

Fretbow's

Guitar Note Reading Course for Beginners

By Theo Elsey

BOOK ONE

PART TWO

*Eight Natural Notes in the First Position
PLUS: An Introduction to Open Bass Notes and Chords*

LIST OF MUSIC TITLES

SET TWO

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

Frère Jacques

Lavender Blue

Liberty

Au Claire de la Lune

Waltz Petite

The Victors Song

Website: www.fretbow.co.uk **Blogspot:** <https://fretbow.blogspot.com/>

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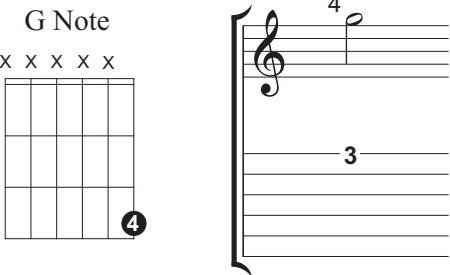
Introduction

Part One of this book has a full 10 pages to it's introduction where enough music theory and explanation was covered, not only for Part One but also for most of the content here in Part Two. Anything extra you need to know will be mentioned in this introduction and elsewhere as we go along. Before learning any new music I would like to have a quick review of both left and right hand fingering, this will introduce some new technique that not only improves the sound of music you have studied from Part One, but will also help you make the most of the music that's coming up here in Part Two.

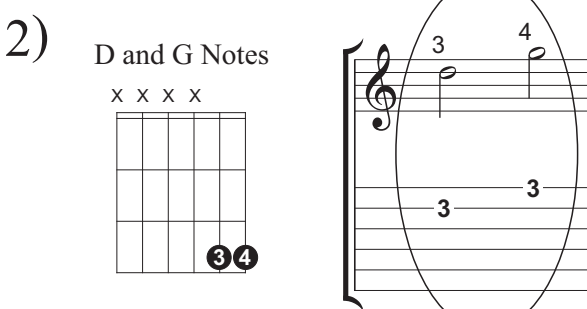
A Review of Left Hand Fingering Technique

Hopefully by now, you will be playing music from Part One using the Left Hand Fingering Rule. It is sometimes said that rules are made to be broken, generally I would disagree with this saying but occasionally a better way can be found and this is when breaking the rule becomes both acceptable and the right thing to do! With this in mind I would like to show you an alternative fingering for G, on the first string, 3rd. fret. Let's go back to *Jingle Bells* from Part one. We are going to substitute the 3rd. finger for the 4th. Little Finger, just in one place at measure 8.

