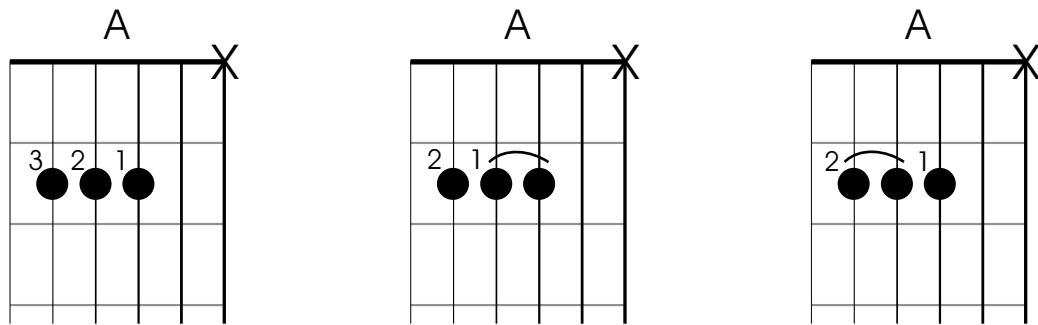
IMPORTANT HINT

Chord fingering variations

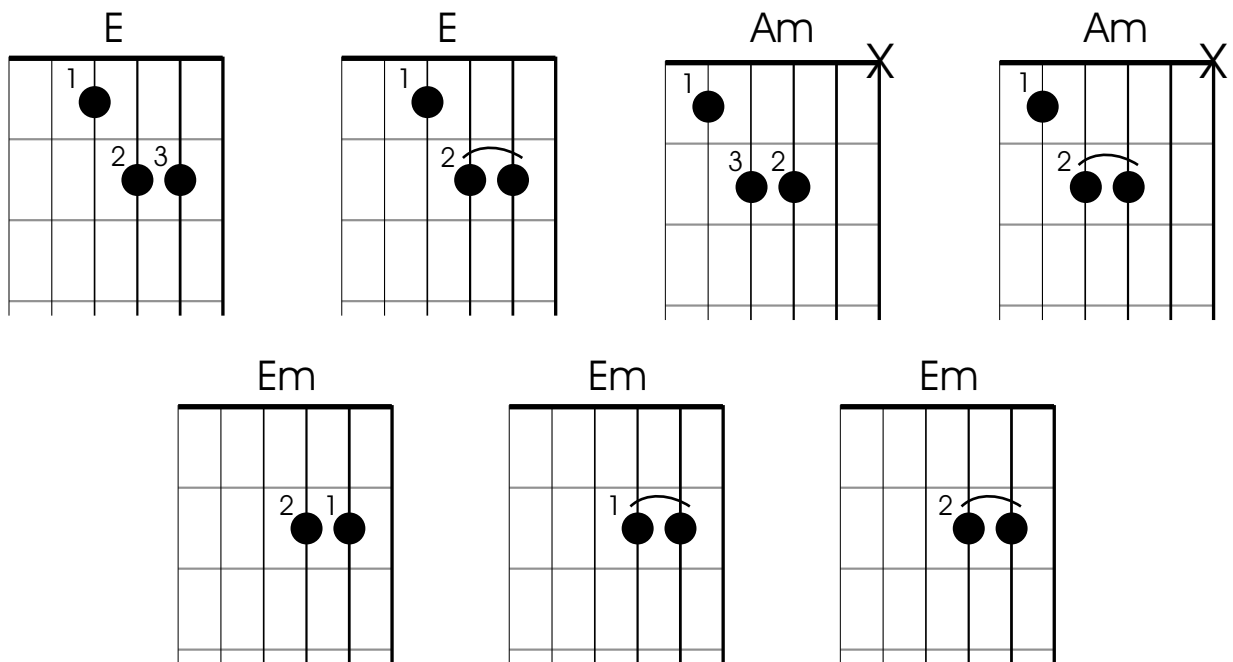
Sometimes it is acceptable or even prudent to change the fingering for a particular chord. This can be for a number of reasons including the build or structure of the players hand or simply being better prepared for the next chord in a sequence.

