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# 10 Minute Guitar Lessons

## Volume One

By Brian Kloby



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## **Getting The Most From These Short Lessons**

These concise and specialized lessons are individually focused on a specific area of musicianship, guitar technique and musical development. Each lesson requires approximately 10 minutes to read and understand. The lessons themselves are short but the concepts and techniques behind them will take longer than 10 minutes to master. The purpose of each lesson is to hone in on a specific area of guitar technique that you'll be able to apply to your own practice regime. The end result is the culmination of you becoming a better guitarist and musician.

The chosen topics for these lessons have been developed from years of personal experience teaching private guitar lessons. Helping my students reach their goals and guiding them to attainable solutions for their specific problems and challenges as aspiring guitar players and developing guitarist/musicians.

I will be writing more of these concise to the point lessons. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or if you have a particular musical problem or specific technique you would like to more about.

Learn Fast, Play Heavy... And...  
Enjoy the lessons!

Brian Kloby

## **Lesson One: Picking(Alternate Picking)**

Alternate picking technique is crucial. Alternate picking is a key ingredient for any guitarist's accuracy and articulation. Simply put, alternate picking is a series of **Up-Strokes** and **Down-Strokes** played one after the other, over and over again.

Many guitar players play single note lines or scales with down-strokes only. Doing this makes it twice as hard to play single notes with fluidity and authority. Especially at moderate to fast tempos.

The coordination of right and left hand synchronization can be tricky at times but, with some attention to alternate picking, your going to see vast improvements in your right/left hand coordination as you begin to harness the power of simplicity. What goes up... must come down. Minimal movement gains maximum results. Take advantage of the fact that your picking hand moves in two directions(up & down) and that the pick has two sides.

I'm going to show you the fastest and easiest way to begin developing this technique. Below is a series of fingerings to be played with strict alternate picking. The exercises shown will be located in one spot(position) on the fretboard however, they can be played in different positions(other places) of the fretboard. Keep your hand in the same position and play the notes across all six strings. You can start with either an up-stroke or a down-stroke. It's not a bad idea that you practice starting both ways. Pay attention to making each note sound out clearly and work on a smooth transition from one note to the other. Not only are you developing strong alternate picking technique, you're also developing strong articulation.

Go SLOWLY at first.

**The exercises will be in TAB.**

I suggest using a metronome to get the maximum benefit from these lessons. You may also substitute Quarter Notes with 8<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 32<sup>nd</sup> Notes etc... depending on your skill level. Whichever speed you do them at make sure the notes sound out clearly and your transition from note to note is smooth.

**Note:** For all the **TAB** in the lessons the **High E string** is located on the top and the **Low E string** is on the bottom.

Left hand fingering legend: i = Index, m = Middle, r = Ring, p = Pinky.

**Exercise 1:**

High E      i m r p   i m r p   i m r p   i m r p   i m r p   i m r p

---

                  3 4 5 6

---

                                  3 4 5 6

---

  3 4 5 6

---

  3 4 5 6

---

  3 4 5 6

---

Low E

**Exercise 2:**

          p r m i      p r m i      p r m i      p r m i      p r m i      p r m i

---

          6 5 4 3

---

                          6 5 4 3

---

                                  6 5 4 3

---

  6 5 4 3

---

  6 5 4 3

---

  6 5 4 3

---

You can mix it up a bit and have a lot of fun with this. You may work your way ascending upwards(starting on the Low E and ending at the High E) or descending(starting on the High E and ending at the Low E string). You can also alternate the patterns, switching directions for each string!

**Exercise 3(alternate direction for each string):**

i m r p                      p r m i    i m r p    p r m i    i m r p    p r m i

---

3 4 5 6

---

6 5 4 3

---

3 4 5 6

---

6 5 4 3

---

3 4 5 6

---

6 5 4 3

A GREAT thing to add to these exercises is double picking each note. That is, giving each note a **Down-Stroke** and an **Up-Stroke**. This will build even further stamina and endurance in your picking hand. The variations one can come up with are infinite and the results are magnanimous.