1) **G Note**
x x x x x

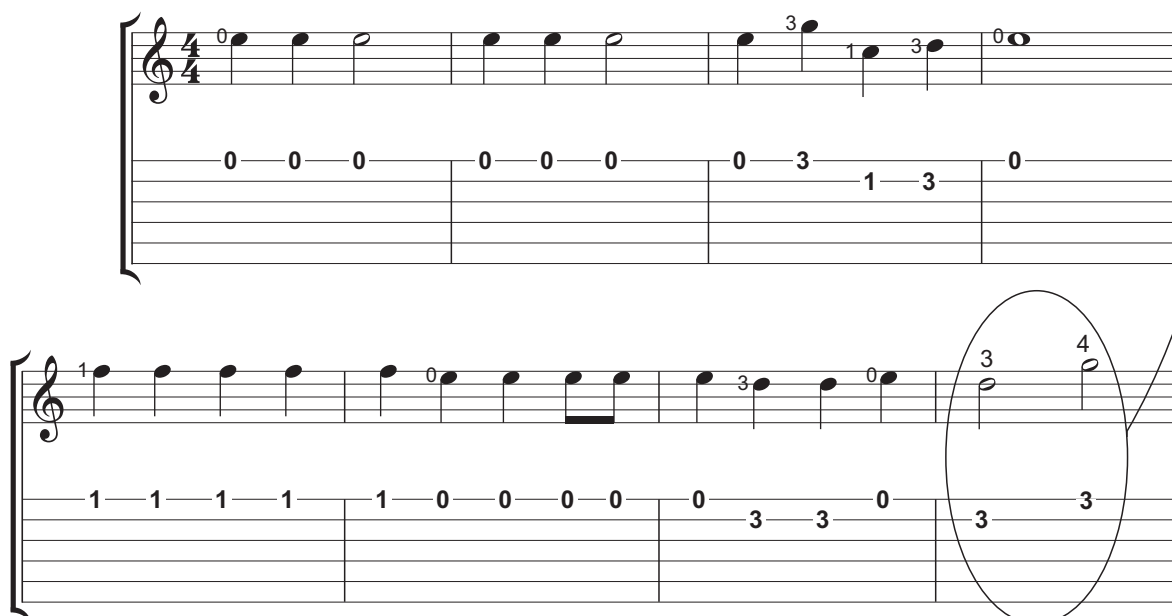


2) **D and G Notes**
x x x x



The first note in measure 8 of Jingle Bells is D, fretted with the 3rd. finger, continue to hold this down when you play G with the 4th finger, both notes ring out together. D is the *Sustained Note* that continues to ring out longer than it's written time value, finishing when the G note has fully sounded.

Jingle Bells

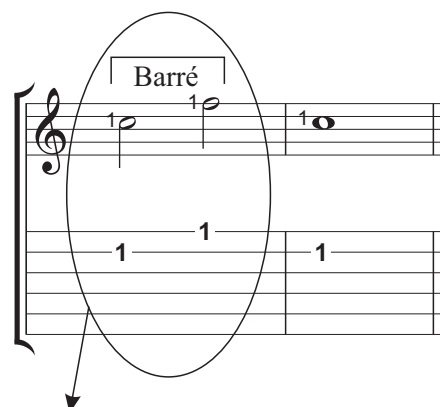
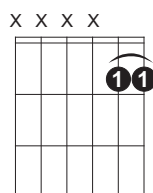


A Review of Left Hand Fingering Technique (Continued)

Good King Wenceslas also from Part One gives us further opportunity for sustained notes. The technique is very different from what we have just studied for *Jingle Bells*, this time we will use the 1st. finger to cross the first two strings at the 1st. fret. The notes we are going to hold down are C on the 2nd. string, and F on the 1st. string. The first finger lays flat across the two strings to form a *Barré*.

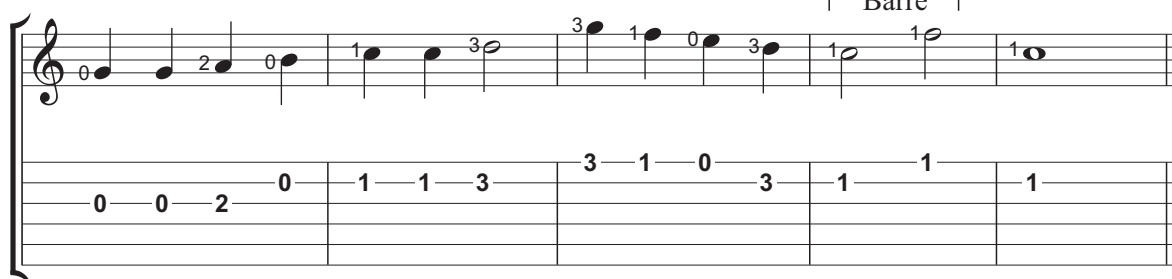
The barré fingering is good to use where indicated but it is best to lift the finger into it's normal upright position for the last note C. The F note hanging on doesn't work so well when sounding the last note.

