I'm not a bot

The idea of learning how to play the guitar can be very intimidating, especially if this is the first musical instrument youre learning how to play. Its totally normal for you to have a lot of questions about the entire process, but were here to help push you in the right direction on your guitar journey! In todays guide, were going to discuss: What gear youre going to need to get started playing An easy way to start learning chords with minimal confusion (even if you have no music experience) How you should your guitar pick The differences between strumming rhythmically and musically The best methods of practice for beginners How to find the best guitar teacher for your personal needs Answers to some of the most commonly asked questions by guitar beginners And we'll give you some pro tips to use scales for solos when you're ready! Lets get started! The options for guitars targeted towards beginners is almost endless, and considering that no guitar plays the same, narrowing down what type of guitar you want to purchase can be a difficult choice to make. The type/brand/make/model of guitar that you purchase will have a huge influence on your development and progress as a musician, as there are some guitars out there that are easy to play and there are other guitars that are more difficult to play. If you happen to end up investing your money into a guitar thats hard to play, youre going to have a difficult time finding a passion for playing guitar. While its true that its better to have a guitar than it is to have no guitar at all, youre going to want to make sure that youre investing your money into a guitar that fits your body size and hand size. A guitar that properly fits your body is going to make a huge impact on your guitar journey, so dont try to cheap out by buying a guitar that isnt going to fit your body or your hand sizing. As a beginner, you shouldnt be spending an arm and a leg on a new guitar, but that also doesnt mean you should purchase the least expensive guitar that you can possibly find and think that youll be buying a guitar thats actually worth the money. You should be getting your hands on a guitar thats going to stay in tune and that doesnt have any faulty working pieces. Just as a personal recommendation, I wouldnt recommend spending less than $150 on a guitar, but I would highly recommend staying away from the unbranded guitar kits that you find on eBay or Amazon. These kits arent worth your money and will bring you nothing but frustration, which isnt how you want to start off your guitar journey. I also always recommend going to a guitar store to try playing guitar before you commit to purchasing; even if you dont have any experience playing, at least go in-store to try holding the guitar to see if it feels comfortable. There are a few essentials that I would recommend getting into your gear collection before you really start trying to learn and play the guitar, you should invest your money in: A guitar tuner A capo A guitar strap Guitar picks (we recommend a pick that is between 0.65-0.73 in thickness) If youre investing in an electric guitar, you will also want to pick up a small practice amp and a cable The right type of equipment will really make a huge difference in your technique and the tone of your instrument. As you develop as a musician, you can always add more equipment to your arsenal, but the above-mentioned pieces of equipment are what I would strongly recommend investing in for the beginning of your guitar journey. Besides shopping for a guitar (and an amplifier, if youre playing an electric guitar of sorts), going shopping around for a pick is going to be one of the most overwhelming shopping experiences you will go through when youre first getting introduced to the guitar. Just on the selection of sizes, thicknesses, shapes, and types of materials that are used in the creation of a pick, its very easy to become lost in the options of choices pick manufactures give you. The longer you play your guitar and the more familiar you become with your instrument, you may find that a certain style/type of pick works best for what you personally need. However, I would recommend checking out plastic picks if youve never used a pick before. Plastic picks are a great (and popular) choice to make because theyre very flexible and easy to grip; I would also personally recommend going for a medium thickness (anywhere between .72mm to .88 mm) as its going an easy pick to hold, without being too cumbersome. A guitar strap is a crucial accessory to pick up if youre planning on playing your guitar while youre standing up. Just like guitar picks, there are a lot of different types of materials and designs that you can choose from for a guitar strap. As a beginning musician, you shouldnt get caught up in the beautiful details of a guitar strap, but should more shop around for a strap thats comfortable for you to play with. If you do plan on playing standing up, I would recommend buying a guitar strap that is at least two inches wide with extra neoprene (padding), as this extra padding will help to reduce neck and shoulder strain. You will only need a guitar cable if your guitar is an electric guitar, an electro-acoustic guitar (an acoustic guitar that can be amplified), or a bass guitar. In terms of cable length, I would recommend starting out with an instrument cable that is less than 20 feet, as a short cable will help to decrease signal and noise loss. A guitar thats worth the financial investment is a guitar that holds its tuning. But, how do you know when your guitar is in tune? Thats where a guitar tuner comes into play; there are four main types of tuners, which are: Vibration-based tuners: Use the vibrations that your guitar creates and tunes via the vibrations that the tuner picks up. Vibration-based tuners can be used in loud environments. Pedal tuners: Are often used with electric guitars, bass guitars, and electro-acoustic guitars. Microphone-based tuners: Listen to the notes that your guitar produces, can be plugged into electro-acoustic and/or electric guitars. Not a great choice to make if youre looking to play in a loud environment, as microphone based tuners pick up other noises, which effects your tunings. Smartphone apps: These are a great option if youre wanting to turn your guitar for super cheap and arent interested in lugging around extra gear. There are a ton of free tuning apps available for download off of iTunes or Google Play store. The more money you invest in a guitar, the more likely you are to get an instrument that has a built-in tuner in it, which can be super handy to have. The problem that a lot of beginners run into when first starting to learn how to play is that theyre so excited to dive into playing music, that they often neglect to actually learn the parts and pieces that come together to make their guitar. Learning how to properly identify the strings on your guitar will make the entire learning process so much easier (and less frustrating) down the road. The identification process of your guitar strings isnt too complex and once you get it down, its something that will stick with you for the rest of your guitar journey! Plus, learning the identification of your guitar strings will make it a lot easier for you to properly communicate with a guitar teacher and/or other musicians, which is really important to get down especially if you want to be in a band! Starting from the thickest string on your guitar and going to the thinnest, the guitar string names are: E, A, D, G, B, E. The thickest string is going to be your 6th string (E), while the thinnest string is going to be your 1st string (e). Every Apple Does Go Bad Eventually Elephants and Donkeys Grow Big Ears Elvis Always Dug Good Banana Eating Every Boy Gets Dinner At Night Whatever is easier for you to remember is the one that you should repeat to yourself, just to get in stuck in your head so you dont ever forget! The most confusing part of identifying guitar strings for beginners is not having the guitar strings labeled as 1-6, but rather having them labeled as 6-1. Naturally, the thickest string is the string that most people strum first, which is why a lot of musicians think that low E string is going to be the 1st string. But, that low string is actually going to be identified as your 6th string, which the 1st string on your guitar is the high E string. After learning about what the string names are and the placement of those strings, you will also be able to understand what fingers go on which strings! Youre going to be using your index finger, your middle finger, your ring finger, and your pinky finger to hold down strings, as your thumb will be on the back of the neck of the guitar to help balance the instrument. Heres a little graphic to help you get a better understanding of where you place your fingers! Yay, now we can start getting into the fun part of the guitar, which is actually starting to learn some chords and get to playing! No matter what genre of music youre looking to play, its absolutely necessary that you learn how to play a few basic chords, as chords as an essential part of understanding how to successfully play the guitar. You may have already spent some time trying to learn how to play some chords, which is totally cool! One of the most amazing parts about learning basic chord structures is that when you get into playing more difficult chords (like B or F), that you will have a better understanding on how to simplify the difficult chords that you struggle to achieve. Learning how to play a basic chord breaks down to figuring out what to do with your left hand and your right hand. Assuming that your right hand is your dominant hand, your right hand is going to be the hand that strums your guitar, while your left hand is going to be on the fretboard of the guitar (the hand that fingers out the chords). If your left hand happens to be your dominant hand, your left hand is going to be the hand thats strumming and your right hand will be the hand thats fingering all of the chord positions. Just as a quick note, understanding that lining your fingers up on the proper strings isnt the only step you need to get fluidity in your playing when youre switching chords. Also, if youre having problems with your chords not playing and youre getting a stumped sound out of your instrument, check the positioning of your fingertips. You should be using the tips of your fingers and not the pads of your fingers, so if you are hearing a stumped sound of your guitar, chances are your fingers are touching other parts of the strings that theyre not supposed to be touching. Its totally okay that your playing sounds choppy when youre first starting out, but if you keep at practice, you will soon find that your fingers are switching chord configurations with letter effort! There are so many different moving parts that go into playing the guitar, but depending upon what type of musical experience you have (if any), learning how to follow rhythm may be the hardest part for you to master. There is absolutely no song in the world that doesnt have a rhythm, so while you may be able to get away from playing songs that dont feature a melody or a harmony, but you wont be able to get away from playing music with rhythm. A great thing about the guitar is that it doesnt require a lot of upper arm movement because you mainly depend on your wrist to strum your guitar. Dont get caught up into the common mistake that a lot of beginners make, where they use their whole arm to strum their guitar with an extreme amount of power. You dont need to strum your strings hard, even if youre looking to blast your audience away with the sound. Just put a little bit more force behind your wrist and youll notice a difference in the dynamic that youre producing but at no point should you ever need to use your entire arm to strum your guitar. Its also important that you come to understanding that while its a lot of fun playing loud and bold, that you should get the hang of understanding rhythm before you go and start playing your tunes at a thunderous volume. Learn how to strum in time with a beat, as this concept is going to be what makes you sound like a musician who knows what theyre doing, rather than just being someone who cant play in time and just plays blaringly. Read our full list of top most popular songs to learn guitar. When youre first starting off on your