
GUITAR BASICS

The Guitar Essentials course is specifically for people who have never played guitar before or who have only rudimentary knowledge of playing the instrument. Even if you have studied classical guitar extensively there might be some principles within this course that will be new to you.

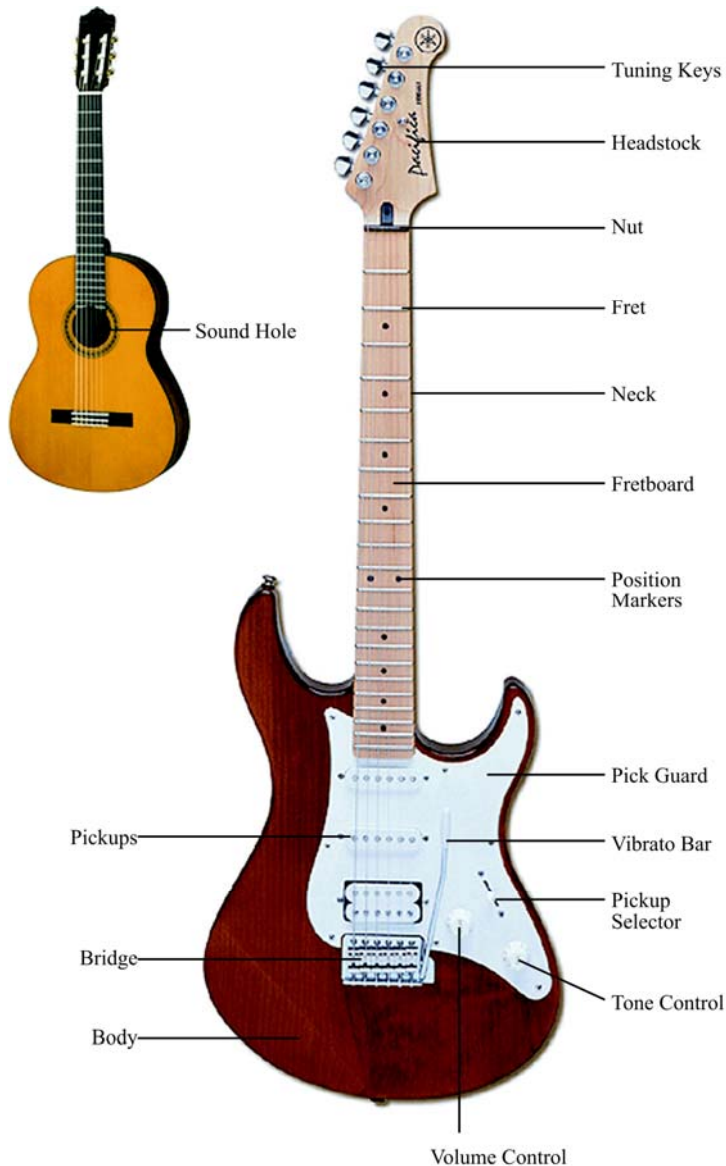
The focus at this level is to get you to start playing standard 'garden variety' chords, understand elementary rhythm concepts and start identifying notes on the fretboard.

This course covers concepts that are applicable to all styles, with particular emphasis on Folk, Pop, Blues and Rock music.

Module	Title	Description
01	Basics	Naming guitar parts, Ups & Downs, Holding the Guitar, Picking, Reading TAB, and Finger Exercises.
02	Major Chords	CAGED, Progressions.
03	Note Theory	Notes, Tuning the guitar.
04	Minor Chords	Am, Dm, Em, Progressions.
05	Strumming	Common Rhythms and patterns
06	First Song	Knockin' on Heaven's Door – Bob Dylan
07	Seventh Chords	CAGED, Progressions, Blues principles.
08	Second Song	No Woman No Cry – Bob Marley
09	Chord Embellishments	Variations on common chords
10	Song	Student Selection
11	Riffs	Riffs
12	Blues	Basic Blues Riff

Naming Guitar Parts

Throughout these lessons you will come across terms describing parts of the guitar. _
These diagrams will help you identify different parts of the guitar. You should become familiar with these terms.



Pickups

There are two main types of pickups found on electric guitars:



Single-coil pickup



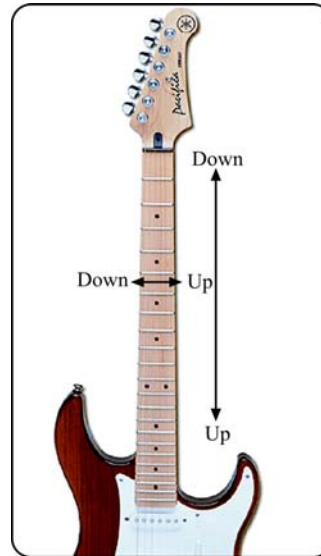
Double-coil or *humbucker* pickup

Ups and Downs

Movement along the fretboard is determined by pitch. When you move to higher frequency sounds, the movement is called up and as you move to lower pitches the movement is called down; even though this may seem contradictory to physical ups and downs.

