Guitarmann method

a complete guide for all levels

guitarmann.com

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Welcome

Welcome to the Guitarmann method. This book is a complete guide to learning everything you need to know to be able to play the songs you love. This method has been developed over ten years by a professional guitarist who has led worship for several years, played in hundreds of live settings and taught thousands of lessons to students just like you.

Whether you are an absolute beginner who wants to learn the first few chords, a seasoned guitarist who is "stuck in a rut," an aspiring electric guitar rock star, or a band leader who wants to know more about music principles as they relate to guitar, this comprehensive method is for you.

Every section in this book is designed as a simple, two page layout. Just open to the section you want to learn and you will see important hints on the left and easy-to-read charts on the right. In this book, you will learn:

- How to play the most **commonly used chords** in popular music
- Tips on how to correctly finger each chord
- How to **change** your **strings**
- A **simple strum pattern** that will work in thousands of songs
- How to **name every note** on the guitar without memorization
- How to play **slash chords** that **avoid bar chords**
- How chords fit together in **chord families**
- Which **chord progressions** sound best
- Why reading music is waste of time for most guitarists
- How to read **Nashville Number charts** that studio musicians use
- How to **write your own songs** using regular chords or unique chords
- How to **use a capo** to easily transpose from one key to another
- How two guitarists can play the same song with different chords
- How to **change keys** in the middle of a song
- How to **build** and **play every chord** that exists
- How to play in **DADGAD** alternate tuning
- How to use a **cut capo** to simulate an alternate tuning
- How to play **bar chords**
- How to play **complement chords** (for the **electric guitar** player)
- **Easy scales** that will "get you by" in most all situations
- How to solo all over the fret board using **5 major scale positions**
- How **modes** work with Spanish sounding songs or **songs in a minor key**
- How to **build speed** in solos and create your own solos

Middle school students, high school students, college students, business owners, professors, moms, dads and worship leaders have all used this system with 100% success. Join the countless number of guitar players out there and begin or continue your journey to play the guitar. Get started. Get better.

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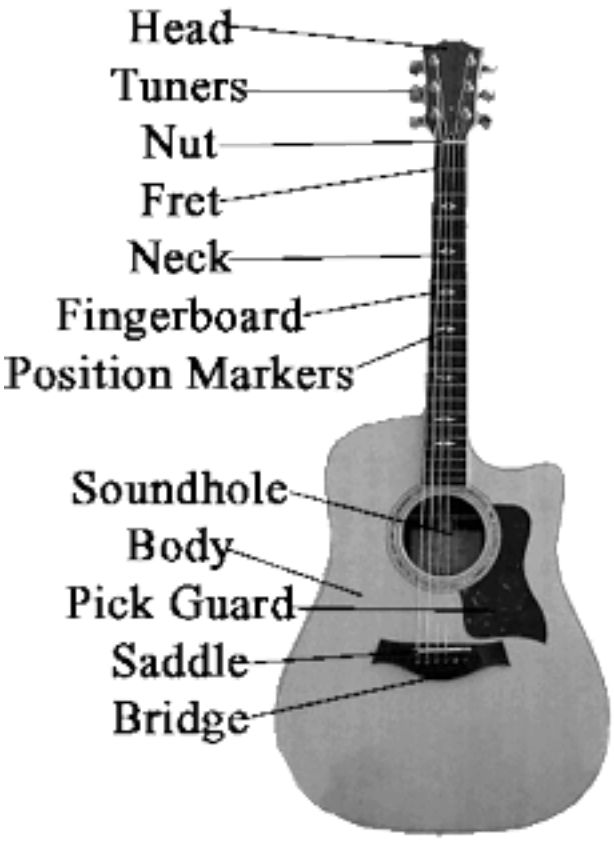
Guitar Anatomy

Before you can learn how to play the guitar, you must first understand the instrument that you are playing. The guitar dates back to the 15th and 16th centuries but has undergone some helpful improvements to make it one of the most popular instruments in modern music. The guitar we know today has several parts.

- The guitar is like a person. It has a **head**, a **neck** and a **body.**
- The **tuners** on the head tighten and loosen the strings in order to tune them (make them a certain pitch or note).
- The **nut** holds the strings in place at the top of the guitar just as the **saddle** does at the bottom of the guitar.
- On the surface of the guitar's neck is the **fret board** or **fingerboard**. The spaces on the surface are referred to as "frets." So, to "play the second fret" is to hold down one of the strings on the 2nd space on the guitar.
- The **position markers** are on the odd frets, 3, 5, 7, 9, and the 12th. The 12th fret isn't an odd fret, but it is marked for a reason that is discussed later in the book. Position markers help you quickly locate frets.
- On the body of the guitar, is the **sound hole** which projects sound. Just below the sound hole is the **pick guard**, which protects the wood of the guitar from the pick as you strum.
- The **bridge** of the guitar is the wooden piece of the guitar that houses the **saddle**, which holds the strings in place just as the nut does.

Helpful Tips for Naming the Strings

- Remember that the little string is the little number. In other words, the 1st string is the smallest string.
- The phrase, "**E**aster **B**unnies **G**o **D**ancing **A**fter **E**aster" refers to the smallest string (1st string) progressing to the biggest string (6th string).
- The little "e" represents the 1st, little string.



Standard Tuning

e---------- B---------- G---------- D---------- A---------- E----------	1 2 3 **E**aster **B**unnies **G**o 4 5 6 **D**ancing **A**fter **E**aster

Before You Play

- First, tune each string to standard tuning (e, B, G, D, A ,E) using a tuner.

