

Guitar Alliance Chronicles 1

1. Practice Tips

Get In Tune

The very first thing that you should do when you pick your guitar is to tune it. Let's face it, an out of tune guitar can sound horrendous. Do yourself and use a quality tuner to check your guitar's tuning at the beginning and throughout your practice sessions.

Set A Schedule

It's up to you to figure out when to practice and for how long. Ideally you should have at least 2 hours per week of structured practice. You could do two practice sessions per week, at an hour apiece, or you could split it up into 20 minutes practice sessions on 5 days of the week.

Always Be Learning

Your practice routine will be a balance of the physical and mental. In other words, a balance of playing guitar and understanding what you are playing. If you spend all of your time working on your chops then you find yourself caught in an endless loop. Too many guitarists spend only 6 months learning new things and then the next 10 years recycling the things they learned in those first 6 months. Good musicians are always learning. No one 'knows it all'.

The 5 Minute Rule

It's a good idea to play a little everyday. That doesn't mean that you have to sit down and have a structured practice session everyday. It only means 'hands on the instrument' even if it's only a dismal 5 minutes. Play something from your previous practice session. Maybe you'll find 5 minutes in the morning or 5 minutes right before you go to bed, just get your hands on that instrument at least once a day.

You might not think much can be done in only 5 minutes, but this daily contact will compound with time allowing you to see marked improvement. You're also less likely to fall

out of touch with the instrument. We've all had those days where we sit down to play only to realize our hands aren't doing what we want them to or we suddenly can't remember how play things.

Keep A Record

No you old timers, I'm not talking about vinyl. I'm talking about keeping a journal of your progress and possibly some recordings from your practice sessions. With Practice Club we will be working towards both and short term goals. Your journal should list your goals and keep track of your progress towards these goals.

At the end of each practice session spend a minute writing down exactly what you did and work on. Just a paragraph or two will suffice. Periodically you'll be able to review your journal and evaluate your progress. There may be things you may have neglected and the journal will help to shed light on this.

Also, if you have the means, try recording audio from some of your practice sessions. Make a note of what you record in your journal. Periodically go back and record the same material or something comparable. Listen to the recordings from time to time. You'll amazed to hear the progress, but you'll also begin to hear mistakes and problem areas that you could improve on.

Don't Skip The Hard Stuff

Concentrate on your weaknesses. Don't spend most of your practice time on the areas that you would consider your strengths. Take the time to make your weaknesses strong, too. If you come across something that you do not understand don't skip it and go onto something else.

Don't get frustrated if you are working on a song and can't quite get it right and then stop practicing it altogether. You may not see improvement overnight, but you will see improvement eventually. If you're having problems learning to play something or understanding concepts, don't beat yourself up. Stay the course, you'll eventually get there.

Don't Overdo It

If you start to feel too much discomfort in your hands and/or fingers from practicing you may want to take a break or wait until the next day to continue. Over time the muscles in your hands will develop to the point where they won't cramp as much, and your fingertips will develop hard calluses.

2. The Major Scale

Key Concepts

Here are a few things you'll need to know in order to get most out of this practice session:

About Scales

Guitar scales are the building blocks of everything you'll ever play on the guitar. They are a sequence of notes that provide a road map for just about everything including chord construction, chord progressions, songwriting, and soloing. Understanding scales is about as essential to a guitarist's survival as water is to a fish. There's no reason to stress yourself if the concept of guitar scales is still vague to you. It's kind of like learning to read.

First you must learn the alphabet, then you'll start putting letters of the alphabet together to form words and sentences. With music you have 12 notes instead of 26 letters in the alphabet. Scales help you group these notes together in ways that are pleasing to the ear.

For example; to play chords and melodies. The first scale we'll work with is the major scale. It has 7 notes and can easily be transposed to play in any [key signature](#). It gives you a greater than 50% chance of hitting a correct note, because of the 12 different notes on the guitar, 7 of them will be in your major scale.

Rhythm Notation

It will come in handy understanding how to read a little bit of music notation in order to complete today's assignment. Here you'll learn what quarter notes are, how to count them, and how they will keep you in time.

Measures

When writing music down on paper for other musicians to play the music is divided into what is called measures. The measures are divided with vertical lines called **bars**. The lines that musical notes are placed on are called staves. Can you see the vertical lines in the music staff below?



Same thing here in this tablature staff:

T		
A		
B		

All of our lessons, for the time being, will be in 4/4 time. That means each measure will get 4 beats (the count of four).

The Quarter Note

A quarter note is a note that represents the duration of one beat. In other words each quarter note on the staff gets one beat. It looks like this:

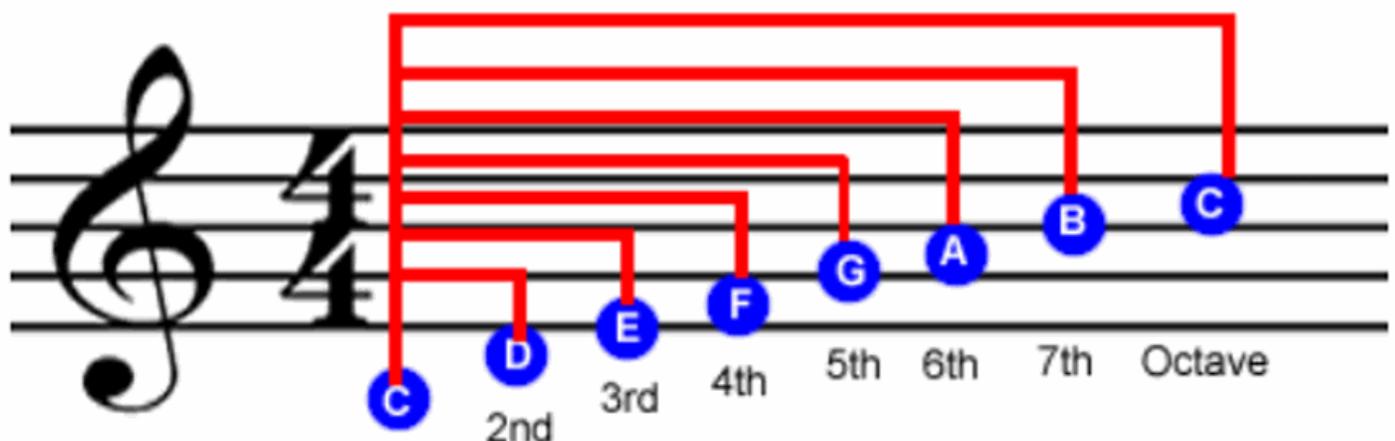


You remember that I told you that a song in standard (4/4) time gets 4 beats per measure, right? That would mean that the song it would get 4 quarter notes per measure, because a quarter note gets one beat. That's why it's called a quarter note. There are 4 quarters in a whole. For example, a dollar bill can be divided up into 4 quarters. (.25 + .25 + .25 + .25 = \$1.00)

Picking A Comfortable Tempo

The tempo of a song tells us at what speed to play a song. If you're a total beginner, I suggest you try starting exercise from The Major Scale PDF at around 60 or 70 beats per minute.

C Major Scale



"The Major Scale" Tab

Play along with the video!

A C Major Scale

1

T							
A	0	2	3	0	2	0	1
B	3					2	0

B C# Major Scale

5

T							
A	1	3	4	1	3	1	2
B	4					2	1

C D Major Scale

9

T							
A	2	4	5	2	4	2	3
B	5					3	2

D# Major Scale

13

T							
A	3	5	6	3	5	3	4
B	6					4	3

E Major Scale

17

T							
A	4	6	7	4	6	4	5
B	7					5	4

F F Major Scale

21

21

T

A 5 7 8

B 8

5 7 5 6

6 5 7 5

8 7 5 8

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the F Major Scale starting at measure 21. It features a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The scale is written in a four-measure phrase. Below the staff are three tablature lines labeled T, A, and B. The A and B strings have fret numbers 5, 7, and 8. The T string has fret numbers 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 7, 5, and 8.

G F# Major Scale

25

25

T

A 6 8 9

B 9

6 8 6 7

7 6 8 6

9 8 6 9

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the F# Major Scale starting at measure 25. It features a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The scale is written in a four-measure phrase. Below the staff are three tablature lines labeled T, A, and B. The A and B strings have fret numbers 6, 8, and 9. The T string has fret numbers 6, 7, 6, 7, 6, 8, 6, and 9.

H G Major Scale

29

29

T

A 7 9 10

B 10

7 9 7 8

8 7 9 7

10 9 7 10

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the G Major Scale starting at measure 29. It features a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The scale is written in a four-measure phrase. Below the staff are three tablature lines labeled T, A, and B. The A and B strings have fret numbers 7, 9, and 10. The T string has fret numbers 7, 8, 7, 8, 7, 9, 7, and 10.

I G# Major Scale

33

33

T

A 8 10 11

B 11

8 10 8 9

9 8 10 8

11 10 8 11

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the G# Major Scale starting at measure 33. It features a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The scale is written in a four-measure phrase. Below the staff are three tablature lines labeled T, A, and B. The A and B strings have fret numbers 8, 10, and 11. The T string has fret numbers 8, 9, 8, 9, 8, 10, 8, and 11.

J A Major Scale

37

37

T

A 9 11 12

B 12

9 11 9 10

10 9 11 9

12 11 9 12

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the A Major Scale starting at measure 37. It features a treble clef staff with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, and G#). The scale is written in a four-measure phrase. Below the staff are three tablature lines labeled T, A, and B. The A and B strings have fret numbers 9, 11, and 12. The T string has fret numbers 9, 10, 9, 10, 9, 11, 9, and 12.

K A# Major Scale

T			
A	10	12	13
B	13		
T			
A	10	12	10
B			
T			
A			12
B			10
T			
A			13
B			10
T			
A			13
B			13

L B Major Scale

T			
A	11	13	14
B	14		
T			
A	11	13	
B			
T			
A			13
B			11
T			
A			14
B			11
T			
A			14
B			14

3. "Why Scales?" (Random Quarter Note Exercise)

Ok, so you can play up and down the major scale. Now what? In this lesson we'll take a look at the major scale in action and discover some of the cool things that we can do with it. I've created a PDF called "Random Quarter Notes" for this practice session. It will expose you to how the major scale sounds over chords.

"Random Quarter Notes" Tab

Play along with the video!

A C Major Scale

Gtr II

B Random Scale Notes

C Am F C

Gtr II

C Go Up An Octave

12

16

D D Major Scale

20

4. Rhythm Notation Exercises

Before you play the exercises along with the video, you may want to review the information below on note (and rest) values.

"Rhythm Notation Exercises" Tab

F Exercise 6

The musical notation shows a treble clef staff with a series of chords. Below it is a fretboard diagram with four rows labeled T, A, B and four columns of fret numbers. The fret numbers are: T: 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 0; A: 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 0; B: 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0. The second, third, and fourth columns have fret numbers 1, 2, 3 respectively for the T, A, and B strings.

Note Values

In music notation, a note value indicates the relative duration of a note, using the color or shape of the note head, the presence or absence of a stem, and the presence or absence of flags/beams/hooks. A rest indicates a silence of an equivalent duration. Discover how to read them in music notation in this lesson.

Name	Note	Rest
Whole Note		
Half Note		
Quarter Note		
Eighth Note		
Sixteenth Note		

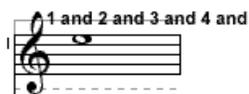
The Whole Note

Its length is typically equal to four beats in 4/4 time. Most other notes divide the whole note; half notes are played for one half the duration of the whole note, quarter notes are each played for one quarter the duration, etc. A whole note lasts half as long as a double whole note. It looks like this:



This is actually the easiest one to play. All you have to do is strum the chord once, and wait for three beats. Strum the chord again, and wait for three beats.