**Things to keep in mind when practicing Alternate Picking:**

1. Don't hold the guitar pick too tight
2. Make sure your hands and forearms are relaxed
3. At first, play the exercises at SLOW tempos. Gradually speed them up as you get better with them. Trust me... Speed will come!
4. Use a Metronome and let each note ring out for the full duration of each beat.
5. Make sure your left and right hands are in sync and the notes sound out evenly.
6. Have FUN!

These workouts will sound horrible if played at a tempos that are too fast for you. Keep in mind that you're building Muscle Memory. Don't worry about playing fast and allow the information to settle in. You'll find after working with this a while that your scales and single note lines have more clarity and improved articulation. You'll begin to notice improvements in your speed as well. These improvements will begin to spill over into other areas of your guitar playing. Stick with it. The payoff is worth it and you'll be happy that you did it.

## **Lesson Two: Muting Technique for Rhythm Guitar** **(The Path Towards Playing Killer Rhythm Guitar!)**

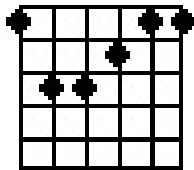
This Lesson will focus on a technique that is extremely important if you want to have command over your Rhythm Guitar playing. This Technique is called Muting. **Good Muting Technique Is Essential for Guitar Players.** It is one of the secrets to unlocking the tonal richness of the guitar.

**Muting** means to “dampen” one or more strings. If you place your left hand across all six strings(not fretting any notes) it will keep them from sounding out. We’re going to apply this technique intentionally to specific strings(strings that are not being fretted) while simultaneously fretting other specific strings. Only the notes of the fretted strings are the notes we want to hear.

I’m going to show you how to get a variety of voicings using a very common Chord Form. We’ll use the **E Bar Chord** as a “template” for the following exercises.

The examples given will be at the fifth fret position making this an **A Major Chord**.

5<sup>th</sup> Fret ----->  
Low E String



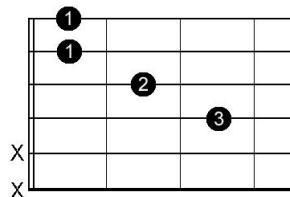
**Note:** to understand the exercises you’ll need to know the “numbers” assigned to each string. They are as follows:

High E = 1<sup>st</sup> String  
B String = 2<sup>nd</sup> String  
G String = 3<sup>rd</sup> String  
D String = 4<sup>th</sup> String  
A String = 5<sup>th</sup> String  
Low E = 6<sup>th</sup> String

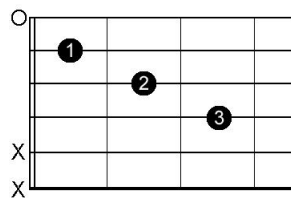
I'll now guide you through several variations of this Chord Form. All of them have a unique sonic impression(each one sounds different) and are extremely useful for any style.

1. Exercise One: Bright with Middle Tone- only fret the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> strings of this chord form at the 5th fret position.

Place your 1<sup>st</sup> finger at the 5<sup>th</sup> fret, 2<sup>nd</sup> finger at the 6<sup>th</sup> fret, and your 3<sup>rd</sup> finger at the 7<sup>th</sup> fret. ***Mute the A string & Low E string.***

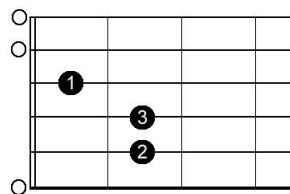


2. Exercise Two: Middle Tone- only fret the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> strings of this chord form with you 1<sup>st</sup> finger at the 5<sup>th</sup> fret, 2<sup>nd</sup> finger at the 6<sup>th</sup> fret and 3<sup>rd</sup> finger at the 7<sup>th</sup> fret. ***Mute the High E string, A string & Low E string.***



3. Exercise Three: Middle with Low Tone- only fret the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> strings. Place your 1<sup>st</sup> finger at the 6<sup>th</sup> fret, Your 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> fingers at the 7<sup>th</sup> fret.

