

How To Hold A Guitar Pick In 3 Easy Steps

Want to learn how to hold a guitar pick? This free guitar lesson will show you!



Beginner Level: Suitable for new guitar learners

In this free guitar lesson you will learn:

- 4 must-know pick tricks which will make you sound amazing.
- 2 essential tips which will take your guitar playing to the next level.
- How to hold a guitar pick in 3 easy steps.
- The no1 secret that will enhance your musicality and phrasing.

Learning to hold a guitar pick is the secret to playing guitar fast. Let's learn how to hold a guitar pick.

1) How To Hold A Guitar Pick | Do A Thumbs Up Sign!

This is arguably the coolest step of all, and it's the easiest too.



You may have used this kind gesture from time to time, but don't underestimate it. It's the first step you must take when learning how to hold a guitar pick.

2) How To Hold A Guitar Pick | Place The Pick On Top of Your Fingers

When you do this, make sure that:

- The pointy edge is facing towards you.

Like this:



3) How To Hold A Guitar Pick | Clamp Your Thumb On Top Of The Pick

For the final step, place your thumb over the top of the pick.

Like this:



Quick Pick Tip!

When you learn how to hold a guitar pick, make sure that a decent amount of pick can be seen.

Your picking will not be consistent if:

- A tiny amount of plectrum is showing.
- If there's too much plectrum showing.

When you're holding a guitar pick, try and get a balance between the two.

Like this:



What Size Pick Do I Need?

Picks come in a range of shapes and sizes. From thick to thin and large to small.

If you're new to guitar playing, we recommend a medium sized pick. This size is perfect for beginners:

- 0.65-0.73

Any thicker than this and your strumming can feel rigid and stiff.

Any thinner than this, and you won't get much power out of the plectrum.

Check out these awesome hand made guitar picks by Time Tones: [Timber Tones: Largest Collection Of Luxury Guitar Picks Worldwide](#)

How Do I Strum With A Guitar Pick?

One of the most common ways to use a guitar pick is to help your strumming technique.

We're going to show you some essential tips which will take your strumming to the next level.

Firstly, let's take a look at the basics of guitar strumming technique.



Guitar Posture

Having good posture is the secret to great strumming technique. Here are a couple of cool tips which will help you master your posture:

- Sit on a chair with no arms.

Your arms need to be free to move, sitting on a chair with arms restricts your movement.

- Your legs are at a 90 degree angle.

This keeps your back straight, and allows you to sit properly with the guitar!

To learn more about guitar posture go [here](#):

- [How To Play Guitar Chords: A Beginner's Guide](#)
- [How To Hold A Guitar](#)

What Do I Do With My Strumming Arm?

Make sure that your strumming arm is placed over the ridge of the guitar. This is where you have MAXIMUM movement when strumming.

Your strumming arm needs to pivot back and forward over the strings.

Don't Bend Your Wrist!

Bending your wrist is a big no when learning to strum the guitar. Not only is it painful, it's also detrimental to your strumming.

Your wrist shouldn't be bent like a swan's neck. Your wrist should be straight. Like this:



Notice how the pick is directed at the strings, this is the PERFECT pick position.

How Do I Strum The Guitar With My Pick?

When you strum the guitar, your wrist should be locked. All the movement **MUST** come from your elbow.

When you strum the guitar, make sure that you:

- Use big bold movements from your forearm.
- Strum from your elbow, NOT your wrist.

All your strumming power comes from your elbow, not your wrist.

When using your pick to strum the strings, you should be pushing through the strings with a downward motion.

3 Essential Plectrum Techniques

Using a plectrum is the best way to enhance your guitar **technique**. It's a fantastic tool which will make you a better guitarist.

Let's take a look at 3 of the most common ways to use a guitar pick.

1) Alternate Picking

Alternate picking is frequently used by all guitarists. It's a lead guitarist's secret weapon.

Alternate picking is useful for genres such as:

- Rock.
- Jazz.
- Metal
- Blues.

It can be used ANYWHERE. If you're going to learn one pick technique, make sure it's this one.

What Is Alternate Picking?

Alternate picking is a smaller version of strumming.

When you strum a guitar, most of the time you are doing down and up strokes. When you alternate pick, you strike each individual string with a down and up motion.

This technique is useful for:

- Rapid lead lines.
- Intricate melodies.
- Killer sounding guitar riffs.