- Place the curved side of the body of the guitar on your right thigh. Your right arm should come over the guitar so it can reach the strings.

- As your right arm comes over the top of the body of the guitar, it should hold and support it. The left hand should be free to move about and should not carry the weight of the guitar.

- The neck of the guitar should either be tilted slightly towards the ceiling or parallel with the ground. It should never be pointed towards the ground.

- Your **left hand** is all about fingers. *No palms*. The pad of your thumb should rest on the back of the neck and should be pointing towards the ceiling. Beware that your thumb will probably move without your realizing it. Position your fingers like you are about to run your fingers down a chalkboard or scratch somebody's back. Now, scoop them underneath the neck so that they stand tall on the strings. Your fingertips should be pressing the strings, not your finger pads. Position your finger(s) right in the middle of the fret for the best sound, and be careful that your finger is not accidentally touching another string below it. When you start learning chords, your left hand will have to squeeze as hard as it can.

- Your **right hand** should be fairly relaxed. The pick should rest on the side of your index (pointer) finger, with your thumb securing it. Just the tip of the pick should be sticking out. To hold the pick, make a fist with your thumb resting on top. Now, slide the large edge of the pick underneath the thumb with the small end pointing out the side of the thumb. The pick should have a little leeway or "give" when strumming, so don't hold on too tight. This may feel awkward, but how you hold the pick will make all the difference when you branch out from common strum patterns or start soloing. Also, you will get the warmest, fullest sound when you hold the pick the correct way.

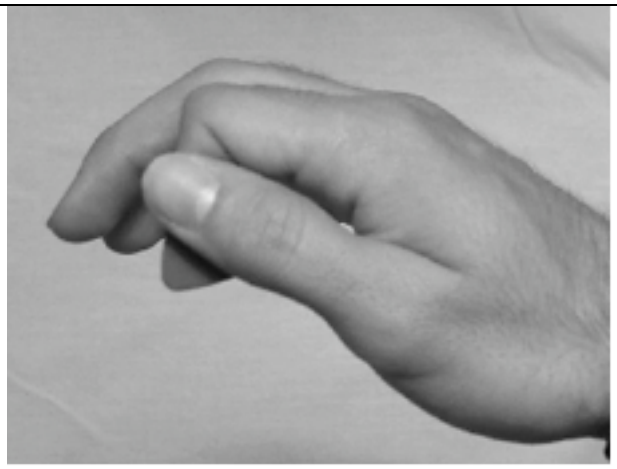
- When you strum, hinge at the wrist, not the elbow.

- It may help to put your right foot on an object on the floor that is about 6 inches off of the ground. This will help bring the guitar closer to you. If you want to use a strap, just adjust it where you feel comfortable. In fact, if you're having trouble holding the guitar, a strap will probably help.

- Pick selection is mostly about preference, but steer away from the heavy ones when playing acoustic guitar. Try medium or light gauge picks.

How to Hold Your Guitar

Left Hand Position

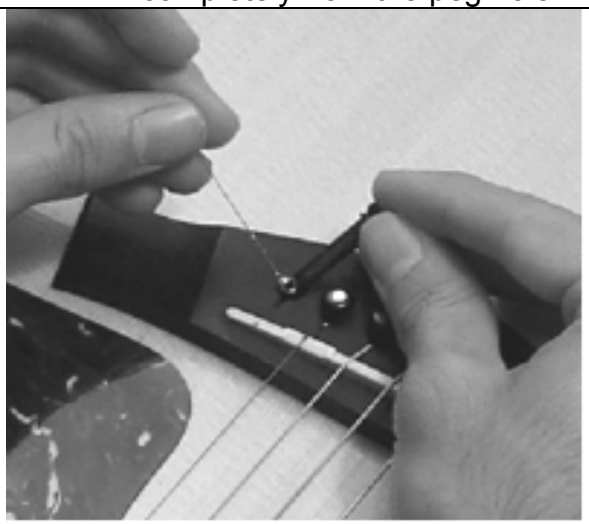


Right Hand Position

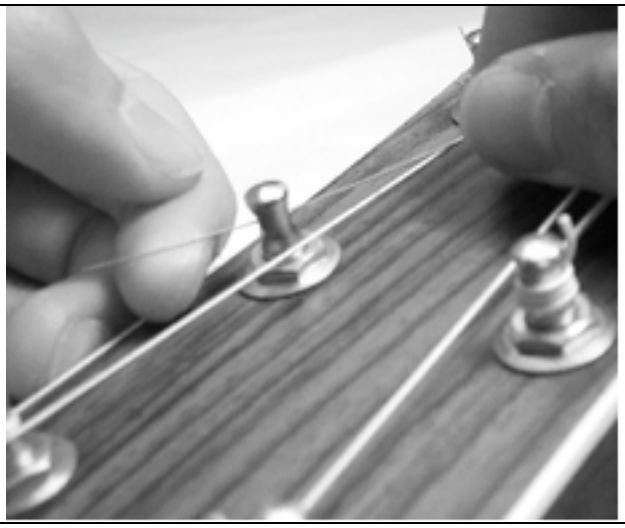
How to Re-string Your Guitar

Step 1: Unwind the tuner to loosen the string, and remove it completely from the peg hole.