For example

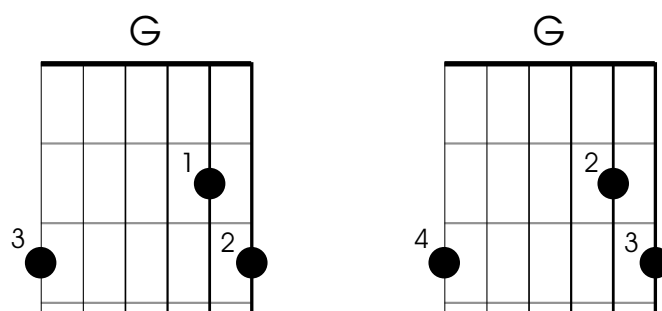
The 'A' major can be fingered in a number of ways. The second and third way of fingering 'A' shown below are more suited to people with large or wide fingers as they involve covering 2 strings with one finger.

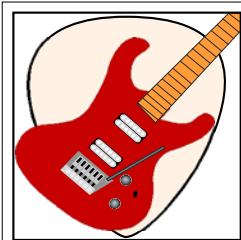


This style of play, where you cover 2 strings with one finger can be used with other chords including 'E' major, 'E' minor and 'A' minor.



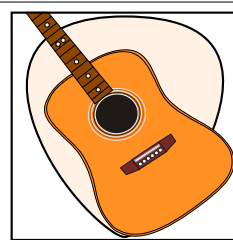
The 'G' major chord is commonly played in 2 different ways. The choice of which way you play the 'G' depends greatly on what chord is following it. The second way of fingering the 'G' is used commonly when a 'C' major chord is before or after the 'G'. The first chord is the most common way to finger 'G' major.





month one

Week Three



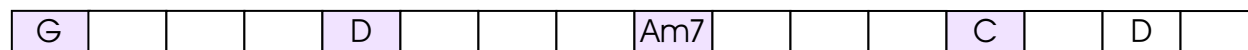
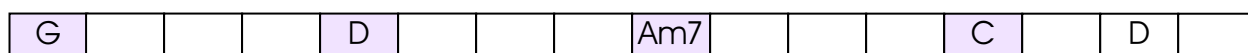
tune

This first month needs to be spent mastering open chords.

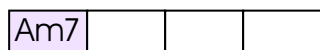
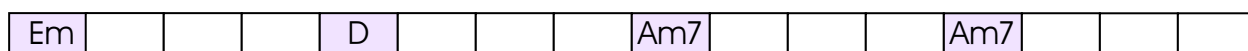
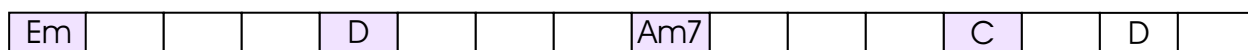
1. Play the chords a few times until you are happy with the changes.
2. Play with the metronome in 4/4 time, using a slow setting (between 60 & 100)
3. Try playing with the backing tracks

Live Forever - Oasis

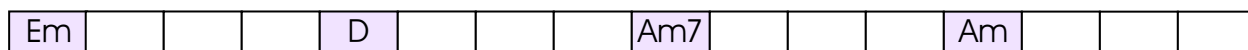
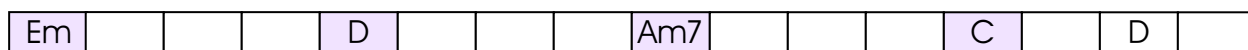
verse



