

# GENERAL GUITAR

## Groupon Promotional Lessons



**Instructor: Dr. Francesco Barone**

[barone.guitar@gmail.com](mailto:barone.guitar@gmail.com)

## **Materials Needed**

In addition to this guide, you will need the following materials for your first lessons. You can find links to everything on this page or use the alternative suggestions listed.

Classical Guitar: Although a classical guitar is recommended, any guitar that will hold its tune will suffice for these lessons.

Footstool: This is a fairly inexpensive investment. The linked footstool is affordable, but feel free to purchase a less expensive one if you can find it.

Tuner: This is a nice tuner although you can also use any free tuner app.

Picks: I recommend these although you can probably purchase picks individually at a music store.

## **What You Will Learn**

- Proper sitting, left hand & pick position
- A song using your first notes
- How to play with a pick and fingers
- Your first three chords

# **Lesson 1**

## **Sitting and Holding the guitar**

1. Establish the correct height of the footstool or other device
2. Sit straight on the chair (make sure to sit on the front edge of the chair). Keep the spine naturally straight and the shoulders dropped and even.
3. The right leg should be flat on the floor (heels underneath the kneecaps). The foot position should offer support for the back. If you are sitting correctly you will be encouraged to lean into the guitar rather than slump.
4. The curve of the body of the guitar sits on the left lap.
5. The side of the body of the guitar rests on the inside of the right thigh.
6. The head of the guitar should be at or above eye level.
7. The neck of the guitar is slightly forward to the plane of the body.
8. Both shoulders should be relaxed and level.

# FUNDAMENTAL TECHNIQUES

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## SITTING POSITIONS

Guitarists should adopt a sitting position that enables them to be alert, yet free of excessive tension, and that will allow ease of movement of the arms. Most players will adopt one of two basic approaches, shown in Figure 8. A classical sitting style is shown on the left of the figure, and a popular sitting style is shown on the right. Either can be used to accomplish the ideal blend of physical characteristics described above.

Figure 8



## HOLDING A PICK

Figure 9 shows the appropriate way to hold a pick. One can arrive at this position by following the next few steps:

1. Curl the fingers of the right hand, making a “monkey palm” shape.
2. Hold the pick with the left hand. Place it on the left side of the tip segment of the right index finger, pointed toward the nail.
3. Place the right-hand thumb over the pick. When the arm is in place to play, the tip of the pick should point toward the guitar.

Pick thickness and style are up to the player’s discretion.

**Figure 9**



## LEFT-HAND POSITION

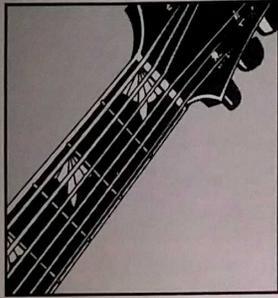
Use the following steps to set up the left hand.

1. Allow your left hand to hang by your side, palm turned face up.
2. From the elbow, lift the forearm until the fingers are in front of the guitar neck and the thumb is behind it.
3. Place the fingers on the first string, lining up with corresponding frets. Place the thumb behind the neck roughly behind the middle finger.
4. Make sure that the knuckles are parallel to the neck.
5. Place the fingers on their tips and snug to each corresponding fret. If your fingers are on top of the frets, they will thud; if they are too far away, they will buzz. The first and fourth fingers should be pointed slightly toward the middle two (see Figure 12).
6. Feel the weight of the arm (hanging from your elbow) depressing the notes.

Also note the numberings of each finger, as shown in Figure 12: index (1), middle (2), ring (3), and pinky (4). These designations are standard for notating and discussing the left-hand fingers.

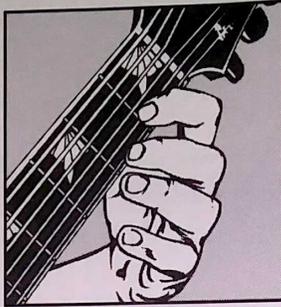
# The Notes on the Second String

**B**  
Open



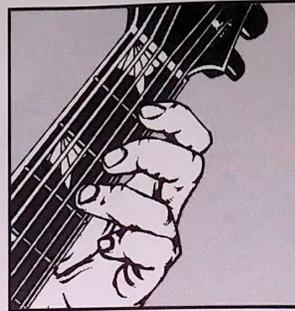
B (Open)

**C**  
First Finger  
First Fret



C (1st Fret)

**D**  
Third Finger  
Third Fret



D (3rd Fret)

7

1

2

3

## String Combination Study:

Say notes aloud as you play.

# DCB Exercise

Musical score for "DCB Exercise" in 4/4 time. The score consists of two systems. The first system has six measures. Above the first two measures are the chord names "D" and "D", above the next two are "C" and "C", and above the last two are "B" and "B". The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature, containing half notes. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature with a 4/4 time signature, containing fret numbers (3, 3, 1, 1, 0, 0) and vertical bar lines indicating fret positions.

