

Learn Blues Guitar Easy



Fuzzball

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Lets get started

I will assume that you have a guitar and you know how to tune it and you know how to make the basic open chords.

I also assume you know/don't care what all the parts of the guitar are called and that you can read tab music.

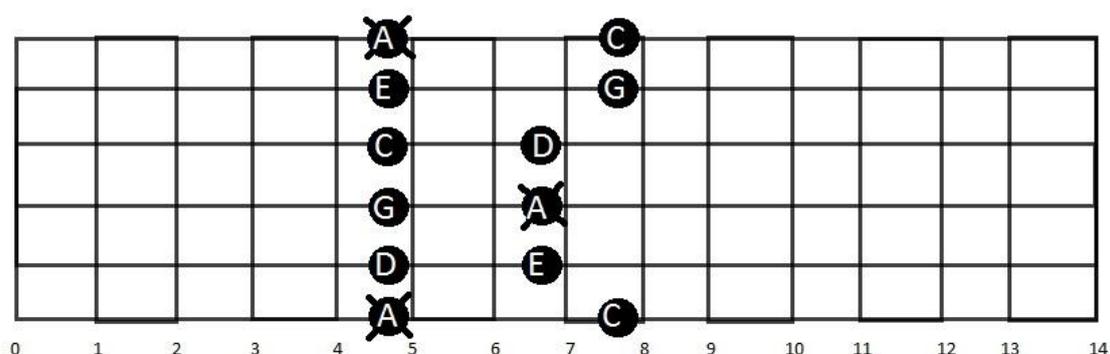
Other teach yourself guitar books will fill the first 50 pages with these four subjects just to fill up the book, so I won't waste your time with that.

Let's get on with what you downloaded the book for, learning to play blues and lead guitar.

Once you have the knowledge in your head you will use it to make music for the rest of your life, if you live that long. The more effort you put into learning how it all works now, the better music you are going to play in the future. So you must put aside any 'couldn't be bothered' feelings and work to make yourself exceptional. How good you become is all according to how much effort you put into it.

If you have already downloaded my previous book 'learn guitar easy' the first edition of which is called 'guitar omnibus' then you are way ahead and you have less work to do, otherwise don't worry, enjoy the journey ahead. I certainly did in my life.

The first thing you should learn is this scale pattern:



This is the blues scale in A. Let me briefly explain what this means.

If a friend is playing a song or instrumental tune in A major and you are playing lead guitar for him then you need to use a scale different from the A major scale otherwise it would sound off.

When you are listening to a song, your ear listens out for a major scale. When your ear hears a major scale it recognises that bit of the song as the main bit. If there are two people playing different things but both are using the major scale then your ear gets confused and has to go and have a lie down.

When your ear hears a blues/pentatonic scale it recognises that as the lead.

It's just like when you watch Laurel and Hardy or Abbot and Costello; you recognise right away who the straight guy is and who the clown is. In the same way, your ear says aha, this bit is the guy playing the main song and this guy is playing along. You know what I mean because you do it all the time.

The key of A major uses this scale:

A Bm C#m D E F#m G#m A

These are the notes that you use if you are making a tune in that key. If you use any other note it would sound off key.

If you are playing along with someone using this scale you have to use the A blues/pentatonic scale. It's a reduced version of the A major scale.

The A blues/pentatonic scale is made like this:

A Bm C#m D E F#m G#m A

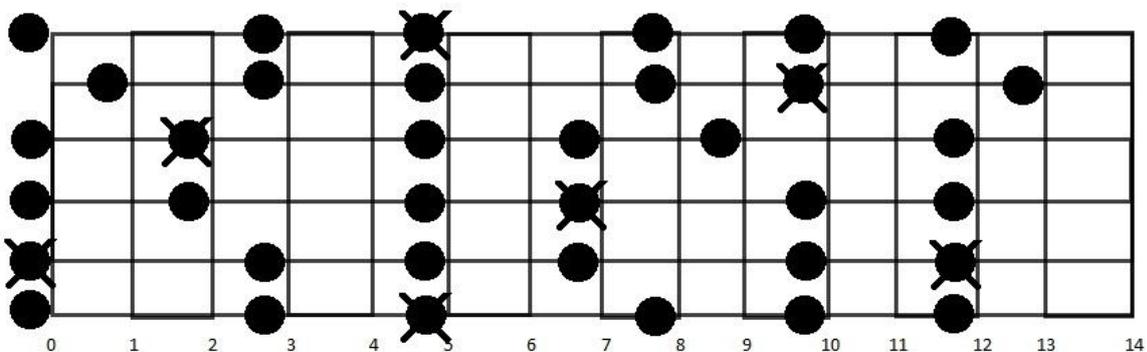
I	\	/	I	I	\	/	I
A	C	D	E	G	A		

Notice that the note C is used instead of the B and C# and the note G is used instead of F# and G#.

This makes a scale of five notes instead of the usual seven which is why we call it the pentatonic scale, penta means five and tonic means tone. Five tones.

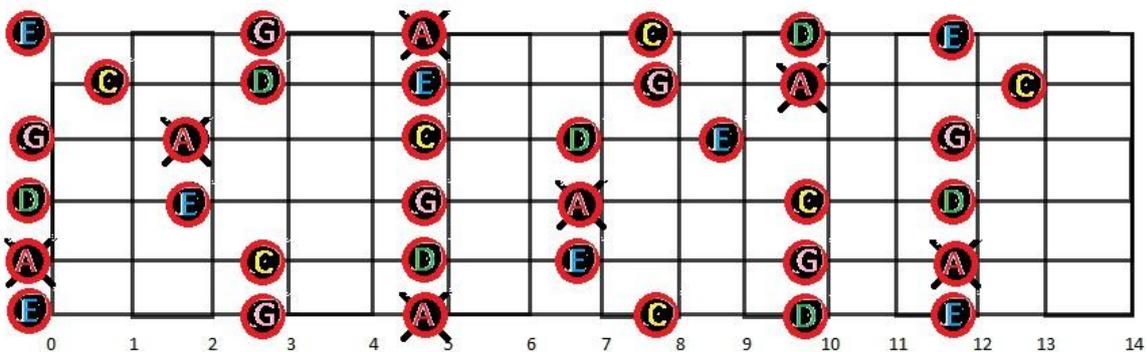
Now you understand how to make the basic blues scale, let's extend it so you can play all over the neck like the big guys/girls.

Here is a map showing where all the A blues scale notes are on the neck. The notes with the cross on them are the root note, A.



Those five notes that make up the blues scale can be found all over the neck, each note is somewhere on the neck 12 times. Remember that the neck map is repeated after the 12th fret

Here is the same map colour coded according to the notes.

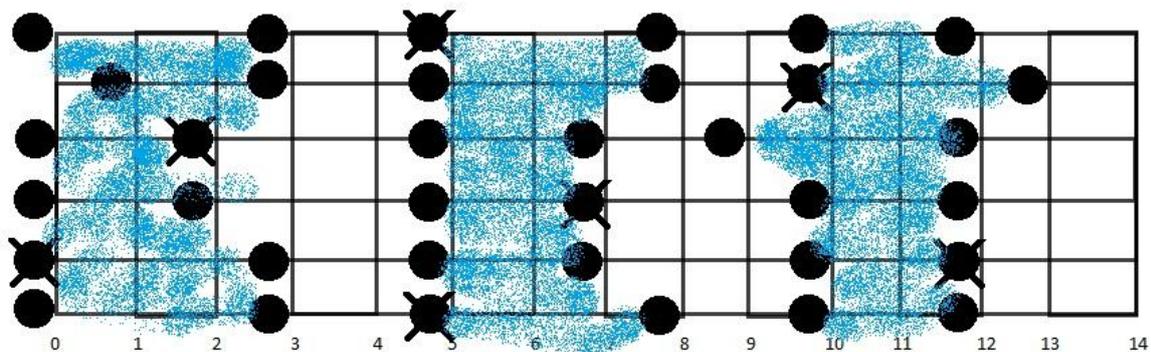


Notice that up to the 12th fret there are 6 of each note and above the 12th fret the pattern is repeated.

