

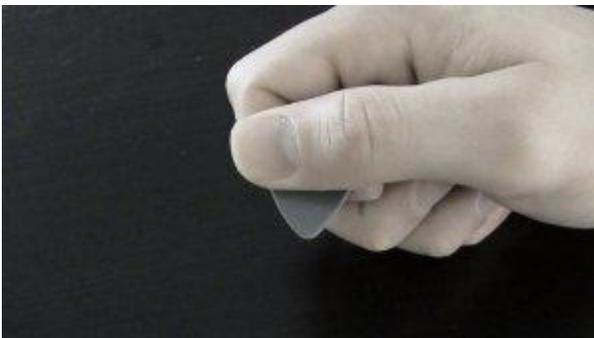
Rock Guitar - Lesson 3

Holding The Pick:

In this lesson, we'll study playing technique, learn some more chords and then have a look at 'Power Chords'. So, fire up your guitar and get stuck into to some serious learnin'.

If you're playing rock, you'll most likely be using a pick/plectrum. You don't have to by any means, but I'd suggest beginning with one. Players like Mark Knopfler and Lindsay Buckingham do not use picks to achieve their sound.

On whichever hand you use for strumming, curl your index finger comfortably, but not tightly. It shouldn't be touching itself. Place the pick onto your index finger, with the broadest part of the pick covering most of the tip segment of the finger. See below:



Now, once you've had a bit of a fiddle to make it feel comfortable, try strumming downwards on the strings. Strum slowly, and pick each string individually. Refer to the video for the correct position.

<http://www.luxxydaizy/RockGuitar/Lesson3/Strumming.wmv>

Notice in the video that my wrist is free to move independently of my forearm? This is important. In later lessons, we'll pay close attention to what the wrist is doing, but for now, we need to learn some stuff to play.

Before moving on, I want you to keep trying this for a while. Get used to feeling where the pick is about to 'flick' down to the next string. Also, don't try to force the pick to remain upright or straight. Let the strings lean it over, and as you keep moving your hand down, the pick will spring back into place.

Experiment with different grip strength on the pick

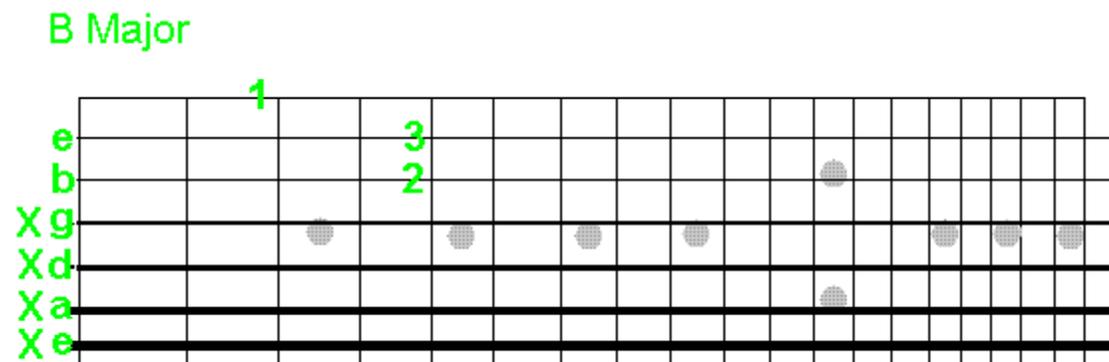
Experiment with different strum speed

Try to keep an even and steady downward speed without tensing up too much.

Onto Some New Chords:

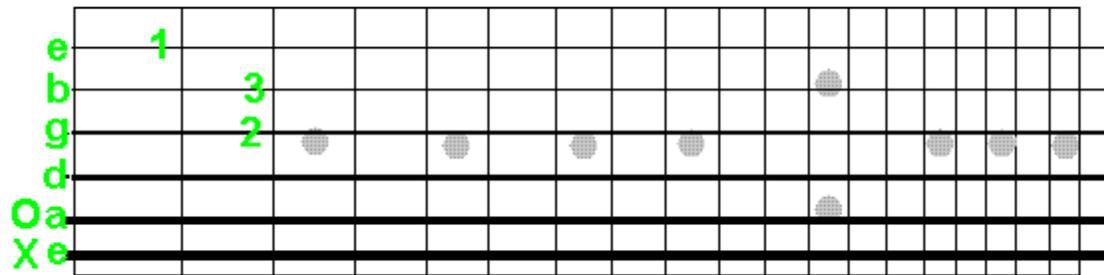
You should have been practicing the three chords from last week, so it's time to move on to some new ones. With these three, and the three from last week, you'll have all the chords you need for hundreds of 'busking' classics!

B Major



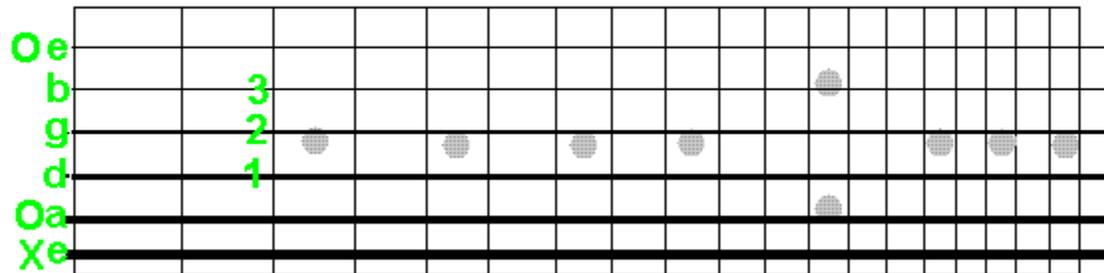
A Minor

A Minor



A Major

A Major



If these diagrams look confusing, think back to last lesson. An 'O' means that you include that string when you strum, even though it has no notes on it. An 'X' means to exclude that string. Don't let it ring at all. At this stage, just strum slowly downwards as you've been doing. You're trying to make sure that each note is fretted properly and that no strings are being deadened by your fingers.





