

Basic Guitar Technique



by Steve Cullum

Basic Tips

Things to remember:

- **Stay relaxed:** Do not play rigidly.
- **Good posture:** Keep your back straight, and try not to bend over to look at the guitar.
- **Build up those calluses:** It will hurt in the beginning, but your fingers will eventually get used to it. I promise!
- **Practice practice practice:** Guitar is definitely one of those things that you will only get out what you put in. If you only practice 30 minutes a week, you will barely get any better. If you put in 30 minutes to an hour every day, you will be amazed at how much better you get.
- **Remember to take breaks:** If your fingers get tired, take a rest for a couple minutes. Learning to play is hard work, but it also needs to remain fun.
- **Find inspiration:** Listen to others, and find musicians you like. It always helps to have a goal in mind (for example, I wish I could play as good as John Mayer).

Helpful items when starting to play guitar:

- **Electric tuner:** It is important to make sure your guitar is in tune every time you pick it up to play. You can pick one up at a local music store for around \$15. Do not feel like you need to go all out and get a fancy one. As long as it tells you if you are in tune, it will work.
- **Picks:** Get what feels good in your fingers. I recommend going with a medium weight to start off. These usually run about \$.50 a piece or less at most music stores. Grab several, because you are probably going to lose them or break them over time.
- **Extra set of strings:** Within the first month or so, if you are practicing as you should, you will break at least one string. That is normal. Having an extra set is always nice, so you do not have to stop playing. These run at different prices, depending on the type/brand. I recommend starting with a Medium-Light weight and a brand like D'Addario or Martin. Do not get the coated strings in the beginning, as it is essential that your fingers get use to normal strings first. These will run just under \$10 a set.

Completely optional items that are not essential:

- **Case:** It is nice to have something that will protect your guitar, especially when traveling back and forth from home to lessons.
- **Strap:** Just in case you want to practice/play standing up. Get what feels comfortable, but do not feel like you have to get the most expensive and fancy one out there. A basic strap will do just fine.
- **Metronome:** One of the things you will learn is rhythm. A metronome keeps time for you with a basic and steady beat. Most electronic keyboards have one built into them, so you could just use that.