pick journey, its a really great idea to get yourself a variety of different picks that consist of different sizes and materials to play around with. Its almost safe to say that you cant overbuy picks, as theyre really small and are easy to lose, so its always better to have too many rather than not have enough. Its really common for beginning guitarists to prefer a softer pick when theyre first starting out playing, so dont let an experienced guitarist talk you out of getting softer picks. The more experience that you get under your built, the more youll find that a heavier, harder pick will be what gives you the most feeling of control. I would recommend getting started with a pick that is between 0.65-0.73 in thickness, as a pick thats any thicker than this will make it more difficult to control your fluidity when youre strumming. When holding your pick, I strongly recommend holding your pick in between your thumb and your forefinger, as this is the most natural and comfortable way to hold your pick (some people argue holding with your middle finger and your thumb, but it doesnt feel as natural). You should hold your pick far down enough so that just the tip (the pointy end) of the pick is sticking out from your fingers; holding your pick back too far wont provide you with enough control of over your pick, making it easier to lose control of. While holding your pick in the correct place doesnt seem like it would make a big difference in your playing, getting a solid understanding on how to properly make contact with your guitar will make a huge difference in overall experience with your instrument. Another common mistake that beginners make when first starting out their journey is that they will find the easiest way that they can to strum/pluck their guitar, which typically means that they strum with their fingers or their thumb. Its totally okay to play with your fingers, but playing with your thumb is the most limiting bad habit that you can develop while youre learning how to play. As a well-versed musician, its incredibly important that you develop the ability to play with both your fingers and a pick, so make sure that youre practicing with both techniques. If your dream is to be the worlds greatest guitarist, you dont have to be born with a secret talent or have really long fingers to be able to make your dream achievable. Developing a healthy practice schedule is whats going to make your dreams possible! But what really makes the difference in your long-term goal is how you practice and how often your practice is whats going to make the biggest difference in your guitar journey. Practicing at least a half hour every day is what I recommend, as a half-hour practice is going to give you time to: Warm up Run through your scales Practice chord fingerings or different strumming techniques Work on learning a new song However, even just practicing five or ten minutes a day on the days that you dont have a lot of time is a lot better than not practicing at all. But at the same time, dont try and take a weeks worth of practice and cram it all into one day. Its totally okay if you miss a day or even a few days because life does happen and unforeseen circumstances will pop up. This doesnt mean that youll be okay if you miss weeks after weeks worth of practice, as you will be a little rusty getting back into the game. This also doesnt mean that you should cram a few days of practice into one day, as a huge list of to-dos will certainly get your mind overwhelmed and limit the amount of information that your brain is absorbing. Its a lot easier and a lot more productive to get your fifteen minutes to half-hour practice on a daily basis, as breaking off your practices into chunks will make your learning experience a lot more manageable, easier to understanding, and less overwhelming. While there are a lot of great tutorials on YouTube, tutorials on YouTube are better for learning an individual song or an easier way to finger a certain chord rather than to actually learn guitar. Dont get me wrong, there are some channels on YouTube that do a really great job of breaking down guitar basics and music theory, but if youre looking for someone to give you a concrete lesson thats covers everything that you need to understand as a beginner, I would recommend also investing your money into a guitar teacher or a program. One thing that a lot of beginners expect is that all guitar teachers are the same, so they can go to any local guitar store/lesson and think that any teacher available will work for them. Just like a pair of sneakers isnt going to be the most comfortable choice for all people, not all guitar teachers are going to be the perfect fit for you. It may take you going through five or six guitar teachers to find the perfect match for you, so dont feel discouraged if you havent found the exact fit yet! When you are shopping around for a guitar teacher, its a great idea to have a set of goals in your head for you to share with your guitar teacher, as this will help your guitar teacher get a better understanding of what youre looking to learn. Here are a few example goals to have in mind for you to share with your teacher: I want to play in a band or I want to cover songs on YouTube I want to play country music or I want to play heavy metal I want to learn how to read sheet music or I want to How to Rea I want to play lead guitar or I want to play rhythm guitar The term I want to play the guitar means something different to everyone, as learning how to play is a very personal experience. When looking around for a new guitar teacher, dont just tell your teacher that you want to play the guitar. Instead, discuss with your teacher some goals that you want to achieve on your guitar journey, as that will help your teacher to get a better understanding of what success looks like to you! Once you've got the basics down as a beginner player, it's time to get to the solo learning, right? I mean, who doesn't dream of taking their rightful place on the main stage to shine? Think of this as your beginner guitar lesson from us here at Guitar Space! Watch the video and see how it's done! So, when it comes to getting a hang of scales, I swear by this approach I like to call "connect the dots." This is what is going to make you the stellar guitar player you want! It's pretty straightforwardpick a scale, lets say the A minor pentatonic, and just jam along with a drum machine or a metronome. Start slow with whole notes, then kick it up a notch with half notes, followed by quarter notes, and then eighth notes. It's like having a rhythmic conversation with the scale, and trust me, it's a game changer for feeling the groove. These are the kind of exercises I take beginner guitarists through all the time. It takes some time, but hang in there; your guitar skills will improve in time! Now, once youre cozy with the scale, its time to sprinkle in some guitar techniques. I love using the longer rhythms to work on my bends and vibratoits like adding a bit of spice to a dish. And for the speedy stuff like hammer-ons and pull-offs, those eighth notes are your best pals. Its all about keeping it clean and rhythmic, you know? Alright, transitioning to soloing was a journey, as a beginner guitar player, but I picked up a couple of golden nuggets along the way. First off, I started restricting myself to just a handful of notes to create these tiny melodic phrases, or motifs as I like to call them. Pacing is a big deal. Imagine the sound of Jimi Hendrix without proper pacing. He was a master at telling a story with the guitar. Surrounding my motifs with a bit of space not only made them stand out but also caught the ear of my bandmates and the crowd. Its like giving everyone a moment to digest the melody before diving back in. Trust me, a little pacing goes a long way in making a solo resonate with the audience. Further Reads: Whenever you start the journey of learning a new skill, we all possess the same desire of wanting to be skilled at the new skill were working on developing. All good things take time, so your insane guitar skills arent going to develop overnight or within one day of practice. If youre struggling (or feel like youre struggling) to learn the guitar, realize that we all learn at different paces and that the most important thing you can do is be patient with yourself! Getting frustrated will only lead you to develop a dislike for the guitar, whereas as a newbie on your journey, you should want to start developing a passion for playing. There is no sort of time period that you have to learn the guitar in and the journey to mastering the guitar isnt a race! Take a second and realize that there isnt any need to getting frustrated with yourself. Struggling to master a concept or a task is all part of the learning process, so what youre struggling with is completely normal. This also means that you shouldnt get discouraged by other people! Sure, there are bound to be guitarists who are better at one skill than you are, but at the same point, you have the potential to be better than that same guitarist in another area. Dont judge your playing capabilities against someone who has been playing for longer than you have-thats just a killer of hope. Nobody gets good at guitar just by picking up and playing, so being successful (whatever you think a successful guitarist is) takes time, patience, and practice! Read our full guide on how long it takes to learn guitar. Absolutely not, you could never be too old to learn the guitar! No matter if youre just starting high school or if youre celebrating your retirement, there is absolutely no age that you could be that would make you too old to learn the guitar. Also, no matter what age you are, learning the guitar can be a promising and rewarding hobby to get under your belt, which may give you a whole new perspective on what youre capable of! This can be really difficult to follow along with at first, but using a metronome will help you to keep a sense of steady rhythm, while also helping you to figure out the timing of your notes. Make sure to set your BPM (beats per minute) to a slower tempo (beat) when youre first starting out a new song! While mastering chord fingerings is really important, working on strengthening the skill of your dominant hand is often forgotten about. Just pick an easy chord to press down on your left hand and work on any finger-style playing or using a pick while playing the same chord. Practicing with your right hand will really help when it comes time for you to nail complex solos that have a tricky strumming pattern! When youre feeling like your hands are getting tired, your fingertips are sore, or your wrists are starting to feel strained, take a break and listen to some music! Dont worry- its totally normal for your fingers to hurt a bit. However, if your wrists are starting to hurt, you dont want to take the chance of damaging any ligaments or tendons in your hands, so dont forget to rest. Listening to music and listening to what other popular guitarists do with their sound (or how they implicate the technique theyre most famous for) can help you to find your own individual sound! Want to watch a movie but dont want to make the noise that comes with playing the guitar? Silent playing or silent rehearsing is a method of practice where basically the guitarist just moves their left hand across the fretboard, fingering different chords, but doesnt strum with their right hand. This is a great practice technique to use if youre looking to increase your chord switching speed! At the same time Whatever you do, DO NOT wrap your thumb about your neck board so that your thumb is pressing down the 6th string on your guitar. Its a natural reaction to want to do this because as a beginner, your fingers and wrists are likely getting tired rather quickly while playing. Instead of using your thumb to control the 6th string, place your thumb on the back of the neck of the guitar, as this forces you to use your fingertips. This is going to feel weird at first and your wrist may feel strained, but its much better to struggle to develop a habit than it is to try to break a bad habit of using your thumb to press down the 6th string. Trying to learn to play at a really fast pace isnt going to help build muscle memory or help your brain retain the information any longer. A great technique is about accuracy, which is something that you develop by