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## SITTING POSITION

When reading music and *improvising* (the process of creating music on the spot), your hands will adjust more quickly if you use the classical sitting position. When playing chords, you can sit in a more casual position, or stay in classical position as you wish.



Acoustic: left leg over right knee



Acoustic: guitar on right knee



Acoustic: right leg over left knee



Classical



## RIGHT-HAND POSITION: FINGERSTYLE

There are two main ways to play the guitar with the right hand: *fingerstyle* (with the fingers) and *pickstyle* (with a pick). Whether playing fingerstyle or pickstyle, use the list below as a starting point for your right-hand position, and tweak from there with the guidance of a teacher. There are no “absolutes” in positioning, as everyone’s body is different.

- Your forearm should rest on the guitar in approximate alignment with the bridge.
- Arch your wrist slightly. The right wrist should not be flat or touching the guitar, as this does not allow the fingers to follow through in a relaxed manner. Try not to over-arch your wrist—aim for the midrange.
- The wrist shouldn’t deviate too much to the left or right—again, aim for the midrange of the joint.

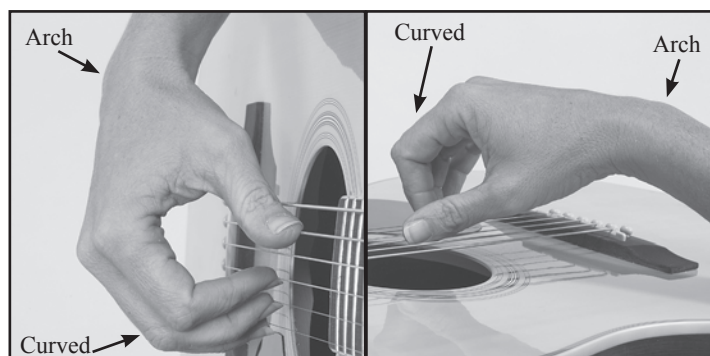
### For Playing Fingerstyle

- The fingers should be curved and resting on the strings slightly to the left side of the tip of the finger.
- Do not allow any right hand fingers to rest on the top of the guitar. This would take your hand well out of playing position and slow you down. Fingers can rest on the strings (in ready position) when not in use.

### Good Hand Position



Note the straight wrist.



Arched wrist and curved fingers.

### What Not to Do



Wrist too low.



Wrist too high (over-arched).



## Good Left-Hand Position



Fingers are independent of each other with the fingertips just behind each fret



Thumb behind the back of the neck

## What NOT to Do



Fingers leaning to the left



Fingers clumping together



Thumb grabbing over the fretboard



Collapsing fingertip joints



7-7



## BUILDING CHORDS

Top Note	_____	_____	_____
Middle Note	_____	_____	_____
Bottom Note	_____	_____	_____
Chord Letter Name	_____	<u>G</u>	<u>G</u>

Write the pitches on the staff.



## TIME TEST 5

The following notes should now be memorized, including the names of the notes and their location on the guitar. Be prepared to name the note and show the location on the guitar in 3 seconds or less. Study these notes as you would study for a vocabulary quiz. Notes are the building blocks of music. Reading fluently is a must for playing any instrument.

## *Guitar Legends: Paco de Lucía*



Photo: Cornel Putan/Wikimedia Commons/CC-BY-2.0

### **Profile**

- Widely regarded as the best modern-day flamenco guitarist
- Often performed with a group of musicians and dancers in a high-energy show that rivaled the energy of any rock concert

### **Style**

- Flamenco, occasionally infused with or collaborating with influences of jazz and classical

### **Suggested Listening**

- “Entre Dos Aguas”
- “Cepa Andaluza”
- “Impetu”

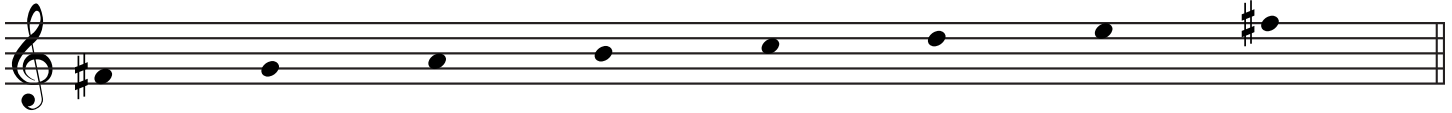




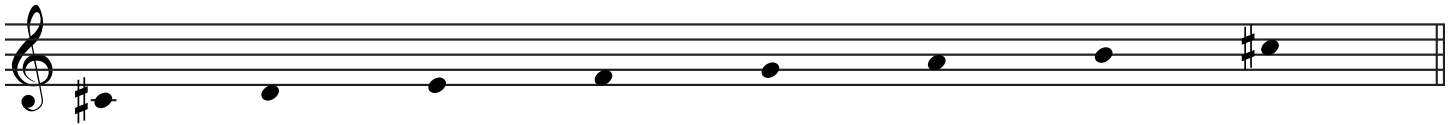
**THEORY:**  
**MINOR SCALES**

Write the necessary sharps to create natural minor scales for the following:

**F# Minor Scale (Relative Major: \_\_\_\_\_)**

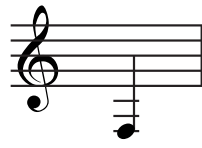


**C# Minor Scale (Relative Major: \_\_\_\_\_)**



**TIME TEST 8**

The following notes should now be memorized, including the name of the note and the location on the guitar. Be prepared to name the note and show the location on the guitar in three seconds or less. Study these notes as you would study for a vocabulary quiz. Notes are the building blocks of music, and reading fluently is a must for playing any instrument.



## *Guitar Legends: B. B. King*



Photo: Cesar Vera courtesy of MCA

### **Profile**

- Has influenced most of the great jazz, blues, and rock guitarists today
- The nickname “B. B.” comes from “Blues Boy”
- Called his guitar “Lucille”

### **Style**

- Blues, with a signature sound that features bends and vibrato

### **Recommended Listening**

- “The Thrill Is Gone”
- “Let the Good Times Roll”
- “Every Day I Have the Blues”



## NOTE COLLECTION FOR IMPROVISATION

There is no right or wrong path when you're improvising. You'll discover there are notes that will sound better than others in certain circumstances—use your ear to find natural “resting points” in the collection of notes you're working with. (Hint: The “root” note of the chord over which you are improvising is a natural resting point.) Use your knowledge of theory to know where those root notes are. Eventually, you'll want to learn to find the right times to hit root notes and times when it sounds more interesting to move away from the root. For now, just experiment, and enjoy the freedom of knowing that if you stay within the collection of notes provided, there are no wrong notes!

The charts below introduce what is called a *box pattern*. This is a moveable pattern that uses a *pentatonic* scale (a scale based on five notes instead of eight, as in the major scale) and works well for improvising with a bluesy sound. This pattern is moveable to work in any key you'd like to play in. The lowest note of the pattern is the key in which you are playing. When you use this pattern at the 5th fret, we are playing in the key of A Minor. Memorize this pattern and become comfortable moving across the strings with this collection of notes. Pay attention to where your root notes are.

Steps for starting simply:

- Start with only using the notes on strings 1–2.
- When those are comfortable, use only the notes on strings 3–5.
- When those are comfortable, use the notes on 1–5.
- Finally, move on to notes on all six strings. Take note of the patterns as you go.

### A Minor Pentatonic Pattern 1 at the 5th Fret