When moving along the fretboard, moving toward the bridge is considered up and moving toward the neck is considered down.

When changing strings, moving toward brighter strings is considered an up movement while moving to the lower-pitched wound strings is considered a down movement.



Holding the Guitar

Whether you're standing or sitting, the guitar neck should always point upwards at an angle. Hold the guitar in a vertical position and avoid laying it flat on your lap.

When sitting, rest the groove in the body of the guitar on one leg. You can cross your legs to raise your guitar a bit.

When standing, use a strap to sling the guitar around your neck. Generally, the lower your guitar, the cooler you look and the harder it is to play. Adjust the strap until you find a position that you feel comfortable with. If you think it's too high, as you improve, slowly move it down until you get to the height at which you want to play. Having the middle of the guitar at belt height is the most common (and recommended) position.

Your picking hand should hover over the pickups (electric) or sound hole (acoustic).



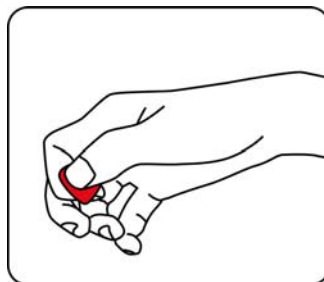
Picking

As a beginner you will be picking and strumming strings with a plectrum or pick.

Hold the pick between your index finger and your thumb. It isn't important whether you have a closed or open hand while picking, although a closed hand helps with faster playing. Bend your index finger so that it lines up with your thumb.

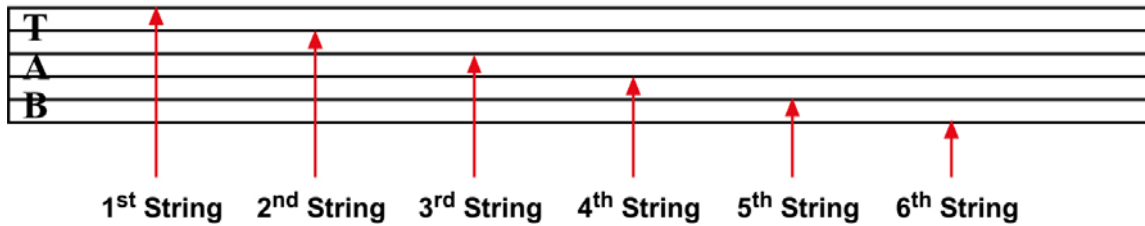
The pick you use is a matter of personal choice; It is a good idea to buy a variety of picks: Small, large, thick and thin to try out. Use the pick you feel most comfortable with. Often a thin pick is good to start off with and as your skill builds, you'll find yourself using a thicker pick, which allows for better control.

When playing with a pick, strike the string with the flat-side of the picky end of the pick.

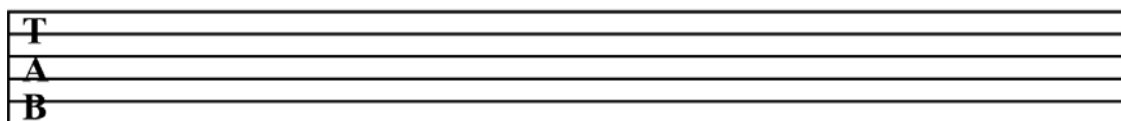
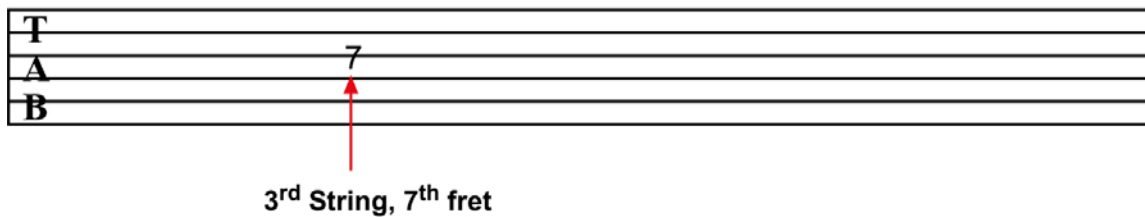


Reading Tab

Tablature shows locations on the fretboard of the guitar, and is a particular way of writing music for guitar. Each of the six lines corresponds to the strings on the guitar.