playing at a slow tempo. When you learn to play properly, speed naturally follows along! Practicing isnt much fun if youre only doing scales and chord progressions. Learning to cover your favorite song, even as a beginner, is totally possible! You dont have to start off learning the guitar by learning Hot Cross Buns or Happy Birthday. The absolute most important part of playing the guitar is creating music that inspires you and motivates you, not creating the perfect technique, so start working on playing some of your favorite songs! Starting off with a lighter gauge string will mean that theres less tension on the neck of the guitar, which makes the strings easier to press down for beginners. For acoustic guitar players, I would recommend buying a set of .009 to .042 strings and for electric guitar players, I would recommend .010 to .046 gauge strings. While a certain fingering may feel a little bit easier for you to accomplish using certain fingers, dont take the lazy way when it comes to proper fingerings. Later on down the road, you may come to the realization that the chord that youve been lazy fingering is now nearly impossible to play with a seventh or ninth variation added onto it. Just do yourself the favor and practice the fingerings that you struggle with the most, so you dont develop bad habits down the road when you need to use proper fingering the most! Learning the guitar can be a tricky hobby to get into, but its a lot easier to play the guitar if you work on building correct playing techniques and a healthy practice routine when youre first starting out! Hammering out the simple, common mistakes that a lot of beginners make and nailing the basic techniques will make the rest of your playing journey an easy ride! Here are some recommendations for your starter kit: Boss Accessory Bundle | Guitar Center This all-in-one bundle has all your favorite BOSS accessories. Use the blue microfiber polish detailing cloth and guitar detailing spray to keep your instrument looking like new. The BOSS branded medium guitar picks and black nylon guitar strap ensure youll look and play great. Check price Buy at Musician's Friend We may receive compensation from the companies whose products we review. We only recommend products that we believe in and test. Best Guitar Books Hal Leonard 101 Guitar Tips | Sweetwater 101 Guitar Tipscontains invaluable guidance on everything from scales and music theory to truss rod adjustments, proper recording studio set-ups and much more. Check price Buy at Music & Arts We may receive compensation from the companies whose products we review. We only recommend products that we believe in and test. Logic Pro vs Pro Tools Compared Best Tablets for MusiciansCongratulations, your decision on learning to play guitar just might be one of thebest decisions of your life.After teaching100's of live studentsandover 130,000 people online,I've gathered everything I know and created this simple-to-followfree beginner guitar lesson course. Yes, it's suitable for both the acoustic and electric guitars.Now let's get started! And please remember:Even thebest guitarists were beginnersat one time,just like you. Slash, Eric Clapton, BB King, Joe Satriani all started out somewhere. Maybe in a chair, just like yours.Contents of this Free Beginner Guitar GuideIf you follow these guitar lessons developed specifically for beginners, you'll build a rock-solid foundation of guitar skills.They have proven to work again and again with my on- and offline students.Oneveryimportant thingto keep in mindis that the best way to keep your practice sessions fun and motivating is tostart playing songs right from the beginning. With each lesson chapter, I'll list several songs suitable for the level you will be at.Learning these songs will:bring life to a maybe not so interesting practice session,they'll let you practice tons of practical guitar skills,and, of course, playing the guitar is about making music, that's your ultimate goal.Each chapterwill contain the following elements:1. Tabs and Chord ChartsAnd your journey begins, how exciting! Learning guitar is not exactly the easiest endeavor of your life, but if you stick with it and devote some time to it, you'll definitely become a good guitarist and enrich your life in so many ways. Remember, playing guitar is an acquired skill, all it takes is practice.InfoLessonsSongs to playBefore moving onThere are a few guitar-specific music notations you need to be familiar with, in order to understand our guitar lessons (and all other guitar lessons for that matter). This chapter will introduce you totablature, andchord charts.Tablature(or tabs for short) are basically music sheets for the guitarist. They differ from traditional music sheets, so it's important to know how tabs work and be able to read them at a glance.Chord charts, or chord diagrams will show you exactly how to play chords on the guitar, including the strings, fingerings, and notes to play.This chapter is more of a primer on tabs and chord diagrams, which you can refer back to later if you see something you don't understand.Tabs and chord charts are fundamental to learning guitar, so start getting familiar with them.This is just an introductory chapter, we'll have a go at our first song in Chapter 2, so stay tuned!You should be familiar withbasic tab notationas well as thestructure of chord diagrams.Don't worry if you can't recite every tablature symbol yet, you'll learn them all as you see them in upcoming lessons. Just remember to refer back to the written lessons in case you don't remember a given symbol when you encounter it.I want you to leave this chapter in a positive mood, so have a read at my article onhow long it'll take to learn guitar.And if you haven't made up your mind yet, read my thoughts onwhether beginners should choose an electric or an acoustic guitar.2. The BasicsOk, so now it's time to grab your guitar. The previous chapter was more of a pre-theory session to make sure you'll understand the chord charts and tabs you'll be using not just in these lessons, but for many years to come as a guitarist.InfoLessonsSongs to playBefore moving onThis chapter will focus ongetting you familiar with the guitar. It is a wonderful instrument which you'll grow to love, but in the beginning, it'll feel a bit clumsy.We'll learn thevery basics, such as:how to hold the guitarhow to hold the guitar pick (plectrum)the parts of the guitarand how to pluck individual notesIt is important that from now on, youkeep your guitar out where you can see it. You'll pick it up and practice more often if it's in sight, and of course it's a beautiful thing to look at as well.You've just started, but there are already a few songs you can start practicing! Is that cool or what?!Wipeout by The Surfaris- This super popular song is one of the first you should learn, it'll really improve your plucking skills and general fretting.Keep it slow at first, speed will come with time.Watch lessonPink Panther Theme by Henry Mancini- Who doesn't know the Pink Panther theme, right? Well, it turns out it's pretty easy to play, and it'll teach you a bunch of techniques. Have a look!Watch lessonAnd we're on our way! Chapter 1 should take you no longer than afew days to grasp, but of course, becoming proficient at the things you just learned will take much longer.Make sure youpractice at least a half-hour every day. Your fingertips will hurt initially, but it will pass in a few weeks, since you'll develop calluses, and you won't even feel the strings anymore. If they really start hurting though, just stop playing, and continue later.Practice everything you learned in the video lesson:Study the fretboard (open string names, fret markers)Doing the finger strengthening exercisePlaying the C major scale up and downMaking sure you're alternate plucking the stringsAnd if you're interested, read this article onhow I learned to play guitar.3. Playing ChordsHolding the guitar is an experience you can never get bored of. It's great just picking it up, appreciating the fine workmanship of the instrument, and feeling the vibrations flow through the wood as you strum a chord.InfoLessonsSongs to playBefore moving onIn Chapter 3, you'll be getting familiar with afundamental part of playing the guitar, chords.Chords are apart of every song ever written, you'll be using them throughout your guitar-playing career. Even though you can create chords anywhere on the guitar neck, potentially creating thousands of chords, there is no need to memorize them all. There are a few basic, versatile chords that will allow you to play literally hundreds of super famous songs. In this chapter, you'll learn:Basic beginner's chordsRecognize the difference between major and minor chordsYou don't need to worry about how chords are constructed yet (what notes a chord would be made out of), that's music theory. For now, you just need tolearn the few basic chordsin this chapter.We're not quite at the point where we can change in between chords yet, but if you're feeling adventurous, have a go at this song:Hurt performed by Johnny Cash -Hurt is a beautiful song, which is pretty easy to play. It uses just a few basic chords from the video lesson, so give it a try.Watch lessonWow, this lesson packed a punch! You learned several chords, and right now, you're wondering how you'll ever be able to play any of them correctly.Don't worry, even the best guitar players started out just like you. All it takes is practice and patience. You'll most likely spend several weeks perfecting these chords, but you don't need to wait that long to move on to the next chapter.Before starting Chapter 4, you'll need to be thoroughly familiar with the following chords:Major chords: C, D, A, E, GMinor chords: Am, Dm, EmThe F major is something you'll need to practice a lot. Don't neglect it, but you don't need it perfected for the next lesson just yet. It will take many weeks, maybe months to perfect it. This is totally natural and OK.Remember to only strum the strings that the given chord requires.It's very important to make sure you're holding each chord correctly. When you fret a chord, pluck each string one-by-one, make sure all of them ring out nicely. If not, check your fingers, and start over.I really want to encourage you to keep at it and practice these chords as much as you can. It's hard to believe right now, butthey will become second nature soon, your fingers just need to get acquainted with the new movements. It's called "muscle memory". Your hand and fingers will get used to the chord shapes, and soon fretting a chord will be instinctive.It's like learning to walk basically. Could you do it on day 1? Nope. Butwith time, it will become effortless.4. Chord changesAre your fingertips hurting yet? If not, then you're probably not practicing enough!As a beginner, fretting a chord, and thus holding down the strings will definitely cause pain in your fingertips. But don't worry. With practice, your fingertips will develop calluses, and the pain will go away completely.InfoLessonsSongs to playBefore moving onIf you are comfortable with playing single chords from Chapter 3, it's time to take it to the next level and start changing in-between chords.Changing chords refers to the act ofransitioning your fingers from one chord to another. I won't lie to you, this will be difficult at first, but again,it'll become super easy with time. You'll be learning:Several widely used chord changesThe G-C-D chord progressionThis chapter concentrates solely on learning some basic chord changes. Nothing more, nothing less. It's meant to get you started in moving your fingers between chord shapes, a skill you'll be mastering very soon.Again, until we start strumming, we're somewhat limited in being able to play songs, but if you want to give it a go, here are a few songs for you.Ring of Fire by Johnny Cash- This nice and simple song uses the same chord progression you learned at the end of the basic lesson, which we'll also be building on in Chapter 4 on strumming. And, of course, every guitarist needs to learn Johnny Cash songs.Watch lessonMy Girl by The Temptations- My Girl will have you doing some single-string plucking, as well as basic chords, including the F major.Watch lessonOk ok, nobody said it would be easy, but hey, nothing worthwhile ever is. I can only repeat myself in saying that if youpractice and keep at it, you'll find it'll get easier and easier every day. Keep