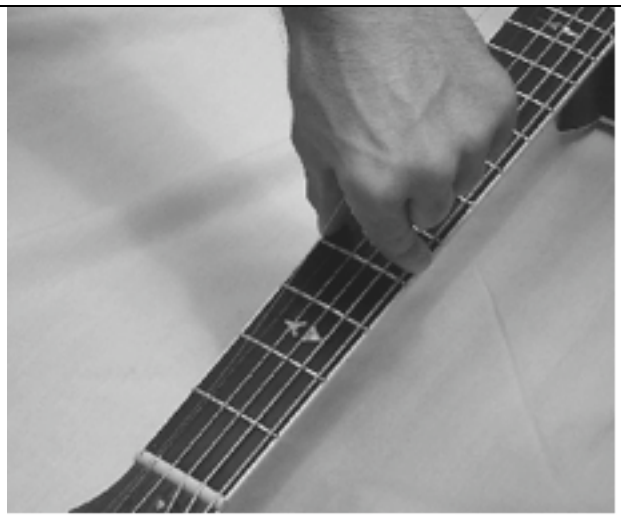
Step 2: Gently pull the pin to allow the string to come out.



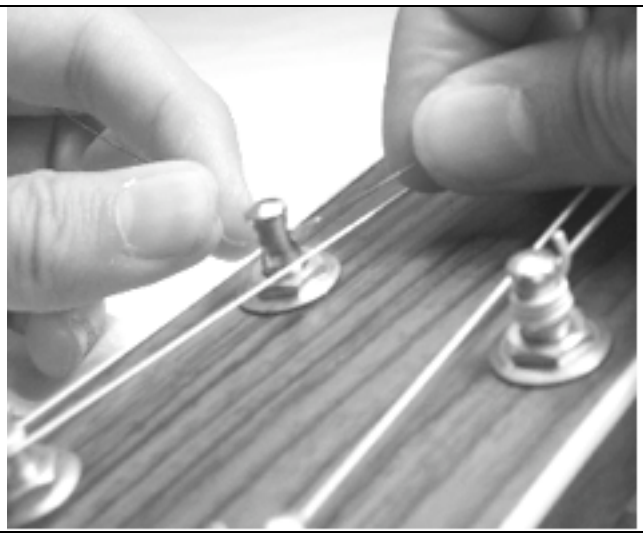
Step 3: Place the ball of the new string in the appropriate hole, and push the pin back into position to secure the string.



Step 4: Thread the new string through the hole in the tuner slot.



Step 5: Hold the string at about the 5th fret in the palm of your hand to allow enough slack to wind.



Step 6: Make a 90 degree bend in the string.

Step 7: Wind the tuning peg in the appropriate direction.

Note: Your string should wrap about 3 times around the peg.

Tips

- As you wind, keep an eye on the peg to make sure it doesn't pop out.
- You can gently stretch your strings from side to side to "break them in," but remember to retune after doing so.
- You can cut off the excess string with wire cutters.

Guitar Tablature (TAB)

Tablature is a simplified, guitar-specific way to read music. Many guitarists prefer tablature to standard notation since it is easier to learn. Tablature is basically a picture of the guitar upside down. The *lines represent the strings* and the *numbers represent the frets*.

- The top line represents the top string. The numbers represent the frets your fingers should play. (Notice there is no direction on which fingers to use). Note that this is flip-flopped from what you might expect. The top line of tablature actually represents your little string (your bottom string).

- Match the correct tablature line with the correct string, and then play the correct fret on that string. Note that 0 on a string means that the string is open, so take all of your fingers off of the string, and then pluck it.

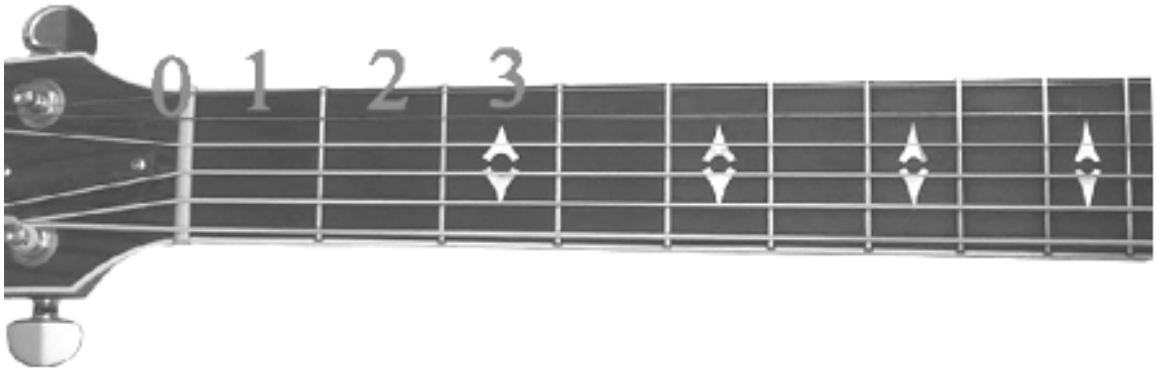
- When you have two numbers that are on top of each other, position your fingers on the correct strings and strum both (or all) strings at the same time.

- The "x" on a string means that you must mute the string as you play it. The resulting sound is a clicking sound rather than a note. To mute a string, rest your fingers on the string without pressing down.

- Remember to arch your fingers and press down very hard with the tip of your finger as you play each note.

- If you hear a buzzing sound, either move your finger more towards the middle of the fret, or try to press down a little harder. Also remember to keep your thumb pointed up, with the pad of the thumb touching the back of the neck.

- Try matching each of the frets and strings in order to play through the melody line of the familiar tune, "*Yankee Doodle*."