# Spanish Theme

Hal Leonard

Musical score for "Spanish Theme" in 4/4 time. The score consists of two systems. The first system has four measures. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature, containing quarter notes. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature with a 4/4 time signature, containing fret numbers (0, 0, 1, 1, 3, 1, 0, 0, 1, 1, 3, 1) and vertical bar lines. The second system starts with a measure number "5" above the first measure. It also has four measures. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature, containing quarter notes. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature with a 4/4 time signature, containing fret numbers (0, 1, 3, 1, 0, 1, 3, 1, 0, 1, 3, 1, 0) and vertical bar lines.

## **Lesson 2**

### **Est. Right hand position and teaching rest strokes**

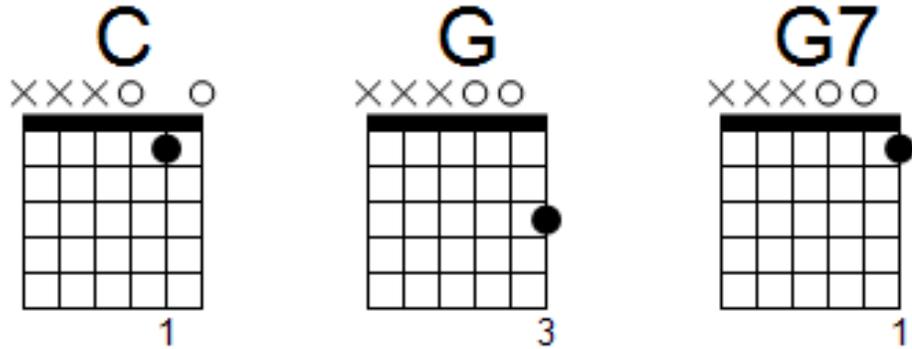
1. The forearm rests approx. one to two inches from the elbow on top of the guitar. Position the forearm over the bridge.
2. Position the forearm over the string approx. @ a 30 degree angle from the face of the guitar and make a fist.
3. Relax the wrist and place the thumb (pointed in) on the fourth string. Observe the angle of the wrist.
4. With the thumb on the fourth string, allow the fingers to open.
5. If necessary, rotate the wrist to achieve correct alignment.

### **Learning Rest Strokes**

1. Place the middle finger on the first string (m).
2. Position the finger mid-knuckle over the string to be plucked.
3. Pluck the string by pushing the finger through the string. Rest on the next string.
4. Bring the next finger to pluck into position when the previous finger plays.
5. When m plays, always move the "a" and pinky with it.

# C, G & G7

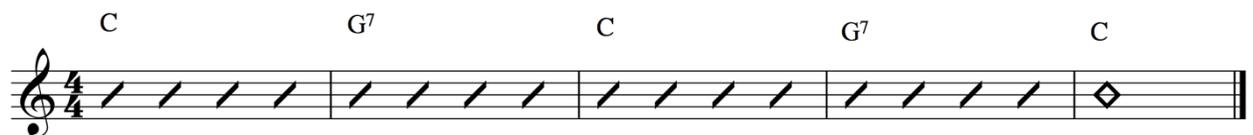
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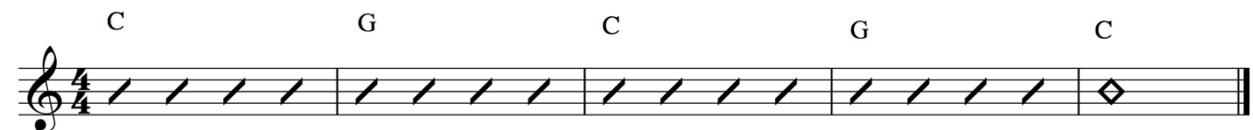
These introductory exercises are pretty straightforward. Give attention to the following points while learning these exercises as well as the other exercises and excerpts throughout this book.

- Play slowly and evenly.
- Be aware of the left-hand technique and pick position.
- Release left-hand tension between chords.

## Exercise 1



## Exercise 2



### Exercise 3

C G C G<sup>7</sup> C

### PAPERBACK WRITER – *Lennon-McCartney*

The Beatles “Paperback Writer” was Paul McCartney’s attempt at writing a song composed primarily of a single chord: G<sup>7</sup>, with just one change to C for just a couple of beats in each verse. Its simple harmonic structure makes this song a perfect introduction to chord changes. Note that the chord changes occur on the first syllable of ‘writer’ (“writ-”).

For “Paperback Writer” and the other songs in this book, be sure to follow the guidelines set out in the exercises. Also take the time to play each song along with a recording, while keeping in mind these basic principles:

- Play slowly and evenly.
- Be aware of the left-hand technique and pick position.
- Release left-hand tension between chords.
- When ready, play along with the recording.

G<sup>7</sup>

7 C G<sup>7</sup>

# **Bibliography**

If you are interested in reading further, I have included the sources I have cited. [Chord Companion](#) is my book. It is a method intended for learning chords, but contains an excellent section on plectrum style technique (If I do say so myself). [Aaron Stang's method](#) is great for learning how to play with a pick, but I would not recommend it for classical guitar.

Barone, Francesco. [Chord Companion: A Chord Method Supplement](#). 1st ed., Kindle Direct Publishing, 2020.

Stang, Aaron. [Belwin's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Guitar Method: Guitar Method 1](#). Warner Bros. Publications, 1993.

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