it slow and steady, no rush.Spend some more time practicing your chords, then concentrate on your chord changes.Now before moving to Chapter 4:Watch the video lesson several times, andpractice every chord change variationI teach you.Note that with shared finger chord changes, you should keep that shared finger on the given string. This makes changing a whole lot easier, as it'll give you a pivot point.Practice the G-C-D chords progression a lot.Practice the chord changes as described in the written material as well.At this stage, you'll be looking back and forth between your fretting hand when fretting a string and your plucking hand before plucking or strumming. That's not a problem, the more you practice, the more accustomed you'll get with the guitar neck, and sooner or later, you'll be able to fret and pluck without looking. From now on, I want you to make aconscious effort to not have to look downat your hands all the time.5. StrummingYou are at a milestone, this is where you start making enjoyable music!Just a few chords, a nice rhythmic strumming pattern, and the world is yours.InfoLessonsSongs to playBefore moving onIn Chapter 5, you'll belearning how to strum the guitar, by strumming some of the chords we learned in the previous lesson. By the end of the chapter, you should be able to:Change in between the G-C-D chords semi-fluently, with less and less hesitationStrum the guitar up and downApply a strumming pattern to the G-C-D chord progression, using ghost strums to disguise chord changesThings will really start speeding up from here, but it's important that youlearn these fundamental topics well, and correctly. Learning correct strumming will take a bit of time, but it'syours for lifeafterward, so it's really worth the effort.Strumming songs is really fun, and there is no shortage of songs to strum, believe me. Here is afull list of strumming song lessonsI have on the site, some are of course a bit harder. Here are a few simple strumming songs I recommend for beginners:Mad World by Gary Jules -This song uses only 4 beginner chords, and it's a great one to learn, since it'll take you from very simple strumming, all the way to playing arpeggios on the given chords.Watch lessonGood Riddance (Time of Your Life) by Green Day -This is one of my favorite beginner songs to teach, since it uses easy chords, easy strumming, and is very energetic and fun to play. You'll be playing this one for years to come.Watch lessonTimes Like These by Foo Fighters- The acoustic version of this song is very very fun to play, you should definitely check it out. It's a really cool song which is pretty easy to learn.Watch lessonViva La Vida by Coldplay- If you're looking for a challenge, here it is. This song uses simple chords, but the strumming style makes it unique and a bit more difficult.Watch lessonAs you can probably see,strumming isn't that difficult to get a hang of. Just follow my advice from the lesson, learn a few songs, and you should be fine.You'll know you're ready to move on, when:You can play Knocking on Heavens Door almost fluently, so with acceptable chord changes and strumming techniqueYour up strums are about the same volume as your down strumsYour pick doesn't go flying out of your hand every other strum. Don't worry, it happens to everybody.It's all very unbelievable at first, butfour chords and a few strumming patternscan deliver hundreds of songs,have a listen!6. Notes on the GuitarBasic knowledge of music theory will definitely be of benefit to you as a guitar player. It'll allow you to not only understand why you are playing what, but to progress as a musician as well.And it all starts with learning the notes on the fretboard.InfoLessonsSongs to playBefore moving onIn this chapter, I'll introduce you to afew important theoretical aspectsof the guitar. It isn't vital for you to know this inside-out just yet, but you definitely have to be familiar with it, and start learning it at your own pace.By the end of this lesson, you should be familiar with the following:12 notes of the musical alphabetsemitones, whole tones, octavesstring relationsYou'll also learnhow to tune your guitar, a very important part of being a guitarist. Guitars do go out of tune at times, so you'll always need to check your tuning, otherwise everything you play will be out of tune and won't sound right.Well, we didn't really learn any new guitar playing skills in this chapter, but it never hurts to learn a new songFr Elise by Beethoven- This beautiful classical song can be played by beginner guitarists as well. It uses a few basic chord arpeggios, give it a go!Watch lessonWe're going to be taking it up a notch from Chapter 7, so you'll want to pause here, andmake sure you've got the essence of Chapters 1 to 6covered:Basic chord fingerings and changesStrummingString names, string relationsTuning your guitarYou don't need to know all of the notes on the fretboard yet, but you do need to start learning them at this stage. It'll become really useful later on.7. FingerpickingPlaying fingerstyle guitar will open up new possibilities for creating beautiful music.Fingerstyle is mostly used on acoustic guitar and is a staple of the classical guitar, but it can sound wonderful on electric guitars as well. Just turn off that overdrive InfoLessonsSongs to playBefore moving onAnew world will open up in Chapter 7, that of using just your fingers to create music on your guitar. You may even decide never to pick up a plectrum again No, but seriously, fingerstyle is a lot of fun, and you cancreate beautiful musicjust by playing the individual notes of simple chords.You'll be learning:Correct method of fingerpicking, which finger does whatArpeggiating chordsFingerpicking patternsWe'll beusing chords all throughout this chapter, so if you need to, please refer back to Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 on chords and switching between them.Someone Like You by Adele- You may not know that this ultra-popular song uses just a few simple beginner chords. Really!Have a go, practice it a lot, and you'll be able to play along with the original song soon.Watch lessonGreensleeves- This was one of the first songs I learned to play on guitar, and I still enjoy it today. The lesson is actually a double lesson, where you'll learn 2 guitar parts.It is a must-know for beginner guitarists.Watch lessonHouse of the Rising Sun by The Animals- This is one of the songs I play during the basic fingerstyle lesson, it's great to get your fingers moving, and practice those chord changes.Watch lessonAnd of course, we have many morefingerstyle song lessonsfor you, look for the Level I and Level II lessons if you're just starting out.As with pretty much everything on the guitar, you'll need to start out slow, speed will come with time.If you do things correctly now, you'll greatlyimprove your picking hand's muscle memory. Your fingers will start remembering where each string is, and soon, you'll be able to stop looking at your picking hand altogether.Of course, this takes practice:Fingerpicking, and learning picking patterns is all about repetition, so repeat each pattern a lot, get it programmed into your fingers.You can practice fingerpicking by playing chords from specificchord progressions.Learning fingerstyle is best done through learning songs, so I would really recommend you learn a few songs from the song list.Once you can play chord arpeggios constantly and clearly without looking down at your hand, you're ready to move on.8. Barre chordsLearning barre chords will be your first major hurdle as a beginner guitarist (and you thought chord changing was hard).Barre chords are difficult, no doubt about it.BUT take comfort in the fact that they were hard for Eric Clapton, Slash, and BB King as well.Barre chords can be learned, it just takes practice and technique.InfoLessonsSongs to playBefore moving onSo here we are, gettingready to learn barre chords. You've come so far, congratulations! And oh boy, are you in for a treat If you think normal chords were tough, well... Let's just say you'll need to practice barre chords a lot more.In this chapter, you'll learn:What a barre chord is (you can also spell it barr, or bar chord by the way)How to fret the E shape major and minor barre chordsHow to fret the A shape major and minor barre chordsThe chord progression (barre chords) for Stand by MeIt is important that you not only watch the video tutorial, but also read the written lessons as well. You'll need toexperiment with how your hand can best handle barre chords, which is covered in the written material.Stand by Me by Ben E King- Everyone knows this tune, it's actually made up of a chord progression of just 4 chords. The lesson will show you a fingerstyle version, but you can also strum along to the song if you like.Watch lessonFly Away by Lenny Kravitz- An awesome song by a great musician, this song is again a testament to the simplicity of great songs. You don't need huge solos and super complicated riffs, just a few chords.Watch lessonGive Me One Reason by Tracy Chapman- This song's got such a great vibe, you'll go out of your mind! It's a bit more difficult than the two other songs above, but once you can, you'll love playing it.Watch lessonOk, so before you ask, yes, you must learn barre chords. Barre chords are aintegral part of playing guitar, you can't get along without knowing them.I'm not gonna lie to you,barre chords are hard. You're going to have to practice them A LOT. At first, it will sound awful, your hand will hurt, and you'll just be sick of it all. As one of my students bluntly put it:"I have a deep and passionate hatred towards barre chords"It's OK though, good things don't come easy. You gotta work for it, and by work, I really meanjust 5 minutes of practicing barre chords per day. Not that bad, right?With time, it gets easier. With practice, yourhand will naturally form the barre shapes, and the chords will start sounding right.And once you can play barre chords, you'll be able to play pretty much any song you want. That's a promise.Here is your homework:From now on, you'll need to practice barre chords every day. It sucks, I know, but it will get easier with time.Once you can form the barre shapes, practice them playing the songs in the song section. They make your practice sessions just a bit easier.We've all been there, all guitar players went through this. And here we are.You'll be joining us soon, all it takes is practice.9. Lead Guitar TechniquesReady to rock? Born ready!Lead guitar is usually played on electric guitars, but if you only have an acoustic handy, you can still learn most lead techniques to create amazing solos. But still, this chapter is best on the electric.InfoLessonsSongs to playBefore moving onLead guitar, and the techniques we'll be learning in Chapter 9 ismostly played on electric guitar, but you'll want to familiarize yourself with them even if you only have an acoustic guitar on hand right now.We'll belearning all of the essential lead guitar techniques, you'll be able to use them to play 95% of all solos and lead parts:hammer ons and pull offsstring bendingsliding between notesvibratopalm mutingpower chordsThe things you learn in this chapter will really startimproving your hand and finger coordination, and your movements have to start becoming more and more exact.Learning these soloing techniques isbest done by using them in songs, so make sure you learn a few songs from the song list.Smoke on the Water by Deep Purple- An ultra-popular riff that is pretty simple actually. This riff is usually one of the first riffs beginner guitarists learn to play, with good reason. Make sure you hit this lesson as well.Watch lessonSamba Pa Ti by Santana- Carlos Santana is one of my favorite guitarists, he just puts so much of himself into every note he plays. Samba Pa Ti is suitable for beginners, and it will teach you lots of lead guitar techniques.Watch lessonAmerican Idiot by Green Day- Power chords are an integral part of rock guitar, and American Idiot is a great song for beginners to start practicing them. The song also has a cool mini solo, it's a lot of fun to play.Watch lessonWe have loads oflessons on popular lead guitar songs, look for the Level I and Level II songs if you're just starting out.Lead guitar is just cool, plain and simple. It's loads of fun to play, but again, it takes practice to get under your fingers.Here is what you need to do:Make sure you are familiar with the basic lead guitar techniques from this chapterStart playinglead guitar songsto practice the techniquesThe more songs you play, the more youuse these techniques, the more you'll program them into your fingers.In the next chapter, we'll be learning about scales, and how you can use them to improvise at a later stage, but for now, just go ahead and practice the songs from the greats.Think of some ofyour favorite guitar solos, and search for their tabsonline as well, or in ourGuitar Pro tabs database. Find inspiration in other people's playing, and use it to deepen your love of the guitar.And remember, even pros likeKirk Hammet have to practice.10. ConclusionLearning to play the guitar is really anever-ending journey. The more you lear

