



It's really hard to get down here. I'm getting ready to play a pretty difficult song. Getting just notes right is an accomplishment on its own, but you need to think about the actual underlying bigger concept of it all and still play all the notes right. Now that's a challenge on a whole other level. Hi, my name is Paul Davies and this video is about one of my favorite songs by one of the most beloved guitar players of modern age, a song that's been a nemesis to a lot of guitar players since its release back in 2001. The song is neon by John Mayer. John Mayer's renowned guitar style has always been a major influence for many aspiring guitarists also for me, when I started to just plow through his tunes after they released *Continuum* in 2006 and the *Life in the LA* DVD two years later, I started to learn all of its songs from his iconic *Ballad*.

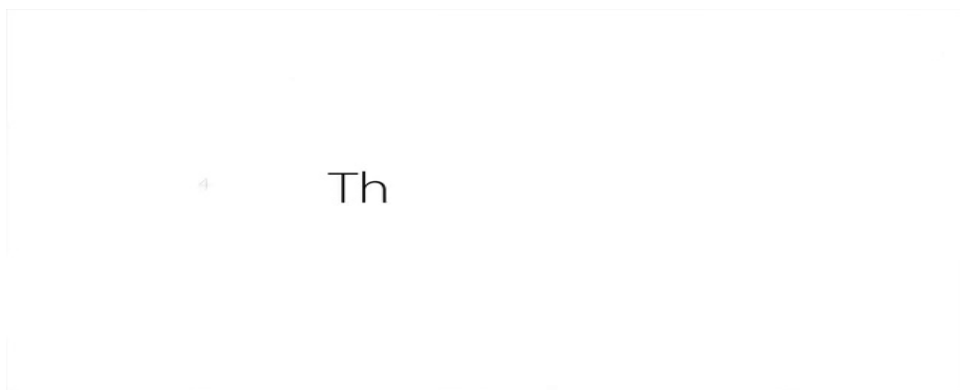


Slow dancing in the green room to the acoustic song *Stop This Train*, but seeing him play *Neon* for the first time live was quite a thing. The bizarre left-hand shapes and the seemingly odd right-hand plucking technique. The low E string tuned to see what is happening. In any case, I decided to leave that song for what it was. Rather, I just play the correct notes after each other, but something is really missing. When learning this song, you might think the most important thing to get down are the fretting-hand chord shapes and the probably new-to-you picking technique. But diving deeper into this song, I think I've discovered the four most fundamental things that make this version sound so great and at the same time make it so difficult for those who wonder what makes the song *Neon* so incredibly hard to play. For starters, the chords themselves are not your typical triad chord shapes. If anything, the shapes are quite unique and for some definitely a challenge to get down.

Just using the thumb can have many benefits from playing guitar for this particular figure, I don't see any benefits. Therefore you can just as well use the fingers instead of creating too much unwanted attention in your hand. After Discord, we go to the F lets us 4 / F chord, a pretty colorful cord, not something you'll see a lot in your run of the mill pop song followed by an E flat sauce. 4 But now with a different voicing of the court and with a different base node. Eve lets us 4. Over a flat and to conclude this, there is a ceaseless 2 / B flat chord which John himself didn't get right in his own tabbed version of the song. Warning if you try to play the shape with the thumb, chances are you'll dislocate something in your hand. So now those are the quartz and I hear you thinking is that all? No? Because then there's also the picking John's right hand technique is not something you learn in the books or in any school for that matter, and I think it's a result from what once was a pretty flawed technique, but then turned into a brilliant new playing style. He is known to just use his thumb and index finger playing the strings. But meanwhile, most fingerstyle guitarists use their thumb, index, middle, and even the ring finger. But the way John does it, it sometimes feels like he's playing with even more fingers and fit on one hand. This technique, ingeniously implemented in songs like Heart of Life, or who says, has a remarkable way of presenting itself in this riff. Let me show you. Playing the B string so this is what that sounds like. Pretty strange technique, right? So now you may think can't I just use my middle and ring finger for this? Well no, because playing the notes with the thumb and index finger only is quite essential for getting everything right. You'll see later why that is, but what you can do is play the highest string with your middle finger instead of the index finger, but the thumb going all the way to the G string needs to happen for sure. It's a technique Mark Knopfler. Also likes to use.



It's a great tool to simulate a bigger sound than just the one guitar you're playing. Adding the percussive slap gives it a direction. It adds another layer on top, or should I say beneath those harmonies and melodies, creating a sense of an entire band on just the one instrument. And don't forget in Neon, he's playing all of those arpeggios, skipping string with an alternating. Dumb and mean while slapping around.



So we've got a whole beat left after the courts two transition between the arpeggios. So in that one big gap you of course plays at slap we talked about. But also one or even two accents and a base note. So did base notfalls exactly at the last eighth note before changing chords, creating that baseline. So let me emphasize the transitioning notes. And then we've got the bassline coming in together with the transitioning notes from chord to chord. Creating an intricate web of notes without ever colliding. And to top this all off, we've got the percussive slap. Creating a steady, thriving rhythm behind all of this, this keeps you at the ground, giving an easy to grasp grit to all the complicated

patterns around it. And that is why the song neon is so incredibly difficult to fully master. John is also singing a song. Come to think of it, the part we've discussed is only just a verse. Well, there's something for our future video, maybe? Thanks for watching tabs of my explanation are available on my page on page. And if you like this video, make sure to hit the thumbs up, click subscribe to the channel if you aren't already hit the notification though if you want to be notified by all my future videos and I hope to see you next time. Have a wonderful day.