It follows that if there are 12 occurrences of each note on the neck then there are lots of versions of the same scale all over the neck, any of which you can join together to play an infinite riff, never running out of space like you would if you were playing across the neck with the basic blues scale.

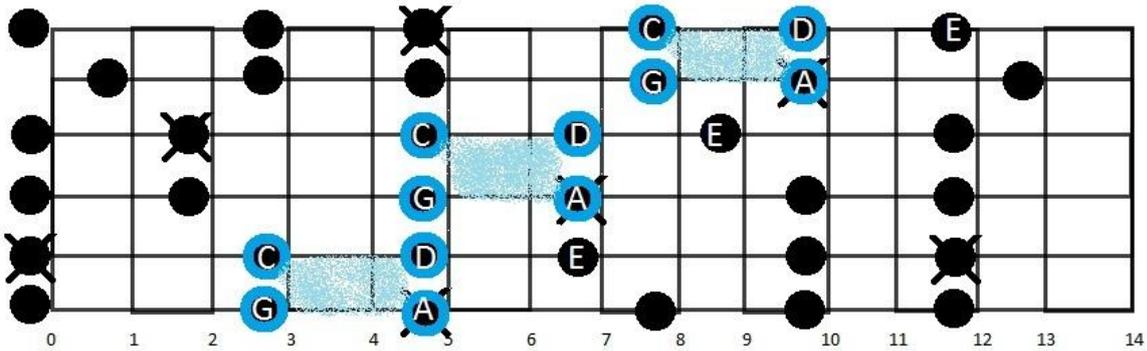
Let's now break the pattern up into separate modes so it becomes manageable and easy to learn.

Here is the same map with the scales separated into two octave scales.



This enables you to play any of these patterns to get an A blues scale so you are not restricted to just playing on the 5th fret. You can now play an A blues scale anywhere on the neck.

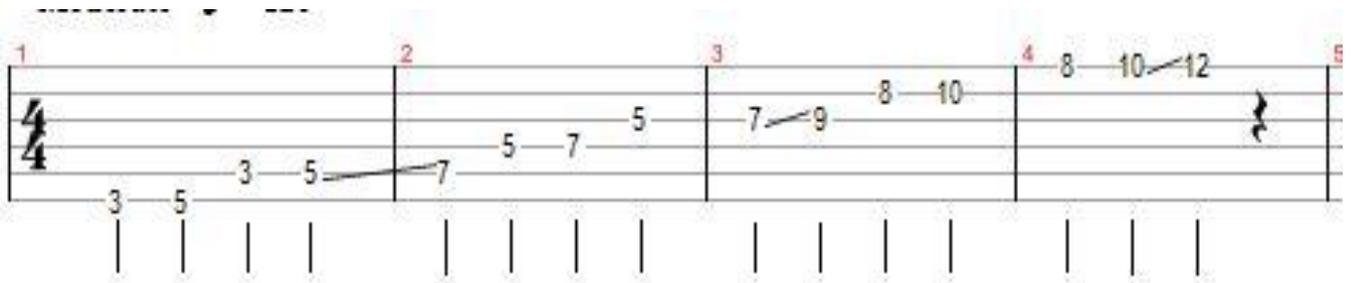
Now you have learned that, let's learn to play through those patterns, up the neck instead of across.



Take a look at the map and you will see that the five notes always turn up in the shape of a box.

The three boxes above are the same notes in three different places. G A C D and the black E.

To get the E you can slide up two frets setting yourself up for the next pattern like this:



Or you can play music just within the confines of one box using the five notes, and move between the boxes to give yourself a three octave range to play with. This pattern is easy to remember and you only ever need to stretch to two frets; there is no place in the pattern where you have to stretch three frets like in the standard blues scale. The other way to get the E is to bend the string till it sounds an E.

Do your best to learn this three box pattern because 90% of all the guitar you will ever play will be this pattern and the basic blues across the neck pattern. All the guitar music in your head that you are trying to make real through your guitar is made of this pattern.

The better and faster you can play this, the better a guitarist you will become.



How to find the key.

Go put a CD on, anything that you like. Now listen to the bass player, try to find the note that he is playing using the thickest string on your guitar (6th).

When you find the note that matches then that note is the key, the note on the maps that has the cross through it.

Play along with the CD using the blues pattern and you can't go wrong, everything you play will be in key. This is the perfect way to practice; playing along with a CD. The more you do this the more comfortable you will get at expressing yourself. It's just like talking; you will do it so often it will become natural, just another way of communicating. Just make musical lines using those blue boxes, think in terms of lots of little triangles joined together. Randy Rhoades used to create riffs like that. Let your fingers find lines by themselves, that way your music will be natural and it will be original. If you can create the music that is in your mind just as you imagine it, then you at that moment are the greatest guitarist in the world, because that is what all of us guitarists are trying to do; make the music that is inside of us real so that other people can hear it.



B.B.King

Pitch axis

The usual way music is made is this:

The song is made from a major scale and the riff and anything else is made from a blues scale.

Joe Satriani, Steve Vai, John Petrucci and lots of other guitarists turn this arrangement on its head. They play the main bit with a blues scale and do all the riffs and elaboration with major scale patterns. Good examples of this are Satch Boogie and For the love of God.

Pitch axis is when you use any major pattern but the root note is the one to the key you are in.

For example if I am playing in A then I would normally use an Ionian pattern on the 5th fret, but if I am playing a riff I can use any pattern AS LONG AS I PLAY FROM THE ROOT NOTE A.

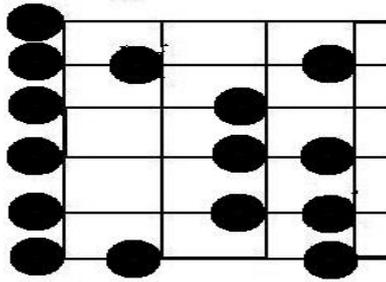
This is what pitch axis means, the scale can be any pattern but it starts from the root note of the key you are in.

In my other book, learn guitar easy, I explained how to play Spanish guitar by changing the root note from C to E. This is pitch axis. What you did was play a Phrygian pattern on the open fret instead of an Ionian pattern. This changed the overall sound of what you were playing, so instead of sounding English and bouncy, happy, it sounded Spanish, moody, dark.

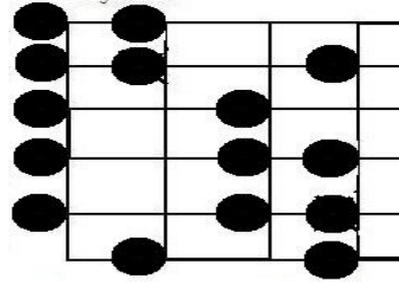
This is why the patterns are called modes, they change the mood of the piece of music you are playing. It is much like when you speak, you use the same words but change the tone of your voice to express the mood of the statement so the same sentence can have different meanings. You could say I love you, which would be nice, but if you said it sarcastically or reluctantly then the same words would have totally different meanings. You use modes on the guitar in much the same way.

Here are all the patterns you can use when you are riffing. The modes used most in blues guitar riffing are the Mixolydian, the Aeolian and the Dorian. Using modes instead of the standard blues scale means you are playing three notes per string instead of the usual two, so you can play more complicated scales.