option as well.Make sure to practice guitar for at least half an hour each day consistency is key for learning guitar, and even short practice sessions are better than none.Focus on your rhythm and timing, practice various up- and downstrokes, and use a metronome to stay in rhythm. This will help you avoid accidentally muting strings and improve your strumming technique. So you want to learn how to play guitarbut dont know where to start? No worries. This how to play guitar for beginners guide will cover all the basic requirements to get you started with playing guitar. The guide is split into 2 sections: The Basics where youll learn about the various parts of the guitar, how to hold the guitar and how to tune your guitar.Playing where youll learn popular chords, strumming techniques, and how to read guitar tabs. This guitar for beginners guide is meant for guitarists just starting out, however, there are also tips and tricks here which will further help intermediate guitarists excel. If you prefer to learn by video or would like to go into more in-depth topics, Id recommend checking out our list of online guitar lessons to get you started on the right foot. Without further ado, lets jump into it! The first part of learning how to play guitar from scratch is learning the basics. The basics include everything from learning how to tune your guitar, to how to hold it properly, etc. In this section, well mention parts of the guitar you may or may not be familiar with yet. If any guitar part names are foreign to you, consult the following guitar anatomy guide to get a better understanding of which name corresponds to which part of the guitar. Lets start off this section by learning the notes thateach of the six guitar strings corresponds to. Knowing what note each string corresponds to on the guitar is an important first step. This will help you with tuning your guitar (shown in a later step) as well as give you a starting point for when you choose to learn more about the note structure of the fretboard (we wont worry about that for now). Starting from thethickest to the thinnest string, the notes are assignedas follows: E A D G B E. Here is a quick visualization: A simple way to remember the notes is to associate each letter with a word. For instance, I like to use the following example to help me remember what each open string is. Eddie (thickest string)AteDynamiteGoodByeEddie (thinnest string) Try to remember the above mnemonic or make one on your own to help remember the open string notes. Now that we got that covered, lets move on to the nextstep. Holding your guitar properly ensures that you will maintain good posture and therefore your back, shoulders, and armswontget sore as quickly (although youll likely still experience some discomfort at first). If youre right-handed start off byresting the guitar on the upper part of your right leg. Ensure the back of the guitar is pressed up against your chest and that your right arm is wrapped around the body of the guitar so that your hand ends up in front of the soundhole. Additionally, your left hand should be used to cradle the neck of the guitar so that your thumb sits on top or behind the neck (whichever is most comfortable) while your fingers are on the strings. If youre left-handed, simply do the opposite.The guitar should rest on your upper left leg, your left arm should wrap around the body of the guitar, and your right hand supports the neck. Try to be aware of any slouching either from your body or the guitar itself. A lot of new guitar players tend to slouch the guitar so that its easier to see their fingers. Try to avoid this habit as much as possible as it makes the guitar harder to play and will cause more discomfort. Using a pick when youre first starting out is recommended as it is much easier to pluck the strings. There is likely a huge selection of picks at your local music shop and they can be any combination of thick, thin, solid, flexible, wide, or skinny. I like to use a regular-sized pick that has medium flex to it. Choosing the right pick for you will depend on what you feel comfortable with, but for starters, any regular-sized pick will work. To hold the pick, simply lay the wide end flat betweenyour index finger and your thumb. When holding the pick, the majority oft should be covered by your thumb and finger with only a couple of centimeters sticking out. When holding the pick dont gripdown on it too hard but also dont hold it so loosely that it will fly out of your hand when you start to play. Try to keep a medium grip that holdsit in place without moving around too much when you play. You may also want to expriment with holding the pick in various positions.Pick-holding preference is subjective and will depend on what you feel is most comfortable. Tuning your guitar is very important and should be done every time before you start playing. Make this a habit so that your guitar will always be in tunefor when youre practicing or playing. When it comes to tuners, there are now more options than ever. You can use your phone, your computer, or even a traditionaltuner which all work well. Lets go over each option in more detail. There are many apps that can be downloaded on your mobile device (iPad, iPhone, Android) to be used to tune aguitar. Some are paid apps that come with additional features while others are free. Im going to go over two apps, one of which is free (with in-app purchases) while the other is paid. GuitarTuna Free GuitarTuna is a free guitar tuner with in-app purchases. For beginners who just need to tune their guitar in standard tuning, this is a great option. It gives you a user-friendly interface and allows you to switch between manual and auto-tuning modes. Manual mode means that you select which string you want to tune, while auto allows you to play the string on your guitar and the tuner will automatically determine which string itis. GuitarTuna also provides you with a metronome and chords guide. A metronome essentially producesa continuous click at a certain speed to help you maintain a beat (more on this later). The chords guide provides you with an awesome library of chords to choose from so you can quickly lookup a certain chord and know instantly how to play it. This app also provides a variety of in-app purchases or bundle purchases. This gives you access to more chords, instruments, tuning settings, etc. Although the in-app purchase prices are a little higher than the next option Im going to discuss, it does provide you with a ton more information that you may find beneficial. Guitar Tuner! Paid $3.99 Guitar Tuner! is the tuning app that I currently use. Unlike the GuitarTuna, this apps sole purpose is to act as a tuner. Although not as visually appealing as the previous option, its straightforward to use and comes with a variety of special tunings that you can experiment with. Both of these options are great ways to get started with a guitar tuner. Although I personally believe having a guitar tuning app is the best way to go (in most cases) lets take a look at the other two options as well. There are also a couple of ways to use your computer to tune your guitar. The first method is through using an online service such as Pro Guitar Tuner. This website allows you to choose from a variety of tuning options. Simply by listening through your computers mic the site is able to determine if your guitar is in or out of tune. When you go to the site simply allow camera and microphone access in order for the tuner to be able touse your computers microphone. Alternatively, if you have a Mac, you can use the Garage Band app to tune your guitar by following these steps: Open Garage Band and choose Empty ProjectUnder the Audio section select Record using a microphone or line input and click Create.Then select the tuning fork in the upper right-hand corner. This will bring up another window which will be your tuner. Lastly, you can also choose to buy a traditional guitar tuner. These come in different shapes and sizes and average around $10-$15 at your local guitar shop. A good guitar tuner, if you choose this option, is the Korg GA1 Guitar and Bass Tuner. Now that know what options you have when choosing a guitar tuning method, you can now start tuning your guitar. Remember our mnemonic from before? Eddie (thickest string)AteDynamiteGoodByeEddie (thinnest string) These are the notes that you want to tune each string to. That means that when tuning your top string (thickest string) youll want the E note to show up on your tuner. Always try to tune up to the note. If you turn your guitar pegs too far and the note goes sharp, simply unwind the tuning peg slightly and tune up to the note again. Dont worry if your tuner is showing that youre off + or 1 or 2 cents, your guitar will still be in tune regardless of this slight imperfection. Still with me? Now that weve covered the basics of guitar, its time to start playing. The next section will cover some of the basic and most popular guitar chords, strumming techniques, and how to read guitar tabs. In this section, Ill dive into the basics of what you need to know to actually learn to play guitar. Well cover everything from learning a few basic chords that are used in many popular songs, how to strum, and read guitar tabs. When first starting to learn guitar, knowing a few basic guitar chords give you the ability to play a huge amount of songs. Many famous songs were createdusing only 4 chords; even less in some cases. Im going to show you the best chords to learn as a beginner guitarist so that you can start learning a ton of new songs. A diagram is drawn for each chord below. The numbers on each string correspond to which finger you should be using. For example, your index finger corresponds to 1 while your pinky would be 4. Additionally, on the left side of the diagram, you will see more numbers. These correspond to which fret your fingers should be on. So for the E Major chord, your 2nd and 3rdfingers should be placed on the 2nd fret while your 1st finger should be on the first fret. Also, at the top of the diagram if you see an x that means not to pluck that string while an o means you can play that string open. If youre not sure how exactly the chord is supposed to sound, simply play the sound cloud that is associated with each chord. Were going to go over 7 different chords in the section below, so have your guitar ready and lets get started. E Major E Minor (Em) A Major A Minor (Am) G Major C Major D Major Practice these chords on a daily basis. Your fingers arent used to these chord shapes just yet, so you have to build muscle memory to allow your fingers to become accustomed to each shape. Practice notonly strumming each chord separatelybut also practice switching between each chord. The more you practice the easier it will become to play chords and the faster youll get at switching between each one as well. Learning how to strum a guitar takes practice and is somewhat subjective, meaning that one guitar players strumming technique may differ from the next. Although youll likely start to develop your own strumming style and preferences as you progress. Here are a few basic strumming tips and techniques to get you started. Place your strumming hand atthe base of the soundhole of your guitar.This is a good default position, however, there is no harm in deviating from this. Strumming closer to the neck will create a bass-ier sound while strumming closer to the bridge will create a sharper, smaller sound.Keep your wrist loose when strumming. The majority of strumming should be done with your wrist, not your arm. Try to avoid moving your arm too much when strumming (although dont tense