EXERCISE:

For this exercise, you're going to be playing through the chords you've learnt. You'll need to follow a simple rhythm diagram that shows you how many chords to play before changing. For every 'slash' you see, strum down. Also, the chord name counts as one strum too.

A Major /// C Major ///

That would mean, play A Major four times (the chord name counts for one strum), then change to C Major for another four strums. You count a beat with your foot and you can even count out loud if you want. In fact, counting out the beats is recommended. Try these:

D Major /// D Major /// A Major /// A Major ///

D Major /// A Major /// D Major /// C Major ///

C Major /// C Major /// A Minor /// A Major ///

When you play through this exercise, you may find it quite hard to change the chords and still keep a steady beat. That's fine, because the idea of this exercise is to get you used to changing between chords. Feel free to make up your own changes, once you've played mine and can change comfortably.

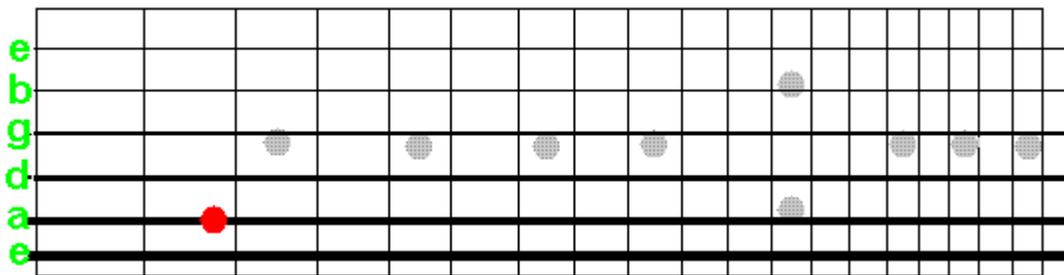
Power Chords:

You've probably heard of 'Power Chords' before. And you'll definitely use them a lot in rock music. I mean A LOT! Technically, power chords are not chords, because they are played with only two notes. The correct name for a power chord is a 'fifth interval'. Next week, we'll do some more theory on chords and intervals.

To play a power chord, you need to find a 'root' note and another note, one fifth above it. This means, you count five notes up, inclusive of the starting and end note. Let's look at an E power chord:

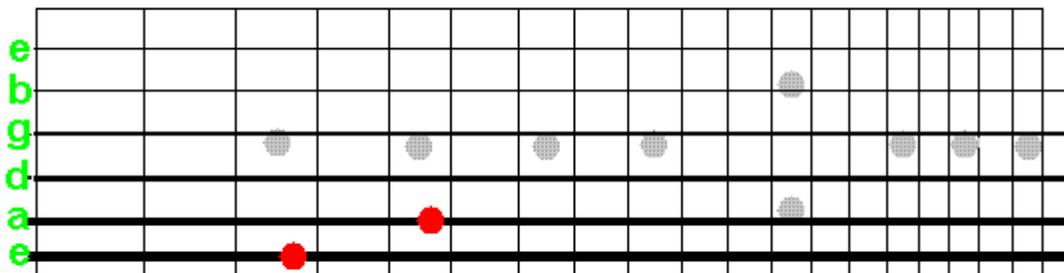
1 2 3 4 5
E F G A B

All this means is that 'B' is a note, a fifth higher than E. So if you play an E and a B together, you'll have an E power chord, or technically speaking, an E fifth interval. Let's look at that on the fret board:



Here, the E note required is just the open E string. The 'fifth' above E is the B note played on the second fret of the A string. With a power chord, you only play two notes, and the lowest note is usually the one that gives the chord its name. Here's a G power chord:

G Power Chord



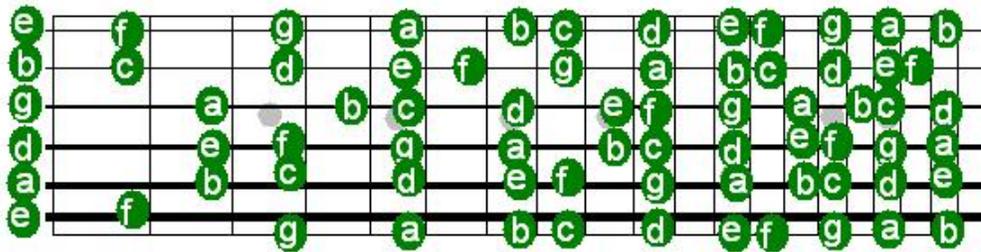
To play this one, you have two options. You could use your index finger on the E string and your third finger on the A string, or your fourth finger instead of the third.

Notice the pattern the two notes make? It's kind of an L shape. You can move this formation around on the lowest two strings to wherever you wish, with the lowest note giving the power chord it's name. So if you moved the G power chord directly over to the A string, you'd play the following notes. Your index finger would play a C note on the third fret of the A string, your third/fourth finger would be playing a G note on the D string.

The relative positions of your fingers will remain unchanged. You've just moved the whole shebang over. As long as you know what the low note is, you can say you are playing X Power Chord, X being the name of that note.

EXERCISE:

Using the chart below, find and play the following 'Power Chords':



Find the following power chords:

- A
- G
- D
- F

That wraps it up for this week. Between now and the next installment, practice all six chords, practice strumming and practice changing between the chords. See you next week!