***Mute the High E string, B string & Low E string.***





All of the voicings above are an *A Major Chord*. Listen carefully as you play these chords. You are going to hear that each one has a distinct tonality. They may be a little tough to play and not sound that great when you first try them. It's O.K. Remember, you are working on developing your muting. Your building a solid foundation for your rhythm guitar playing. Getting a grip on this technique(pun intended) is going to open the door for you to begin playing superior rhythm guitar.

Here-in lies one of the secrets to achieving superior tone with your chord work. Making use of *Muting Technique* will greatly enhance your ability to “color” chords when used in your rhythm guitar playing. Now you can begin to choose exactly how you want your chords to sound. This is a valuable benefit for you as a guitar player.

**Things to remember when practicing Muting Technique:**

1. Don't press down too hard on the strings being fretted.
2. Allow the sides of your fingers to lean up against the sides and tops of the strings that are NOT being fretted(open strings).
3. Be patient and allow the information to settle into your hands.
4. Have FUN!

## **Lesson Three: Finger Independence**

Building Finger Independence is something that many guitar players overlook. Not only is synchronization between both hands important but, building finger strength and increased dexterity is equally important.

Your fingers need to have the agility to go where YOU want them to go, WHEN you want them to go there. This requires that they have the strength needed to handle it along with the coordination needed to facilitate it.

Whereas alternate picking drills certainly lean in this direction, they are focused on just that... Developing alternate picking technique. When you're playing music you want the ability to go wherever your inspiration calls you. Being able to shift directions in an instant and the ability to break from a "Pattern" are two examples of why you want to work on finger independence. This will strengthen you fingers more than doing only the alternate picking drills. It also starts to develop your ability to begin playing lines that are not simply a step fashioned pattern moving in one direction only, one degree at a time.

I'm going to bring you through a few exercises that will help improve that much needed finger independence. Use alternate picking for these exercises.

**Exercise One:**

i p m r i p m r i p m r i p m r i p m r

1 4 2 3

1 4 2 3

1 4 2 3

1 4 2 3

1 4 2 3

1 4 2 3

**Exercise Two:**

p r i m p r i m p r i m p r i m p r i m p r i m

4 3 1 2

4 3 1 2

4 3 1 2

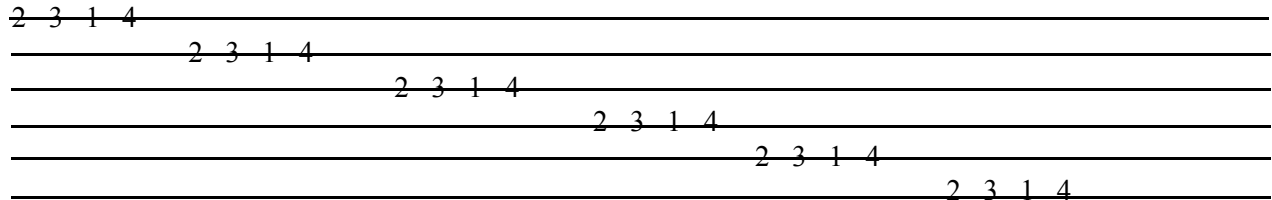
4 3 1 2

4 3 1 2

4 3 1 2

***Exercise Three:***

m r i p    m r i p    m r i p    m r i p    m r i p    m r i p



The great thing about finger independence exercises is that they get your fingers stronger than only playing straight ascending or descending patterns (where the notes follow each other in step fashion like the alternate picking exercises). They further reinforce your alternate picking as well as get your fretting hand in shape for playing lines that are not based strictly off a “stock” ascending or descending pattern. You will gain more dexterity and the ability to change directions at will. This is a skill that is paramount for playing lead guitar.

