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Acoustic Fingerstyle

LEVEL 2 • Guitar Skills



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The Sweep

UNIT 2 • LESSON 3 << PREVIOUS NEXT >>

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Modal Interchange

Ok, we're gonna get a little geeky here and talk about a theoretical concept that can take a while to sink in. However, it's a very important subject, especially when looking at fingerstyle, as a lot of songs will use this idea.

What is modal interchange?

| G | C | D | F |



This is actually in the key of G major, and the G, C and D are the 1, 4 & 5 chords in that key. The F, however, is a borrowed chord from another mode.



“

Don't worry! I know this is a lot of theory, and we'll be

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Our next challenge is to take the basic concept from the previous unit and level it up by introducing more complex chord shapes and quicker changes

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applying
it in
bitesize
chunks
during
the unit.
Stick with
me!

Thomas



The concept that we're borrowing a chord from another key is pretty simple. The hard part is knowing which chords you can use, as you need to understand the mode. In the example above, you can find the F major in the key of **G Mixolydian**, so that's absolutely fine to borrow. In practice, at our level, we don't need to worry too much about the mode it comes from. All we need to do is be able to recognise when a chord is borrowed from another mode. If we can do that, we're already halfway there!

The special case of dominant

The final thing to mention here is that we have an extra special use for dominant chords. Think of dominant chords as a potential portal to another key! By borrowing a dominant chord from another mode, we can use it as the 5th of the key (As this is typically where dominant chords sit), therefore moving us into another key altogether, if only briefly.



“ This concept of borrowing from other modes and keys is not one that you’ll hear once and be like... “yep! Got that!”. It will take a lot of application and experience, and this song is a great gentle start to that.

Thomas ”



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