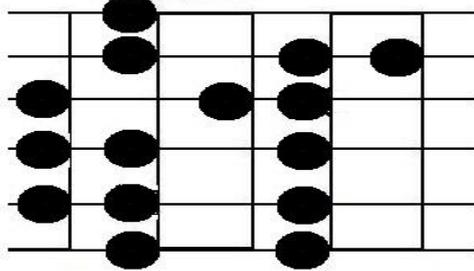
Phrygian



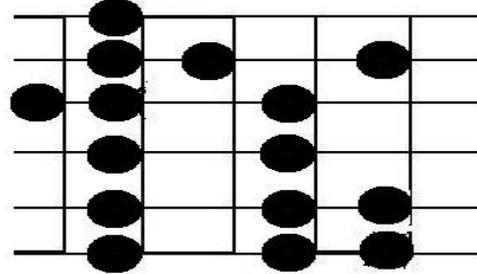
Lydian



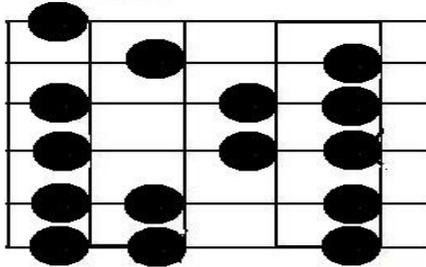
Mixolydian



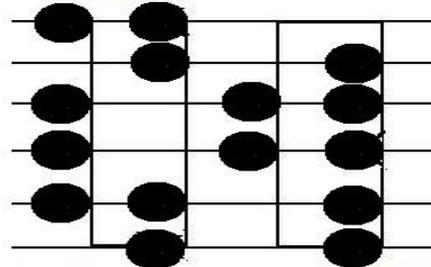
Aeolian



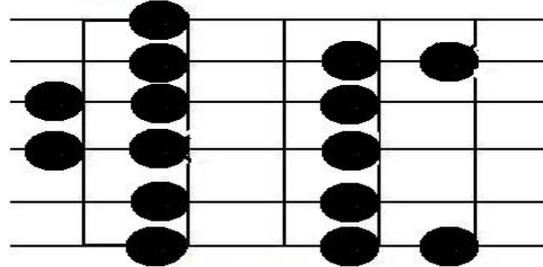
Locrian



Ionian



Dorian



Clever trick time.

Let's take a break from guitar for a page or two and I'll show you my favourite money trick.

Take a five pound note or any money bill with a picture of a face on it.



Fold like this through the eye.



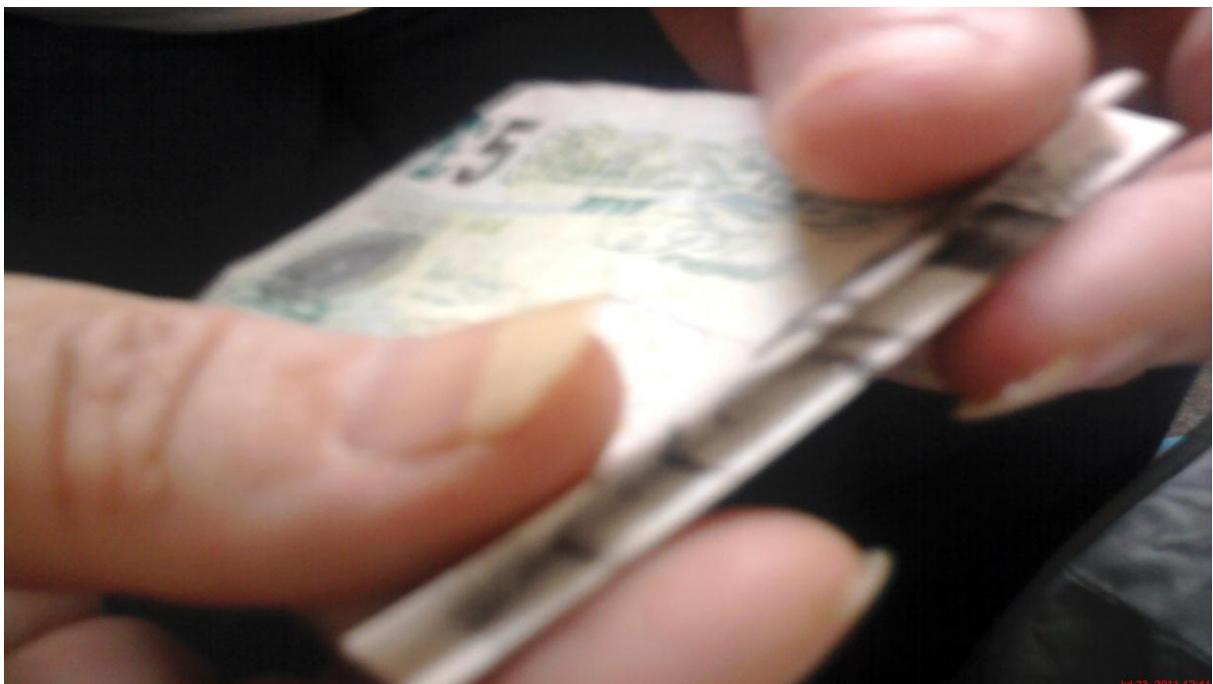
Next fold through the other eye.



So it looks like this:



Now fold through the middle, bringing the eyes together.



Then open it up again so you can see the picture.

Now look at the picture as you tilt it,
one way the Queen is smiling,



And the other way the Queen is frowning.



Great trick. Back to guitar.

Mixing chords into the riff.

Any note you play can be changed into a chord just by adding one or more notes. Usually the 3rd note from the note you are playing or the 5th.

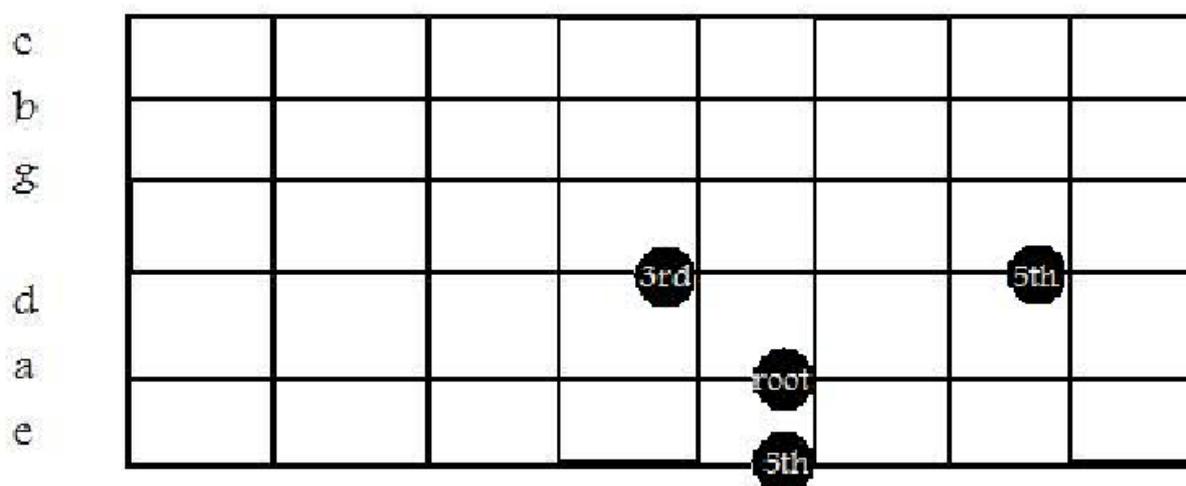
Consider the scale of A major.

A B C# D E F# G# A

If you wanted to make a chord from the note A you would add the 3rd note C# and/or the 5th note E or both.

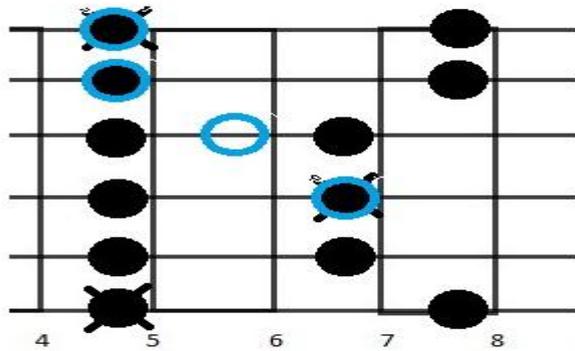
If you wanted to make a chord out of D, add the 3rd note F# and/or the 5th note A.

Ya see how that works. The trouble is you need to know the scale, but you can do this just by knowing where the notes are in relation to each other on the neck. They are all here:

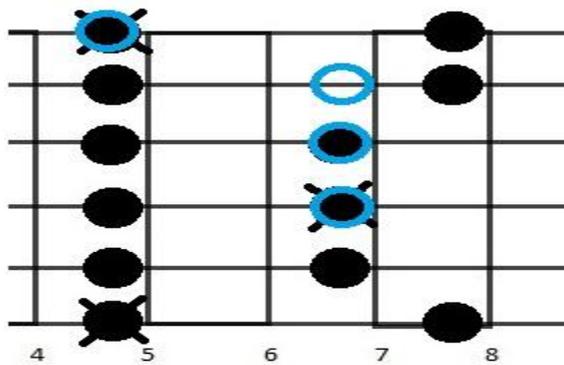


Add the 3rd or the fifth to any note and it becomes a chord. The only place where this isn't the case is on the second string because it is tuned half a step up. So now you can play single note riffs and put in the odd chord to jazz it up.