C and F Notes



Good King Wenceslas

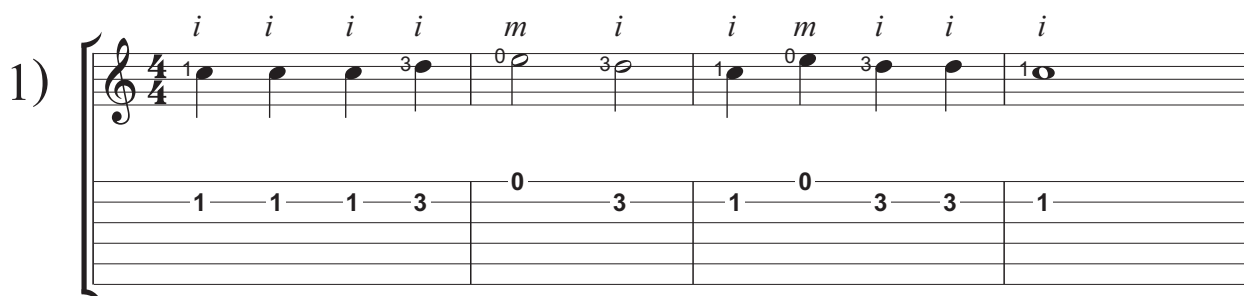
Measures 13 - 17



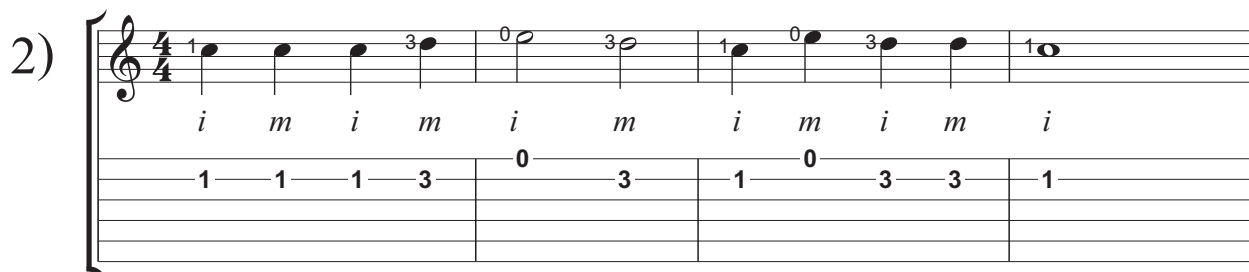
A Review of Right Hand Fingering Technique

Now that you have played several pieces using the R.H. index finger, it would be good to progress to the next stage by introducing the middle finger (m). I would recommend starting with method 1) where the same finger is used repeatedly on the same string until there is a string change, this is when the alternative figure can be used. Method 2) is favoured by Classical guitarists where the index and middle fingers alternate for each new note played.

Au Claire de la Lune Example of *i* and *m* fingering - Acoustic Guitar Method



Au Claire de la Lune Example of *i* and *m* fingering - Classical/Spanish Guitar Method



A Review of Right Hand Fingering Technique (Continued)

Here's an extract of the first 4 measures from two more of the 7 tunes in this collection. The optional fingerings 1) and 2) follow the same methods described on the previous page with 1) for a generally easier method of fingering, and 2) for the Classical approach in the use of finger alternation between the i and m fingers.

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star - Measures 1 - 4

1) —————> i i m m i i m m m m m i i i

2) —————> i m i m i m i m i m i m

Lavender Blue - Measures 1 - 4

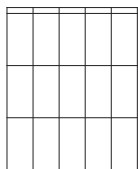
1) —————> i m m m m m i i i m m m

2) —————> i m i m i m i m i m i m

The Introduction of Three Open Bass Notes

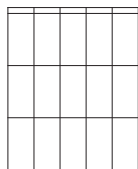
Open Bass Notes E, A and D

O X X X X X



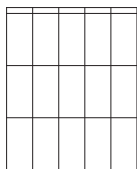
E, 6th String,
OPEN

X O X X X X



A, 5th String,
OPEN

X X O X X X

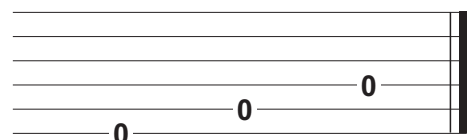
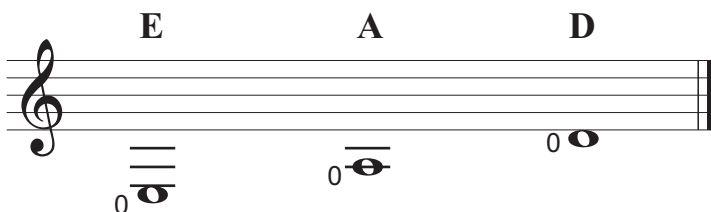


D, 4th String,
OPEN

The first melody in this book to introduce the bass note D will be *Frère Jacques*. E and A are used in the last piece *The Victors Song*.