A Whole Note equals 4 beats:



A Whole Rest would look like this (same value, but instead of playing it, you rest for that duration):

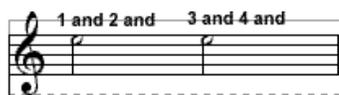


The Half Note

A half note is a note played for twice the duration of a quarter note. In time signatures with a denominator of 4, such as 4/4 or 3/4 time, the half note is two beats long. It looks like this:



You can think of the half note as dividing the whole note into two. This means you're playing a given note or chord twice for every one time you play a whole note.



A Half Rest would look like this (same value, but instead of playing it, you rest for that duration):



The Quarter Note

A quarter note is a note that represents the duration of one beat. In other words it gets one beat. It looks like this:



You remember that I told you that a song in standard (4/4) time gets 4 beats per

measure, right? That would mean that the song it would get 4 quarter notes per measure, because a quarter note gets one beat. That's why it's called a quarter note. There are 4 quarters in a whole. For example, a dollar bill can be divided up into 4 quarters. (.25 + .25 + .25 + .25 = \$1.00) A Quarter Rest would look like this (same value, but instead of playing it, you rest for that duration):

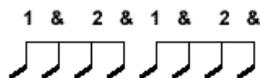


The Eighth Note

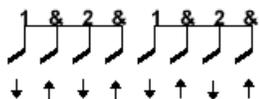
An eighth note is a note played for one eighth the duration of a whole note, hence the name. As with all notes with stems, the general rule is that eighth notes are drawn with stems to the right of the note head, facing up, when they are below the middle line of the musical staff. It looks like this:  When they are on or above the middle line, they are drawn with stems on the left of the note head, facing down. Flags are always on the right side of the stem, and curve to the right. On stems facing up, the flag starts at the top and curves down; for downward facing stems, the flags start at the bottom of the stem and curve up. When multiple eighth notes or sixteenth notes (or thirty-second notes, etc.) are next to each other, the stems may be connected with a beam rather than a flag.



We can count eight notes along with a beat like this: Tap a steady rhythm on table. Each time your hand hits the table is a beat. Each beat gets two eighth notes, so each time your hand hits the table is a "1" or "2". Each time your hand comes up is the "and". See the example:



You'll want to strum them in a down up down up pattern like so (and vice versa):



An Eighth Rest would look like this (same value, but instead of playing it, you rest for that duration):



The Sixteenth Note

The easiest way to explain sixteenth notes is by using what we already know from the eighth note. This is LITERALLY doubled up. Sixteenth notes are notated with an oval, filled-in note head and a straight note stem with two flags.



As you can see, it looks just like the eighth note, only with double beams that connect. A sixteenth note by itself would look like this:



A Sixteenth Rest would look like this (same value, but instead of playing it, you rest for that duration):



Standard time, the most common time, means the music gets 4 beats per *measure*. A measure is a way to break the song down into small groups and are separated by bars.

5. Two Octave Major Scale

In this session I will introduce to you a version of the major scale that spans 2 octaves and all six strings. The tab for this session will be great to practice building speed.

In the video below I perform this session's exercise at three different tempos. Try to play along, or practice it on your own. In the video I stop at about the 12 fret, but you can keep going up the fretboard if you so desire.

Play it at your own speed. If you can't play it up to speed as in the video, try practicing at a slower tempo.

"2 Octave Major Scale" Tab

A] F Major Scale

♩ = 80

1

Gr 1

T		0 1	1 0	
A		0 2 3	1 3	3 1
B	1 3	0 1 3	0 2 3	3 2 0
				3
				2 0
				3 1 0
				3 1

B] F# Major Scale

5

T		1 2	2 1	
A		1 3 4	2 4	4 2
B	1 2 4	1 3 4	1 3 4	4 3 1
				4
				3 1
				4 2 1
				4 2

C] G Major Scale

9

T		2 3	3 2	
A		2 4 5	3 5	5 3
B	2 3 5	2 4 5	2 4 5	5 4 2
				5
				4 2
				5 3 2
				5 3

D] G# Major Scale

13

T		3 4	4 3	
A		3 5 6	4 6	6 4
B	3 4 6	3 5 6	3 5 6	6 5 3
				6
				5 3
				6 4 3
				6 4

E A Major Scale

17

T
A
B

F A# Major Scale

21

T
A
B

G B Major Scale

25

T
A
B

H C Major Scale

29

T
A
B

I C# Major Scale

33

T
A
B

J D Major Scale

37

T		9 10	10 9	
A	9 11 12	9 11 12	12 11 9	
B	10 12		12	11 9
				12 10 9
				12 10

K D# Major Scale

41

T		10 11	11 10	
A	10 12 13	11 13	13 11	
B	10 11 13		13	12 10
	11 13			13 11 10
				13 11

L E Major Scale

45

T		11 12	12 11	
A	11 13 14	12 14	14 12	
B	11 12 14		14	13 11
	12 14			14 12 11
				14 12

M F Major Scale

49

T		12 13	13 12	
A	12 14 15	13 15	15 13	
B	12 13 15		15	14 12
	13 15			15 13 12
				15 13

R A# Major Scale

Musical notation for the A# Major Scale (Right Hand) starting at measure 69. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written in a single staff. Below the staff is a guitar tablature with three lines labeled T (Treble), A (Middle), and B (Bass). The tablature shows fret numbers for each string across four measures.

T		17 18	18 17	
A		17 19 20	20 18	20 19 17
B	17 18 20	17 19 20	20	19 17
	18 20			20 18 17
				20 18

S B Major Scale

Musical notation for the B Major Scale (Left Hand) starting at measure 73. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written in a single staff. Below the staff is a guitar tablature with three lines labeled T (Treble), A (Middle), and B (Bass). The tablature shows fret numbers for each string across four measures.

T		18 19	19 18	
A		18 20 21	21 19	21 20 18
B	18 19 21	18 20 21	21	20 18
	19 21			21 19 18
				21 19

6. Creating Basic Melodies

In this lesson we're taking a basic chord progression in the key of C and adding a melody over it using notes from the C major scale.

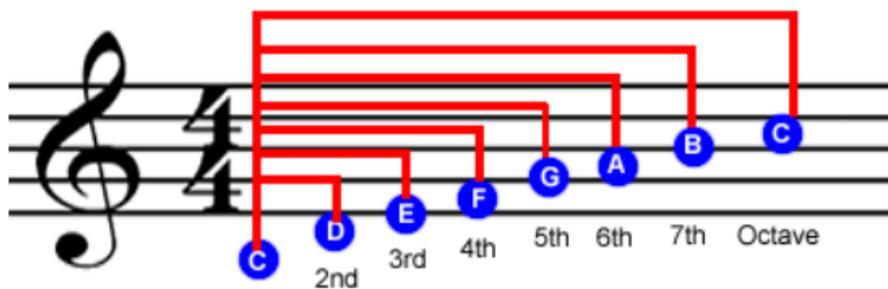
"Creating Melodies" Tab

One of the reasons that the guitar is such a popular instrument is it's ability to play chords. Most instruments don't have this ability. Keyboard instruments, like pianos have this ability, but what about trumpets, or saxophone, drums, etc.?

Triads

The most common chords are 3 note chords called triads ('tri' meaning three). Major chords are the most common triad. The formula for a major chord you take the 1st, the 3rd and 5th steps of the major scale. For example, let's take a look at the C Major Scale in Fig.1:

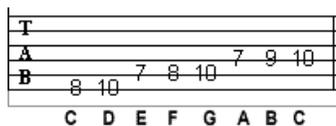
Fig. 1: The Steps Of The Major Scale



Let's Count The Steps

There are 7 notes in the major scale. In figure 1 we're using the C major scale, so the 1st step is C. From there we can just count up the scale. The 2nd step is D, 3rd is E, 4th is F, 5th is G, 6th is A, and 7th is B. To make a C major chord we'll take the C (1st), E (3rd), and G (5th) notes from the scale. Play the C major scale tabbed below:

Fig. 2: C Major Scale In Tab



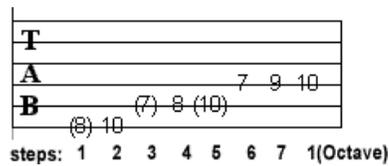
This scale will sound familiar as it is the "Do, re, mi " song you've heard all of your life. Your ears and brain are programmed to it.

Constructing Major Chords From The Major Scale

The formula for a major chord is 1, 3, 5. So, let's take the 1st step, 3rd step, and 5th step of

the scale (in parentheses below). The notes we end up with are C, E, and G. When these three notes are played together, they form a C major chord.

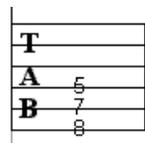
Fig. 3: Finding the 1st, 3rd, and 5th.



The Major Triad

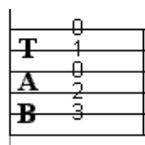
We now know how to build a major chord, so let's try to play one. I've taken our three notes for the major chord and tabbed them out below. For fingering purposes I've taken the 5th step note and moved it to the 4th string instead of the 5th.

Fig. 4: C Major Triad



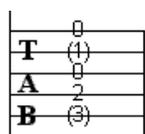
There you go! A C major chord in it's most basic form, but since there there are six strings on the guitar, you can double up on some, or all of the notes of the chord to create a more full sound. For example, let's take a look at the open C chord:

Fig. 5: Open C Chord



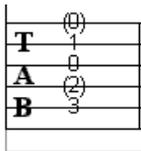
We have the 1st step, also known as the root note (which is C) appearing twice (in parenthesis):

Fig. 6: Repeating The Root



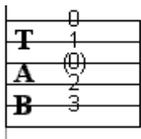
The 3rd step (which is E) appears twice also:

Fig. 7: Repeating The Third



The lonely 5th step (G) appears only once:

Fig. 8: The 5th



Major Chord Formulas

We can add extra notes from the major scale that outside the major triad to create variations of the major chord. If you'll review the table below you'll see some of these possible variations and the formula that's used to construct them:

Major Chord	R	3	5				
M6	R	3	5	6			
6/9	R	3	5	6	9		
M7	R	3	5	7			
M9	R	3	5	7	9		
M11	R	3	5	7	9	11	
M13	R	3	5	7	9	11	13
M7#11	R	3	5	7		#11	

At this point, we're not concerned about memorizing all of these formulas. I've mainly included the table above just to give you an idea of chord are constructed. If, at this point, you decode a chord formula with the major scale, then that's all you really need to know right now.

Looking that the table above you'll see numbered steps that are greater than the 7 notes in the major scale, so you may be wondering what the heck is going on. Just imagine the major scale repeating at a higher pitch, an octave, above.

- The 8th is the same note as the 1st, the 9th the same as the 2nd and so on.
- When we see that our chord formula calls for the 9th scale step we know that it's the same note as the 2nd scale step.
- When we see a chord calling for the 11th, we know it's the same note as the 4th.

Sure, it sounds a little confusing at first, but with a little practice you'll get it down...

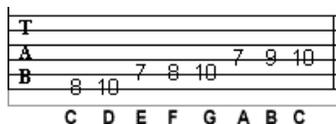
Minor Chords

Minor chords are very similar to major chord, except for one note, which is the 3rd. In a minor chord we flat the 3rd. This means we'll drop the pitch a half step. In guitar-speak that means we'll drop the tone of the 3rd the equivalent of one fret. This small change makes a big difference in the sound of the chord.