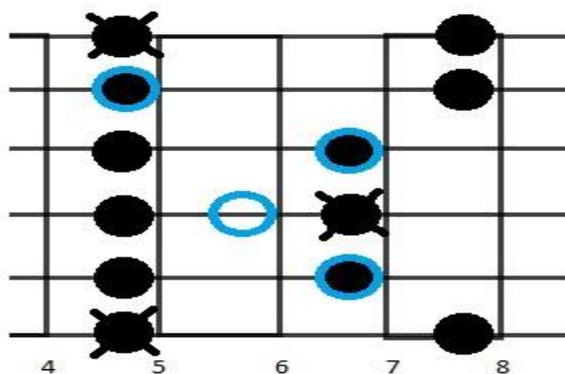
Next let's find out how to make the three major chord shapes within a riff so you can add the major chords without moving away from the fifth fret.



E shape



A shape

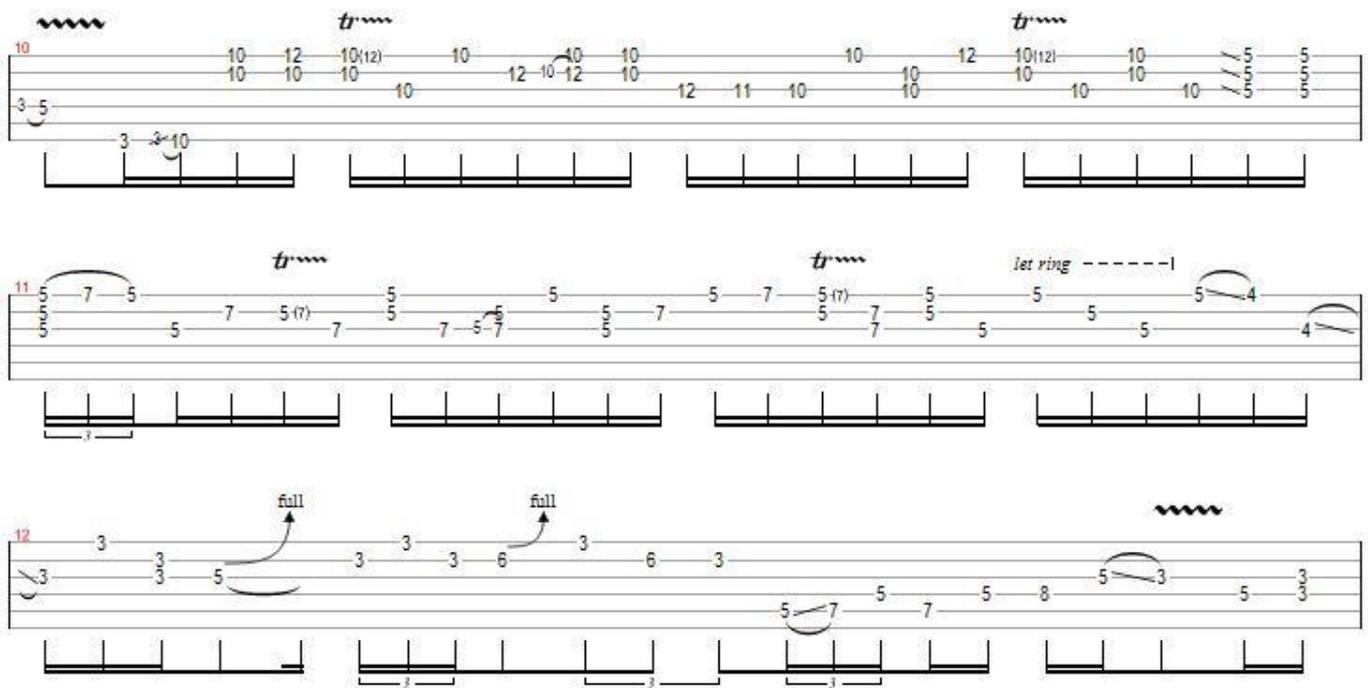
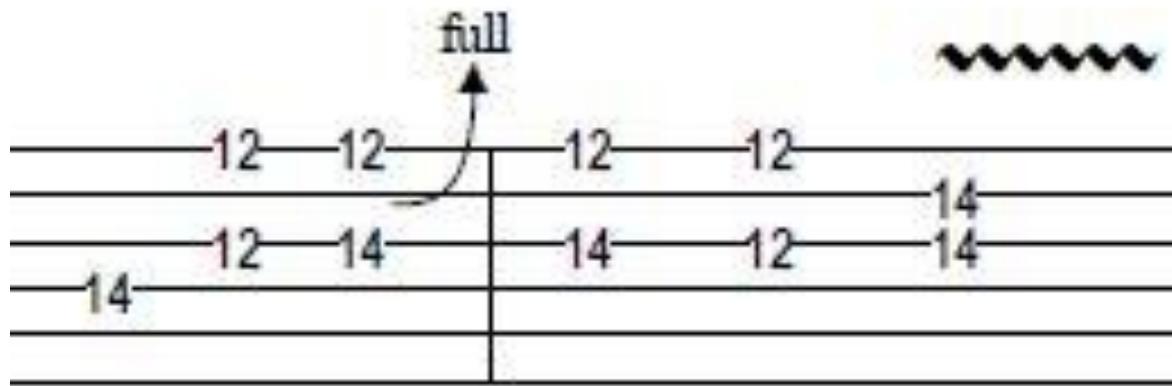


B shape

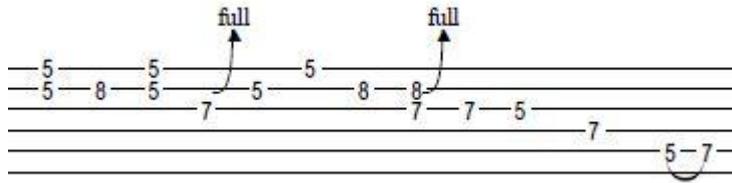
Now you can play rhythm and lead together.