Open Bass Notes in Tablature

E A D



For all seven tunes scored in both Music Notation and Tablature, you can have a direct link to music videos by clicking or tapping the Title/Heading for each piece. This function is not available at present for the same music in the sections for sight reading and chord playing.

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

The first system of music notation and guitar tablature for 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star'. The music notation is in 4/4 time, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody consists of the following notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (half). The guitar tablature shows the fretting for each note: G4 (0), A4 (2), Bb4 (3), A4 (2), G4 (0), F4 (3).

The second system of music notation and guitar tablature for 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star'. The melody continues with: E4 (half), D4 (half), C4 (half), Bb3 (half), A3 (half), G3 (half). The guitar tablature shows the fretting: E4 (2), D4 (2), C4 (0), Bb3 (3), A3 (1), G3 (0).

The third system of music notation and guitar tablature for 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star'. The melody continues with: F3 (half), E3 (half), D3 (half), C3 (half), Bb2 (half), A2 (half). The guitar tablature shows the fretting: F3 (3), E3 (3), D3 (1), C3 (1), Bb2 (0), A2 (2).

The fourth system of music notation and guitar tablature for 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star'. The melody concludes with: G2 (half), F2 (half), E2 (half), D2 (half), C2 (half), Bb1 (half). The guitar tablature shows the fretting: G2 (0), F2 (0), E2 (3), D2 (1), C2 (1), Bb1 (0).

Frère Jacques

There is NO INTRO on repeating, continue playing from the opening repeat mark (||:)

This well known French Children's Song introduces us to the first of our open string bass notes. 'D' is played on the 4th string, open and is positioned just underneath the first line of the music stave.

Suggestion: Since the D is a bass note, you can use the Right Hand Thumb each time it is played. The Spanish fingering for the R. H. Thumb is shown here as a 'p' symbol.

Frère Jacques can be played as a Round. If you have a friend who is learning with you, then you can have great fun with this. Guitar One plays the first two measures, then Guitar Two joins in when Guitar One reaches *, Guitar Two will always be exactly two measures behind.

Lavender Blue

0 3 3 3 1 0 2 0 0 0 0 0

0 3 3 3 1 0 2 0 1 0 2 0

Liberty

The right hand thumb (p) can be used as an alternative fingering where marked.

i i i i
0 0 0 1 0 1 2 1 1 3 1

p p p p
0 0 0 0 1 0 1 1 1 3 1

0 0 0 0 1 0 3 0 2 0 1 1

Liberty *With sustained notes F and A in measures 3 - 4*

F and A sustained notes and optional use of 4th (little) finger for Top G

This is exactly the same music arrangement of Liberty from the previous page. However, this time around we are going to look at how we can improve the sound of our playing by looking for any opportunity to sustain notes longer than their written time value. You will already be achieving this in the first two measures with open notes that continue to ring on each time you progress to a new note. This works out fine because the notes are harmonious, meaning they all blend and sound well together.

Measures 3 and 4

We can get the same effect in measures 3 and 4 by leaving the 1st. string F note finger in place all the way through to the end of measure 4. Likewise you can do the same for the A note on the 3rd. string, following the fingering diagrams 1 - 3 should help. The white fingering dot is for a passing note that is not fixed, in this case the 4th finger, 3rd finger can be used if preferred.

Au Claire de la Lune

First system of musical notation. The treble clef is in 4/4 time. The melody consists of four measures: 1) quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5 (fingering 1, 3, 0, 3); 2) half notes D5, C5 (fingering 0, 3); 3) quarter notes B4, A4, G4, F#4 (fingering 1, 0, 3, 3); 4) a whole note G4 (fingering 1). The bass staff contains the following fingering sequence: 1, 1, 1, 3, 0, 3, 1, 0, 3, 3, 1.

Second system of musical notation, identical to the first system. The treble clef is in 4/4 time. The melody consists of four measures: 1) quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5 (fingering 1, 3, 0, 3); 2) half notes D5, C5 (fingering 0, 3); 3) quarter notes B4, A4, G4, F#4 (fingering 1, 0, 3, 3); 4) a whole note G4 (fingering 1). The bass staff contains the following fingering sequence: 1, 1, 1, 3, 0, 3, 1, 0, 3, 3, 1.