To learn how to become an epic lead guitarist, go here:

- [How To Play Lead Guitar](#)
- [Guitar Tabs For Beginners: 20 Easy Songs That Sound Great](#)



How Do I Alternate Pick?

To alternate pick:

- Play a down stroke and an up stroke on each individual string.

Here's a challenge which will get your alternate picking up to speed in no time.

For a FULL lesson on alternate picking, go here: [Alternate Picking](#)

Alternate Picking Bonus Challenge

Firstly:

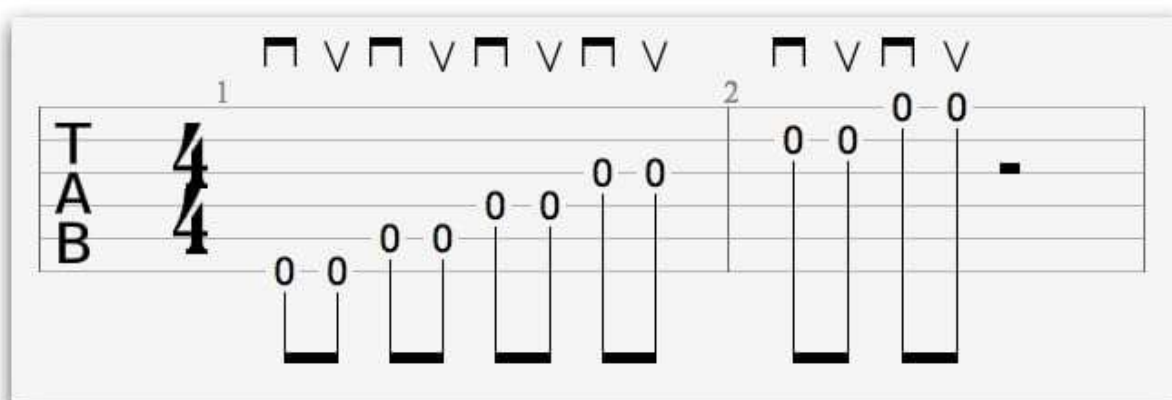
- Play your low E string (6th string) with a downstroke.

As soon as you have played a downstroke, follow it immediately with an upstroke.

Try this on each of the following strings:

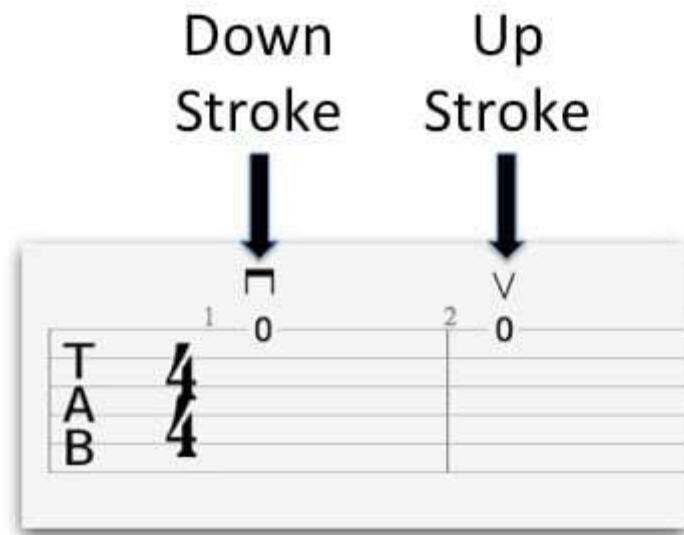
- A string. (5th string.)
- D string. (4th string.)
- G string. (3rd string.)
- B string. (2nd string.)
- E string. (1st string.)

Every time you do a down stroke on a string, immediately play an up stroke after.