Tab time

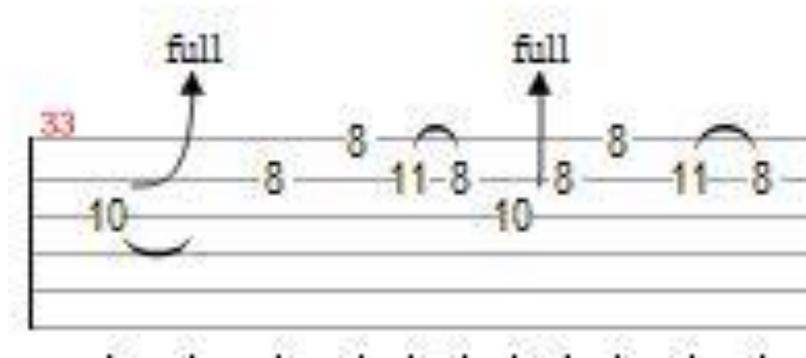
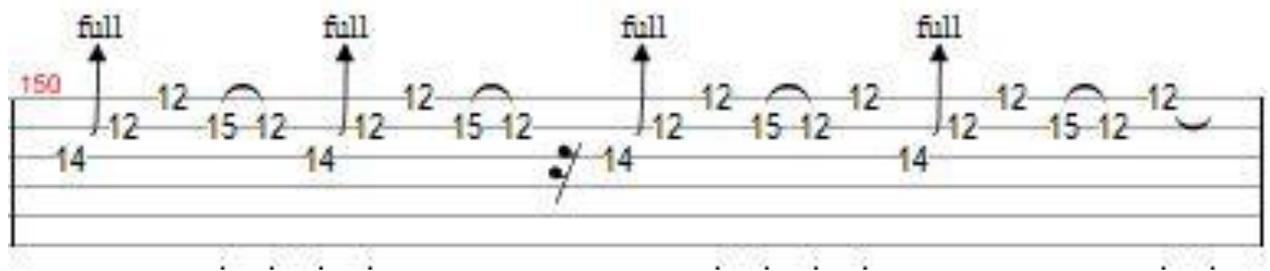
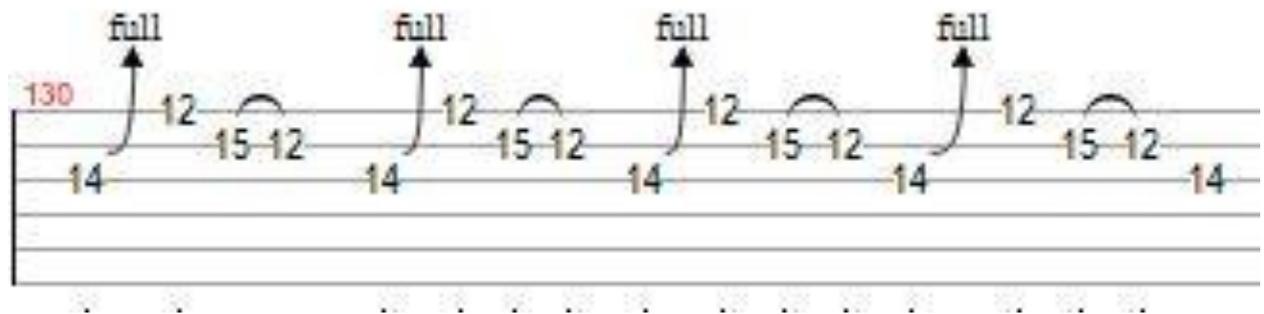
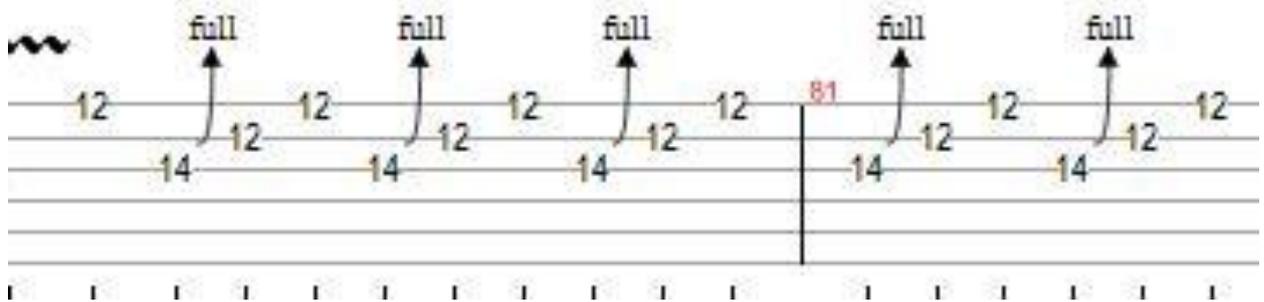
Here's some tab showing how to incorporate chords into a riff.



This is my interpretation of the pretty bit from Texas flood on the live from the El Mocambo video by Stevie Ray Vaughan. The bit just before he turns the distortion on.



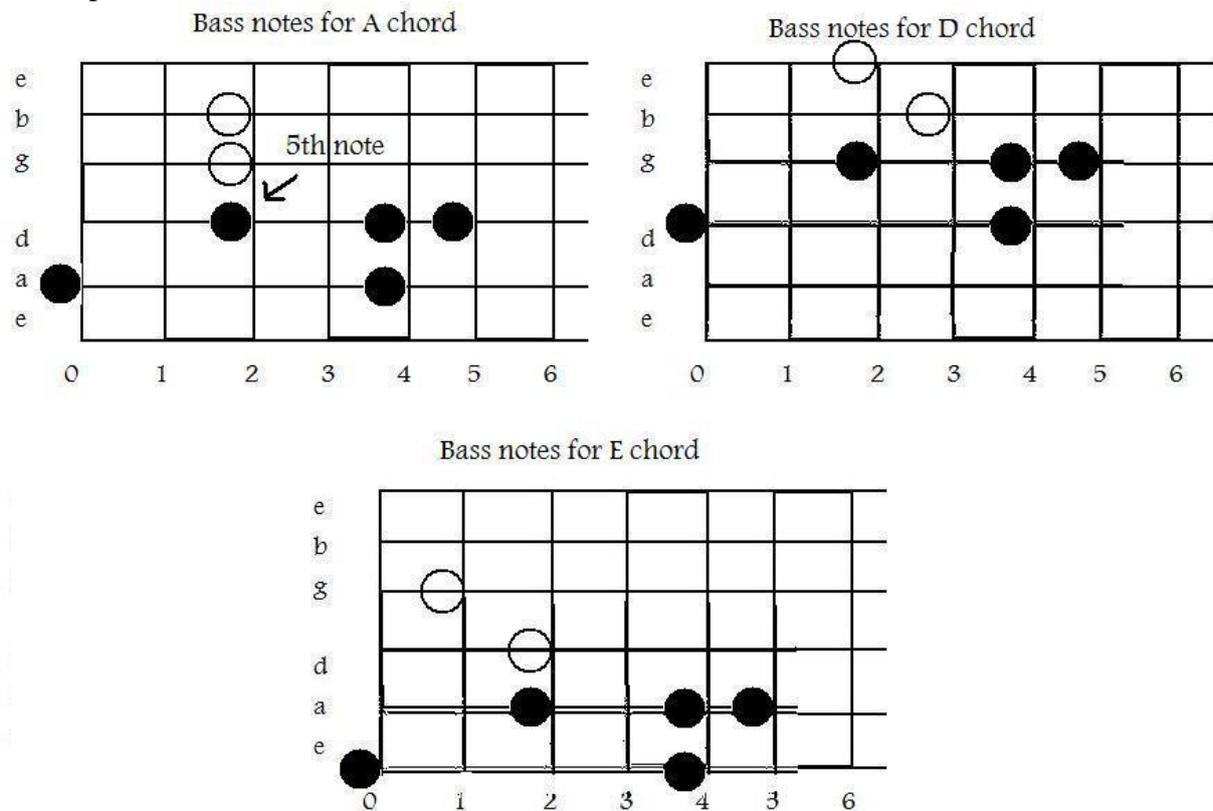
Here's some variations of a round and round phrase that gets used a lot.



Blues / rock rhythm.

There are three main ways of playing blues/rock rhythm.

Half open chord based:



playing the first two notes of an open chord, play the bass notes as a bass line, this way you are playing bass and rhythm at the same time. Ignore the ghost notes, they are just there so you can see the chord that this bass line relates to. Just hold the 5th with your index finger, using your other fingers to play the bass while always playing the two strings together, just as in the tab on the following page.

A5

1 2

2 2 2 4 5 4 2 2

0 4 0 0 0 0 4 0

D5

1 2

2 2 2 4 5 4 2 2

0 4 0 0 0 0 4 0

E5

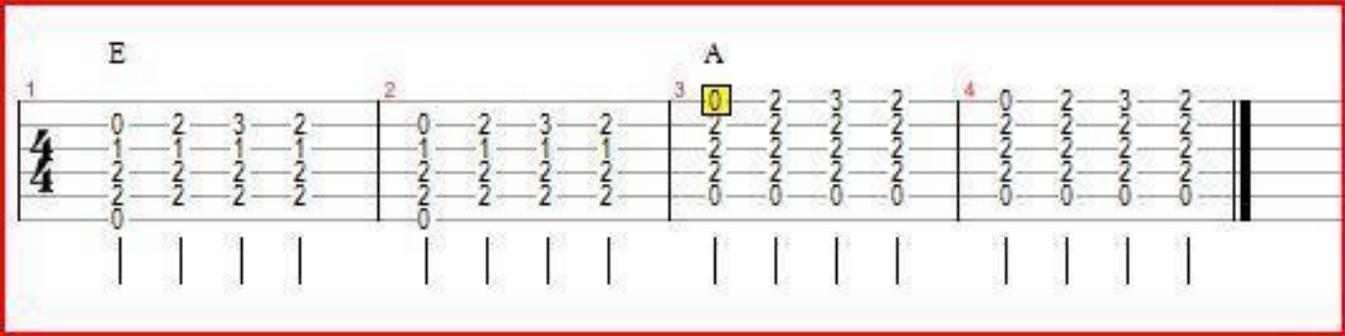
1 2

2 2 2 4 5 4 2 2

0 4 0 0 0 0 4 0

Notice that the pattern is the same on all three chords, This is a very common rhythm pattern, usually called boogie woogie. There are all kinds of variations of it, find some of your own. Experiment.