up).Practice your downward and upward strumming. When practicing downward strumming, start by hitting the top E string (thickest string) and moving your way down, hitting all strings below. To get comfortable with this, try just practicing your downstrokes and nothing else.Next, youll want to start practicing your upstrokes. For this, your hand should move in an upward motion starting from the thinnest string. For most upstrokes, youll generally want to aim to hit the first 4 strings. Try practicing just your upstrokes until you feel comfortable combining the up and down strokes together.Once you feel comfortable doing each stroke individually, tryalternating between each: down-up, down-up, down-up, and repeat. Learning how to play the guitar is a process involving many steps and there are a ton of different strumming patterns to learn. However, practicing the basic down-up strokes will help build a solid strumming foundation. Once you feel you are comfortable with the basic concept of strumming, try playing along to a song. An easy song to play along with to help practice your strumming technique is Love Me Do by The Beatles (scroll down for song and tab links). Try listening to the up-and-down strokes and replicating them as closely as you can. Guitar tabs are, in my opinion, essential for learning how to play guitar. They are a super easy and convenient way to learn new songs quickly. There are a ton of guitar tablatures out there for almost any song you can think of just check out our list of the best acoustic guitar songs. The biggest websites sources for guitar tabs are Ultimate-Guitar and GuitareTab. Basically, a guitar tab shows you your list of guitar strings: E, A, D, G, B, e along with which fret should be used to play a note. Lets look at an example: e----------|-3--3--3--3-3-|----------|--3--3--3--3-3--|B----------|-3--3--3--3-3-|----------|--3--3--3--3-3--|G----------|-0--0--0--0-0-|----0--------|--0--0--0--0-0--|D----------0--2-|-2--2--2--2-2-2-|-2-----2--0---|--0--0--0--0-0--| x 2A-----0h2--------|-2--2--2--2-2-2-|----------|--2--2--2--2-2--|E---(3)----------|-x--x--x--x-x-|----------|--3--3--3--3-3--| The above tablature snippet is for the beginning of the Pink Floyd song, Wish You Were Here. Each row corresponds to one of your strings, where the top row (e) is your thinnest string and the bottom row (E) is your thickest string. When numbers are offset from each other, such as in the first section, this means that you play them one after another. e----------|B----------|G----------|D----------0--2-|A-----0h2--------|E---(3)----------| So, starting from left to right, the above tablature snippet corresponds to the following: Press down on the 3rd fret of the low E string and pluck that stringThen pluck the open A string and hammer onto the 2nd fret of the same stringThen pluck the open D string followed by pressing down on the 2nd fret of the D string and plucking that note. On the other hand, if the numbers are all in the same column, such as the second section, this means you play them all together at the same time. e----3--3--3--3-3-|B----3--3--3--3-3-|G----0--0--0--0-0-|D----2--2--2--2-2-|A----2--2--2--2-2-|E----x--x--x--x-x-| Within many guitar tabs, youll also see letters or special characters within the tablature itself. These mean a variety of things, the most common characters youll see are: h hammer onp pull off/ or \ slide into from below or abovex dead noteb bend Use the tab legend below if you come across any characters within a tab that youre unsure of. The downside to guitar tabs is that it can be hard to tell what the timing should be for each note. Therefore, when learning a new song through guitar tabs its also good to have the actual song handy so that you can replicate the correct timing and rhythm. However, to help fix this issue, I like to use a program called Guitar Pro. Guitar Pro basically turns a guitar tab into a playable MIDIsound file. Therefore the program actually plays out the guitar tab so you can easily hear as well as visualizehow the song should be played. To use Guitar Pro and load in a guitar tab, follow these steps: Download Guitar Pro for your operating systemOnce installed, head over to Guitar Pro Tabsor GTP Tabs and search for a song/artistOnce you find the song you want, simply download it andopen the file with Guitar PRo. Now that the file is loaded within Guitar Pro, youll see a bunch of tabs and likely a list of instruments at the bottom. Many guitar pro tabs come with more than just tabsfor the guitar (e.g. vocals, drums, bass, etc). I still recommend having the actual song handy as replicating the feel and rhythm of a song can be quite challenging to do in a MIDI tab. Use guitar tabs to learn the chords/notes of how a song is played, but listen to the song to get a betterfeel for the rhythm. So far in this how to learn guitar tutorial weve covered a lot of information. Everything from learning the basics of a guitar, seven extremely useful and versatile chords, strumming techniques, and how to read guitar tabs. However, I wanted to go over a few additional things before wrapping up. Learning guitar is not an easy task and as we all know, practice is very important. The length of time it takes to learn guitar will vary from person to person but in general, youll want to practice playing the guitar every day for at least 30 minutes to an hour. If you feel your fingers starting to hurt or your shoulder is getting sore, just put down the guitar for a while and come back later, dont push yourself to the point where it gets too uncomfortable. As for what you should be practicing: Practice tuning every time you pick up the guitar to play it.Practice the 7 chord positions Ive outlined above and practice switching between them (in no particular order).Practice your strumming technique bygetting smoothdownstrokes and upstrokes.Use guitar tabs (either Ultimate Guitar or Guitar Pro) to learn new songs. I mention a few good beginner songs below. A metronome is a device that ticks at a particular BPM (beats per minute)to helpkeep musicians in time with the song theyre playing. A metronome isnt necessary when first starting out. However, when you feel a little more comfortable with playing chords and switching between them, consider using a metronome when practicing. Creating this habit earlywill help improve your rhythm and therefore help keep you in time when playing a song. You can use the metronome within Garage Band oran online tool such as this free online metronome. The songs listed below are all beginner songs using a combination of the chords we mentioned in Section 2 of this beginners guide. Ive included a Spotify link to each song (if you dont have a Spotify account get one, its awesome) along with the Ultimate-Guitar tab and a downloadable tab for Guitar Pro. TNT AC/DC Ultimate-Guitar Tab Guitar Pro Tab Love Me Do The Beatles Ultimate-Guitar Tabs Guitar Pro Tab Take it Easy The Eagles Ultimate-Guitar Tabs Guitar Pro Tab Runnin Down a Dream Tom Petty Ultimate-Guitar Tabs Guitar Pro Tab Check out our complete list of 50+ easy guitar songs for other awesome guitar song suggestions. Hopefully, this how-to guide has helped you improve your guitar-playing skills or at least given you direction on how to start to learn how to play guitar. If you have any questions regarding any of the information discussed in this article (or any off-topic questions) leave them in the comments section below and Ill be sure to answer them for you. Home > Guides > Beginners > How To Play The Guitar: A 10-Step Programme For Beginners Wondering how to play the guitar? Follow this10-step roadmap to get started quickly. Guitar gear boot camp: Guitars, picks, tuners etc.How to learn chords at lightning speed with a secret techniqueThe correct way to hold a pick10 simplesongs for guitar beginnersLearn how to strum with musicality and rhythm.Learn the most effective way to practiceHow to avoid frustration &stay positive!Learning how to play the guitar can be confusing, but after reading this lesson you will understand exactly what the guitar journey looks like and what you should do next.Lets get stuck in!. Over 100,000 guitar-learners get our world-class guitar tips & tutorials sent straight to their inbox: Click here to join them Get our best guitar tips & videos Some guitars are easy to play and some are very difficult to play.The guitar you choose to learn with has a huge influence on your chances of successfully learning the instrument.Any guitar is better than no guitar of course, but ideally, you want a guitar that suits your body shape and size.This will make a profound and long-lasting difference to your guitar journey, so treat it seriously.This article will help you:How To Choose The Perfect Beginner GuitarHow much should Ispend on my guitar?Notmuch, but as a beginner you need a guitar that is EASY to play and is in good working order.A crappyguitar is going to sound crappy, no matter how muchyou practice.As a general rule dont pay less than $150 / 120 for a guitar. You should never buy a guitar without playing first.The Fenders and Epiphones of the world are well established brands. Their guitars are good, but pricey.Theres some affordable guitar brands that offer amazing value like Yamaha, Redwood, Squier, Farida and Ibanez.Do I have to buy my own guitar?You canborrow a guitar,sure, but this should be a temporary thing.If youre serious about wanting to know how to play the guitaryou need to buy yourown hardware.TheEssentialsYou need a tuner. The Korg GA-1 is fantastic:You also need a capo. These trigger capos from Jim Dunlopare brilliant:What else? You need a strap and a few picks (thickness of 0.65-0.73 is ideal for newbies).If youre rocking on electric guitar then youll need an amp and a cable. Where should we send it? Stop struggling. Start making music. Learn beginner-friendly versions of every chord. This is our most popular guide and it will improve your chord ability quickly! Get your own personalised guitar-learning plan Get a custom guitar-learning plan here: Click here for GuitarMetrics How to play the guitar step 2: Tune up right. Stay in tune.A qualitytuner is a smart investment.There are 4 types of tuner:Microphone-based tunersVibration-based tunersPedal tunersSmartphone appsMicrophone-based tunershave to listen to the notes to be able to tune. (You can also plug in an electric or electro-acoustic.)Vibration-based tuners clip on the neck of the guitar. The Snark is my favourite.Pedal tuners are for bass, electric and electro-acoustic guitars. They are super-accurate and robust.Smartphone appshelp you tune your guitar for cheapz! They are mostly free and some of them are ok.To learn more about tuners and the different ways totune (and STAY in tune) check out Robs article:How To Tune A Guitar: A Beginners GuideHeres a fast demo of how to use an electric tuner. amps and guitars have built-in tuners. Theyre never as good as dedicated tuners but they are sometimes handy.As a beginner, having a tuner is essential. As you progress youll eventually be able to tune by ear, without needing a tuner at all.How to play the guitar step 3: Learn the numbers and letters of your stringsI have this conversation with new students all the time:Me: Pluck youropenA string please.Student: Uhm Which string is the A string?Me: The A string is the 5th string.Student: Uhm. Can you explain the string numbers again please?Dont worry if this is you, this is common! You must know which string is which if you want to know how to play the guitar!You need to be able to communicate clearly with your teacher and other musicians.From the thickest to the thinnest strings this is the order: E A D G B E.You can remember this is loads of ways. These are my favourites:EddieAte Dynamite, Good Bye Eddie.Or.Elephants And Donkeys GrowBig Ears.You choose!The1-6 should be the other way round, surely?Thestrings are numbered 1 to 6 from thinnest to thickest. This can be weird for beginners to understand because we strumthe thickest string first, so people usually think thats the 1st of the strings.Sorry amigo, but this is just one of those funny idiosyncrasies that you need to get used to. To learn a lot more about the notes of the fretboard and themusical alphabet (& sharps and flats) check this out:Guitar Notes Explained: A Guide For BeginnersHow to play the guitar step 4: Masterbasic chordsYou MUST know basicchords, regardless of your guitar aims and regardless of