

GUITAR SCHOOL

This book is designed for you to study material from *both sections* of the book *simultaneously*. You may begin in either **SECTION ONE: Accompaniment, Guitar Styles and Improvisation** or in **SECTION TWO: Reading Music, Solos and Ensembles**. The audio that accompanies this book has been recorded with the accompaniment on the left channel and the solos on the right channel.

Contents

2. **SECTION ONE: Accompaniment, Guitar Styles and Improvisation, Pickstyle, Down-Strum, Up-Strum**
3. Fingerstyle, Arm and Hand Position, Strums, Basic Fingerstyle Hand Position, Free Stroke
4. Chords, Basic Chord Forms, Moveable Chord Forms
5. Index Finger Bar Technique
6. Music Theory, Intervals, Types of Intervals
7. Major, Minor, Perfect, Augmented and Diminished Intervals
8. Triads, Major, Minor, Diminished and Augmented
9. Seventh Chords, Major Seventh, Dominant Seventh, Minor Seventh, Minor Seventh Flat Five, Diminished Seventh
10. Principal Chords, Transportation Tips
11. Moveable Principal Chords, Basic Rhythm Strum, Left-Hand Damping Technique
12. Bluegrass Style, Basic Bluegrass Strum, *Oh, Them Golden Slippers*
13. Bass Runs, Other Bass Patterns
14. Pinch Technique, Blues Pinch Pattern, *Hesitation* (Acc.)
15. *Hesitation* (Solo)
16. Metal Guitar Styles, Power Chords, *Deliver* (Acc.)
17. Minor Pentatonic Scale, G Minor Pentatonic Scale, *Deliver* (Solo), Create Your Own Solo
18. Hammer-on, *When the Saints Go Marching In* (Acc.)
19. *When the Saints Go Marching In* (Solo), Other Hammer-on Patterns, Hammer-ons Beginning on the Upbeat
20. Pull-off, Carter Style, *Wildwood Flower* (Solo)
21. Carter Strum Variations
22. Blues Styles, Moveable Seventh Chords, *Gee Blues* (Acc.), Blues Strum, Mute Technique, Blues Variation Strum
23. Blues Scale, *Gee Blues* (Solo)
24. Secondary Chords, *It's a Foggy Day* (Solo)
25. Moveable Secondary Chords, Rock Strum No. 1, *Brighton* (Solo)
26. New Age Style, Calypso Strum, *Aerial* (Acc.)
27. *Aerial* (Solo)
28. Reggae Style, Basic Reggae Pattern, Down-Strikes, Right-Hand Damping, Left-Hand Damping, *Jamaican Reggae* (Acc.)
29. *Jamaican Reggae* (Solo), Up-Strikes, Reggae Variation Strums
30. *The Cruel War Is Raging* (Acc. and Solo)
31. Slash Chords, *Bridges* (Acc. and Solo)
32. Country Style, *Cripple Creek* (Solo), Improvised Solos, Major Pentatonic Scale, Solo Break No. 1
33. Major Pentatonic Scale with Flatted Third, Solo Break No. 2, Tag
34. Secondary Seventh Chords, Chord Progression I-ii-iii, *Horizon* (Pickstyle or Fingerstyle Acc.)
35. *Horizon* (Fingerstyle Acc.), *Horizon* (Solo)
36. Moveable Secondary Seventh Chords, Light Rock Strum, *Horizon* (Rock Acc.)
37. Major Seventh Chords
38. Bossa Nova Style, Basic Bossa Nova Pattern, *Shadows* (Acc.)
39. *Shadows* (Solo)
40. Travis Picking, Playing Position, Groove the Bass, Add the Fingers
41. Add the Pinch Technique
42. Add the Pull Technique, *Getting There* (Acc.)
43. *Getting There* (Solo), Travis Picking with an Alternate Bass
44. Moveable Major Seventh Chords, Chord Progression Imaj7-ii7-iii7
45. Major Seventh Chord Drills, Bossa Nova Variations
46. Alternate Tunings, Drop D Tuning, *Turning Back* (Acc.), *Turning Back* (Solo)
47. More Blues, *West Coast Blues* (Solo)
48. Jazz/Blues Style, Ninth Chord, Blues in Bb, *Blues a la Jazz* (Acc. and Solo)
49. Blues in F
50. Review—Moveable Chords, 6th String Root Chords, G Type Chords, Notes on the 6th String
51. 5th String Root Chords, D Type Chords, Notes on the 5th String
52. Jazz Style, Chord Progression ii7-V7, ii7-V7-Imaj7
53. Basic Jazz Comp
54. Jazz in Three
55. Jazz Waltz Comp, Jazz Waltz Variation Patterns
56. Improvisation Tools, Scales and Arpeggios, Modes
57. Dorian Mode, D Dorian Mode, *Dorian Mood* (Solo)
58. Mixolydian Mode, G Mixolydian Mode, *Mix It* (Solo)
59. *Dorian Mix* (Solo), C Scale, 2nd Position; D Dorian Mode, 2nd Position; G Mixolydian Mode, 2nd Position
60. Five Major Scale Patterns, Major Scale Shapes
61. Major Scales, Modes and Arpeggios
62. Diminished Seventh Chords, Basic Chord Forms, Moveable Chord Forms
63. Diminished Seventh Chord Progressions
64. Freddie's Comp, Tenuto-Staccato Strum, Pull Technique
65. Altered Dominant Seventh Chords, E7#9 Chord, D7#9 Chord, Funk/Rock Strum
66. Mapping the Fingerboard, Natural Notes, Octaves
67. Additional Hints
68. **SECTION TWO: Reading Music, Solos and Ensembles, Pickstyle, Holding the Pick, Arm and Hand Position, Down-Stroke, Up-Stroke, Sweep**
69. Fingerstyle, Arm and Hand Position, Rest Stroke, Free Stroke, Left-Hand Position
70. First Position Review, Accidentals (Sharps, Flats and Natural Signs)
71. Enharmonic Notes, Chromatic Scale, Left-Hand Playing Technique
72. Major Scale, C Major Scale
73. *The Ash Grove* (Solo), Plucking Arpeggio Patterns in 3/4, C Major Scale (Second Position)
74. *Soldier's Joy* (Solo), Accompaniment Pattern
75. Slurs (Ligado), Ascending Slurs, Descending Slurs, *Am Slur Study* (Solo)
76. Eighth Note Triplets, *Beautiful Dreamer* (Solo), *Se Bheag, Si Mhor* (Solo and Acc.)
77. *Study No. 6* (excerpt—Solo)
78. Sixteenth Notes, *Sailor's Hornpipe* (Solo and Acc.)
79. *The Grassy Turf* (Solo), *Allegro* (Solo)
80. *Blues for Bobbie* (Solo and Acc.)
81. *Andantino* (Solo)
82. Dotted Eighth Note, *Largo* (Solo and Acc.)
83. *Serenade* (Solo and Acc.)
84. Treble Strings (Upper Positions), C Major Scale, Fifth Position, *Prelude* (Solo)
85. Treble String Map
86. *Study No. 22, Op. 35* (Solo and Acc.)
88. Harmonics (Natural), Grace Notes, *March (from The Nutcracker)*—Solo and Acc.)
89. Coda Sign
90. *Romance* (Solo and Acc.)
92. Tango, *La Cumparsita* (Solo and Acc.)
93. 6/8 Time, *Giga* (Solo)
94. *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* (Solo and Acc.)
96. *Lagrima* (Solo and Acc.)