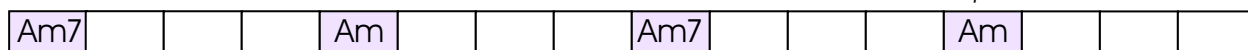
chorus



coda



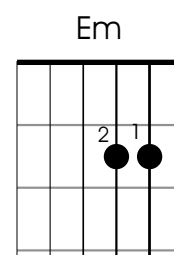
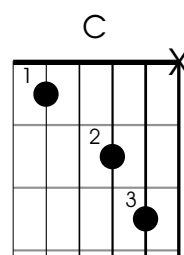
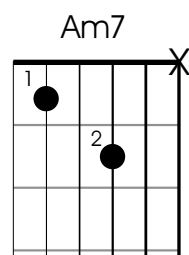
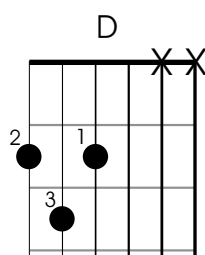
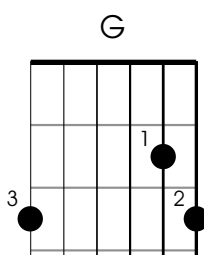
repeat and fade this line



arrangement

verse - chorus - verse - chorus - ^{solo}verse - chorus - verse - coda

chords



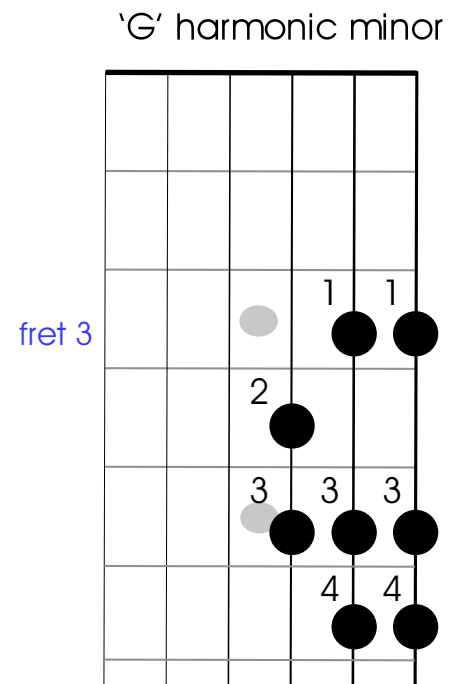
exercise - 'G' minor (harmonic) scale

This time playing the scale should take less explanation, play this scale the same way as you did the 'G' major scale in the last lesson. Play the scale both ways this time, from the bottom to the top and then from the top to the bottom.

Try to memorize this scale and the 'G' major scale and keep practising both scales until you can play them smoothly, uniformly and accurately.

It is very important to use the correct fingers when learning and practising both scales.

Practising scales regularly and correctly will help your finger accuracy, strength and dexterity. Many of the best guitarists use scales as a way of warming up before practising as they keep the fingers subtle.



IMPORTANT HINT

The position of the thumb is very important, so take careful note of it.



Correct

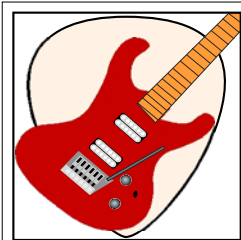
The thumb is in the center of the neck and the fingers are putting pressure on only the string required. Try to keep the fingers on their tips.



Wrong

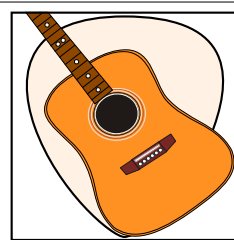
The thumb is around the neck and the fingers are laying against strings which are not intended to be played. The fingers should not touch the surrounding strings.