your genre preferences.Chords are the building blocks of the guitar world. If you want to know how to play the guitar then you must master basic chords.Theres awhole areadedicated to beginner chordshere, so take some time to poke around. Chords are an essential part of understanding how to play the guitar. The secret to learning chords fast is to follow Mikes stepping-stone approach.There is an easy version of every chord.As a beginner, you wontbe able to play a B chord or an F chord in the standard way.So, you have 2 options:Bite off your fingers in a frustrated rage.Learn the easy version.Choosing the second optionletsyou enjoyplaying music while you improve your finger control and dexterity.You can then graduate to the more difficult chord versions.If you dont understand these diagrams read this: How To Read Chordboxes In 60 Seconds(Figuring out how to play the guitar will not be possible if you dont know how to read chordboxes.)Why perseverance is so importantYour chords will sound clunky to begin with. Thats normal. If you useeasy chords you will get better quickly.If yourchords dont sound right youre probably not pressing correctly. We fret chords withthe absolute tips of our fingers. (Not the fleshy pads of your fingerprints.)Understanding how to play the guitar ultimately comesdown to two things: using yourleft hand correctly and using your right hand correctly.Chords = Left handStrumming = Right handLets spend a bit of time talking about the all-important right hand: the music maker!How to play the guitar step 5: Learn to strum the guitar properlyIf you want to know how to play the guitar, you must be able tostrum rhythmically.The most important element of music is the RHYTHM.If you cant strum with rhythm then you cant make music. This is crucial folks, so readcarefully!I often see beginners trying to put too much power into their strums.Calm down amigo, you dont need to strum powerfully to play loud.Pete Townsend wrote some great songs, but his windmilling approach convinced a lot of learners that thats how its done.Check out 4 mins 30 seconds into this vid. Awesome! This is fun entertainment, but its not going to help you as you learnhow to play the guitar.Learning to strum with rhythm and in time should be your primary goal as a guitar learner.Check out this article, it will help you a lot:How To Strum A Guitar: A Beginners Guide Join over 100,000 guitar learners and subscribe to our guitar-tips-by-email service. (It's free.) We'll send you a series of lessons that will move you to the next level of your guitar journey. Learn how everything fits together quickly, easily and effectively. We share ninja tips (for instant fun!) but also timeless fundamentals that will deepen your understanding. Get our best guitar tips & videos Our Guitar Courses To become a better guitarist click here to see our guitar courses Get your personalised guitar-learning plan Want us to make a guitar-learning plan that is customised to you? Click here for GuitarMetrics How to play the guitar step 6: Hold your pick properlyPicks are cheap and get lost all the time, so its a good idea to buy lots of them.Most people prefer to start with a softer pick and after figuring outhow to play the guitarthey progress to a thicker pick for a little more control.Apick thickness of 0.65-0.73 is perfect for a beginner. Any thicker and it gets a lot harder to fluidly strum.Whatever pick you pick(!) make sure you hold it right:Grab it between your forefinger and thumb so onlythe pointy bit can be seen sticking out.A huge partof understanding how to play the guitar is understanding how you make contact with the instrument. This can seem like a minor detail, but its very important.In this image, the pick is being held too far back:This is much more like it:Most beginners find picks are difficult to use initially. Some beginner then follow thepath of least resistance and choose tostrum with their fingers or eventheir thumb.This might feel easier at the time, but strumming with your thumb is an awful and limiting habit for a guitarist. Using your fingers is fine.You need to be able to strum with your fingers AND a pick. Practice with both, but do not abandon the pick.If you want to learnhow to play the guitar, you have to be able to use a guitar pick. How to play the guitar step 7:Playsongs youadoreThese are 3 objective facts:You are more likely to successfully learn the guitar if you practice a lot.You are more likely to practice if you enjoy practicing.You are more likely to enjoy practicing if you ADOREthe music you playduring your practice time.Forget about learning twinkle twinkle little star and happy birthday!You can tilt the scales in your favour if you learn music that you adore.Whenever I take on a new student I ask them for a list of their favourite bands/artists/songs. The more I know about their musical taste the easier it is for me to find a song they love and that they can use as a VEHICLE to progress as a guitarist.Some songs might be too hard, but you should still tell your guitar teacher you want to learn them. Your teacher willbe able to simplify the tracks for you.This article will be a big help!10 Easy Songs For BeginnersA hugepartof understanding how to play the guitar is understanding what makes you want topick the guitar up and play. (There is nothing that will boost this motivation more than learning music that you adore.)How to play the guitar step 8: Geta brilliant teacherDont rely on YouTube! There are many goodguitarists on YouTube, but very few goodguitar teachers.It can take a while to find a teacher thats a good fit for you. You may have to try 5, 6 or 7 teachers before you find a good fit.The right guitar teacher will transform your chances of learning how to play the guitar. Dont be discouraged if it takes a while to findone that clicks with you.When chatting withguitar teachers be clear on your goals:Whatsongs do you want to play? What genres/bands?Do you want toplay at open mic nights or gigs in the future?Do you want to play in a band one day?Be clear. I want to know how to play the guitar meansdifferent things to different people. You should specify what success looks like in your eyes.Learning how to play the guitar can be hard, but with a good teacher who understands clearly what you want to achieve, it becomes easy.Dont say I want to know how to play the guitar.It would be better to be specific: I want to learn rocklead guitar and sound like Dave Gilmour on Comfortably Numb or, I want to be able to write acoustic songs and sound like Neil Young playing Harvest Moon.Useclear examples and specific bands/artists/songs.How to play the guitar step 9:Practice the right wayIf theres one thing Ive learned over the years, its thisTalent counts for very little. The difference between strongguitarists and poorguitarists is nothing to do with finger length or hand size or whether they have amusical family.What makes the difference is practice. If you want to learn how to play the guitar you need to be clever about how you practice.How often should I practice?Ideally 15 minutesaday, but 5 minutes a day will work.I sometimes hear students say: Sorry, I didnt practice this week. I blocked a few hours on Saturday for practice, but then something came up.Dont put all your practice into 1 day.Life gets in the way. Thats life. Things WILL come up!But even if you know youll have that day free, youre creating a HUGE workload for yourself.Its far better to go bite-size. 15 minutes a day is manageable, not at all stressful and if something comes up, its alright. (Losing 15 minutes of practice isnt a big deal.)How to play the guitar step 10:Be kind to yourself. Permit failure. Have patience.There will be ups and downs as you move along yourjourney and figure out how to play the guitar.There will be times when you struggle with a certain song or a certain chord. Know that this is normal. Dont thinkthat you should be better than you are. (Or that you should be further along than you are.) Should is a dangerous and subjective word.Breathe. Becalm. There will be inevitable hurdles. Thats normal. We want progress not perfection.Getting impatient doesnt help. In fact itmakes things worse. It clouds your thoughts and can make you careless.This is another reason thatI suggest 15minutes as the ideal practice time. It helps lower stress because if you ask too much of yourself you are bound to lose patience. Think: small wins, often.Download this lessons worksheetTo download a summary of these steps to print off and put in your practice space click here: how to play the guitar in 10 steps Take our 60-second quiz & get your results: Take The Quiz Join the world's best online guitar school Get your own personalised guitar learning plan(customised just for YOU). World-class online guitar courses. Learn at your own pace. Community Campus & Learning Forum - A friendly community! Connect with our team & students. Beginner Song library with chordsheets, tabs and tips. (Songs suitable for all levels!) Regular live streams, seminars and Q&A sessions- Learn from world-class guitar educators. Get all your questions answered! Click here to learn more about National Guitar Academy membership Cool Guitar T-shirts Look cooler! Check out our merch: Click here to see our merch store Want free guitar tips and video lessons delivered to your inbox? Join over 100,000 guitar-learners and subscribe to our guitar-tips-by-email service. (It's free.) We'll send you a series of lessons that will move you to the next level of your guitar journey. Learn how everything fits together quickly, easily and effectively. We share ninja tips (for instant fun!) but also timeless fundamentals that will deepen your understanding. Get our best guitar tips & videos Enter your email address below to get Aylas free 6 lesson plan and start playing songs on the acoustic guitar in no time! Welcome to the Beginner Guitar Quick-Start Series. The lessons in this series were created specifically for students that are brand new to the guitar. You dont need any previous knowledge to get started with this guitar tutorial. All of the basics are covered for both acoustic and electric guitars. Its recommended that you start with the first video and go through each video in the order they are presented. The first video will help you learn how to play guitar by providing an overview of the series. From there you will learn how to hold the guitar, the numbering systems of the guitar, the parts of the guitar, the guitar string names, how to tune your guitar, how to strum the guitar, your first guitar chords, two more guitar chords, how to play your first song, musical strumming tips, and where to go from here. If you already have some previous experience playing the guitar this tutorial may still be worthwhile. The lessons will give you an opportunity to review the basics before jumping into another series. If you feel you are ready to move on check out our lessons on guitar chords,rhythm guitar, lead guitar, or blues guitar. If you want to accelerate your progress we recommend you joinGuitareo.com. As a member you'll get access to all of our step-by-step videos, fun play-along songs, live broadcasts, and community support. You can find out more by watching the video here. Learning to play the guitar can be thrilling yet intimidating if youre unsure where to begin. Hey, whats up yallDoug from Breakthrough Guitar here. If youve just got your new guitar and youre feeling overwhelmed, Im going to walk you through the essentials to get you started on your guitar-playing journey. This guide works whether youve got an acoustic guitar or an electric guitar, so lets dive in! The first step in learning guitar is getting familiar with the strings. Knowing their names helps tremendously when talking with other guitarists or reading music sheets. Heres a quick rundown: 1st String: High E 2nd String: B 3rd String: G 4th String: D 5th String: A 6th String: Low E (same as the first string but lower pitched) Memorize these, and youll have an easier time learning chords and scales. The G major chord is an essential first step and very common in many songs. Heres how to play it: Middle Finger: 3rd fret, Low E string Index Finger: 2nd fret, A string Ring Finger: 3rd fret, B string Little Finger: 3rd fret, High E string Practice slowly, strumming clearly, and ensure each string rings out nicely. Power chords, also known as fifth chords, are versatile and used in rock, pop, and