Third system of musical notation. The treble clef is in 4/4 time. The melody consists of four measures: 1) quarter notes D5, C5, B4, A4 (fingering 3, 2, 3, 2); 2) half notes G4, F#4 (fingering 2, 2); 3) quarter notes E4, D4, C4, B3 (fingering 3, 1, 0, 2); 4) a whole note B3 (fingering 0). The bass staff contains the following fingering sequence: 3, 3, 3, 3, 2, 2, 3, 1, 0, 2, 0.

Fourth system of musical notation. The treble clef is in 4/4 time. The melody consists of four measures: 1) quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5 (fingering 1, 3, 0, 3); 2) half notes D5, C5 (fingering 0, 3); 3) quarter notes B4, A4, G4, F#4 (fingering 1, 0, 3, 3); 4) a whole note G4 (fingering 1). The bass staff contains the following fingering sequence: 1, 1, 1, 3, 0, 3, 1, 0, 3, 3, 1.

Waltz Petite

First system of musical notation for 'Waltz Petite'. The treble clef staff shows a melody in 3/4 time with notes and fingerings (1, 3, 0, 1, 0, 1, 3, 0). The bass clef staff shows a bass line with fingerings (1, 3, 3, 0, 1, 1, 0, 1, 3, 0).

Second system of musical notation for 'Waltz Petite'. The treble clef staff continues the melody, ending with a repeat sign. The bass clef staff continues the bass line, ending with a repeat sign.

The Victors Song

Bass
Notes

A = 5th string open
E = 6th string open

Diagram showing the positions of the 5th and 6th strings open on the guitar fretboard. The 5th string open is labeled 'A' and the 6th string open is labeled 'E'.

First system of musical notation for 'The Victors Song'. The treble clef staff shows a melody in 4/4 time with notes, fingerings (0, 1, 0, 0, 1, 0, 3, 1, 0, 3, 1, 0), and accents (*i*). The bass clef staff shows a bass line with fingerings (0, 1, 0, 0, 1, 0, 3, 1, 0, 3, 1, 0). The first two measures of the bass line are marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic.

Second system of musical notation for 'The Victors Song'. The treble clef staff continues the melody, ending with a repeat sign. The bass clef staff continues the bass line, ending with a repeat sign.

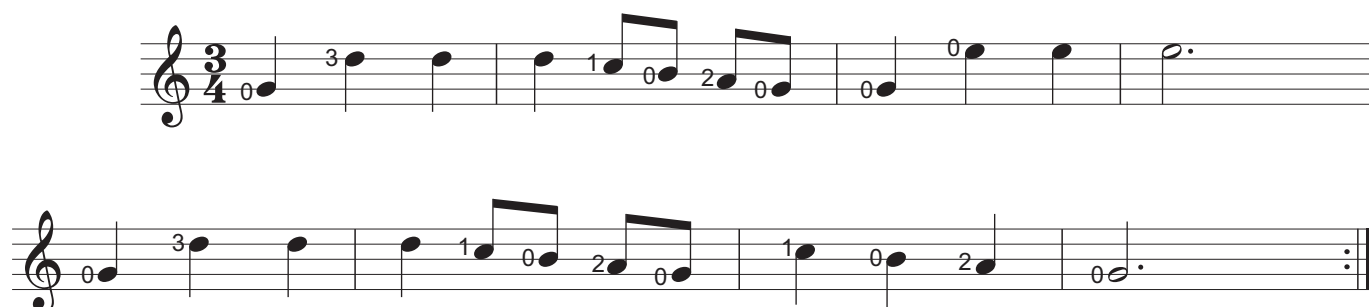
Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star