Note. In both cases you can see how the fingers naturally sit in a position above the correct frets. This is why you should use the correct fingers.



month one

Week Four



tune

Candle in the wind - Elton John

verse

G				G				C				D7			
---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	----	--	--	--

G				C				G				C			
---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--

G				G				C				C			
---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--

G				C				G				C			
---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--

chorus

D				D				G				C			
---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--

G				G				D				D			
---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--

C				C				Em				Em			
---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	----	--	--	--	----	--	--	--

D				C				C				C			
---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--

instrumental

G				G				D				D7			
---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	----	--	--	--

G				D				C				G			
---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--

coda

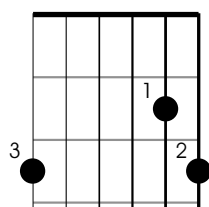
Em				D				C				c			
----	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--

Arrangement

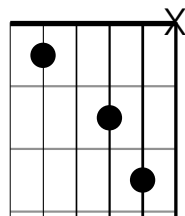
verse - chorus - verse - chorus - instrumental - verse - chorus - coda

chords

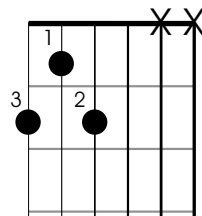
G



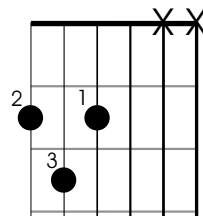
C



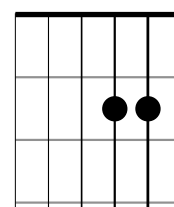
D7



D



Em



exercise - 'G' minor pentatonic scale

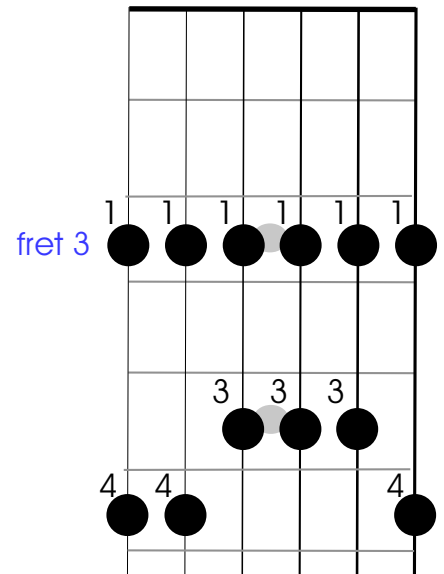
I am going to repeat much of what was said in the lesson for the previous scale because it is so important you learn the scales. Play the scale both ways again, forwards from the bottom to the top and then backwards from the top to the bottom.

Memorize this scale and then you should know three scales which you can revise using the revision section below. Keep practising all the scales until you can play them smoothly, uniformly and accurately.

Remember it is very important to use the correct fingers when learning and practising both scales.

Practising scales regularly and correctly will help your finger accuracy, strength and dexterity.

'G' minor pentatonic



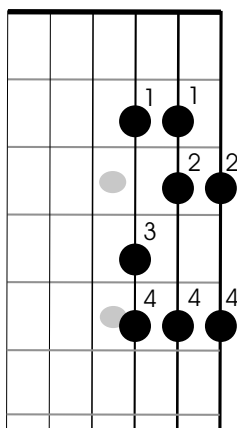
Scale revision

Don't worry. You have learned most of the scales you'll need for the time being and there aren't too many more scales to learn now. Only a few of the scales you learn will be really important to you, unless you want to become a serious or professional guitarist.

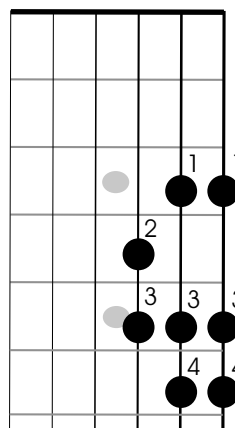
Play these scales until you can remember them and play them smoothly.

The open chords will naturally re-occur as you play more tunes, therefore it isn't as important to memorize them, however the scales will only be used in relation to theory, or when you start playing lead guitar so you may forget them if you don't practise them regularly.

'G' major



'G' minor harmonic



'G' minor pentatonic