TAB Examples

```
e----0----1----2----3-----------------------------------3----------5----------x----------
B-------------------------0----1----2----3--------------3----------5----------x----------
G-------------------------------------------------------------------------------x----------
D-------------------------------------------------------------------------------x----------
A-------------------------------------------------------------------------------x----------
E-------------------------------------------------------------------------------x----------
```

"*Yankee Doodle*"

```
e--------0----0----2----4----0----4----2---------0----0----2----4----0----------------------------
B-----------------------------------------0----------------------------------4--------------------
G-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
D-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
A-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
E-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

```
e--------0----0----2----4----5----4----2----0----------------------------------0--------0----------
B-----------------------------------------------4----0----2---4---------------------------------
G-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
D-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
A-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
E-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

Guitar Tablature (TAB)

continued

- Before you try these next two songs, go back to "Yankee Doodle" and try to play it using a **hand position**. A hand position means that only one finger is allowed to play a certain fret.

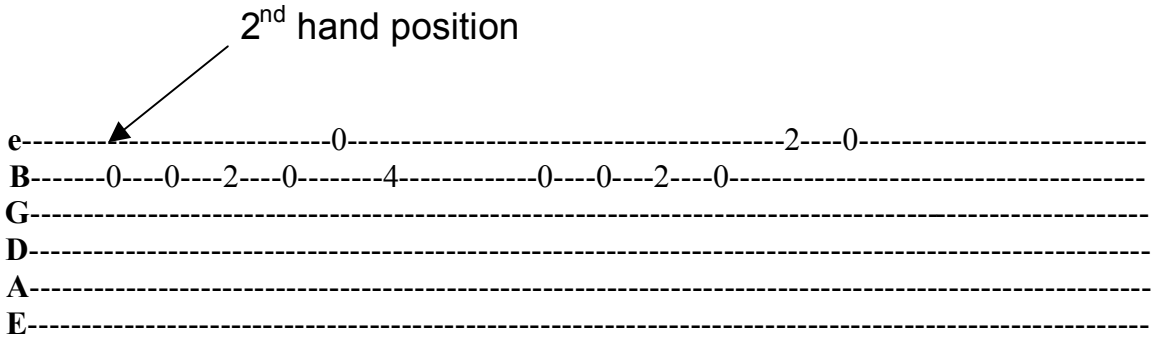
- For "*Yankee Doodle*" you will only use the "second hand position." This means that your index finger is in charge of playing all notes on the 2nd fret. Your middle finger plays all notes on the 3rd fret. Your ring finger plays all notes on the 4th, and your pinky gets the 5th fret.

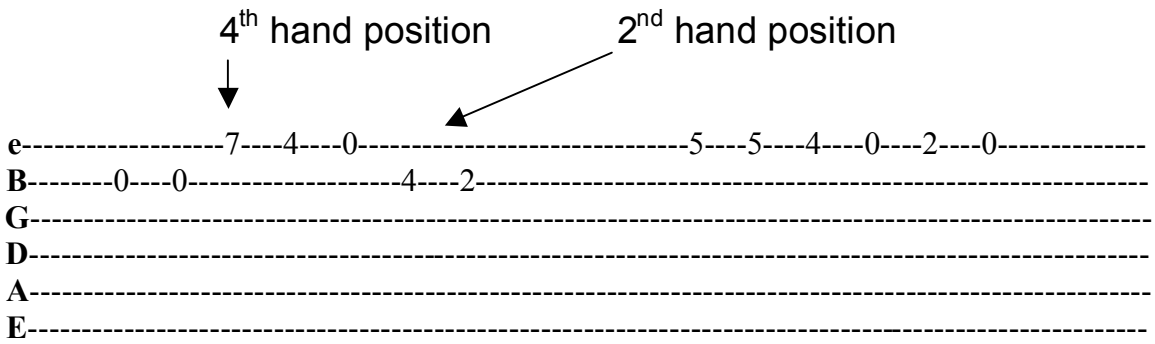
- Because "*Yankee Doodle*" only has 2s , 4s and 0s you will only need your index finger and your ring finger to play the entire song.

- For "*Happy Birthday*," you will also use the second hand position for the majority of the song. However, you must move to the "fourth hand position" to play a part of the song. The fourth hand position will put your pinky in charge of the 7th fret and your index finger in charge of the 4th fret. Use this position for the third part of the song, then go back to the "second hand position" to complete the song.

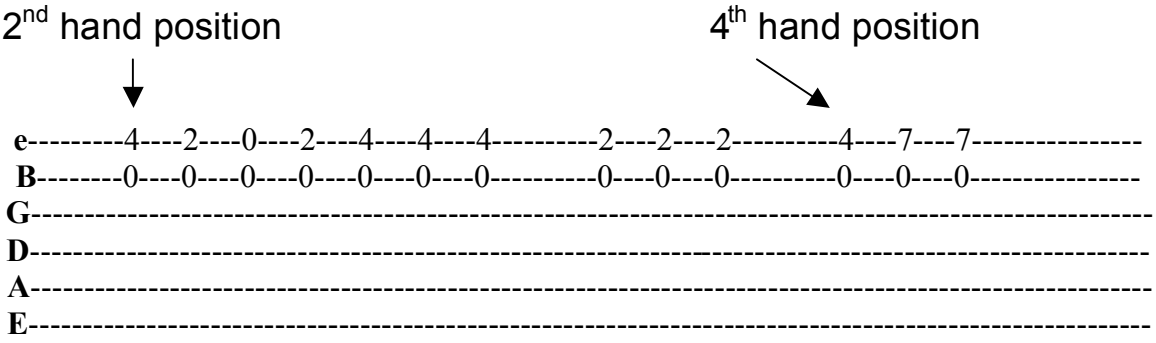
- For "*Mary Had a Little Lamb*," you also use the "second hand position" for the majority of the song. The third part of the song uses the "fourth hand position" and then switches back to the "second hand position" for the remainder of the song. Remember to strum both little strings (the 1st and 2nd strings) each time you strum.