**Things to keep in mind when practicing Finger Independence:**

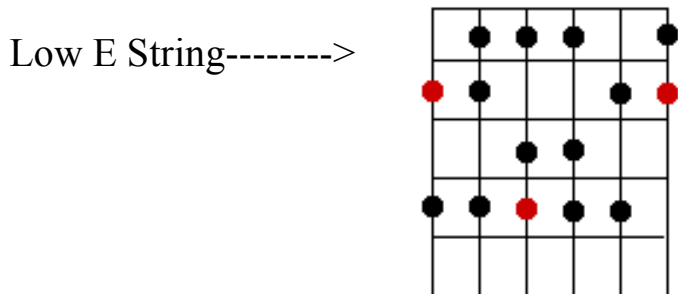
1. Don't hold the guitar pick too tight
2. Make sure your hands and forearms are relaxed
3. At first, play the exercises at slow tempos. Gradually speed them up as you get better with them.
4. Use a Metronome and let each note ring out for the full duration of each beat. Start out SLOWLY. It's not a “Speed” exercise. The focus is on developing dexterity and finger independence.
5. Make sure your left and right hands are in sync and the notes sound out evenly.
6. Have FUN!

## **Lesson Four: Putting It All Together**

So far we have talked about a few of the things that can be done to improve your command over playing the guitar. It's of utmost importance that the technique you develop is good technique. **Muscle Memory** in your hands needs to be cultivated. The lessons I have given you are designed to help you build some of the **Skill Sets** necessary to advance your current guitar playing skills. To this point everything has been very empirical, so to speak. But music isn't about being "empirical". Music is about being free to express yourself in a musical fashion. Having the ability and sufficient guitar playing skills to do so. But, to do this one needs to practice information that is rooted in methodical approach like alternate picking exercises and finger independence etc... And there's a good reason why. It's what needs to be done to acquire the skills that make it possible to play the guitar.

With that said... It's time to have some fun with it all and make some "Musical Statements". For the next lesson of "Putting It All Together" we're going to phrase some lines(say something musical) out of the **Major Scale** and throw a few of the **Major Chord Voicings** shown to you in Lesson Two into the mix. The **Major Scale** is powerful information. It is used across the board by Classical and Jazz Guitarists to Country, Pop, Folk, Rock, Blues, Alternative, Heavy Metal Guitarists and all points in between.

**This is the Major Scale pattern we'll be using:**



The *Exercises* for this lesson will be in the key of *A Major*. The Red Dot on both the *Low E & High E Strings* is positioned at the 5<sup>th</sup> fret. As we can see this *Major Scale* pattern spans a 4 fret distance. It's a *1 fret per finger* scale pattern.

The notes used will be Quarter Notes(1 note per beat) and Eighth Notes(2 notes per beat). They will be written out in **TAB**. Make sure you have your fingers in the correct position at the beginning of each exercise:

1<sup>st</sup> finger over the 4<sup>th</sup> fret

2<sup>nd</sup> finger over the 5<sup>th</sup> fret

3<sup>rd</sup> finger over the 6<sup>th</sup> fret

4<sup>th</sup> finger over the 7<sup>th</sup> fret

These are the fingers to use for the corresponding fret numbers in the **TAB**. To play the chords at the end of each exercise will require you to move your fingers out of the scale position they were in when you first started the exercise. The chord diagrams for the chords used will be placed below each exercises. ***Remember:*** with the chord diagrams, the number is the finger, NOT the fret.

**Exercise One(Quarter Notes):**

Staff 1: 5 4 | 4 5 4 5 4 | 4 5 | 4 5

Staff 2: 7 5 | 5 7 5 7 | 7 5 7 | 7 5

Staff 3: 7 4 6 7 | | | |

Staff 4: | | | |

Staff 5: | | | |

Finger diagram showing fingerings: 1 (index), 1 (index), 2 (middle), 3 (ring). X marks are present on the 4th and 5th strings.

**Exercise Two(Quarter Notes):**

Staff 1: 4 5 4 5 4 5 4

Staff 2: 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5

Staff 3: 7 6 7 6 4 | 6

Staff 4: 7 6 4 | 7

Staff 5: 7 5 4 | 4 7 | 5

Again, Here's the Major Scale Pattern we're using ----->

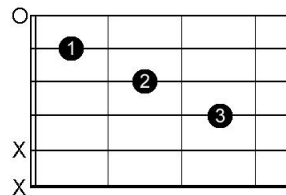
Fretboard diagram showing the major scale pattern with red dots on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th strings.