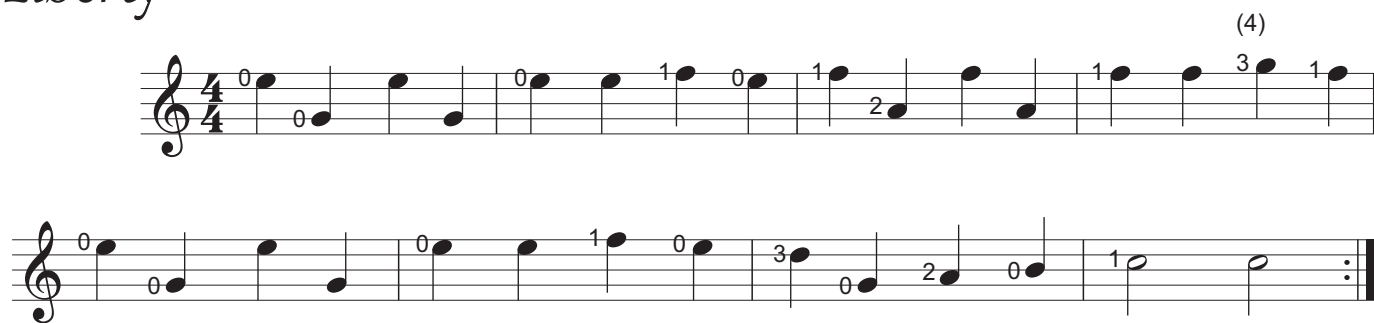
Frère Jacques



Lavender Blue



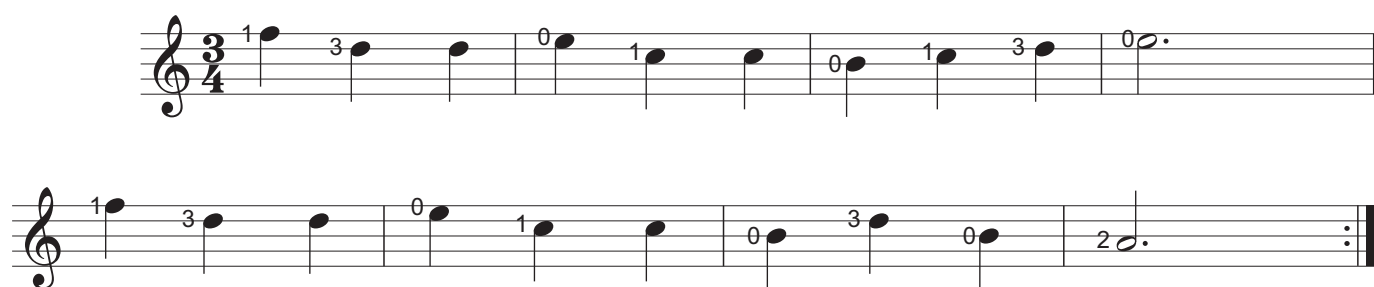
Liberty



Au Claire de la Lune



Waltz Petite



The Victors Song



Chord Accompaniment

Reading Chord Diagrams

CHORD EXAMPLES

C **Am** **D7**

X X X O O X X X O X X O

X = String not to be played
O = Open string, to be played

1 2 3 4 Left Hand Fingering 1 - 4

→ This arrow shows the direction for the Right Hand Thumb to Strum.

CHORD TABLE FOR BEGINNERS

These 7 chords are all you need as an accompaniment for the selection of tunes in this section from both Parts One and Two of Book One.

C	G7	Em	G	Am	D7
X X X O O	X X X O O	X X X O O O	X X X O O	X X X O	X X O

F

X X X

The F chord is the most awkward chord to play here, lay the 1st. finger flat across the first two strings, and then arch in an upright position the 2nd. finger for the 3rd. string, 2nd. fret. Remember to position your L.H. thumb well behind the neck, this will allow the 1st. finger to lay flat more easily, the difficulty comes in arching the 2nd. finger enough so that it doesn't accidentally touch the 2nd. string! If it's too difficult to start with don't worry, it's used only once in this book, give it time.

How to Strum

Use the ball of your R.H. thumb to strum across the strings in a downward direction. To start with play on the beat of the music only. Strums are shown as diagonal lines, Chord Symbols are also regarded as counted beat.

EXAMPLES

1) G / / /

2) C / / / /

Hot Cross Buns

C

3 0 1

3 0 1

3 1 0 3 1 3 0 1

3 0 1

C

x x x o o

1

Hot Cross Buns can be accompanied with the sound of just one chord throughout. Strum the C chord in a downward direction using your Right Hand Thumb or, if you prefer a plectrum. Play with 4 even beats per measure.