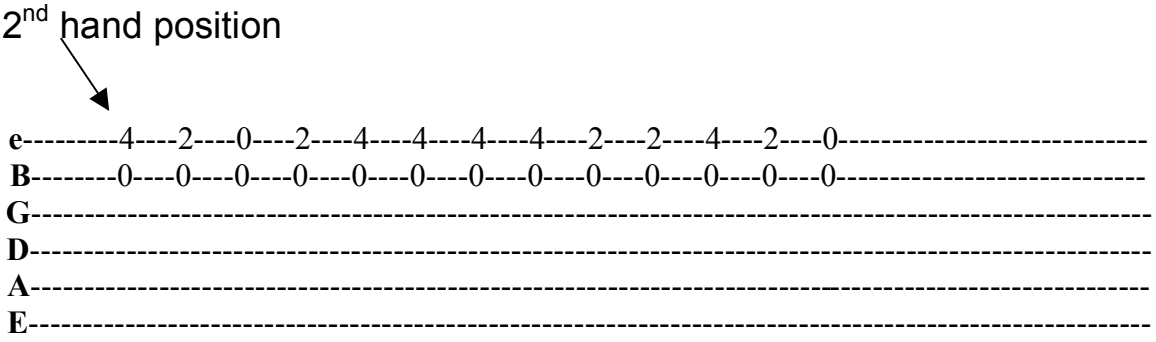
"*Happy Birthday*"





"*Mary Had a Little Lamb*"





Common Chords

These nine chords are the most common major and minor chords used in guitar. Thousands of songs have been written using just these chords. Learn them well.

- Reference the tablature for each chord as well as the picture to see which finger goes where on the fret board. Remember to arch well and squeeze!

- For the **A chord**, first reference the tablature. You can see that the top line (1st string) has a 0 on it. That means no fingers are needed, but you'll still play it when you strum. The 2nd, 3rd, and 4th strings each have a number 2 on them. This means your ring finger will hold down the 2nd fret on the 2nd string, your middle finger will hold down the 2nd fret on the 3rd string and your index finger will hold down the 2nd fret on the 4th string. Before you strum, take a look again at the tablature. There is a 0 written on the 5th string but nothing on the 6th string. So, start the strum on the 5th string and strum down. Remember to squeeze with your left hand as hard as you can, with your fingers right in the middle of the fret. The A chord looks like your fingers making a "number 3." "Number 3" is a good memory trick for the A chord.

- The **D chord** is the "triangle chord" and starts on the 4th string. Arch your fingers, place them in the middle of the fret, squeeze and strum down.

- The **E chord** is the "upside down triangle chord."

- The **G chord** is: "two little fingers on the two little strings; two big fingers on the two big strings."

- The **C2 chord** is the same as the G chord, except that the top two fingers each move down one string.

- The **C chord** is the stretchy chord. Notice that each finger is on a different fret. The index finger is on the 1st fret, the middle finger is on the 2nd fret and the ring finger is on the 3rd fret.

- The **Em chord** is the same an E chord, except that you lift the index finger off of the string. Strum all strings.

- The **Am chord** is the E chord moved down one string (for each finger). Begin on the 5th string and strum down.

- The **Dm chord** is the D chord, where the middle and index fingers trade places and then the index finger scoots back one fret. Begin on the 4th string and strum down.

A (#3) **D** △ **E** ▽

1-----0------- **2**-----2----R- **3**-----2---M- **4**-----2----I-- **5**-----0------- **6**----------		-----2---M- -----3---R-- -----2---I-- -----0------ ---------- ----------		------0------ ------0------ ------1---I-- ------2---R- ------2---M- ------0------	

G (2 little fingers on the 2 little strings) **C2 (looks similar to G)** **C (stretchy chord)**

1-----3---P-- **2**-----3---R-- **3**-----0------ **4**-----0------ **5**-----2---I-- **6**-----3---M-		-----3---P--- -----3---R--- -----0------ -----2---I--- -----3---M-- ----------		-----0------ -----1---I--- -----0------ -----2---M- -----3---R-- ----------	

Em (E without index finger) **Am looks like E** **Dm**

1-----0------- **2**-----0------- **3**-----0------- **4**-----2---R-- **5**-----2---M- **6**-----0-------		-----0------- -----1---I--- -----2---R--- -----2---M-- -----0------ ----------		-----1---I-- -----3---R-- -----2---M- -----0------ ---------- ----------	

I=Index finger M=Middle finger R=Ring Finger P=Pinky finger
(Pointer finger)

Build Your Finger Strength and Flexibility

Practice, Practice, Practice.
Calluses will soon develop on the tips of your finger so they won't be as sore.
Squeeze a racquetball or stress ball in your spare time.
Gently stretch your fingers from time to time.

Understanding Rhythm

Before you start strumming, you must understand some basic concepts about rhythm. These concepts will help in understanding the "feel" of a song and will help in understanding charting later in the book.

- A **measure** is one of many pieces of a song. A song may have over 100 measures in it. Usually a measure is one chord that lasts for 4 beats and then changes to a new chord for the following measure.