Finger diagram showing fingerings: 1 (index), 3 (ring), 2 (middle). O marks are present on the 1st, 2nd, and 4th strings.

**Remember:**

When playing the chords at the end of each exercise, strings that are not being fretted are Muted. For example, with the **A Major Chord** above the **High E String, B String and Low E string** are all Muted.

***Exercise Three(Eighth Notes):***



As a guitar player it is important that you are able to move freely in either direction when playing single note lines(ascending or descending). It is also important to have the ability to go between chords and single note lines. To play the guitar at any level of authority requires that the guitarist have the dexterity and facility to perform these actions at will.

One of the challenges you may have found is it can be tricky to go back and forth between the notes in these passages. They're not "Stock" ascending/descending step fashioned(one degree at a time) lines. They both ascend and descend(go forwards and backwards) at various scale degrees. These exercises are re-enforcing the coordination that needs to be developed in order to play fluid musical statements(phrases) that are not dependant on step fashioned linear movement. It's O.K. to practice scales in linear ascending or

descending step fashion patterns however, when they are used to make music we don't want to sound like we're playing "Scale Exercises". Improvised lead guitar lines(improvised solos) are a great example of how a guitarist uses scales to make spontaneous musical statements(phrases). Being able to move freely in both directions(ascending and descending) at any time you wish and at whichever scale degree you choose is a skill that needs to be cultivated and this skill can be learned.

You may find that another challenge in the exercises is switching from playing the single note lines to playing the chords at the end without losing the time(missing a beat or two when going to the chord). And yet another challenge you may be facing is that when you do play the chord you are having trouble getting all the notes in place so only the fretted notes are the notes sounding out. The remedy to acquiring the proficiency and achieving smooth transition between all of these things can be summed up in three easy words.... Practice, Practice, Practice!

## **Lesson Five: Practice Time Management**

The solution to musical and guitar playing progress doesn't necessarily mean spending more time practicing. The genuine solution is in making the things you practice harvest the most abundance in the shortest amount of time. This way time spent practicing gains fruitful bounty resulting in true musical improvement. The techniques I want to share with you are streamlined for practice time efficiency giving you the most benefit out of your practice time.

You want to get rid of any distractions when you practice. This means no TV, radio, ringing phone etc... You need to be fully present with what you are doing with the guitar and the music you are making.



Your practice time should involve you, your instrument and music without any distractions. “Refined” practice time pinpoints it down even further when it comes to practice efficiency and effectiveness. With “Refined” practice we are going to focus on the “trouble areas” of technique, exercises or the music being worked on and specialize a plan designed for improving them effectively and efficiently. Once we know what and where those areas are, we can put into motion a practice plan that generates maximum improvement, effectiveness and efficiency for your guitar playing. This way you attain maximum results in the shortest time possible. By using “Refined” practice methods, you come out ahead by gaining fast improvements in your music and guitar playing skills without wasting time on things that don’t apply to your desires and goals. By analyzing the difficulties and breaking them down into small pieces it becomes much easier to take the necessary steps that will effectively and efficiently overcome those difficulties.

Musically Yours,  
Brian Kloby - Pro Teacher/Professional Musician

- ✓ ***Become A Great Guitar Player Faster with Private Instruction***
- ✓ If you have thought about “Getting There” faster with private guitar instruction with a qualified and experienced Guitar Teacher, please feel free to contact me from my Website [www.FiveStarGuitarLessons.com](http://www.FiveStarGuitarLessons.com)
- ✓ Private Individual Guitar Lessons, Small Group Guitar Classes, Guitar Lessons for Couples, Songwriting Lessons & Classes, Lead Guitar Lessons, Guitar Improvisation Lessons & other Specialized Guitar Lessons & Music Instruction are available at my Teaching Studio in Largo/Seminole, Fl.