Two String Melody - Version One

The image shows musical notation and fretboard diagrams for C and G7 chords. At the top, two staves of music in 3/4 time are shown. The first staff contains two measures of a C major chord (0, 1, 3) and two measures of a G7 chord (0, 1, 3). The second staff contains two measures of a C major chord (0, 1, 3), two measures of a G7 chord (0, 1, 3), and a final measure of a C major chord (1, 3) with a repeat sign. Below the notation are two fretboard diagrams. The first diagram is for a C major chord, showing the 1st string at the 1st fret (labeled 1) and the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th strings at the 0th fret. The second diagram is for a G7 chord, showing the 1st string at the 3rd fret (labeled 1) and the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th strings at the 0th fret.

C

G7

C

G7

C

G7

C and G7 Chords are used for both *Two String Melody* and *Tandem Ride*. Changing chords is easy, simply hop the first finger across between the 1st. and 2nd. strings staying at the same 1st. fret position.

Tandem Ride

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / / / /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / / / /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

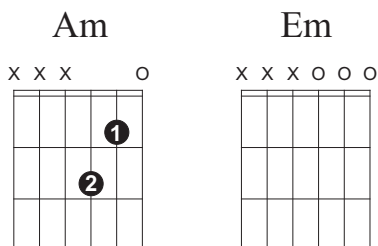
C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

C / / / / / / / G7 / / / / / C G7 C /

The last measure in *Tandem Ride* has some quick chord changing, play only one strum for the first C and G7, followed by two strums on C to finish.

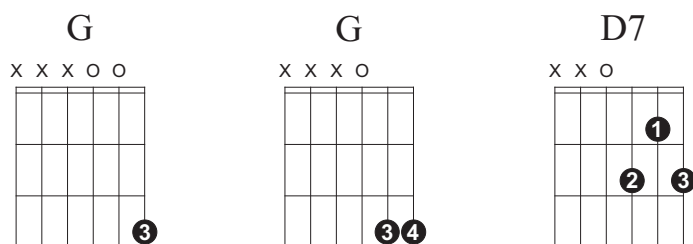
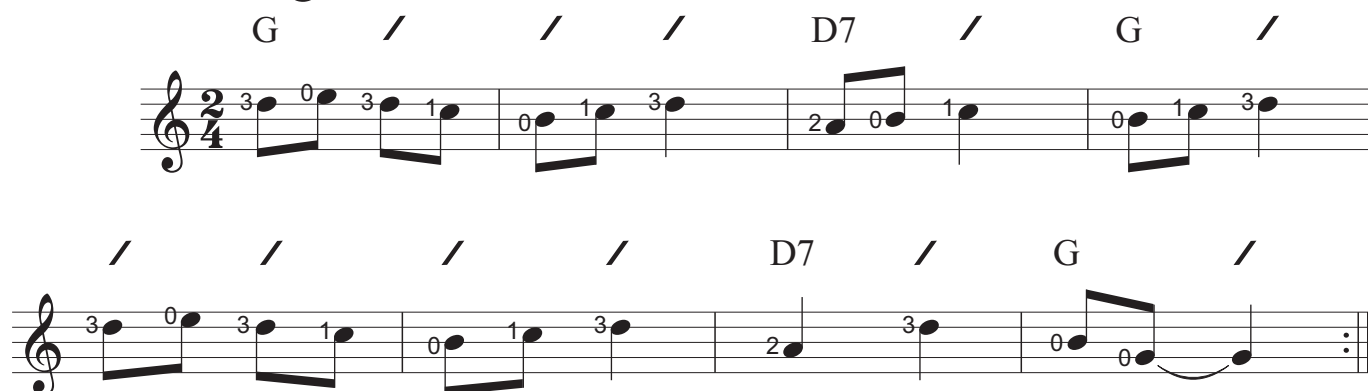
Study in A Minor



Am and Em are abbreviations for A Minor and E Minor. Chords with letter names only are all Major Chords.

TIP: Whilst you are still playing Em, try preparing the two fingers for Am to the correct shape slightly above the strings, as in “mid-air”, then press them into position together at the same time when required.