Constructing Minor Chords

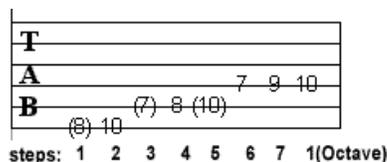
Minor Chords are constructed using using the Root (1st step), a flat 3rd step and the 5th step of the Major Scale. For example take a look at the C Major Scale:

Fig. 9: The Major Scale



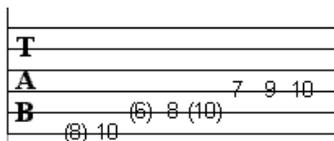
Now we'll take the 1st, 3rd, and 5th step like we did in constructing a Major Chord:

Fig. 10: Finding the 1st, 3rd, and 5th



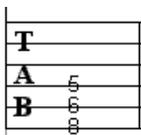
Now all you have to do is flat the 3rd, which just means we'll drop the note down one fret:

Fig. 11: Flat The 3rd



Playing these 3 notes simultaneously will produce a C Minor chord. For fingering purposes in the picture below I've taken the 5th step note and moved it to the 4th string instead of the 5th.]

Fig. 12: The Cm Triad

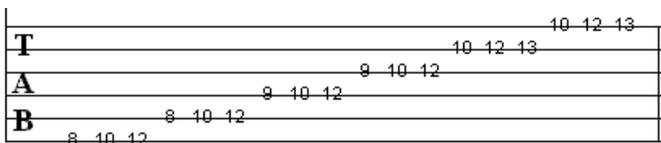


8. Chord Families

Knowing killer chords is one thing, but knowing *where* to use them is the trick. That's why we're going to spend a little time in this lesson learning about chord families. Most people might not realize it, but songs and scales have their own built in chord families. By using the notes from the major scale we can make up 7 different chords. These chords made from the scale will work perfectly with the scale. Each chord constructed from a scale plays a different role and knowing how they interact with each other will make you a better player and songwriter.

For example, for a song in the key of C, we can use the C major scale to determine what chords will work (and how) in the song. We can decode the chord system of a scale by building triads. Remember, triads are simply 3 notes that make up a chord ("tri" means 3, like in tricycle). The actual process of determining the chords is easy. All we have to do build them is to take every other note of a scale until we have three. The key signature can be any note, but for our example we'll use the key of C. Since we're in the key of C, we'll use the C major scale. In figure 1 you'll see the C major scale tabbed out in it's extended form (were we repeat the notes at a higher pitch).

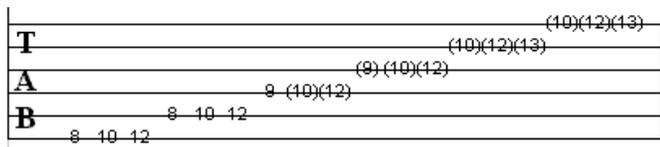
The Extended Major Scale



The major scale is a diatonic scale which just means it has 7 scale steps. Therefore, in the 1st

position of the scale all notes past the first 7 are just repeat notes. You can see them in the picture below in parenthesis.

Repeated Notes



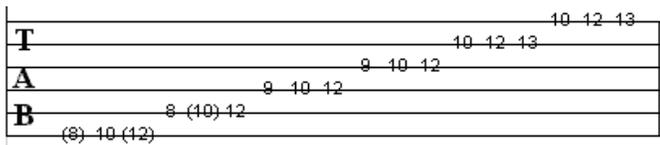
Now if we have our key signature of C and the notes that we can play with the C major scale, how do we know what chords we can use? Keep reading!

Built In Chords

We can build a triad off of each scale step for a total of 7 chords. Start with the first note of the scale step and take out every other note until you have three notes to form a triad as in the picture below.

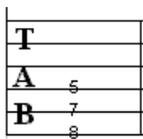
Constructing The 1st Triad

Constructing The 1st Triad



This is the triad we end up with:

The 1st Triad



Note: To show the triads in a form that you can play them in we have to often times move a note to the next string as in this case.

Constructing The 2nd Triad

1st Triad Diagram: Treble clef. T: 10-12-13. A: 9-10-12. B: 8-(10)-12.

The 2nd Triad

2nd Triad Diagram: Treble clef. T: empty. A: 7. B: 8-10.

Constructing The 3rd Triad

3rd Triad Diagram: Treble clef. T: 10-12-13. A: 9-10-12. B: 8-(10)-12.

3rd Triad Diagram: Treble clef. T: empty. A: 9. B: 10-12.

Constructing The 4th Triad

4th Triad Diagram: Treble clef. T: 10-12-13. A: 9-(10)-12. B: 8-10-12.

4th Triad Diagram: Treble clef. T: empty. A: 5. B: 7-8.

Constructing The 5th Triad

5th Triad Diagram: Treble clef. T: 10-12-13. A: 9-10-12. B: 8-(10)-12.

T	
A	7
B	9
	10

Constructing The 6th Triad

T				10	12	13
A				10	12	13
B			8	(9)	10	12
		8	10	(12)		
	8	10	12			

T	
A	8
B	10
	12

Constructing the 7th Triad

T					10	12	13
A					8	(10)	12
B				(9)	10	(12)	
		8	10	12			
	8	10	12				

T	6
A	7
B	9

After we build all 7 triads, we know 7 chords that we can use in the key signature with no problems. Below are the 7 triads that we built (the 8th triad is the 1st triad repeating).

T						6	8	
A				5	7	9	7	9
B	5	7	9	7	9	10	9	10
	7	8	10	8	10	12		
	8	10	12					

The names of the chords that these triads form are named: **1.)** C Major **2.)** D minor **3.)** E minor **4.)** F Major **5.)** G Major **6.)** A minor **7.)** B diminished

9. Roman Numeral System

When we talk about these chords and how they relate to them we DO number them, but we use Roman numerals instead of regular numbers. "Why?" you ask. It's because we can

denote chords major or minor by using upper case and lower case Roman numerals.

- Upper Case Numerals = Major Chord
- Lower Case Numerals = Minor Chord

If we number our 7 chords in a major key using Roman numerals it will look like this:

1. I
2. ii
3. iii
4. IV
5. V
6. vi
7. vii^o

We have 3 major chords: I, IV, V We have 3 minor chords: ii, iii, iv We have 1 diminished chord: vii^o (that funny little circle added is our sign for diminished). The Roman numeral system comes in handy when communicating chord progressions. For example:

- I, iii, V
- I, IV, V
- I, vi, IV

It's all relative to the key of the song. If we take the three chord progressions above and translate them to the key of C we would end up with:

- C, Em, G
- C, F, G
- C, Am, F

10. Chord Leading

Chords have a mind of their own in the context of a song. In any given key, certain chords are much better at following the previous chord than others. The harmonic properties of chord progressions lead our ears by a leash. For example a song WANTS to end on the I chord. The song will feel incomplete or have a sense of 'hanging' if a song ends on any other chord.

That's our ears telling us we want resolution. See, while your mind not understand all the theory behind it, your ears certainly do. Here are some ground rules of what chords want to do:

- The I chord can lead to any chord. That's the privilege of being the I chord, because it's the same as the key (song in C = I is C).
- The ii chord leads to IV, V, vi.
- The iii chord leads to the ii, IV, vi
- The IV chord leads to the I, iii, V, vii
- The V chord leads to the I
- The vi chord leads to the ii, IV, V, I
- The vii chord leads to the I, iii

In Summary:

- A chord may be built upon any note of a musical scale, therefore a seven-note scale allows seven basic chords, each degree of the scale becoming the “root” or “tonic” of its own chord.
- A chord built upon the note A is an A chord: however, since any progression may be played in any key, the fundamentals of harmony are best grasped by numbering the chords according to the step of the scale they are built upon, upwards from the key-note. The structural meaning of a harmony depends exclusively upon the degree of the scale.
- Any major scale gives three major triads that together include, and so can harmonize, every note of that scale. They are based on the first, fourth, and fifth scale degrees (the tonic, sub dominant and dominant).
- The same scale also provides three relative minor chords, one related to each of the three major chords. These are based upon the sixth, second and third degrees and stand in the same relationship to one another as do the three majors.
- Apart from these six common chords there will be one step of the scale that gives a diminished chord.

11. Diminished And Augmented Chords

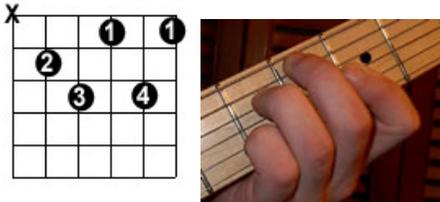
The diminished chord is an interesting chord. It is called the leading note because the seventh note of any scale naturally leads back to the root note or tonic. The diminished chord has a flattened third and a flattened fifth. Diminished 7th chords are interesting chords because each note in the diminished 7th chord is 3 semi-tones apart. Therefore B[°]7 would be B D F Ab.

What does this mean? Well, without going too deeply into the theory (why stop now I hear you say), technically every note in a diminished 7th can be the tonic because they are equal distances apart. This means that B[°]7=D[°]7=F[°]7=Ab[°]7. The same goes for Bb[°]7 and A[°]7, which have the notes Bb C# E G and A C Eb F# respectively. So in reality, you only need to know three diminished 7th chords to play all 12!

A diminished 7th chord is comprised of a diminished triad (is a triad consisting of two minor

thirds above the root) plus a double flattens 7th (same note as the 6th). It's primary use is to lead to the tonic, or root note of the song. In most sheet music books, Cdim or C[°] denotes a diminished seventh chord with root C.

Some modern jazz books and some music theory literature use Cdim or C[°] to denotes diminished chord, while Cdim7 or C[°]7 denotes a diminished seventh chord. Here's one of my favorite ways to play a diminished chord as it's root is conveniently located on the 5th string:



Fret	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Chord	B [°]	C [°]	C [°] /D ^b	D [°]	D [°] /E ^b	E [°]	F [°]	F [°] /G ^b	G [°]	G [°] /A ^b	A [°]	A [°] /B ^b

Diminished chords are mainly used as a passing chord as it leads nicely back to I, however ending a song with vii[°]-I doesn't sound as strong a V-I: Which sounds stronger?

- B[°], C
- G, C

Try the progression vii[°]7-I-V-I. This progressions will help you to compare between the two:

- B[°], C, G, C

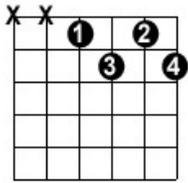
vii[°]7 also works well moving into the vi chord. Try vii[°]7-vi-V-I:

- B[°], Am, G, C

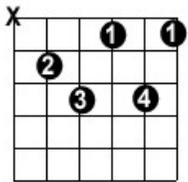
I personally like to sometimes use diminished chords to lead to a chord a half step higher. For example, try this progression:

- B[°], C, C[°], Dm, F, G, C

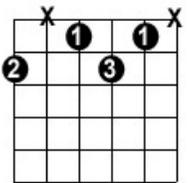
Here are a few more ways to play a diminished 7th chord.