Full open chord based:

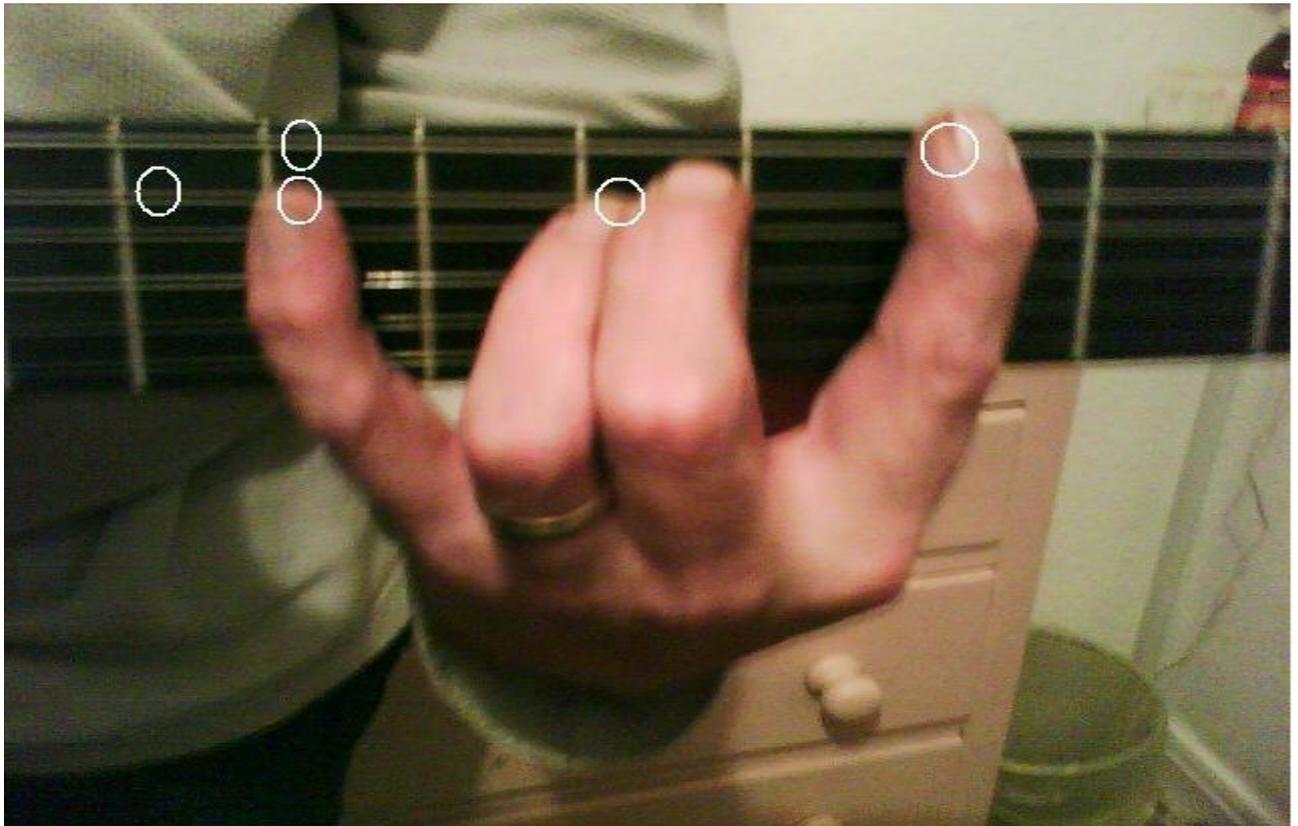


This does the same thing but using the treble string for the fancy bit.



Randy Rhoades

Barre chord based.



The barre version uses the same principles as the half open but you play it on a fret higher than 0 in any key. In the picture here I am playing it on the 5th fret, so I am playing blues/rock rhythm in A. The Ghost notes are the bassline. Play all three strings.

If you move all this across a string, so the bassline is on the 5th and 4th string, the chord and bassline becomes D.

If you were to move it up two frets, it becomes E.

Rock guitarists do this all the time. Put any video on and see. Status Quo is famous for using this method.

Note how my ring finger is tucked under my middle finger. This makes it easier to hold the shape while I move it around the neck.

Something worth thinking about.

If you are thinking to yourself there is only so much I can do with 5 notes and 7 chords, then consider this quotation from Terry Pratchett from science of the Discworld 2 The Globe.

Let's come down to Earth and ask a simpler question. The wells of human creativity run deep, but if you take too much water from a well it runs dry. Once Beethoven had written the opening bars of his Symphony in C Minor - *dah-dah-da DUM* - that was one less tune for the rest of us. Given the amount of music that has been composed over the ages, maybe most of the best tunes have been found already. Will the composers of the future be unable to match those of the past because the world is running out of tunes?

There is, of course, far more to a piece of music than a mere tune. There is melody, rhythm, texture, harmony, development ... But even Beethoven knew you can't beat a good tune to get your composition off the ground. By 'tune' we mean a relatively short section of music - what the *cognoscenti* call a 'motif' or a 'phrase', between one and thirty notes in length, say. Tunes are important, because they are the building blocks for everything else, be it Beethoven or Boyzone. A composer in a world that has run out of tunes is like an architect in a world that has run out of bricks.

Mathematically, a tune is a sequence of notes, and the set of all possible such sequences forms a phase space: a conceptual catalogue that contains not just all the tunes that have been written, but all the tunes that could ever be written. How big is T-space?

Naturally, the answer depends on just what we are willing to accept as a tune. It has been said that a monkey typing at random would eventually produce *Hamlet*, and that's true if you're willing to wait a lot longer than the total age of the universe. It's also true that along the way the monkey will have

produced an incredible amount of airport novels. In contrast, a monkey pounding the keys of a piano might actually hit on a reasonable tune every so often, so it looks as though the space of acceptably tuneful tunes is a reasonable-sized chunk of the space of *all* tunes. And at that point, the mathematician's reflexes can kick in, and we can do some combinatorics again.

To keep things simple, we'll consider only European-style music based on the usual twelve-note scale. We'll ignore the quality of the notes; whether played on a piano, violin, or tubular bells, all that matters is their sequence. We'll ignore whether the note is played loudly or softly, and - more drastically - we'll ignore all issues of timing. Finally, we'll restrict the notes to two octaves, 25 notes altogether. Of course all these things are important in real music, but if we take them into account their effect is to *increase* the variety of possible tunes. Our answer will be an underestimate, and that's all to the good since it will still turn out to be *huge*. Really, *really* huge, right? No - bigger than *that*.

For our immediate purposes only, then, a tune is a sequence of 30 or fewer notes, each chosen from 25 possibilities. We can count how many tunes there are in the same way that we counted arrangements of cars and DNA bases. So the number of sequences of 30 notes is $25 \times 25 \times \dots \times 25$, with 30 repetitions of that 25. Computer job, that: it says that the answer is

867361737988403547205962240695953369140625

which has 42 digits. Adding in the 29-note tunes, the 28-note ones, and so on we find that T-space contains roughly nine million billion billion billion billion tunes. Arthur C. Clarke once wrote a science fiction story about the 'Nine billion names of God'. T-space contains a million billion billion billion tunes for every one of God's names. Assume that a million composers write music for a thousand years, each producing a thousand tunes per year, more prolific even than The Beatles. Then the total number of tunes they will write is a mere trillion. This is such a tiny fraction of that 42-digit number that those

Final thoughts

The thing you should always remember is that you are playing guitar for pleasure, for fun. Don't get wrapped up in the technical details. When you have a conversation with someone you don't worry about how you are saying something or if the person thinks you are a great talker or how eloquent you are, you just talk, it's the most natural thing there is. Guitar is like that, you just pick it up and express yourself. Don't worry if you are any good at it, when you were a baby you were no good at talking but you got better at it from talking to other people, now look at you. You are just at the stage that you are at, soon you will be a better guitarist then you will be even better. For example when I was at your stage I never thought for a minute that I would become a teacher, I certainly never imagined that I would be writing two books on the subject. You just don't know what you will become, just enjoy the process and let the future become what it will.