- The **time signature** describes a measure. For example, 4/4 means that there is a value of 4 quarter notes in a measure. A 3/4 time signature means that there are 3 quarter notes in a measure. 6/8 means that there are 6 eighth notes in a measure, etc.

- A **whole note** lasts for a whole measure: typically 4 beats. Clap your hands, and count to 4.

- A **half note** lasts for half of a measure and is worth 2 beats. When people clap their hands to a song, they are clapping half notes.

- A **quarter note** is worth 1 beat. When people tap their foot or bob their head to a song, they are usually in sync with quarter notes.

- An **eighth note** is worth ½ beat. Eighth notes are twice as fast as quarter notes.

- A **sixteenth note** is worth ¼ beat. Sixteenth notes are twice as fast as eighth notes and sound like a train: "chug—a—lug—a."

- For "*Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*," strum the appropriate note for each chord. Notice that each box is a measure. The 1st measure is made up of 4 quarter notes of the A chord. The 2nd measure is 2 quarter notes of a D chord and 1 half note of an A chord. The half note will ring out twice as long as the quarter note. Use only down strokes for the entire song.

Switching Chords

- From A to D: slide your ring finger up one fret, as you keep it on the 2nd string. Your other two fingers will need to jump and land into place. Reverse this to switch from D to A.

- From D to E: Slide your index finger backwards one fret, and keep it on the 3rd string. Your ring and middle fingers should stick together as though they are one finger and land on the 4th and 5th strings (respectively) on the 2nd fret. Reverse this to switch from E to D.

Measure (Bar): an amount of time specified by the beats in the time signature:
"a unit of a song"
Time Signature: 4/4 (Common Time) 3/4 2/4 6/8

Top number: how many beats
Bottom number: what kind of beats

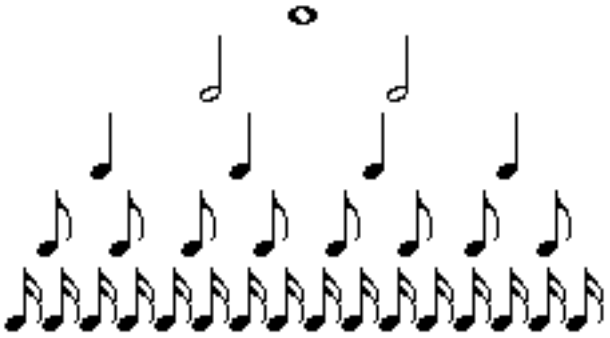
Whole Note (4 beats)

Half Notes (2 beats)

Quarter Notes (1 beat)

Eighth Notes (1/2 beat)

Sixteenth Notes (1/4 beat)



Beats Per Minute (BPM): establishes the tempo (speed) of a song

60 BPM is pretty slow
85 BPM is medium
100 is starting to get fast
130 BPM is pushing it

"*Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*"

A A A A	D D A	E E A A	E E A
A A D D	A A E	A A D D	A A E
A A A A	D D A	E E A A	E E A

Musical Alphabet

- The musical alphabet is foundational in understanding music principles such as how chords fit together, how to create new chords, scales, transposing, etc. Because you already know the regular alphabet, you already have a head start in learning the musical alphabet.

- The musical alphabet is just like the regular alphabet but stops at the letter G. It also has new letters that fall in between the regular letters. These new letters get their name from their placement between the regular letters. Each new letter will be "higher than" one letter and "lower than" another letter. The musical term for "higher than" is *sharp*, and the musical term for "lower than" is *flat*.

- For instance, the letter between A and B is called "A sharp" or "B flat." You may call it by either name since it is the same note. Notice that this new letter is higher than A and lower than B. The name of the letter between C and D is called either a C# or a Db.

- "**B**ig **C**ars **E**at **F**uel," will help you remember that B and C are stuck together and E and F are stuck together. In other words, there is no sharp or flat note between them.

- Study the musical alphabet until you can easily locate each letter. Other music principles will reference the musical alphabet time and time again.

A B C D E F G

"**Sharp**" (**#**) means "higher than"
"**Flat**" (**b**) means "lower than"

A → A#/Bb ← **B** **C** → C#/Db ← **D**

"Big **C**ars **E**at **F**uel"
BC & **EF** are stuck together.

The 12 notes that exist in the musical alphabet:
A – A#orBb – **B** – **C** – C#orDb – **D** – D#orEb – **E** – **F** – F#orGb – **G** – G#orAb

Quick Quiz:

Which note comes after C? _____
Which note comes after C#? _____
What is another name for Ab? _____

Complete the musical alphabet on your own (don't peek!):

A _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Answers on page 87

Charting

Guitar players are notorious for knowing very little about music principles and reading music. Guitarists should know music principles but do not need to know “how to read music” (standard notation).

Standard music notation that pianists or violinists use is very inefficient in communicating what a rhythm guitar should play in a band. A band with guitars, drums, bass and vocalists is quite different from an orchestra. Standard music notation details every single note and beat. Charting, on the other hand, provides the over-all structure of a song via measures, not single notes. The result is a one-page diagram of the intro, verses, choruses, and other parts of the song.

The beauty of charting is that it conveys all of the musical components that are important to the song without the unnecessary detailing of notes. A chart can convey how fast the song is, how many times to repeat a section, when to abruptly stop a chord, when to get louder, etc. It is a complete road map for a song. In fact, professional studio musicians who record new songs every day use this system of reading music. Some of the symbols are borrowed from standard notation, and some of the symbols were created to represent common dynamics in contemporary songs. This charting system is called the “Nashville Number System.” Many professional musicians use numbers instead of chords (refer to the chord family chart), but the way in which the chart is laid out is most important.