Fret	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Chord	C ○	C#/Db ○	D ○	D#/Eb ○	E ○	F ○	F#/Gb ○	G ○	G#/Ab ○	A ○	A#/Bb ○	B ○



Fret	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Chord	B ○	C ○	C#/Db ○	D ○	D#/Eb ○	E ○	F ○	F#/Gb ○	G ○	G#/Ab ○	A ○	A#/Bb ○

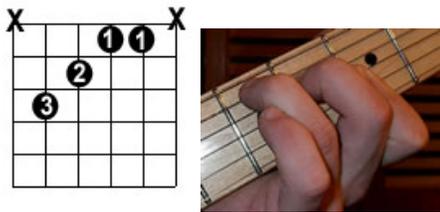


Fret	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Chord	F#/Gb ○	G ○	G#/Ab ○	A ○	A#/Bb ○	B ○	C ○	C#/Db ○	D ○	D#/Eb ○	E ^o	F ^o

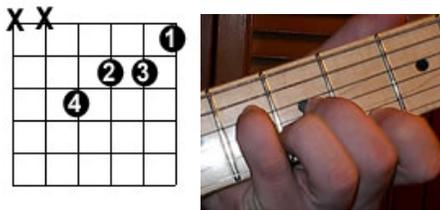
The Augmented Chord

This chord is kind of like the opposite of the diminished chord. Instead of being constructed of only minor 3rds, it is constructed of only major 3rds. It's usually labeled with a plus sign (+) The augmented triad differs from the other kinds of triad (the major triad, the minor triad, and the diminished triad) in that it does not naturally arise in the major scale. Augmented chords are usually used as a substitution for the dominant chord (V+).

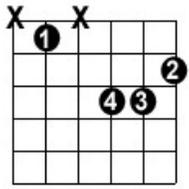
One of the most memorable uses of an augmented chord is the song "Oh! Darling" by The Beatles. The song's first chord is V+. Here are some of the ways to play augmented chords:



Fret	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Chord	C+	C#/Db+	D+	D#/Eb+	E+	F+	F#/Gb+	G+	G#/Ab+	A+	A#/Bb+	B+



Fret	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Chord	A+	A#/Bb+	B+	C+	C#/Db+	D+	D#/Eb+	E+	F+	F#/Gb+	G+	G#/Ab+

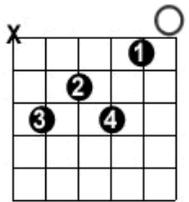


Fret	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Chord	A#/Bb+	B+	C+	C#/Db+	D+	D#/Eb+	E+	F+	F#/Gb+	G+	G#/Ab+	A+

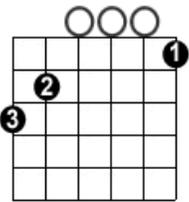
12. The Dominant 7th Chord

There are 5 dominant 7th shapes in the open position. They are C7, A7, G7, E7, and D7. All other dominant 7th chords must be played with a barred version of one of these chords.

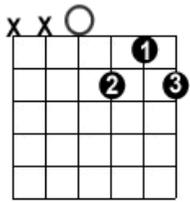
C7



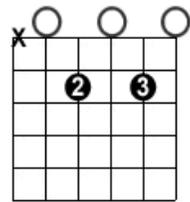
G7



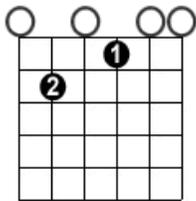
D7



A7



E7



Dominant 7th chords are called "dominant" because they are a common substitution for the dominant chord in a song. The dominant chord being the 5th of the tonic or V.

A dominant 7th chord creates a little tension and they sound like they want to resolve to the tonic chord creating a **V-I** progression.

13. Suspended Chords

A suspended chord is a chord that creates a subtle harmonic tension by adding an extra note that sounds like it wants to resolve back to the original chord. You can hear their use in most types of music. Usually this extra note replaces the 3rd.

There are two types of suspended chords:

Suspended 2nd

The suspended 2nd is often labeled as "sus2". The extra note in this chords is the 2nd (2nd step of the major scale).

Suspended 4th

The suspended 4th is labeled as “sus4” (or sometimes just “sus”). The extra note (you guessed it) is the 4th.

A suspended chord creates a little tension that makes it sound like it wants to resolve back to the regular chord? As an example, a Esus chord resolves back to E. As a general rule you should always please the ear by resolving the suspended chord back to the original chord.

"Suspended Chords" Tab

Dsus2 **D** **Dsus4** **D**

Gtr 1

T	0	2	3	2
A	3	3	3	3
B	2	2	2	2
B	0	0	0	0

Csus2 **C** **Csus4** **C**

T	0	0	0	0
A	1	1	1	1
B	0	0	0	0
B	3	3	3	3

Esus2 **E** **Esus4** **E**

T	2	0	0	0
A	1	1	2	1
B	2	2	2	2
B	2	2	0	0

Fsus2 **F** **Fsus4** **F**

T	3	1	1	1
A	1	1	1	1
B	2	2	3	2
B	3	3	3	3

Gsus2 **G** **Gsus4** **G**

T	3	3	3	3
A	0	0	1	0
B	2	0	0	0
B	0	2	0	2
B	3	3	3	3

21	Asus2	A	Asus4	A
T	0	0	0	0
A	2	2	2	2
B	0	0	0	0
25	Bsus2	B	Bsus4	B
T	2	2	2	2
A	4	4	4	4
B	2	2	2	2

14. Major 7th Chords

Where major and minor triads have 3 different notes, 7th chords have 4. The major seventh chord refers to where the “seventh” note is a major seventh above the root. This is also known as the *major/major seventh chord*, and it can be written as maj7, M7.

Major 7th chords are different than dominant 7th chords (whose 7th is flattened).

"Major 7th Chords" Tab

1 Cmaj7 C

Gtr I

T	0	0
A	0	1
B	2	2
B	3	3

4 Amaj7 A

T	0	0
A	2	2
A	1	2
B	2	2
B	0	0

7 Gmaj7 G

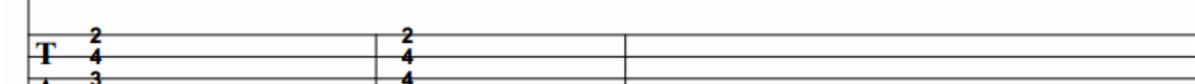
T	2	3
A	0	0
A	0	0
B	2	2
B	3	3

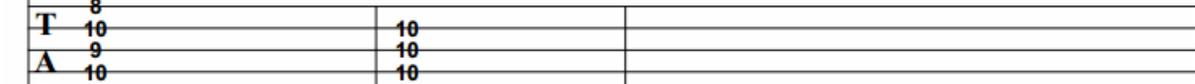
10 Emaj7 E

T	0	0
A	1	1
A	1	2
B	2	2
B	0	0

13 Dmaj7 D

T	2	2
A	2	3
A	2	2
B	0	0

16		Bmaj7	B
			
T	2	2	
A	4	4	
A	3	4	
B	4	4	
B	2	2	

19		Fmaj7	F
			
T	8	10	
A	10	10	
A	9	10	
B	10	10	
B	8	8	

15. B.B. Butterfly

No music needed. Just enjoy the video where we'll discuss different ways to add vibrato.

16. Playing Blues: Key Of A

In this lesson we'll become familiar with the scale patterns you can use for a blues song in the key of A

"Blues Scale Patterns In The Key Of A"

Figure 1

Figure 1 shows a musical staff in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of four quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, and C5. Below the staff, the text "Gtr I" is written. The bass line consists of two measures, each containing a triplet of notes: 3, 5, 3 in the first measure and 5 in the second measure.

Figure 2

Figure 2 shows a musical staff in treble clef. The melody consists of four quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, and C5, followed by a half rest. The bass line consists of two measures: the first measure contains a triplet of notes 5, 7, 5, and the second measure contains a triplet of notes 7, 5, 7.

Figure 3

Figure 3 shows a musical staff in treble clef. The melody consists of four quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, and C5, followed by a half rest. The bass line consists of two measures: the first measure contains a triplet of notes 9, 8, 10, and the second measure contains a triplet of notes 8, 10, 9.

Figure 4

Figure 4 shows a musical staff in treble clef. The melody consists of eight eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, and G5, followed by a half rest. The bass line consists of two measures: the first measure contains a triplet of notes 3, 5, 3, followed by a slur over notes 5, 7, 5, 7, 5; the second measure contains a slur over notes 7, 9, 8, 10, 8, 10. Slurs are also present over the triplets in both measures.

Figure 5

Figure 5 shows a musical staff in treble clef. The melody consists of eight eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, and G5, followed by a half rest. The bass line consists of two measures: the first measure contains a triplet of notes 5, 8, 5, followed by a slur over notes 7, 5, 7, 5, 7; the second measure contains a slur over notes 5, 8, 5, 8.

17. Finding The Key

By using your ears and knowing a few key things, you can quickly determine what the key signature of a blues song is. In this video I'll show you how to do it.

"Finding The Key" Tab

Follow along with the video...

A Fig. 1: 12 possible keys

1
Gtr 1

T
A
B

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

B Fig. 2: Finding D

4

T 5
A 2
B 0

10

C Fig. 3: Apply correct lead

7

T 13 15
A 10 12 14 13 15
B 8 10 10 12 10 12 12 14

D Fig. 4: Works for Dm too

10

T 1
A 3
B 0

10

E Fig. 5: Turnaround intro

13

T 3 0 3 2 0 2 1 0
A 2 2 2
B 0 1 2 0

- Most of the time a song will begin and end with the chord that is the song’s key signature.
- Another way to look at it is that the chord used most in a song is the same as the song’s key signature.
- The best way to develop skills in identifying key signatures is by listening to songs and trying to identify their key signature by ear. Pick up your guitar and try to identify the roots of the chords being played in the song. Use your low E string to find these root notes. With a little practice you’ll easily be able to identify a song’s key signature.
- To play solos over a song you first need to identify it’s key signature, then you will be able to pick the appropriate scales to solo with.

18. Returning To The Root

A good way to drive your licks home is to fall back to the root note.

"Returning To The Root" Tab

Follow along with the video!

A Fig. 1: Blues Lead Pattern

F Fig. 6: Intermediate root

15

T

A

B 5 7 5 (7) 5 7

G Fig. 7: Albert King root

18

T

A 7 9 8 (10) 8 10

B

19. Call And Response

Here's a fun exercise that will reveal how to send calls and give responses. Does this sound like speech? It's very similar.

"Call And Response" Tab

Follow along with the video:

A Fig. 1: A call and response

B Fig. 2: Rolling call

C Fig. 3: A proper response

D Fig. 4: Call and response

E Fig. 5: No "right" response

F Fig. 6: Challenging call

16

T 10 8 10 8 10 12 8 10 10 8 10 8

A

B

sl. P P P

G Fig. 7: The Response

19

T 5 5 8 5 5 10 5 5 8 5 5 8 5 7 5 7

A

B

sl. P P P P P P

20. Bluesy Double Stops

Would you like to learn a cool trick that you can implement into your blues guitar playing that will liven up your performance? Use these double stops to spice up a 12 bar blues progression.

"Bluesy Double Stops" Tab

Play along with the video:

G

Gtr I

T 3-5 5-3

A 3-5 5-3

B 3 3 sl. sl.

C

T 3-5 5-3

A 3-5 5-3

B 3 3 sl. sl.

G D

T 3-5 5-3

A 3-5 5-3

B 3 3 sl. sl.

T 5-7 7-5

A 5-7 7-5

B 5 5 sl. sl.

C G

T 3-5 5-3

A 3-5 5-3

B 3 3

T 3-5 5-3

A 3-5 5-3

B 3 3 sl. sl.

T 3-5 5-3

A 3-5 5-3

B 3 3 sl. sl.

21. Better Bends

Bends are a critical element of blues guitar soloing. Use these examples as a way to help improve your bends.

"Better Bends" Tab

A Fig. 1: Slow bend /vibrato

Gtr 1

Full

T 7

A

B

B Fig. 2: Release bend/slide

Full

Full

T 7 (7) (7)

A

B

sl.

C Fig. 3: Adding that twang

Full

Full

T 7 8 8

A

B

sl.