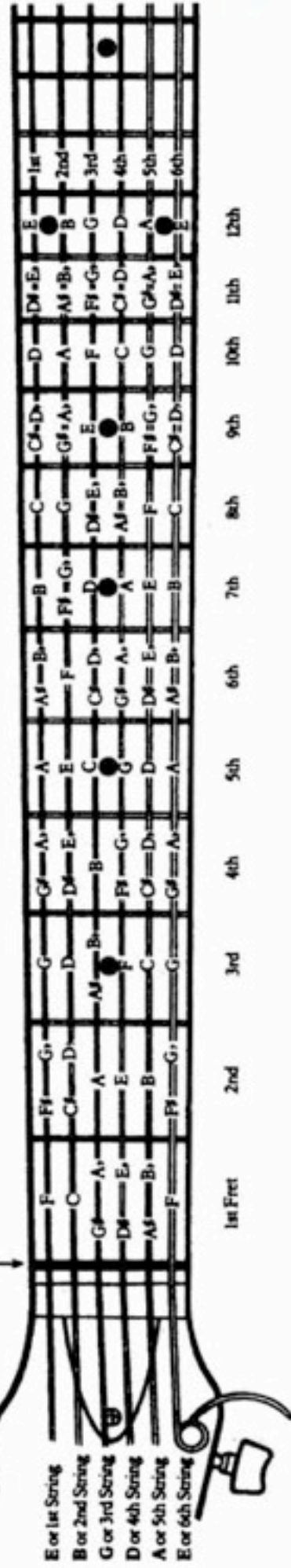
Basic Parts of a Guitar



Head

Nut

To Body →



Open String

E or 1st String

B or 2nd String

G or 3rd String

D or 4th String

A or 5th String

E or 6th String

G-Major



C2-Major



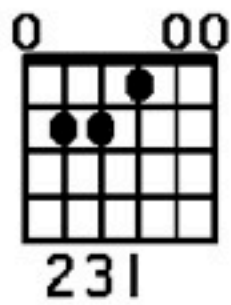
E-Minor



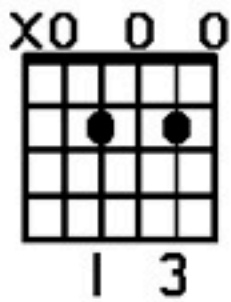
D-Major



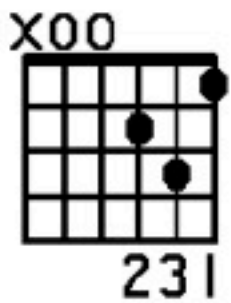
E major



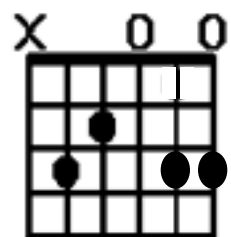
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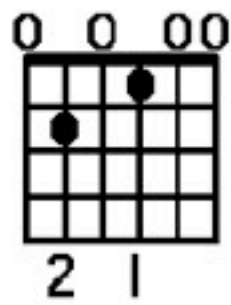
D minor



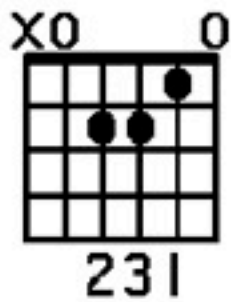
C2 major



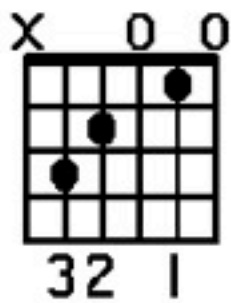
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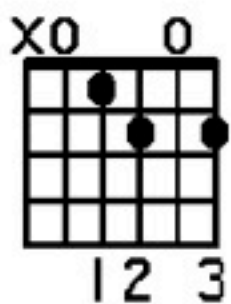
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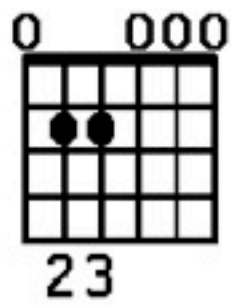
C major



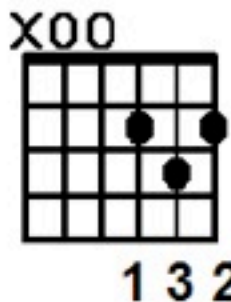
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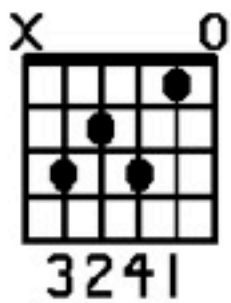
E minor



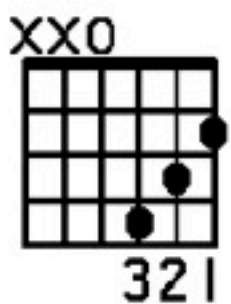
D major



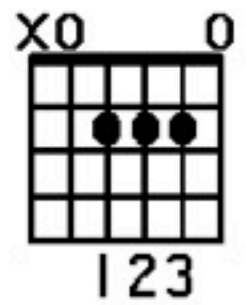
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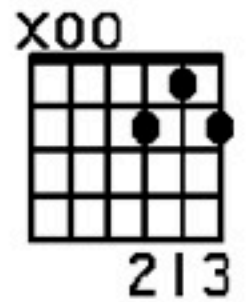
B minor



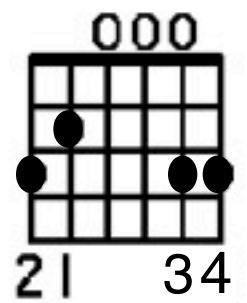
A major



D7



G major



F major