This charting style allows for the whole band to have an exact layout of the song with no memorizing or guesswork necessary. Unfortunately, most worship leaders or band leaders spend hours of practice time conveying what they want and hoping that every single member of the band will remember the cue during a service or performance. In using these charts, you will likely only need to practice a song once through. The band will have more confidence about every cue when it comes time to perform.

In learning and using this system, you will not only become a better musician, but you will also be able to clearly communicate your musical opinion in musical terms. Instead of saying, “Let’s really make that rock,” you could say, “Let’s drive eighth notes on the chorus all the way to the diamond on the first measure of the turn around.”

The “Song Example” section incorporates each of these symbols in some form or fashion so that you will become comfortable with reading charts. Spend about a week on each chord family until you become familiar with all of the chords as well as the symbols in this charting system.

I	Intro (beginning of a song; usually instrumental)
Out	Outro (end of a song usually instrumental)
Vs	Verse (sections with the same music and different lyrics)
Ch	Chorus (main part of a song that is usually repeated throughout the song; has the same lyrics)
Br	Bridge (a musical and lyrical "break" from the typical vs and ch)
TA	Turn Around (instrumental part between sections)
SOLO	Instrumental Solo
PC	Pre Chorus (consistently precedes the ch; builds musically)
TAG	Repeated phrase(s), usually at the end of a song
BPM	Beats Per Minute: defines the tempo/speed of a song
Vamp	Continuously repeat a chord until another section of a song begins; used usually in an intro or a turn around
4/4 2/4 6/8 etc	Time Signature: "How many" beats/"type of" beats per measure

G (or any chord not in a box)	**4 beats**: normal strum pattern
G C	**2 beats per chord**: strum each 2 times
| | | | G C	Specified (with hatch marks): **beats per chord:** in this case, strum G 3 times and C 1 time
G C2 (>)	**Pushed 8th Chord**: *Shared Strum* reference "Advanced Strum Patterns"
G C2 (.)	**Pushed 16th Chord**: reference "Advanced Strum Patterns"
G (◇)	**Diamond**: strike once, and it let it ring out for the appropriate amount of beats (usually 4 beats)
▲ G	**Stop/Choke**: strike and mute
‖: :‖	**Repeat** whatever is in-between these symbols before moving on
G C D (<) G C D (>)	**Crescendo**: gradually becoming louder **Decrescendo**: gradually becoming softer
G C D rit ⌐	**Ritardando (Ritard)**: tempo gradually slowing down ("*a tempo*" returns to original tempo)
G ⌒ G	**Tied Note**: Strum only once and let ring for both measures (usually 8 beats)

CAGED Capo

picking the chord family you want

While capos help significantly in changing from one key to another, they also help the guitar player who wants to **stay in the same key** but use a different chord family's chord shapes. For instance, if you don't like the A chord family, you can place a capo on the 2nd fret and use the G chord family chords instead.

Perhaps there are three guitar players who all want to play the same song in the same key but want different capo options so that they are not playing the exact same chord shapes. For instance, the song is in the key of E, and the first guitarist plays it using the E chord family. The next guitarist can capo 2 and use the D chord family and still be in the key of E. The third guitar player can capo 4 and use the C chord family and be in the key of E as well.

- The system of picking the chord family you want is called CAGED. "CAGED" is a memory trick for moving from one chord family to another. Each letter represents a common chord family. In order to transition from one chord family to another, place the capo either 2 or 3 frets higher than where you are. To transition *from* the C or G chord families, place the capo 3 frets higher. To transition *from* the A, E, or D chord families, place the capo 2 frets higher.

- For instance, if you start with the C chord family, you have a few options. You may place the capo on the 3rd fret and play the A chord family. Note, you will remain in the key of C; you'll just be playing different chord shapes. If you do not like the C chords or the A chords, you may progress 2 more frets (5 frets altogether) and play the G chords. Placing a capo on the 5th fret and using the G chord family is the same as no capo with the C chord family.

- In order to know exactly which chords to play, when you have placed a capo on the right fret, you must turn all of the chords into numbers via the major scale chart. For example, your old chords may be C, F, Am, G. You decided to place a capo on the 5th fret and use G chords. The C, F, Am and G, turned into numbers is: 1, 4, 6m and 5. In the G chord family, those numbers turn into G, C2, Em and D. These "new chords" with the capo are technically the same as the "old chords" since you are in the same key. They will just have higher notes than the original chords.

C $\xrightarrow[3]{}$ **A** $\xrightarrow[2]{}$ **G** $\xrightarrow[3]{}$ **E** $\xrightarrow[2]{}$ **D** $\xrightarrow[2]{}$

KEY of C =

- Capo 3 and use the A chord family
- Capo 5 and use the G chord family
- Capo 8 and use the E chord family

KEY of A =

- Capo 2 and use the G chord family
- Capo 5 and use the E chord family
- Capo 7 and use the D chord family

KEY of G =

- Capo 3 and use the E chord family
- Capo 5 and use the D chord family
- Capo 7 and use the C chord family

KEY of E =

- Capo 2 and use the D chord family
- Capo 4 and use the C chord family
- Capo 7 and use the A chord family

KEY of D =

- Capo 2 and use the C chord family
- Capo 5 and use the A chord family
- Capo 7 and use the G chord family

Pentatonic Scales

The pentatonic scale provides a simple approach to soloing. In fact, countless blues and rock players have used this scale as their primary scale. “Penta” means five (like pentagon); so, a pentatonic scale uses only 5 of the 7 notes in the major scale. It is a simplified scale that is the easiest scale to play. Minor pentatonic scales are used for songs like blues songs, songs in a minor key, and rock songs (especially songs that use power chords). The minor pentatonic scale is much more useful and popular than the major pentatonic scale; however, the major pentatonic can still be used for songs in a major key (mainly country).