D Fig. 4: Unison bend

Full

Full

T 8 5 5

A

B

E Fig. 5: Disharmonic bend

Full

Full

T 10 8 8

A

B

F Fig. 6: Gradual release

11

T
A 7 7 7 7 7 7 7
B

G Fig. 7: Slow rising pitch

13

T 8 8 8 8
A
B

22. Fake It Until You Make It

Learn how to quickly adapt to any blues jam situation in this lesson. You don't have to be an expert to hang with the big fish.

"Fake It" Tab

A Fig. 1: The trill

1

Gtr I
tr

T

A 5 (7) 5 (7)

B 7 7

B Fig. 2: Easy slide

4

T 8 8

A 7-9 7-9 7-9 7-9

B

sl. sl. sl. sl.

C Fig. 3: On the I chord

7

T

A

B 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 5

H H H

D Fig. 4: On the IV chord

0

T

A

B 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 5

H H H

E Fig. 5: On the V chord

3

T

A

B 5 3 5-7 5 3 5-7

sl. sl.

F Fig. 6: Basic bends

G Fig. 7: Getting fancy

23. Technique Exercises 1 (60 bpm)

One of the best ways to improve your playing is to provide yourself with a regular finger workout. The following exercises are a great way to do this. Practice along with the video!

Fig. 1: Simple Alternate Picking Exercise

Fig. 2: Alternate Picking Variation

Fig. 3: One, Two, Four

Fig. 4: Pentatonic Scale

Fig. 4: Pentatonic Scale

The diagram shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The scale is written in eighth notes. Below the staff are three guitar strings labeled T (Treble), A (A), and B (Bass). The fret numbers for each string are: T: 5, 8, 5, 8, 8, 5, 8, 5; A: 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7; B: 5, 8, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7.

Fig. 5: Up The Strings

Fig. 5: Up The Strings

The diagram shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are written in eighth notes, moving up the strings. Below the staff are three guitar strings labeled T (Treble), A (A), and B (Bass). The fret numbers for each string are: T: 5, 8, 5, 8, 8, 5, 8, 5; A: 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7; B: 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6.

Fig. 6: Down The Strings

Fig. 6: Down The Strings

The diagram shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are written in eighth notes, moving down the strings. Below the staff are three guitar strings labeled T (Treble), A (A), and B (Bass). The fret numbers for each string are: T: 5, 6, 7, 5, 6, 7, 5, 6; A: 5, 6, 7, 5, 6, 7, 5, 6; B: 5, 6, 7, 5, 6, 7, 5, 6.

24. Technique Exercises 2 (60 bpm)

Fig. 1: First & Second Finger

$\text{♩} = 60$

Tr I

T											
A											
B	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1

Fig. 2: First & Third Finger

T											
A											
B	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1

Fig. 3: First & Fourth Finger

T											
A											
B	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4	1

Fig.4: Second & Third Finger

T
A
B

Fig. 5: Second & Fourth Finger

Gtr 1
T
A
B

Fig. 6: Third & Fourth Finger

T
A
B

25. Technique Exercises 3 (63 bpm)

Fig. 1

Fig. 1 shows a musical exercise in treble clef. The notation consists of two measures. The first measure contains a sequence of notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). The second measure contains: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). Below the staff is a guitar fretboard diagram with strings T (Treble), A (Acoustic), and B (Bass). The fret numbers for the first measure are: T (5), A (6), B (7), B (8), A (6), G (5). For the second measure, the fret numbers are: T (5), A (6), B (7), B (8), A (6), G (5).

Fig. 2

Fig. 2 shows a musical exercise in treble clef. The notation consists of two measures. The first measure contains: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). The second measure contains: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). Below the staff is a guitar fretboard diagram with strings T, A, and B. The fret numbers for the first measure are: T (5), A (6), B (7), B (8), A (6), G (5). For the second measure, the fret numbers are: T (5), A (6), B (7), B (8), A (6), G (5).

Fig. 3

Fig. 3 shows a musical exercise in treble clef. The notation consists of three measures. The first measure contains: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). The second measure contains: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). The third measure contains: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). Below the staff is a guitar fretboard diagram with strings T, A, and B. The fret numbers for the first measure are: T (5), A (6), B (7), B (8), A (6), G (5). For the second measure, the fret numbers are: T (5), A (6), B (7), B (8), A (6), G (5). For the third measure, the fret numbers are: T (7), A (5), B (7), A (5), G (7), F (5), E (8), D (5).

Fig. 4

Fig. 4 is a guitar exercise consisting of three measures. The first measure contains notes: G4 (1), A4 (2), B4 (3), C5 (4), B4 (2), A4 (3), G4 (4), F4 (5). The second measure contains notes: E4 (3), F4 (4), G4 (5), A4 (6), G4 (4), F4 (5), E4 (6), D4 (7). The third measure contains notes: C4 (5), D4 (6), E4 (7), F4 (8), E4 (6), D4 (7), C4 (8), B3 (9). The tablature staff below the staff shows the corresponding fret numbers: 1 2 3 4 2 3 4 5 | 3 4 5 6 4 5 6 7 | 5 6 7 8 6 7 8 9.

Fig. 5

Fig. 5 is a guitar exercise consisting of three measures. The first measure contains notes: G4 (9), F4 (8), E4 (7), D4 (6), E4 (8), F4 (7), G4 (6), F4 (5). The second measure contains notes: D4 (7), E4 (6), F4 (5), G4 (4), F4 (6), E4 (5), D4 (4), C4 (3). The third measure contains notes: G4 (5), F4 (4), E4 (3), D4 (2), E4 (4), F4 (3), G4 (2), F4 (1). The tablature staff below the staff shows the corresponding fret numbers: 9 8 7 6 8 7 6 5 | 7 6 5 4 6 5 4 3 | 5 4 3 2 4 3 2 1.

Fig. 6

Fig. 6 is a guitar exercise consisting of three measures. The first measure contains notes: G4 (5), A4 (4), B4 (7), A4 (6), B4 (8), A4 (7), G4 (6), F4 (5). The second measure contains notes: G4 (9), A4 (8), B4 (7), C5 (10), B4 (9), A4 (8), G4 (11), F4 (10). The third measure contains notes: G4 (9), A4 (12), B4 (11), C5 (10), D5 (13), C5 (12), B4 (11), A4 (14). The tablature staff below the staff shows the corresponding fret numbers: 5 4 7 6 5 8 7 6 | 9 8 7 10 9 8 11 10 | 9 12 11 10 13 12 11 14.

26. Technique Exercises 4 (63 bpm)

Fig. 1

♩ = 63

Otr I

T		
A		
B	5 4 7 5 5 4 7 5	5 4 7 5 5 4 7 5

Fig. 2

T		
A		
B	4 7 5 4 4 7 5 4	4 7 5 4 4 7 5 4

Fig. 3

T		
A		
B	7 6 4 7 7 6 4 7	7 6 4 7 7 6 4 7

Fig. 4

T		
A		
B	6 4 7 6 6 4 7 6	6 4 7 6 6 4 7 6

27. Technique Exercises 5 (66 bpm)

Fig. 1

♩ = 66

Gtr I

T									
A	4	7	6	5	4	7	6	5	
B									

Fig. 2

T									
A	7	7	5	4	7	7	5	4	
B									

Fig. 3

T									
A	7	5	4	7	7	5	4	7	
B									

Fig. 4

T																										
A																										
B	5	4	7	5	4	7	5	4	7	6	4	7	6	4	7	6	4	7	6	4	7	6	4	7	6	4

28. Technique Exercises 6 (66 bpm)

Fig. 1

$\text{♩} = 66$

Gtr I
T 4 3 2 1 5 4 3 2 | 6 5 4 3 7 6 5 4 | 8 7 6 5 9 8 7 6
A
B

Fig. 2

T 9 8 7 6 8 7 6 5 | 7 6 5 4 6 5 4 3 | 5 4 3 2 4 3 2 1
A
B

Fig. 3

T 5 6 7 8 | 5 6 7 8 | 5 6 7 8 | 5 6 7 8 | 5 6 7 8 | 5 6 7 8
A
B

Fig. 4

T 5 4 7 4 | 6 5 8 5 | 7 6 9 6 | 8 7 10 7 | 9 8 11 8 | 10 9 12 9
A
B

Fig. 5

T
A 2 4 | 2 4 | 3 5 | 3 5 | 4 6 | 4 6 | 5 7 | 5 7 | 6 8 | 6 8 | 7 9 | 7 9
B

29. Technique Exercises 7 (69 bpm)

Fig. 1

Fig. 1 shows a musical exercise in treble clef. The notation includes a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a guitar tablature staff below it. The tablature staff is labeled 'Gtr I' and contains the following fret numbers: 5, 8, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 8.

Fig. 2

Fig. 2 shows a musical exercise in treble clef. The notation includes a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a guitar tablature staff below it. The tablature staff contains the following fret numbers: 8, 5, 8, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5.

Fig. 3

Fig. 3 shows a musical exercise in treble clef. The notation includes a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a guitar tablature staff below it. The tablature staff contains the following fret numbers: 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 8, 5, 8, 5.

Fig. 4

Fig. 4 shows a musical exercise in treble clef. The notation includes a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a guitar tablature staff below it. The tablature staff contains the following fret numbers: 3, 5, 7, 3, 5, 7, 4, 5, 7, 4, 5, 7, 5, 7, 8.

Fig. 5

Fig. 5 shows a musical exercise in treble clef. The notation includes a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a guitar tablature staff below it. The tablature staff contains the following fret numbers: 1, 2, 3, 4, 2, 3, 4, 1, 3, 4, 1, 2, 4, 1, 2, 3.

30. Technique Exercises 8 (69 bpm)

Fig. 1

Fig. 1 shows a musical exercise in treble clef with a tempo marking of quarter note = 69. The exercise consists of a single melodic line on the treble staff. Below it is a guitar fretboard diagram for strings T (Treble), A (Acoustic), and B (Bass). The fretboard is divided into four measures, with fingerings indicated by numbers 4, 5, 7, 6, 4, 7, 6, 4, 7, 6, 4, 7, 6, 5, 7, 7, 5, 4, 7, 5, 4, 7, 5.

Fig. 2

Fig. 2 shows a musical exercise in treble clef. The exercise consists of a single melodic line on the treble staff. Below it is a guitar fretboard diagram for strings T, A, and B. The fretboard is divided into four measures, with fingerings indicated by numbers 1, 2, 3, 4.

Fig. 3

Fig. 3 shows a musical exercise in treble clef. The exercise consists of a single melodic line on the treble staff. Below it is a guitar fretboard diagram for strings T, A, and B. The fretboard is divided into four measures, with fingerings indicated by numbers 1, 2, 3, 4. Slurs are used to group notes across frets, and 'H' markings are placed below the fretboard to indicate specific fret positions.

Fig. 4

Fig. 4 shows a musical exercise in treble clef. The exercise consists of a single melodic line on the treble staff. Below it is a guitar fretboard diagram for strings T, A, and B. The fretboard is divided into four measures, with fingerings indicated by numbers 5, 5, 8, 8, 5, 5, 8, 8, 5, 5, 7, 7, 5, 5, 7, 7, 5, 5, 7, 7, 5, 5, 8, 8.