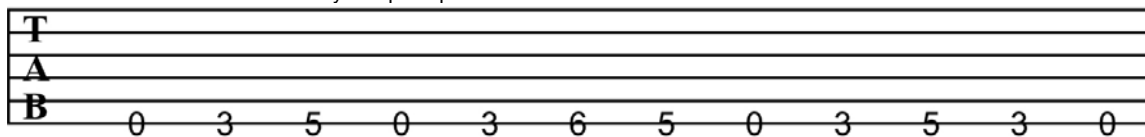


Fret numbers are placed on the lines to indicate which note should be played. Notes are played sequentially from left to right unless they are on top of one another, in which case they are played simultaneously.

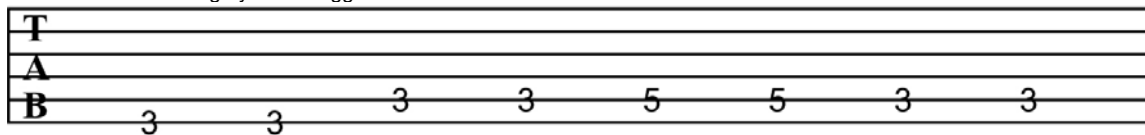


Simple Riffs

Main riff for Smoke on the Water by Deep Purple



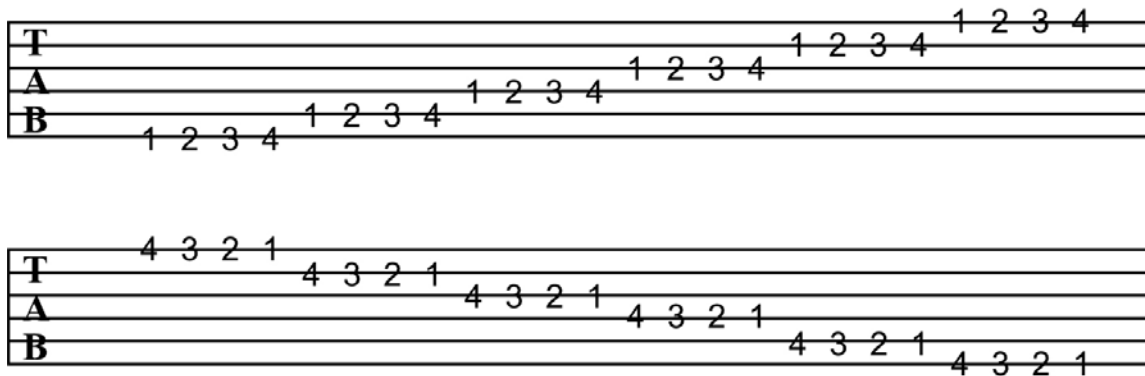
Main riff for Wild Thing by The Troggs



Quasi-chromatic Exercise

The purpose of this exercise is to get your fingers accustomed to playing the guitar and to help synchronise your left and right hands. Play the following exercise, concentrating on these points:

- Pick each note down.
- Keep your thumb behind the neck.
- Don't rest the neck in the palm of your hand.
- Pick only one string at a time. Do not let the other strings ring.
- Keep your picking hand closed.
- All notes on the first fret must be played with the index finger, all the notes on the second fret must be played with the middle finger, all notes on the third fret must be played with the ring finger, and all notes on the fourth fret must be played with the little finger.
- At this stage don't be hard on yourself if you make mistakes. Make a mental note of what you did wrong, and let it go.



Stuff you need

Just having a guitar, and some self-discipline are usually enough to get you on the road to becoming a guitar god. However, these additional items, found at any half-decent music shop will help you get there sooner:

- ☐ Guitar
- ☐ Picks
- ☐ Amp (for electric)
- ☐ Metronome or drum machine
- ☐ Electronic tuner

Recommended Practice Schedule

General Tips:

1. Practice for no more than five days every week.
2. Avoid spending too long practicing one thing.
3. Practice only as fast as you are able to without making mistakes. Avoid practicing mistakes!

In addition to anything else you might be practicing, do the following daily routine. Once you have achieved the target tempo for an item, you can remove it from your practice schedule. Write in the current tempo at which you can play it without making mistakes.

Item	Notes	Practice Time	Current Tempo	Target Tempo
Smoke on the Water Riff	Make sure you're not strumming any of the other strings by mistake	2 mins		90
Wild Thing Riff	Make sure you're holding the pick correctly	2 mins		90
Quasi-chromatic exercise	Practice to a metronome or drum machine	3 mins		90
Total Practice Time:		7 mins		