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SECTION ONE

Accompaniment, Guitar Styles and Improvisation

Section One includes open position and moveable chords, pickstyle and fingerstyle accompaniment, music theory, improvisation (scales and modes) and an introduction to a variety of guitar styles. The following is a review of the right-hand pickstyle and fingerstyle playing positions and techniques that were presented in *Method Book 1*.

Pickstyle

Use a pick, also called a flat-pick or plectrum, to strum the strings of the guitar. I recommend a pick of standard size and gauge such as a Fender “drop shape medium.” Hold the pick between the thumb and index finger; holding it parallel to the strings will produce a clear sound. A

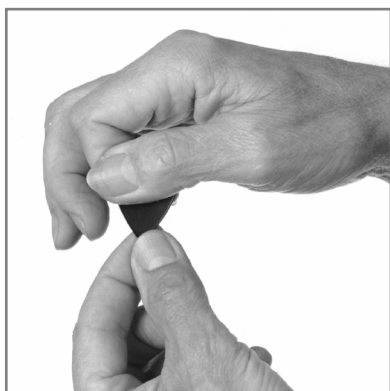


fig. 1 *Insert the pick*

common error is to hold the pick with the thumb, index and middle finger, a technique that will restrain your playing potential.

While holding the pick in your left hand, curl your right index finger toward the palm of your right hand. Insert the pick between the tip joint of the index finger and thumb. Press lightly but firmly,

fig. 1 and 2.



fig. 2 *Holding the pick*

ARM POSITION

Avoid the bad habit of resting the upper arm (biceps) on the body or edge of the guitar. This will inhibit the development of your technique. You should rest the **forearm** on the edge of the guitar just above the bridge base, fig. 3.

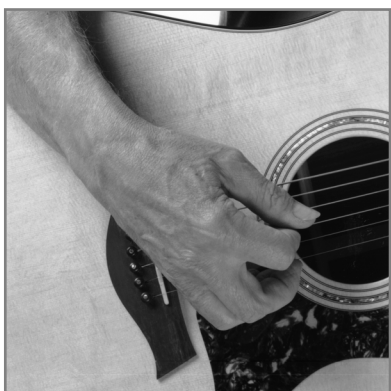


fig. 3 *Forearm position*

DOWN-STRUM

The **down-strum** is the basic strum with the pick. Chords are generally strummed from the location of their root in the bass strings. Sometimes you strum all of the strings and other times you might strum fewer strings.

In the down-strum, the thumb *pushes* the pick through the strings, fig. 4 and 5. Follow through only far enough to finish the strum and then return your hand to the starting position.



fig. 4 *Pick preparation*



fig. 5 *Completion*

UP-STRUM

The **up-strum** usually alternates with the down-strum in various patterns. To create contrast in color, brightness and thickness, the up-strum often omits strings. Sometimes it is only necessary to strum the treble strings (1st, 2nd and 3rd strings). In the up-strum, the index finger *pushes* the pick through the strings.