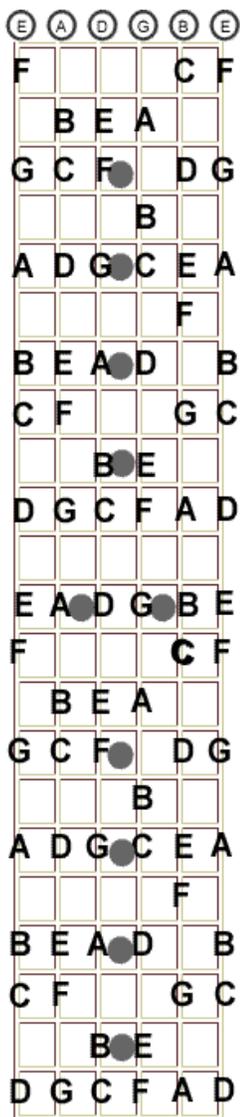
Bonus Lessons

"Notes On The Fretboard" Diagram

Here is a handy little chart that you may want to print out. It has all the primary notes on the fretboard. The sharps and flats are not shown here. Sharps and flats are easy to identify,

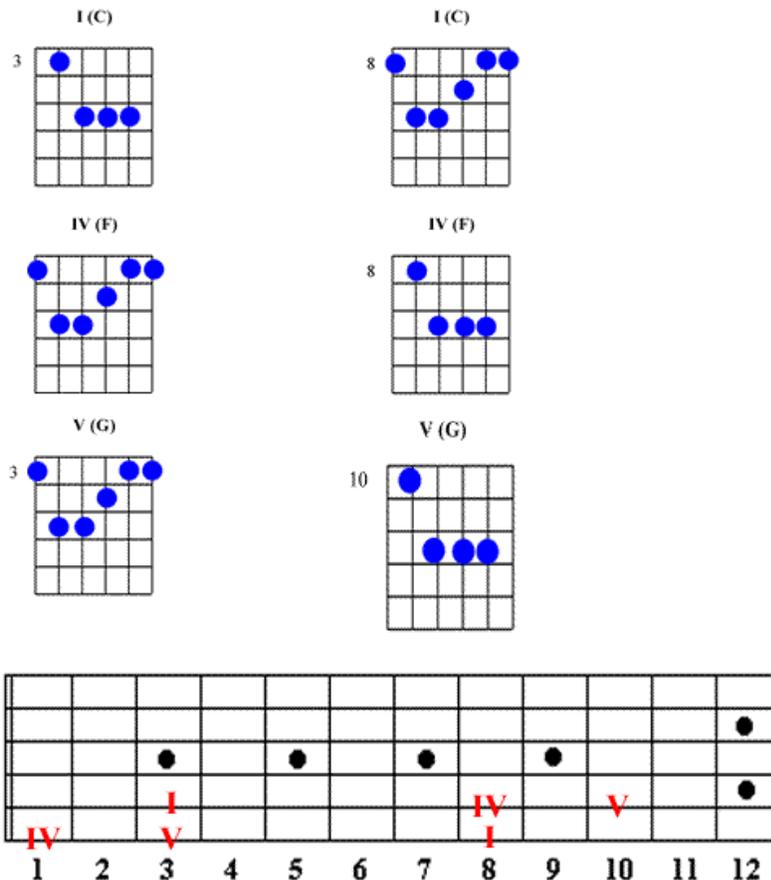
though. For example, to find an F#/Gb just find the note, between the F and G.

Note order: A,A#/Bb,B,C,C#/Db,D,D#/Eb,E,F,F#/Gb,G,G#/Ab



"I,IV, V Chord Location Guide"

This I-IV-V (1, 4, 5 chords) family is the basis for countless chord progressions in pop, rock, country, blues, and jazz. This page shows you how to locate chord families automatically in



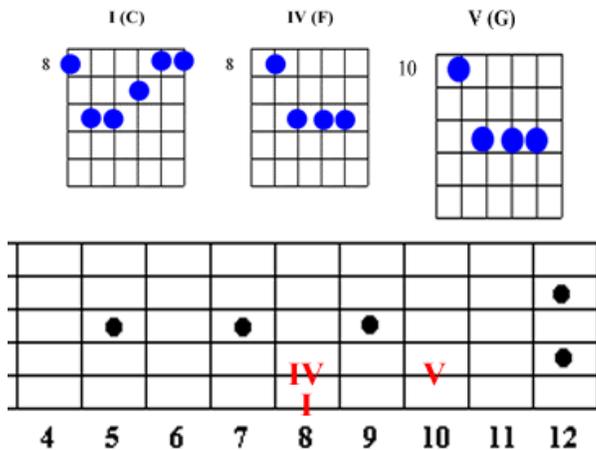
any key, all over the fretboard.

- The Roman Numerals in the chart above are the roots of the I, IV, V chord in the key of C.
- The I chord is named because its root is the keynote, In the key of C, the C chord is the I chord.
- The IV chord's root is a fourth above the keynote. For example, the F is a fourth above C, so the F chord is the IV chord in the key of C.
- The V chord's root is a fifth above the keynote. Its root is a whole step above the root of the IV chord. G is a fifth above C (and a whole step above F) so the G chord is the V chord in the key of C.
- The I, IV and V chords form a 'family.' They are used together so frequently that in order to get familiar with them, you must first locate them on the fretboard in any key.

Here's How!

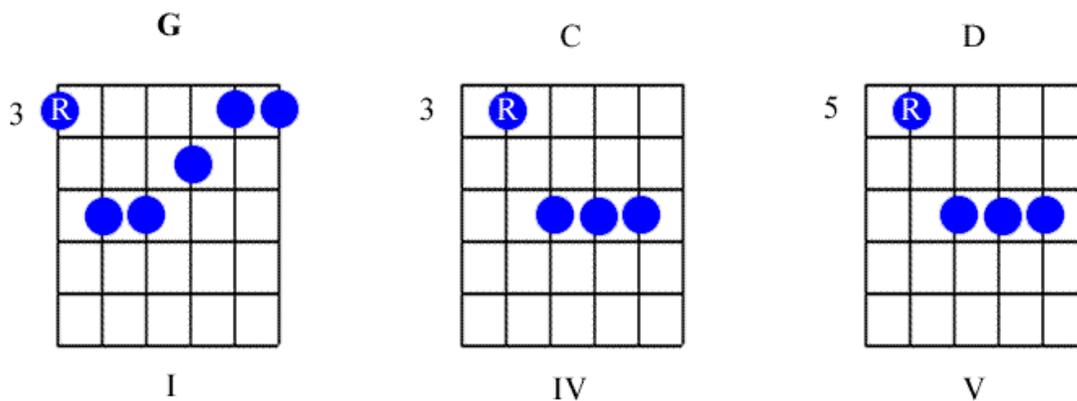
The I - IV - V root patterns on the fretboard chart are movable.

1.

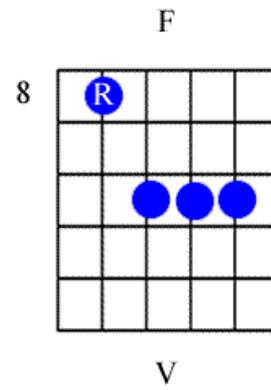
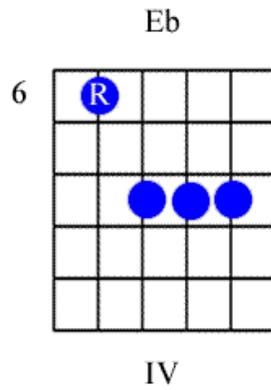
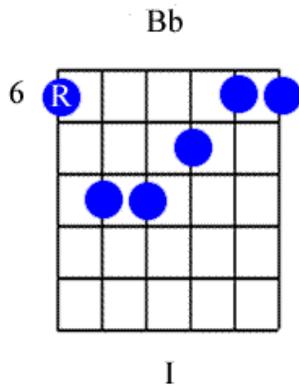


*The above C chord family has a 6th string root/I chord. *When the I chord has a 6th string root, the IV chord's root is always on the same fret/5th string. Here are some chord families that make this understandable (root notes are labeled with an "R"):

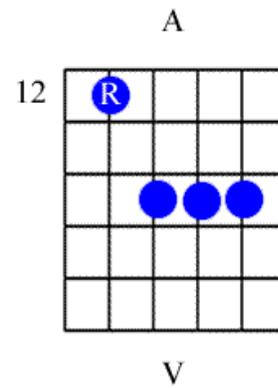
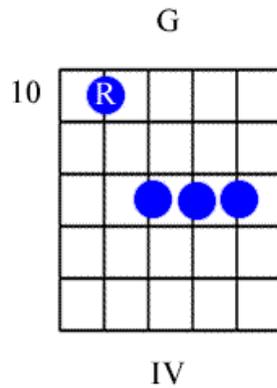
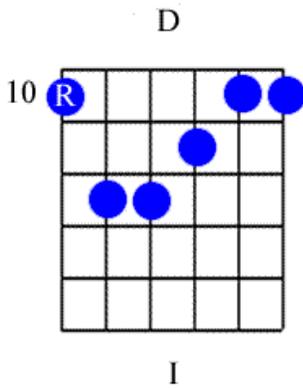
1, 4, 5 Chords Key of G



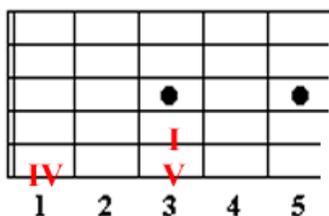
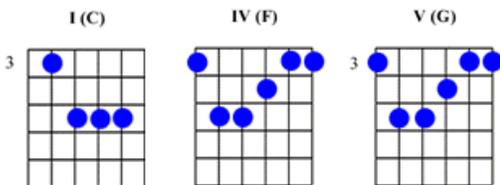
Key of Bb



Key of D



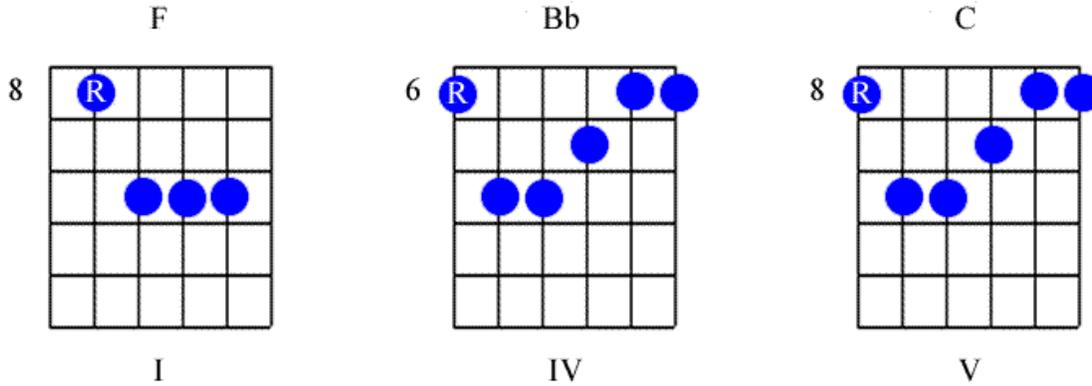
2.