You will never be the guitarist that is in your head, you imagine the sound you want to make and try to make it real but because of the nature of your body, your reflexes, your muscles, the time that you are allowed by circumstance to devote to practice, you can never match what is in your mind. Don't worry, we all have that problem, it's called being human.

When you see a new guitarist that impresses you, you learn what he/she is doing and emulate it, but by then someone else has impressed you and you want to do what he/she is doing, you are a butterfly flitting from flower to flower. Just be happy to explore the infinite world of the guitar, there are many who cannot do this because they just can't understand it or they never meet someone who teaches them properly.

You can always take a moment out of your stressful life and forget everything while you become involved in what your fingers are doing and you can forget it all for a bit. You will meet and play music with people who you never would have met if it wasn't for the guitar. You have mental capacities that you wouldn't otherwise have, I for example can separate sounds

when I am listening to something, a skill all guitarists acquire as a result of listening to the bass and rhythm while playing. Everything about you is different because you developed a creative streak.

You are lucky to be given such a gift. So practice those patterns and learn about the relationships that they have with the music you are playing. Regularly play along with CDs and jam with other musicians and explore the world of music that is out there. Improve your skill so that whatever you might want to do with it in future you will find easy.

You need to look at other styles of music than the ones you are currently interested in, the guitarist Charlie Christian liked to listen to saxophone music and emulated it on his guitar and developed a unique style which is much admired. Go listen to some Sonny Rollins to hear some fantastic blues expression, he can play for hours making blues music and never repeat a phrase. John Coltrane is worth a listen to any musician, he does things with scales and chords that no one ever did before. He was interested in Indian music and applied it to the saxophone also he played a soprano saxophone which at the time, no one had considered using. Check out A love supreme and Coltrane plays the blues, great to play along with.

Go listen to some old time American fiddle music, the fiddle was the lead guitar of the popular music scene before the guitar came along and there is a lot of technique there that transfers over to the guitar, things like playing a conversation between a high bit and a low bit, question and answer guitar like Thin Lizzy do. Jimmy Hendrix never listened to anything except the goon show and classical music. His middle name was Marshall. Stevie Ray Vaughan became so good at blues music because he played regularly with the best blues guitarists and absorbed all the styles and all the things that they knew.

Think how much less of a guitarist you were before you read my two books. Think how much more of a guitarist you could be if you jammed with someone like me. Well there's lots of people like me out there, there's people much better than me, certainly younger, go and find them and jam.

When I was teaching guitar in Manchester I had a guy in for his first session and I said “give me your guitar, it’s way out of tune.” He said “ It can’t be, it was in tune when I bought it.” That guy knew nothing about guitar, but within a few months he was working in clubs in a band and is now regularly teaching guitar just like I did. You too can be this successful if you make the investment of learning what is here in this book and look to other areas of music in all its forms to find something new to do with it. Don’t just play songs that have already been recorded, make your own music, that is what other guitarists respect. If you was to say to another guitarist I can play this tune, the chances are, so can he. Guitarists respect people who can express themselves, you can tell when they are impressed by what you are doing because they are looking at your left hand to figure out how you are doing it. You probably do this when you are watching a video of your favourite guitarist. if you knew someone who only quoted people when he spoke and never said anything original you would wonder why he ever learned to talk wouldn’t you? You were given the gift of music so that you could express yourself, don’t waste it expressing other peoples stuff

.
If you are in a guitar shop trying out a guitar, don’t play stairway to heaven, they are sick of hearing that tune. Get respect by playing your own stuff.

The most important thing to do is to play with other musicians, you wouldn’t talk only to yourself would you? Music is a social thing, it thrives when you share it. You are inspired by other people and by what they do with the song you are playing and you are inspired by them. If you are talking to someone, when they speak it takes your mind into another direction and the conversation goes in directions that you wouldn’t expect which is what makes talking to people so interesting, this is why we don’t talk to ourselves because it doesn’t happen when you talk to yourself. Music is the same. So find other people and shred till you are dead.

If you never play music with others you are like a bird in a cage, your talent won't develop and it will be wasted.

Thank you for downloading this book and if you want to copy it or distribute it in any way then feel free, it is copyright free. All the information in this book is common knowledge to any guitarist so do with it what you like. Have a wonderful life and play music all the way through it.



Useful links

If you would like some links for good sites on the net then here are my favourites:

www.ultimate-guitar.com Well worth a look, THE site if you play guitar. Massive forum, lots of tab.

WWW.DanCHolloway.com Excellent site for finger style, Video lessons, tab. Lots of interest here.

www.satriani.com Satches own site. A very friendly forum where you can leave a message for Joe and get an answer; Joe frequently visits the site and puts messages up and answers your questions. His messages are always in blue. I love this site, the people you find there are very welcoming and friendly.

www.vai.com Steve Vais official site very big forum section similar to ultimate guitar.com

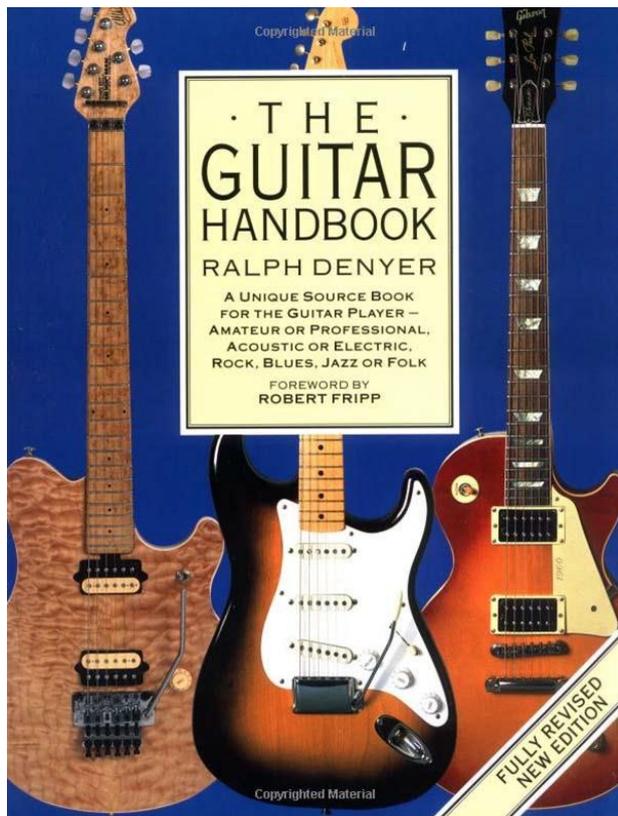
www.srvofficial.com Stevie Ray Vaughan's official site.

<http://www.rorygallagher.com/> The official site dedicated to the Irish blues guitarist Rory Gallagher. Great site.

Further reading

There are many millions of books that you can buy that teach you guitar. Most of them are only any good if you know absolutely nothing on the subject. If you know about open chords and how to tune a guitar then 99% of them are useless.

However there is one book that is the guitarists bible. The guitar handbook by Ralph Denyer.