- Remember to use a **hand position** throughout the duration of a scale, where *each finger claims a certain fret*. In a typical hand position, the index finger will claim the first fret, the middle will claim the next fret, followed by the other fingers. Each finger should only play only the notes on a the fret to which it is assigned.

- If you want to play a minor pentatonic scale, the keynote is played with your index finger on the 6th string. If you want a major pentatonic scale, your keynote is played with your pinky on the 6th string.

For instance: For any blues, rock, or minor sounding song (blues in A, or a song starting with Am), use your index finger to find the keynote for the A minor pentatonic scale. When you do, your hand position will be: index finger gets the 5th fret, middle gets the 6th, ring gets the 7th, and pinky get the 8th.

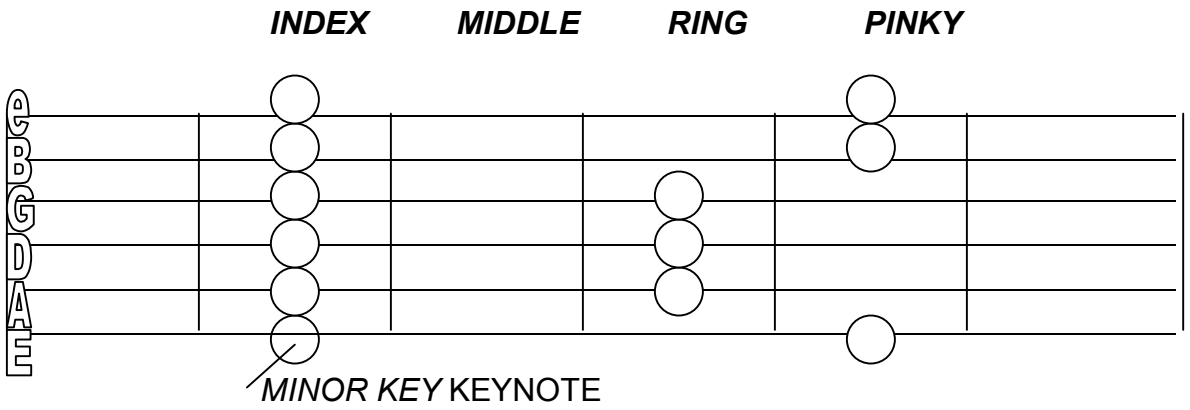
If you are soloing to a song in the key of A (major key), find the A note on the 6th string with your pinky. You’ll find that it is on the 5th fret. Now, you’re in position for playing the scale. Your ring finger gets the 4th fret, middle gets the 3rd and index gets the 2nd. For a different key, just find the keynote on the 6th string. Try identifying different keys using major and minor hand positions.

Technique Tips

Left Hand: As you learn this scale, play each note in order, starting from the appropriate keynote on the 6th string. Also, your ring and pinky fingers will probably need to gain a bit more finger strength as you solo.

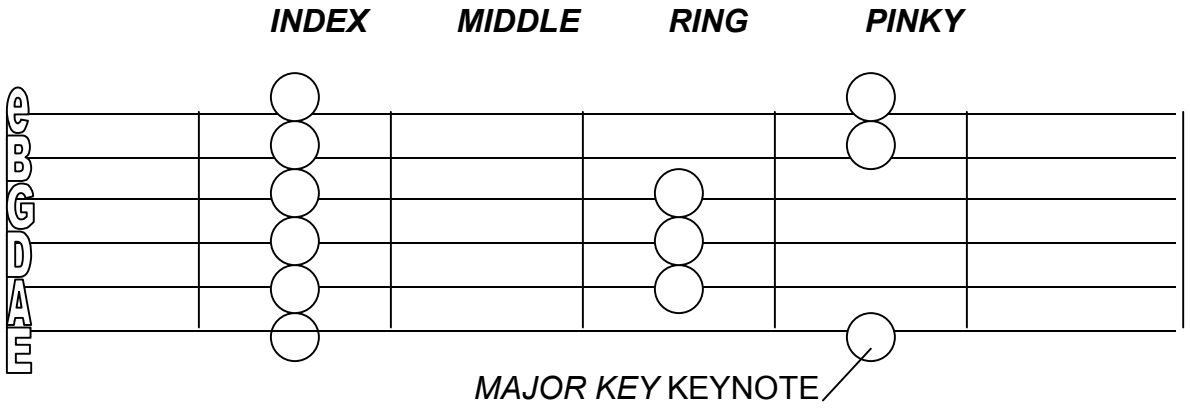
Right Hand: Your right hand so far has only strummed. Soloing, however involves plucking individual strings. This may be done by a subtle flick of the wrist or controlled bend of the joint in your thumb. Make sure you are holding the pick correctly or plucking individual strings will be very difficult. Furthermore, as you play each note, constantly alternate between down plucks and up plucks. Make this movement as second nature as possible. This alternating pattern is the key to speed. It may feel unnatural at first, but it is essential if you want a fast solo.

Minor Pentatonic Scale Position



- Blues
- Rock
- Songs in a minor key
  (songs that begin and end with the relative minor, 6m, of a chord family)

Major Pentatonic Scale Position



- Songs in a major key