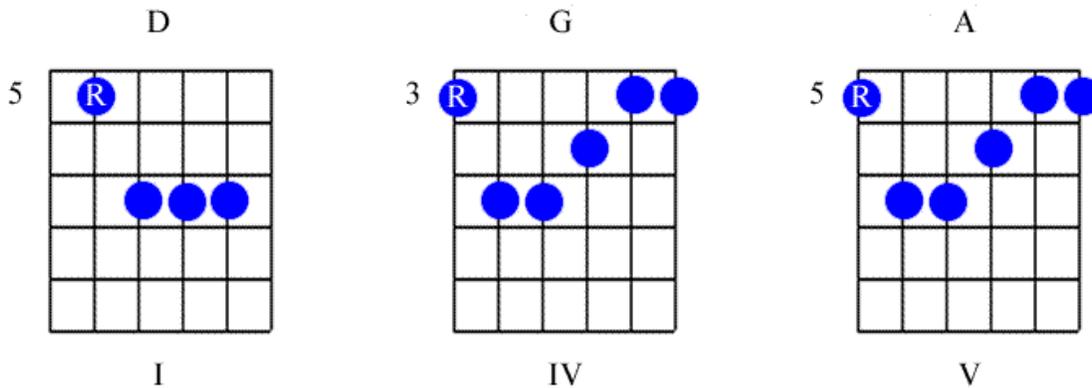
*This chord family has a 5th string root. *When the I chord has a 5th string root, the root

of the V chord is always on the same fret/6th string. The root of the IV chord is always two frets below that of the V chord, like this (root notes labeled "R"):

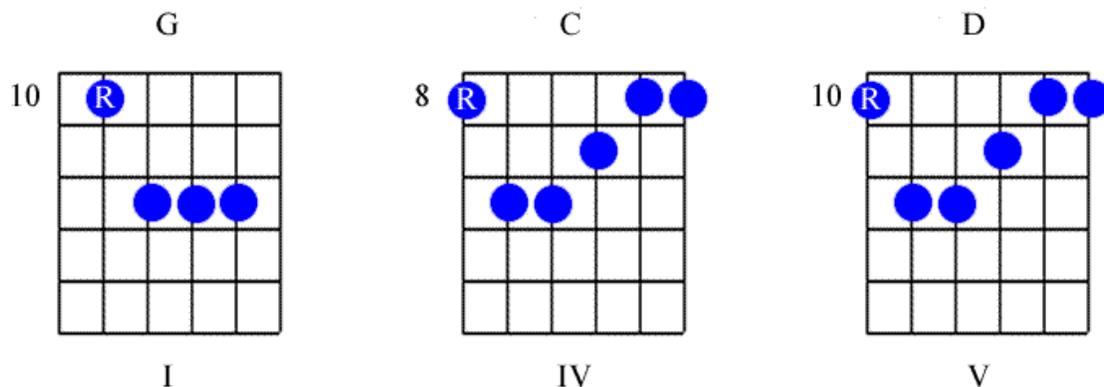
Key of F



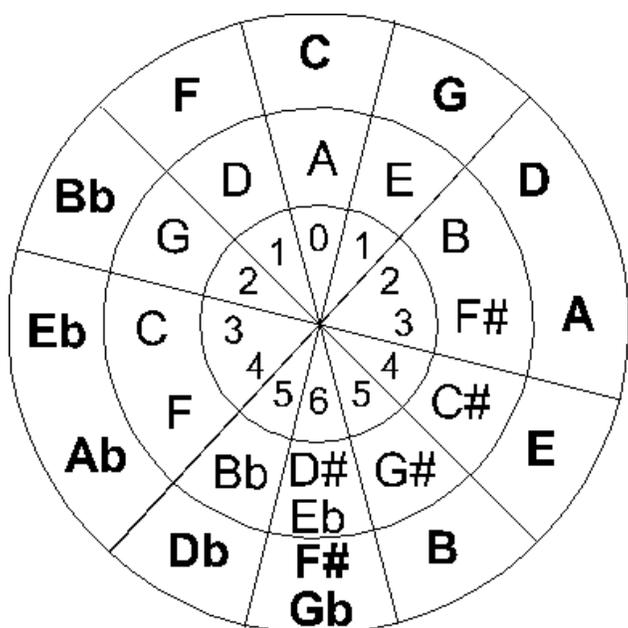
Key of D



Key of G



"The Circle Of Fifths"



So how does it work? The outer ring displays the major keys. The middle ring displays the corresponding relative minor keys and the inner ring displays the number of sharps (#) or flats (b) for these keys. For example at the 12 o'clock position, we have C major. C major's relative minor is A minor and both of these keys have zero sharps or flats. It is called the circle of fifths because it moves clockwise to the dominant (a fifth) from the tonic key (root). For example the dominant of C (I) is G (V). The circle of fifths is also known as the circle of fourths when you move in an anti-clockwise direction. For example, moving anti-clockwise from the tonic (C) to the subdominant (a fourth) will give you F (IV). Interestingly, these three chords, I, IV & V are the foundation to songwriting and are common in music, particularly 12 bar blues and rock and roll. To fully understand the circle of fifths and develop our songwriting capabilities, we need to touch on some theory. I know this doesn't sound very rock & roll, so if you're happy playing the same three chord songs

then stop here. However, if you want to know why particular chords work well together, then jump on the songwriting train to Progressionville because we're just about to leave!

The chromatic scale There are 12 notes in Western music. When you put these 12 notes in sequential order, you get the chromatic scale as illustrated by the C chromatic scale below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	(1)
C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	A#	B	(C)
C	Db	D	Eb	E	F	Gb	G	Ab	A	Bb	B	(C)
	ST											

Table: The chromatic scale

The difference between the sequential notes in the chromatic scale is a semitone (ST) or half step. For example C to C# is one semitone. Ab to A is one semitone. B to C is one semitone. For the ease of the explanation I have used the C chromatic scale, however, you can start a chromatic scale on any note, it will always have 12 notes. For the sake of convention, an ascending chromatic scale will have sharps (#) and a descending chromatic scale will have flats (b). Notice that F# and Gb are the same note. These are called enharmonic notes. They are still the same note even though they are written differently. Interestingly, there are 12 notes in the chromatic scale and there are 12 keys in music as illustrated by the circle of fifths. This leads nicely to the major scale.

The major scale The major scale consists of seven notes with the root note or tonic being repeated at an octave interval. When you put these 7 notes in sequential order, you get the major scale as illustrated by the C major scale below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8(1)
C	D	E	F	G	A	B	(C)
	T	T	ST	T	T	T	ST

Table: The major scale

The major scale has the formula, tone (T), tone, semitone, tone, tone, tone, semitone. Convention says that two semitones make a tone. Now, compare the C major scale to the C chromatic scale and look where the tones and semi-tones are. Now by using the major scale formula with the C chromatic scale, you can write out any of the 12 major scales and know how many sharps and flats that they have. Try writing out the G, E, F and Eb scales on a piece of paper. It will be a worthwhile exercise.

Key	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Number of # / b
C	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	0
G	G	A	B	C	D	E	F#	G	1#
D	D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D	2#
A	A	B	C#	D	E	F#	G#	A	3#
E	E	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#	E	4#
B	B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B	5#
F#	F#	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E# (F)	F#	6#
Gb	Gb	Ab	Bb	Cb (B)	Db	Eb	F	Gb	6b
Db	Db	Eb	F	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	Db	5b
Ab	Ab	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	G	Ab	4b
Eb	Eb	F	G	Ab	Bb	C	D	Eb	3b
Bb	Bb	C	D	Eb	F	G	A	Bb	2b
F	F	G	A	Bb	C	D	E	F	1b

Looking at Table 3, the 12 keys of music, notice how a pattern emerges? In the key of C, counting up five notes (a perfect 5th) from scale position one (C) we get G, which is our dominant. The key of G has 1# which is F#, as defined by our major scale formula. By repeating this exercise for the key of G we get D which has 2#'s, F# and C#. From D we go to A and so on. Now, counting up four notes (a perfect 4th) from the key of C we get F our subdominant, which has 1b, Bb. From F we get Bb and so on. Compare table 3 to figure 1, the circle of fifths. Clockwise from C is fifths, anti-clockwise from C is fourths. The same goes for our relative minors as well. Clockwise fifths, anti-clockwise fourths. The inner circle shows you the corresponding number of #'s or b's. Ok, this theory is all well and good I hear you say, but when do we get to the songwriting part? Lets look at the following scale table for chords using the C major scale.

Scale position	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8(1)
Scale note	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	(C)
Triad	C E G	D F A	E G B	F A C	G B D	A C E	B D F	(C F G)
Chord name	C	Dm	Em	F	G	Am	B ^o	C
Chord type	Major	Minor	Minor	Major	Major	Minor (relative minor)	Diminished seventh	Octave
Chord type	M	m	m	M	M	m	dim 7	M
Chord position	I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi	vii ^o	VIII (I)
Position name	Tonic	Super-tonic	Mediant	Sub-dominant	Dominant	Sub-mediant	Leading note	Octave

Using table 4, we can see that each note in the scale can now be changed to a chord and used for songwriting (chord name/chord type rows). By referring to table 3, you can now write songs in any key you so desire. But which chords work well with each other and why are some major and some minor?

Major and minor chords Chords are built around triads, which is the root note, a third above the root note and a fifth above root note. Major chords have a major third and a perfect fifth. Minor chords have a flattened third and a perfect fifth. In table 4, the tonic

chord (I, C major) for the key of C is major, because it has the notes C, E, & G (triad row). These notes occur naturally in the C scale. The supertonic chord (ii, D minor) in the C scale is minor as it has the notes D, F & A. Why? Because in the D major scale F would be F# as illustrated in table 3. However, we are working in the C major scale, which has F and not F#. Therefore the third is naturally flattened making it minor chord. Follow this logic for the remaining chords in the C major scale until you get to vii, the diminished chord or leading note.

The diminished chord The diminished chord is an interesting chord. It is called the leading note because the seventh note of any scale naturally leads back to the root note or tonic. The diminished chord has a flattened third and a flattened fifth as illustrated by the B diminished chord in the C major scale (table 4). B diminished (B^O) has the notes B D F. In the B major scale (table 3) we would find that notes D and F are D# and F#. However in the C scale these notes are D and F, making the chord a diminished chord. Diminished 7th chords are interesting chords because each note in the diminished 7th chord is 3 semi-tones apart. Therefore B^{O7} would be B D F Ab. What does this mean? Well, without going too deeply into the theory (why stop now I hear you say), technically every note in a diminished 7th can be the tonic because they are equal distances apart. This means that $B^{O7}=D^{O7}=F^{O7}=Ab^{O7}$. The same goes for Bb^{O7} and A^{O7} , which have the notes Bb C# E G and A C Eb F# respectively. So in reality, you only need to know three diminished 7th chords to play all 12! Ok, using table 4 lets look how these chords interact so we can start writing songs.

I, IV & V chords. As previously discussed, these are great chords and you can build a lot of songs around them. Grab your guitar and play around with chords C, F and G or any I,IV,V chords from table 3. You will soon hear some classic rock & roll progressions i.e. Wild thing or Louie Louie (Cx2, Fx2, Gx2, Fx2) and 12 bar blues progressions (Cx4, Fx2, Cx2, Gx1, Fx1, Cx1, Gx1). Let's understand why these chords work the way they do.

The Tonic chord I Meet the tonic chord, which comes from the root note of the key you are playing in. The tonic chord is a major chord and you will find that your songs will rarely end on anything but this chord. (There are always exceptions!) Now, go back and play those I, IV, V progressions, then when you want to finish them, play the tonic chord. It sounds resolved. Now try playing anything other than the tonic to finish the song. The song doesn't sound resolved does it? Even if you physically finish on chords IV or V, your musical mind will be finishing on I. Try it and see.

The Dominant chord V The dominant chord is a major chord. It is the strongest and most important chord because it leads us back to the tonic. Chords that lead back to the tonic are often described as having a dominant function and hence the name dominant. A great way of ending a phrase or a song is using the V-I progression. This is also known as a cadence. Try it on your guitar. Now try $V^7 - I$. The dominant 7th chord is always a great chord to use

when returning to the tonic as the 7th creates dissonance (tension) and your ear subconsciously wants to hear harmony.

The Subdominant chord IV The subdominant chord is also a major chord. The IV chord is one of many chords that can lead to the dominant chord and hence it is pre-dominant or subdominant. The chord progression IV-V-I is one of the strongest progressions in music. Try this on your guitar. This is a really strong way to end a phrase or a song. The chord progression IV-I is called the plagal cadence. Listen out for this one in church music as it often ends hymns. It is informally known as the “amen” cadence. Can I get an amen?

ii, iii, vi chords Using these minor chords in your songwriting will add some depth and colour to your compositions.

