

# Dexterity Exercise for the Left Hand

Review these points before each practice session.

1. At first concentrate on building strength by squeezing the neck and the fingerboard with your thumb and fingers. As strength increases due to regular practice, gradually reduce pressure with the long term goal of using only as much pressure is needed to make the notes sound clear and resonant.
2. Aim for consistency in all aspects:
  - tempo - use a metronome/click track as much as possible to develop a steady feel;
  - volume - all notes should be of equal loudness;
  - attack - play over the sound-hole on acoustics, or in-between pickups on electric guitars, or about halfway between the bridge and where the neck meets the body and try to make every note begin with the same initial sound;
  - timbre - all notes should have the same steady, non-vibrato, clear, resonant sound;
  - technique - point-of-contact on fingertips, minimal finger movement, unused fingers stay as close as possible to neck and strings, thumb stays behind 1st and 2nd finger position regardless of which of the four fingers is playing, play as if you have a 'ball in hand' to maintain curved fingers.
  - legato - all notes should continue 'ringing' until sound of next note begins.
3. Focus on left hand technique, especially at first. Gradually focus more attention on right hand.
4. Think of the area from the 5th to 8th frets as a 'box', within which each finger is assigned a fret across the fingerboard. 1st finger plays 1st fret, 2nd finger plays 2nd fret, and so on.

Play (1,2) on each string across the neck and back.

The first exercise is written in 4/4 time with a treble clef. It consists of six measures. The first measure shows fingerings 1 and 2 on the strings. The subsequent measures show ascending and descending patterns of notes with fret numbers 5 and 6 indicated.

(2,3) across the neck and back.

The second exercise is written in 4/4 time with a treble clef. It consists of six measures. The first measure shows fingerings 2 and 3 on the strings. The subsequent measures show ascending and descending patterns of notes with fret numbers 6 and 7 indicated.

(1,3)

Musical notation for exercise (1,3). The treble clef staff shows a melodic line starting on G4, moving up stepwise to B4, then down to G4, and ending on a half note G4. The guitar TAB staff shows fret numbers 5 and 7 on the strings.

(1,4)

Musical notation for exercise (1,4). The treble clef staff shows a melodic line starting on G4, moving up stepwise to B4, then down to G4, and ending on a half note G4. The guitar TAB staff shows fret numbers 5 and 8 on the strings.

(2,4)

Musical notation for exercise (2,4). The treble clef staff shows a melodic line starting on G4, moving up stepwise to B4, then down to G4, and ending on a half note G4. The guitar TAB staff shows fret numbers 6 and 8 on the strings.

(3,4)

Musical notation for exercise (3,4). The treble clef staff shows a melodic line starting on G4, moving up stepwise to B4, then down to G4, and ending on a half note G4. The guitar TAB staff shows fret numbers 7 and 8 on the strings.