Don't understand this? Go here: [How To Read Guitar Tabs](#)

On tab, watch out for these symbols:

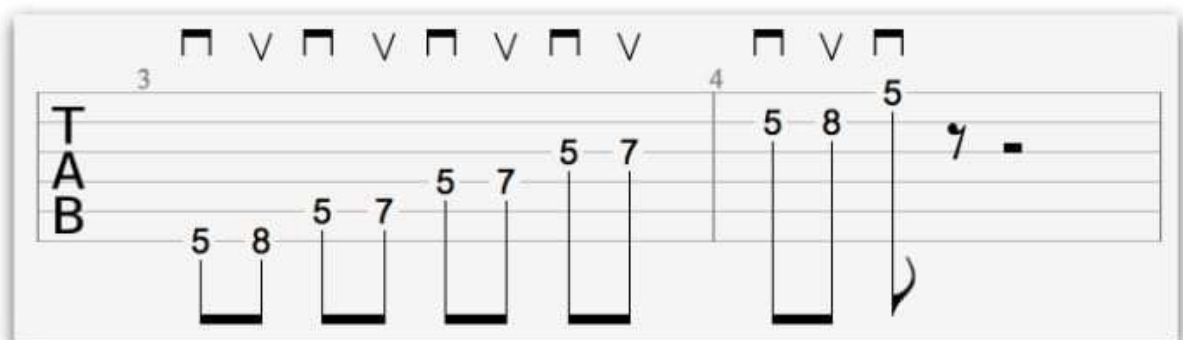


This tells you which way you should pick a specific note.

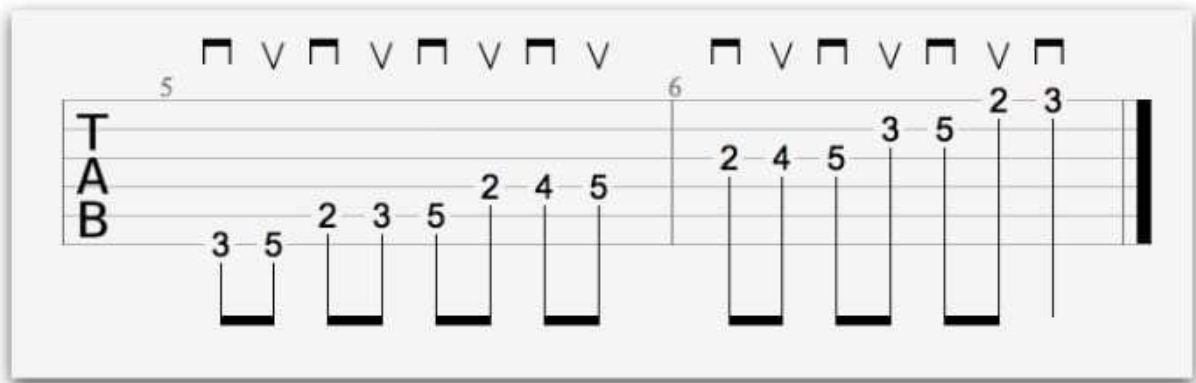
To take your picking to the next level, we're going to apply alternate picking to the following scales:

- The minor pentatonic scale.
- The major scale.

The Minor Pentatonic Scale



The Major Scale



When you practice these scales make sure that you pick each note clearly.

To learn more about guitar scales, go here: [Learn Guitar Scales In 8 Easy Steps](#)

2) Picking Chords With A Pick

Strumming chords is a great way of enhancing your musicality. If you want to add some texture and dynamics to your playing try picking each individual note in a chord.

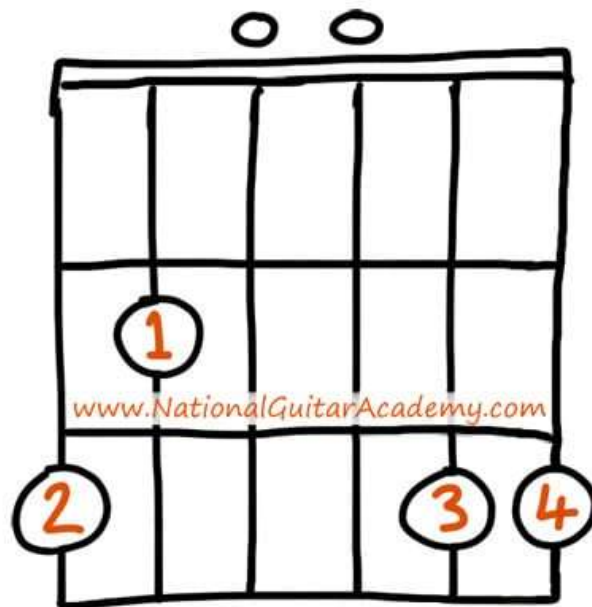
Top Tip!

The musical term for picking individual notes of a chord is known as 'arpeggiating'.

An arpeggio uses the exact same notes in a guitar chord, except they are played individually. Let's apply this technique to some guitar chords.