The supertonic chord ii ii chord is the strongest pre-dominant chord because it resolves to V very easily. One of the most common progressions using ii is the ii-V-I progression. Jazz uses this example fairly regularly. ii can move to IV or vi, although this isn't as strong as ii-V.

The submediant chord vi This chord is the relative minor for the key that your are composing in. Also called the submediant, it acts as a weak predominant. vi progresses well to IV or ii but generally doesn't follow these chords. Try the progressions I-vi-IV-V and vi-IV-V-I. Can you hear the heavens rumbling? Another good progression is I-vi-IV-ii. Are the skies getting dark? Next try the progression vi-ii. Now remember that in the supertonic chord section, ii progressed well to V then I. So try vi-ii-V-I. Has that bolt of lightning struck yet? Before we discussed the cadence V-I to end a passage or song. Compare the progression V-vi. Deceptive isn't it. Funnily enough it is called the deceptive cadence and adds some nice suspense, especially if you end a song with it.

The mediant chord iii The mediant chord not used that often in the major keys for songwriting and is found more often in the minor keys. This doesn't mean that we should avoid it completely and I find that the iii chord can add some interesting colour, especially in a bridge. iii rarely moves to V and generally leads to the chords vi, ii and IV. Some nice progressions using iii are iii-vi-ii-V, iii-ii-V and iii-IV-V. Experiment and see what you can come up with.

The diminished (leading note) chord vii^O As discussed previously, this chord is often a diminished 7th chord. It is mainly used as a passing chord as it leads nicely back to I, however ending a song with vii^O-I doesn't sound as strong a V-I. Try the progression vii^{O7}-I-V-I. vii^{O7} also works well moving into the vi chord. Try vii^{O7}-vi-V-I.

The minor scale The minor scale consists of seven notes with the root note or tonic being repeated at an octave interval and when you put these 7 notes in sequential order, you obtain the minor scale as illustrated by the A minor scale below.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8(1)
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	(A)
	T	ST	T	T	ST	T	T

Table 5. The minor scale

Writing in the minor key gives a sad or melancholy feel to a song. The minor key uses the same basic rules as the major key, however feel free to experiment by substituting chords from the relative major key.

Scale position	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8(1)
Scale note	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	(A)
Triad	A C E	B D F	C E G	D F A	E G B	F A C	G B D	A C E
Chord name	Am	B ^o	C	Dm	Em	F	G	Am
Chord type	Minor	Diminished	Major (Relative Major)	Minor	Minor	Major	Major	Minor
Chord type	m	dim	M	m	m	M	M	m
Chord position	i	ii ^o	IIIb	iv	v	VIb	VIIb	viii(i)
Position name	Tonic	Super-tonic	Mediant	Sub-dominant	Dominant	Sub-mediant	Leading note	Octave

Looking at table 6, the songwriting table for a minor scale, our tonic (i), subdominant (iv) and dominant (v) are minor. Our submediant (VIb) and leading note (VIIb) chords are major and our mediant (IIIb) is the relative major of the key we are writing in. Convention helps us to distinguish chords built on the minor key from their relative major counterparts. The “b” (i.e. IIIb) means that the chord is from the minor key. Essentially IIIb in the minor key and I in the relative major key are the same chords, however seeing “b” you will automatically know that you are playing in the minor key.

Some chord progressions to get you started in the minor key.

i-iv-v,

i-VIb-IIIb-VIb,

i-iv-IIIb-VIIb-I,

i-iv-V,

i-IV-V

Two progressions that you might know using the minor key. i-VIIb-VIb-VIIb – All along the watchtower (Bob Dylan / Jimi Hendrix) i-VIb-iv-VIIb-i-VIb-VIIb – Mr Jones (Counting Crows) One last trick to know using the minor key is the Picadilli third. This is when you end your song that is written in the minor key on the relative major chord. Compare i-iv-v-

i to i-iv-v-IIIb and see what you think.

Putting it all together.

Looking at the key of C major on the circle of fifths. C is your tonic or root (I). G (clockwise) is the dominant (V). F (anti-clockwise) is your subdominant (IV). A (minor) is the relative minor (vi), D (minor) is the supertonic (ii), E (minor) is the mediant (iii) and B is the leading note (diminished). Choose a different key, the same rules apply. An infinite number of chord progression are all here in one neat diagram.

"Building Blazing Speed"



Note: We are experiencing audio technical difficulties due to a new computer system we have installed. This problem should be fixed soon, but in the meantime, we'll still keep producing content for you to work with. This lesson has to do with building speed using tablature drills, and finally using a snippet from "Blitzkrieg" by Yngwie Malmsteen to really get your practice up to par. **This lesson is for acoustic or electric. Every file on this page can be played with virtually any instrument for a great practice routine!**

Introduction

Problem

Most guitar players think the basis of real speed is a good fret hand (generally left hand) technique. If your left hand is fast, you will be able to play fast. So, many players train mainly their left hand, and the right hand is kind of left behind. It's rare to have a complete workout for your picking hand (generally right hand) until now.

Solution

Here is a lesson for all you players who want to play real fast but don't know how! Believe me - it will work. This is a guide to the best and fastest right hand picking technique: ***ECONOMY PICKING***, the key to real speed!

What Is Economy Picking? As I have already said, economy picking is the best picking technique there is. It's fast, it looks mighty fine, and it requires very little effort (once you have mastered it of course). But to experience the comfort of economy picking, you must first understand the concept of it. To keep a long story short: economy picking is a mixture of firstly alternate picking, and secondly, sweep picking. Now the explanation of these two techniques:

1. Alternate Picking. A basic technique. Most of you players will be familiar with it (unless you're still a beginning player). Alternate picking means: constantly switching between down- and upstrokes with your pick (to make things easier: down-up-down-up-down-up-...) This technique doubles the speed you reach by only down- or upstroking.

2. Sweep Picking. This is a more advanced technique, used to play notes that are on strings next to each other (like arpeggios, see arpeggio lessons), rather than notes on the same string. You actually "sweep" your pick over the strings, as if you were strumming a chord, but you don't let the notes ring as if you were playing a chord. You play each note individually. Now that you know both techniques, you might ask the question: how is economy picking related to these techniques? To answer this question, I will use a small exercise as an example. Firstly, I will show you how this pattern would be played if you used alternate picking (like most guitar players).

d = downstroke u = upstroke

Exercise 1

D U D U D U D U D U D U D U D U D U

You can see clearly, you constantly alternate between down- and upstrokes. Now I will show you the same pattern, played with economy picking:

Exercise 2

D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D

Exercise Set 1:

T
A
B

D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D

Exercise Set 1 Cont'd.

T
A
B

U D U U D U U D U U D U U D U U D U

These are the patterns I used above. I repeat them because they are so important: before playing anything fast, use these exercises (and the exercises below) as a warmup! You should use Exercise Set 1 to train speed, and to play every note evenly and smoothly.

Exercise Set #2

Exercise Set 2

T
A
B

D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D

Exercise Set 2 Cont'd.

T
A
B

U D U U D U U D U U D U U D U U D U

Exercise Set 2 Cont'd.

T
A
B

D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D

Exercise Set 2 Cont'd.

T
A
B

U D U U D U U D U U D U U D U U D U

Exercise Set 2 Cont'd.

The first system of Exercise Set 2 Cont'd. shows a treble clef staff with a melody of eighth notes. Below it are three bass clef staves labeled T, A, and B. The T staff has a sequence of notes: 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5. The A staff has a sequence of notes: 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5. The B staff has a sequence of notes: 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5. Below the staves is a sequence of picking directions: D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D.

Exercise Set 2 Cont'd.

The second system of Exercise Set 2 Cont'd. shows a treble clef staff with a melody of eighth notes. Below it are three bass clef staves labeled T, A, and B. The T staff has a sequence of notes: 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5. The A staff has a sequence of notes: 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5. The B staff has a sequence of notes: 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5, 5, 8, 5. Below the staves is a sequence of picking directions: U D U U D U U D U U D U U D U U D U.

These exercises are based on the first exercise set, but I added left hand fingerings too. The exercises in Set 2 are therefore used to train the synchronous movement of fret and pick hand. This is very important if you want to play fast! Do these exercises every day! Note: you might have noticed that in every exercise, there are 3 notes per string. This is because economy picking is easier when playing an odd number of notes per string. When you have to play an even number of notes, use 1 (or 3, or 5, ...) hammer-ons or pull-offs, so that you have to do an odd number of picks.

Supplemental Exercise Example:

The "H" stands for Hammer-On. The "P" stands for Pull-Off.

Supplemental Exercise 1

Supplemental Exercise 1 shows a treble clef staff with a melody of eighth notes. Below it are three bass clef staves labeled T, A, and B. The T staff has a sequence of notes: 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6. The A staff has a sequence of notes: 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6. The B staff has a sequence of notes: 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6. Below the staves is a sequence of picking directions: D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D. There are Hammer-On (H) markings under the 5th fret notes on the B string in the first system.

Supplemental Exercise 1 Cont'd.

Supplemental Exercise 1 Cont'd. shows a treble clef staff with a melody of eighth notes. Below it are three bass clef staves labeled T, A, and B. The T staff has a sequence of notes: 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5. The A staff has a sequence of notes: 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5. The B staff has a sequence of notes: 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5. Below the staves is a sequence of picking directions: D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D. There are Pull-Off (P) markings under the 6th fret notes on the B string in the second system.

So, in these two exercises, there are 4 notes per string, but you do only 3 picks per string, and 1 hammer-on/pull-off.

Speed

Economy picking is the key factor of speed. But still, there are guitar players using economy who still aren't able to play fast. Why is that? Is it because of a slow left hand? Or is there still a problem with their picking technique? As I've already said, the left hand is usually more than fast enough. You can try this yourself: give your right arm a rest, and use only your left hand. Try to play a fast guitar riff (for example, a Major scale) with only your left hand. You don't have to hear the notes: just try to get the left hand fingerings right. It goes much faster than you would be able to play with both hands, doesn't it? This means, there's still a problem with the right hand picking technique.

What Part Of The Pick Is Used To Pick With

The pick is approximately 3 cm long and 2, 5 cm wide. You use the sharp pointed side to pick the strings with. I know, it's the basic of all basics, but there's more. You know that you have to pick with the sharp edge of the pick, but do you know what part of the pick actually touches the string, in order to achieve maximum speed? The trick is to touch the strings with the tip of the pick. I mean, the very tip of the pick. Only the slightest touch of the string with the pick is enough to produce a clear sound. Most players really "pluck" the strings with their picks, mostly because their right arm muscles are overstrained. If you relax, you will find this subtle string-touching much easier! Knowing this, and combining it with economy picking, allows you to play real fast! Economy is based on smooth right hand movement, but if you "pluck" your strings instead of just slightly touching them, this smooth movement is impossible. So, relax, touch your strings slightly instead of plucking them, and you will play fast in no time!

Pick Angle

When alternate picking, the pick stands straight up (seen from the surface of the guitar body). But when "sweeping" up or down, your pick should be held at a certain angle, so that you don't "pluck" the strings as I have described in the previous section. When moving down, the sharp edge of the pick should point slightly up. When moving up, the sharp edge of the pick should point slightly down. To hold your pick at an angle, use your wrist movement. Why is this? Well, if you hold your pick at the described angle while moving over the strings, you "stroke" them instead of plucking them, resulting in a much smoother movement. And like I've already said: economy picking is based on a smooth right hand movement. Note: when moving up, the sharp edge of your pick should point down. This may feel uncomfortable for your wrists at first, but after some exercising it shouldn't be a problem.