London Bridge



There are two versions of the G chord you can choose from. The second version uses the 3rd. and 4th. fingers as described for Jingle Bells (see page 3).

The hardest Chord here is D7 with three fingers. It can be difficult to get all the fingers in place and still keep in time with the music. It would make sense first to master the Am chord as used for Study in A Minor, when changing to D7 think of the A Minor fingering and then when you are able, add the 3rd. finger to complete the D7 chord shape.

We have had examples of three different chord types Major, Minor and 7th chords. It isn't necessary to understand what these names mean right now as it will all be covered in book two when we progress into a little more music theory.

Au Claire de la Lune

Au Claire de la Lune (By the Light of the Moon) is a great piece for practise as it uses every chord we have looked at so far. To keep the page uncluttered, most of the strum/beat markers (/) have been removed. By now you should have a sense of where the beat falls and where the chords change.

Liberty

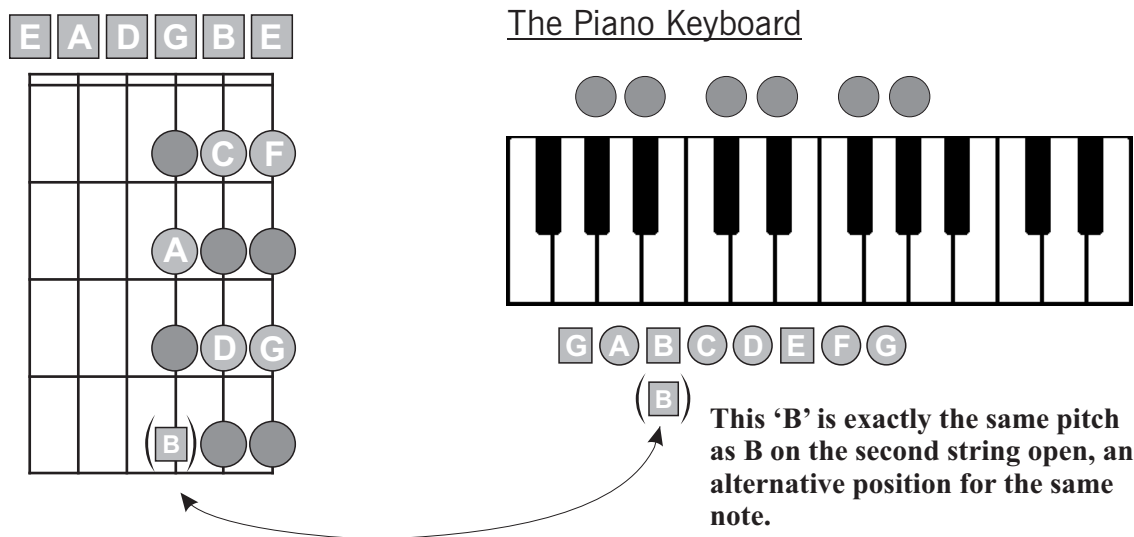
F is the first chord to use a barré. The preparation for this chord has been covered in the sections on Sustained Notes, see *Good King Wenceslas* (p.4) and *Liberty* (p.9). More tips on playing the F chord can be found on page 14.

In Conclusion and Moving Forward

This now concludes Book One, Part Two. Before I sign off I would like to thank you once again for following through this far, I hope you are still enjoying playing guitar and feel that you are making progress. Also, I would like to encourage you to go on to the next step when you are ready as it could be a big leap forward in your learning. The music is going to be even more rewarding as we explore new sounds and unravel yet more of the plentiful wonders that the guitar has to offer.

BOOK TWO - A preview of what's coming up

The most significant advancement in your understanding of music will be in learning all the notes that fall between the natural notes, that's right we are going to fill in the gaps! These are the Sharps and Flats that will lead you on in learning about Keys and Scales.



All the natural notes used in book one are equal to the White Notes on a piano keyboard. In book two, Sharps (\sharp) and Flats (\flat) will be introduced, the same as the piano's Black Notes. If you are interested to know what else is going to be covered in book two then please check out Fretbow's Blogspot, the following link is to a dedicated page for updates and news on book two. <https://fretbow.blogspot.com>

Theo Elsey - January 2025

Piano Keyboard image courtesy of [Wikimedia](#)
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