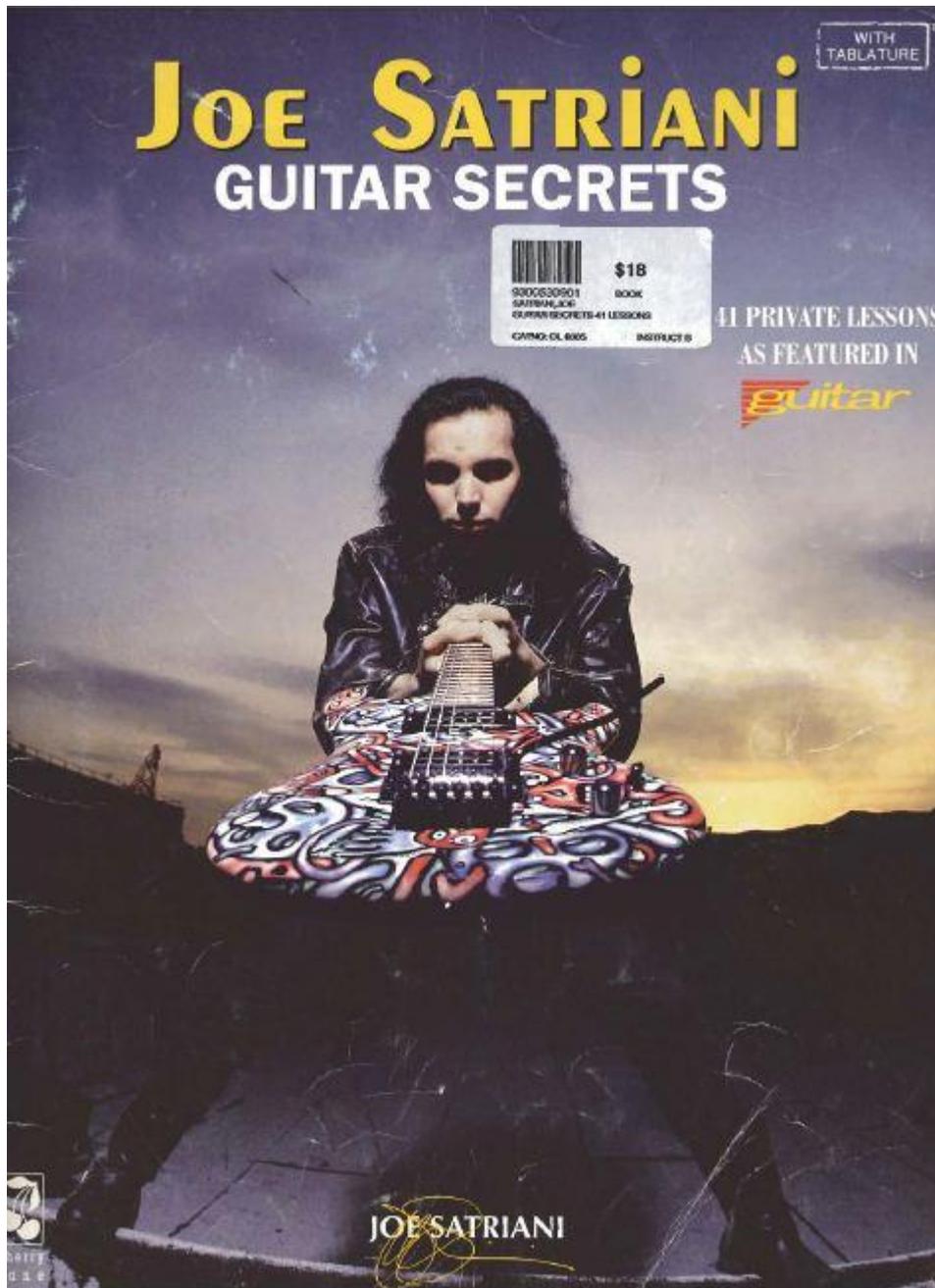
The guitar handbook is the most comprehensive resource available for beginning and experienced guitarists alike, whether acoustic or electric. Completely redesigned and with many more full-color photos than the original, this new edition surveys recent models and profiles current masters, includes an expanded lesson section, and encompasses 10 years of technological change in recording and amplification.

This book is THE book to buy if you need to know anything about the guitar, they should have it in schools. Go find a copy.



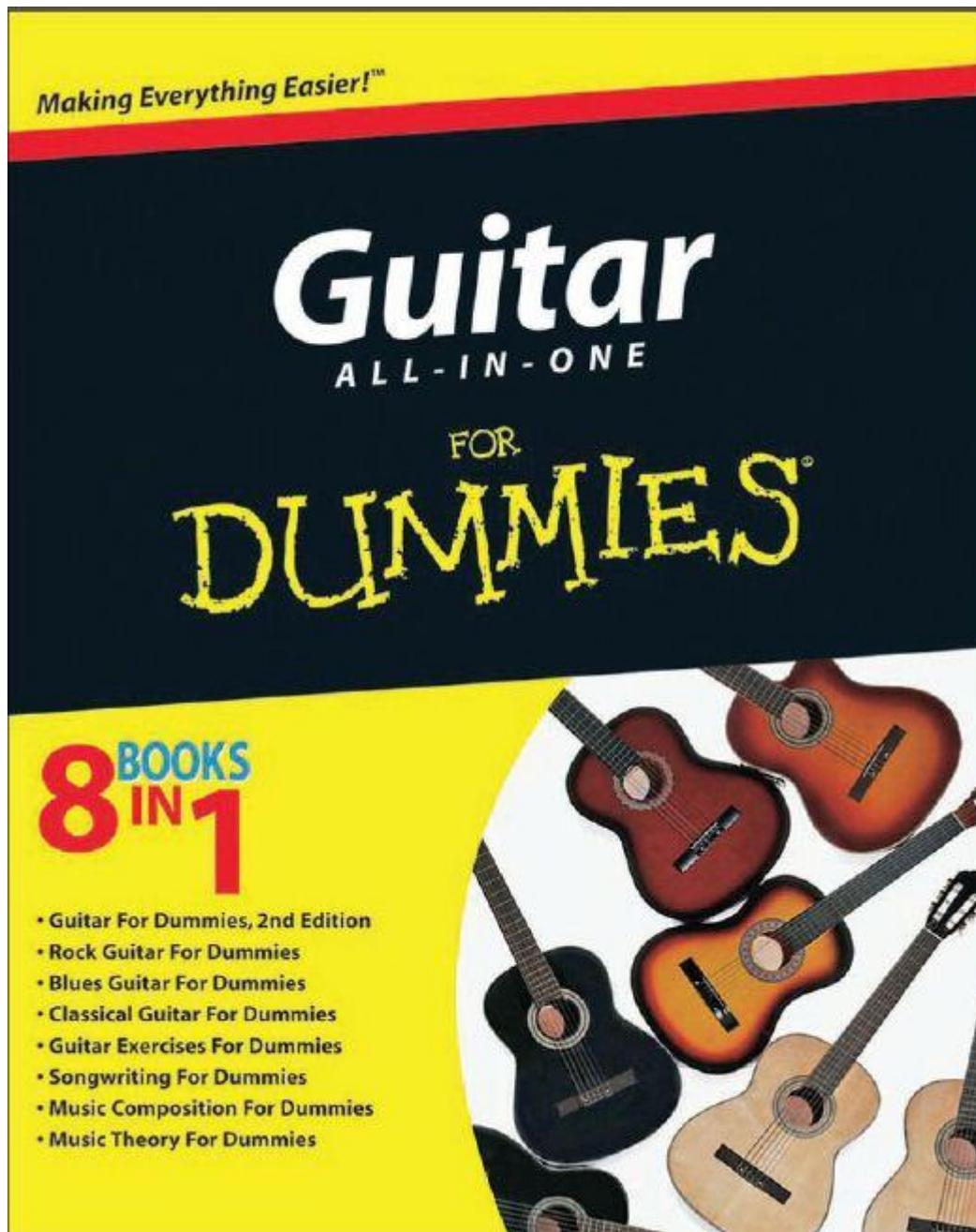
T-Bone Walker

Guitar Secrets by Joe Satriani



An excellent book, goes right into all the techniques that makes Joe the greatest guitar player in the world.

Guitar for dummies.



A very comprehensive book containing all you need to know, no matter how experienced you are on the guitar,

Recommended software.

There is one piece of software that you need to have if you are a dedicated guitar nut. Guitar pro.

Go take a look at it at www.guitar-pro.com

What a fantastic program. With it you can write music scores, guitar tabulation, multi track, and you can **play** it so you can hear what the piece of music you just written sounds like. You can download ready made music. Thousands of them.

Here's the good bit, you can remove the guitar track and play along with the song like a backing track. So you could load Texas Flood, switch the lead guitar part off and play your own blues.

It also has an add on called R.S.E. real sound effects, so you get the sound of a real guitar on playback.

I can't praise it enough. A Phenomenal tool for any guitarist.