punk music. Index Finger: 3rd fret, Low E string Ring Finger: 5th fret, A string Only play these two strings. Strum with downward motions. This shape can slide up and down the neck: 7th fret: B Power Chord 5th fret: A Power Chord 3rd fret: G Power Chord Now, move the same shape to start on the A string: Index Finger: 3rd fret, A string Ring Finger: 5th fret, D string Slide this shape: 5th fret: D Power Chord 7th fret: E Power Chord When practicing these chords: Keep your thumb closer to the guitars headstock for better stretching. Use minimal pick exposure, angled downwards at about 45 degrees. Strum clearly and slowly at first, then gradually increase your speed as you improve. Remember, hand size doesnt limit your ability. Whether your hands are small or large, consistent practice makes the difference! What are the names of guitar strings?High E, B, G, D, A, Low E. Whats the easiest guitar chord for beginners?G major and power chords like G5 are excellent beginner chords. How do you improve guitar chord clarity?Use your fingertips, place them just behind the frets, and practice slowly. What are power chords used for?Theyre versatile chords for rock, punk, and pop music, neither major nor minor, providing a powerful sound. How should I hold the guitar pick?Angle your pick slightly downwards at about 45 degrees and expose only a small part of it. By following these simple yet essential steps, youre setting yourself up for a successful and enjoyable guitar-playing journey. Keep practicing, stay patient, and soon youll be confidently playing your favorite songs. Happy strumming! New player? Youve probably spent hours trawling the internet for the best guitar lessons to kickstart your guitar playing and found yourself with information overload.In this lesson, were going to look at everything you need to get your new guitar journey off to the best possible start.This beginner guitar tutorial and its accompanying video are designed to be used as a bunch of standalone lessons, each segment features a different topic that you should learn and focus on to improve your knowledge and abilities on the instrument.You may like Let's get started! (Image credit: Fender)The guitar is made up of many different parts. Some of these parts are for aesthetic reasons, and other parts have vital roles in making the guitar what is it. Its first important to understand what the parts of the guitar are, and how they work.Body The core structure of the body shape is the main thing that attracts us visually to a guitar. The wood a body is made from also affects the weight, resonance and feel of an instrument and to some degree, the tone of the guitar.Neck The neck is the part of the guitar you will hold with your fretting hand.Fretboard This sits on top of the neck. This is where you will be pressing down with your fretting hand to sound various notes.Frets These are small, metal dividers that are spaced in a specific manner along the fretboard. Each fret will provide you with a different note on each string.The side dot markers can be found on the same frets as the fretboard markers and are helpful for navigating where you are while playing (Image credit: Future)Fret markers They will sit at specific points of the fretboard and provide you with a visual guide as to where certain frets and notes are. They are found on frets 3, 7, 9, 12, 15, 17 and 19. The 12th fret is usually marked with two dots to indicate the octave: it's the the same note, but higher.Side dots These are found on the side of the neck and correspond to the same frets as the fret markers. They are only visible from the player's perspective and allow you to see which fret you are on without needing to look around the guitar neck.Headstock Found at the top of the neck. The shape of the headstock is often a big part in a guitar brand's identity.Tuning pegs The tuning pegs allow you to raise or lower the pitch of each string until they are in tune.Nut Sits between the fretboard and the headstock. It allows the strings to move in a straight line down to the bridge and also serves as the first point of contact for the string where it starts to vibrate and create pitched notes.Thiis is a Telecaster bridge with barrel-style saddles (Image credit: Future)Bridge Found at the opposite end to the nut, the bridge is the other point of contact where the string vibrates from. All the notes you have available exist between the nut and the bridge.Saddles The saddles allow you to adjust the strings' action (height of the string from the fretboard) and the intonation (the overall length of the string).Pickups These are usually copper wire wound magnets that pick up the vibration of the guitar strings and turn it into the sound you hear from your amplifier. The build and placement of pickups affect the tone that you hear.Output jack Where you plug your guitar cable to connect your guitar to an amplifier.Some guitars have one tone control, others can have two depending on the pickup arrangement (Image credit: Future)Want all the hottest music and gear news, reviews, deals, features and more, direct to your inbox? Sign up here. Volume control The volume control allows you to control the output level of the guitar.Tone control This rolls off high frequencies, giving you a darker sound. When the tone control is set to 10 (full) it is considered to be disengaged from the circuit. It only becomes active when turned down to attenuate high frequencies.Pickup switch This allows you to choose between different pickups or combinations of pickups on the guitar to achieve different tones.2. How to hold the guitar(Image credit: Future)Holding the guitar correctly has many benefits. It allows you to develop good habits with your posture and your grip on the instrument. Having these good practices in place from the early stages helps you avoid issues further down the line.If you develop bad technique with how you hold the guitar or how you sit it can lead to all sorts of unwanted issues like back and neck pain, tendonitis, carpel tunnel syndrome and other strain-related injuries to your arms and wrists.The most common way to hold a guitar is to sit the body on the thigh of the leg of the hand you strum with. This puts the guitar either parallel to the floor or with a slight upward tilt which allows you to maintain a good wrist angle when playing.(Image credit: Future)You can also sit the guitar at a steeper angle on the inside of the opposite thigh. This approach is more common in classical guitarists and provides you with more flexibility to move your wrist around and create wider note stretches.With your fretting hand, you should aim to keep your wrist at a comfortable angle. A slight bend in the wrist is ok but try not to allow your wrist to sit in an unnatural angle for too long.Depending on the size of your hands, and your playing style, you may find yourself playing either with your thumb over the top of the neck or with your thumb placed on the peak of the neck curve. Try both to see what feels right.How to tune the GuitarBeing in tune is very, very important for all guitar players. Tuning the guitar is a very simple thing to do, all you need is a guitar tuner and a little patience. Dont worry if the first attempt takes a while, youll get faster over time.For the purpose of this lesson, youll be tuning the guitar to a tuning known as standard tuning. Low to high the strings will be tuned to E A D G B E.Staying in tune is the first step to sounding good (Image credit: Jose Feito Sanchez/Getty Images)Using your guitar tuner, play a single string and check the reading on the tuner. This will tell you if the note is sharp (too high) or flat (too low). You then make the appropriate adjustments with the tuning pegs to raise or lower the pitch until the tuner shows the string in tune.Repeat this for all remaining strings until they are all in tune4. How to pick correctly(Image credit: Future)Once youre tuned up, its time to work on your hands and getting things moving. Let's start by focusing on your picking hand.When youre playing guitar you will be using a combination of picking single strings, multiple strings or strumming chords. To start getting your hands coordinated for single-string picking you can do some simple exercises.Start by resting your fretting hand on the strings to deaden the sound and pick just the low E string as shown in the video below. Keeping the motion small, you dont want to overextend your arm when picking single notes. Start by picking in a downward motion.Once youve done that a few times, you can alternate between the E and A strings, picking each four times.Now that youve gotten used to the feeling of downpicking, you can go the opposite way and pick upward. To do this your plectrum will start under the string and come up. Combining the two directions is known as alternate picking.5. Correct fretting techniqueFretting technique is one of the biggest hurdles that all new guitar players face. Knowing how hard to press down to get clean-sounding notes, but without using excess pressure and stress on your hands is a skill that takes some time to develop.Fretting pressureA great exercise for this is to pick a note anywhere on the guitar, and rest your finger lightly above it. Pick this note and youll hear a muted note. Now keep picking, gradually increasing the finger pressure until the note sounds, this is as hard as you need to press down. Try this with each finger and build up the finger strength by doing this regularly.For the best results you want your finger to sit as close to the fret as possible without it being on top of the fret. This maximises your chances of getting clean-sounding notes and we all want those!(Image credit: Jose Feito Sanchez/Getty Images)Finger independenceIn the early stages of playing guitar, the fingers on your fretting hand wont have a great deal of independence. This is something that you can start to resolve with a really simple exercise. Doing this will allow you to build finger strength but also allow your fingers to learn to move on their own. Starting with your first and middle fingers, play the 5th fret on the low E with your index finger and the 6th fret with your middle finger. Alternate pick as you move between these two notes. Then start to walk it across the other strings, starting with the A and working to the high E. Once you get comfortable with playing two notes on each string, add your ring finger to the 7th fret of the E string, and carry on picking that across all the strings.Finally, you can add your little finger to the 8th fret and repeat across all the strings.You can do this higher up the neck if you find the stretch is too large lower down, or you can go lower than the 5th fret to increase the stretch between notes.6. Basic guitar chords(Image credit: Future)Chords are a big part of music so its essential to learn them. A chord is when you play multiple notes across multiple strings at the same time. As a new player, you dont need to know any complex chords just yet, start with some basics. Were going to learn some chords known as open chords. The reason they are called open chords is because they feature open strings on the guitar alongside fretted notes.In the video you will hear the terms major and minor. These are descriptive words that describe how a chord sounds. Major chords have a more upbeat sound and minor chords have a more sombre sound. There is a theoretical reason to how this works, but you dont need to worry about that at this point in your guitar journey.How to read chord diagramsIn this lesson you will see the chords written out in chord boxes. These are visual aids to use when it comes to learning chords.The solid line at the top is the guitar's nut, the horizontal lines are the frets and the vertical lines are the strings. Starting from the left being your thickest string and the right being the thinnest.An example of a chord box this one is A major (Image credit: Future)Inside these boxes you will see dots, the dots tell you where to place your fingers to play the chord shape. At the bottom of the diagram there are some numbers, these numbers correspond to the number of the finger of the fretting hand:When you see a O at the top of a string, this means play that string open. When you see an X this means do not play that string at all.Now let's learn some chords!E major(Image credit: Future)To play an E major chord you will be putting your middle finger on the