For this example, we're going to use a G and C chord.

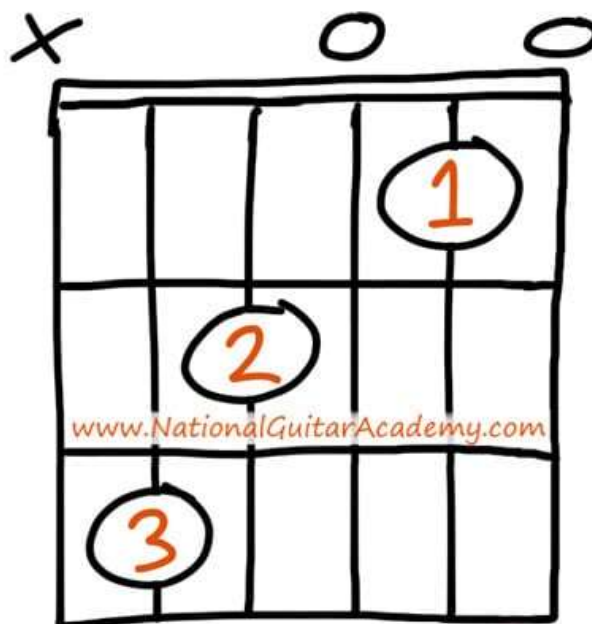
The G Chord



To learn how to read guitar chord boxes, go here:

- [How To Read Guitar Chord Boxes](#)
- [How To Read Guitar Chords: An Essential Guide](#)

The C Chord



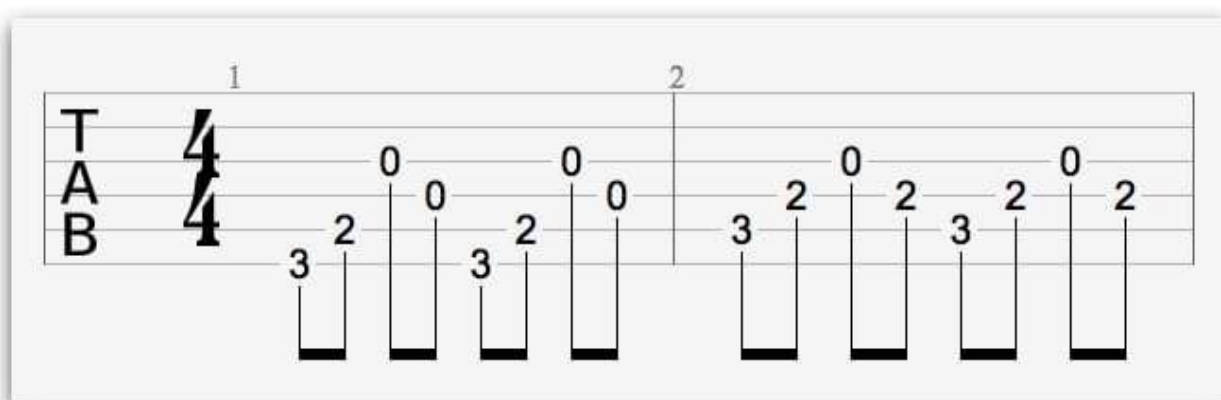
To learn how to play these chords, go here:

- [4 Easy Ways To Play The G Chord On Guitar](#)
- [Easy Ways To Play The C Guitar Chord](#)

Picking Challenge #1

This exercise is a fantastic way of breaking up the chords, make sure each you use alternate picking for this sequence.

Here's the tab:

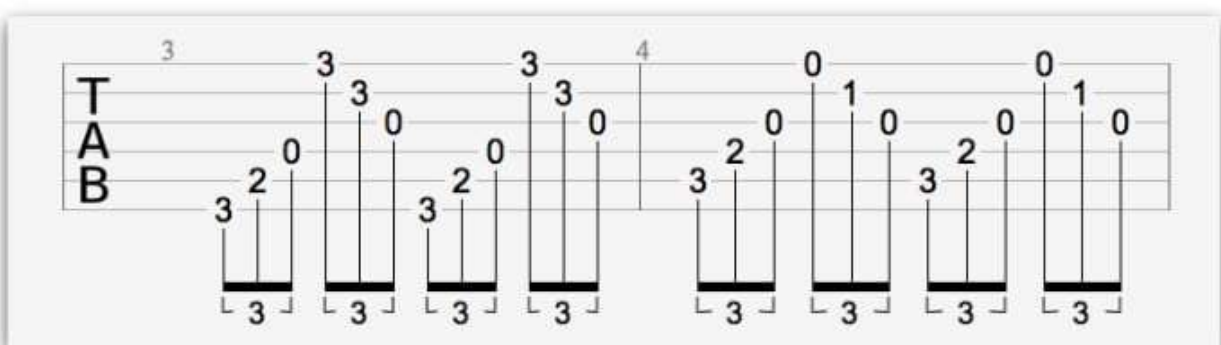


Picking Challenge #2

This one is tricky, as you're picking all of the strings.

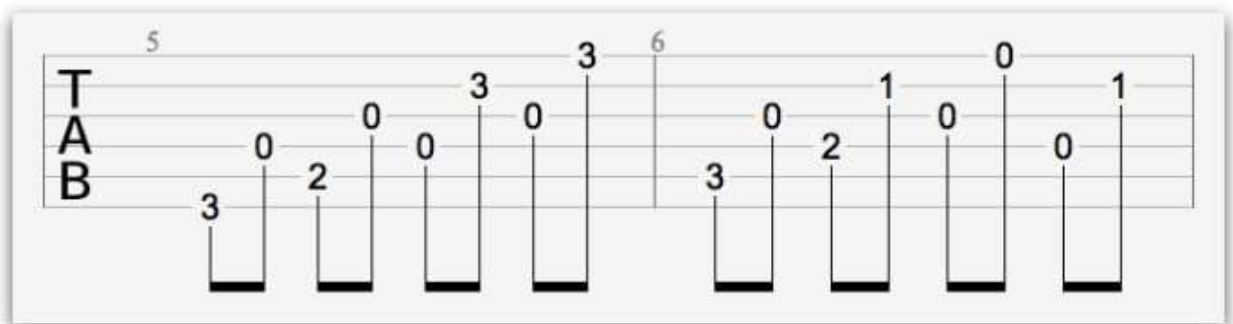
Make sure that you practice this one ultra slow. It is a pick twister!

Here's the tab:



Picking Challenge #3

This final exercise is a great way of practicing your alternate picking. In this exercise you're going to skip each string. This can be tricky, so practice it slowly.



You don't have to just use this technique on the G and C chords, you can use it on ALL guitar chords.

Want to learn guitar chords, go here: [How To Play Guitar Chords: A Beginner's Guide](#)

Bonus Pick Trick!

The final pick trick we're going to learn is how to pick slide. This technique is great for adding tension to your playing.

It's also SUPER easy. Watch this video to learn how to pick slide:

For more electric guitar tricks, go here: [Guitar Tricks: 23 Secrets Every Guitarist Should Know](#)

Why Is Learning How To Hold A Guitar Pick Useful?

There are many reasons as to why learning how to hold a guitar pick is useful. Let's run through some.

1) Using A Pick Makes Guitar Playing Easier

Without a guitar pick, playing the guitar can be difficult.

If you've ever heard someone strumming a guitar with their thumb, you'll know that it sounds messy.

When you first use a plectrum it will feel strange for the first few hours. However, after you're passed this period, it **WILL** feel easier.

Learning how to hold a guitar pick, allows you to:

- Strum the guitar properly.
- Pick single note lines.
- Sound amazing!

Think of the pick as a progress accelerator. Learning how to hold a guitar pick makes everything easier.

2) Using A Pick Makes You Sound Better

With the use of a plectrum, you now have access to a whole variety of sounds.

You can manipulate whether you want the guitar to be, loud or quiet. You can choose whether you want to strum all the strings, or just one or two.

As a result of this, it makes your playing far more versatile and allows you to sound better.



3) Learning How To Hold A Guitar Pick Enhances Your Technique

Using a plectrum, opens up a whole new world of possibilities. With a plectrum, you can now alternate pick, sweep pick, pick individual notes and pick slide.

There's plenty more things you can do with a plectrum, the options are endless.

4) Using A Plectrum Enhances Your Musicality

Without a plectrum, you can't strum the guitar. Strumming technique adds musicality to your chords and makes your playing come alive.

Strumming the guitar without a plectrum is difficult, why would you make it harder for yourself?

Pick the easy option and use a plectrum.

Popular Lessons

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