

the  
**GUITAR  
SHOW**

# **“How to Build a Solid Foundation In Any Genre of Guitar”**

***“no matter if you are a day one newbie  
or a seasoned veteran”***

*Erich Andreas*

Webcast November 3rd, 2018

By: Erich Andreas

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# Introduction

Before the fastest of Olympic sprinters hit the track, they first had to learn how to walk. Before walking, they had to learn how to crawl. Before the best motocross racers learned to flip their motorcycles in midair, there was a first day that they had to get on a bicycle and ride out a few measly, wobbly feet. And with guitar, there is always a first day that our fingers press down on the strings and we strike our first note. Any body who is good at a particular something and actually remembers the first day will tell you that it was not easy... At first! But then again, why would anything that we have never done before come naturally to us? Great question! I'm so glad you asked. What's also important about these beginning stages is that they form the foundation for everything else that is stacked upon them. They are the most important and overlooked set of skills that we could know.

Most experts in any field will also tell you that the majority of what they do well is almost entirely based upon the basics, a.k.a. the fundamentals or foundation. The Pareto principle states that, for many events, roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes. Or, in other words, you only need 20% of the tools to do 80% of the job. Or, better yet, for guitarists, if you are proficient at 20% of the foundational techniques required to play guitar, you will be able to do 80% of what is expected from guitar players. Now, I know that some of you doubt these numbers, but to be honest, I would say that the numbers are closer to 90%/10%.

Okay Erich, yet another seemingly crazy claim, but you haven't failed me yet! Okay, let's break it down this way. When we play guitar, we need to be able to strike the strings (fingerpicking, plucking or strumming) and we need to be able to fret something (notes or chords) and of course having some knowledge of music is also helpful. Technically, we might be able to play the guitar, but if we do not know where to put our fingers to create a memorable melody or chord progression, then it won't help us to just know the techniques. 99.999% of all guitar playing falls under this basic scenario that I just mentioned. So, wouldn't it make sense for us to be very well acquainted with the fundamentals that cover those bases?

What I have found from teaching thousands of lessons over the last few decades is that most players desire to move quickly to intermediate and advanced styles of playing guitar, thinking all the while that that is what they are missing in their own playing and that by reaching those levels or learning those lessons that they will finally play like they've always wanted to play. However, truth be told it all comes down to knowing the basics very, very well. Any day of the week, I would way rather listen to a guitarist well-versed in foundational playing than listen to a guitarist not well-versed in the fundamentals but hacking away at intermediate and advanced techniques. Have you ever met somebody very well educated who was very boring, could hardly hold your interest or had very little to say? Conversely, have you ever met someone who was not well educated or was very young and maybe didn't have the vocabulary to sound "well-educated" but yet was intriguing to speak with? I have run into both of these scenarios many times in my life. So, who would you rather be?

My friend, I promise that when we are done with this broadcast and after you have gone through the materials that I've given you and watched the videos that I've provided for you, you will have the tools to build a mighty foundation that will allow you to play guitar in any genre for the rest of your life. Once that solid foundation is built, you can always add more to it but never without having a firm footing.

Your time is very precious to me and I truly appreciate you trusting me with it. I promise not to fail you but will instead show you just what is needed to build this foundation. You are not too old. You are not too young. Your hands are not too small. Your fingers are not too fat. You don't have to be born into a family that played music. It's okay if you think you are tone deaf (you are not, but it might take some convincing from me to prove that). You truly have everything within you to become a great guitarist. With the instructions that I am giving you today and with the practice and repetition that you will invest into, you WILL have this foundation.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this and taking this journey with me. Please look over the materials here and go through the videos that I am providing for you. If you can do this before the broadcast, that would be excellent. Either way, I will walk you through it all, STEP-BY-STEP. I am here for you! Let's do this!

# Dexterity

**-or-**

***“Getting your fingers to do what you want them to do...”***

According to Webster’s dictionary, dexterity is, “the readiness and grace in physical activity; especially the skill and ease in using the hands”. Well that obviously applies to us guitar players; the more you do a particular exercise or movement, the better you become. In fact, our brains are designed in such a way that it’s impossible for you to not get better when you practice. That means that any amount of playing on the guitar whatsoever is beneficial. Now when we practice specifically, deliberately and with repetition, we end up gaining a lot of control over our fingers - or anything else that we set our mind to, for that matter. Since our thumb is located so closely to our first and second fingers, our third and fourth fingers don’t get called on for the same amount of tasks throughout the day. For this reason, EVERYONE’S third and fourth fingers tend to be lazy when playing guitar. You thought it was just you? Nope! Hendrix, Van Halen, Vai and any other player that you can think of, had to develop their third and fourth fingers with exercises just like this; many times, these exact same exercises. The only guitar players that don’t have this issue are those that are born with a thumb that grows straight from the middle of their hand. Yes, I’m toying with you!! Everyone has this issue, so let’s find out how to undo it!

The following three exercises were specifically designed to strengthen your fingers and hands, increase your speed and sharpen your technique. I have used these exercises for years and have found them to be extremely beneficial. Exercise one is a warm-up just to get your fingers moving. Exercise two is an intense workout that develops both left and right hands. You will especially feel the third and fourth finger of your fretting hand being worked out through this one. Make sure that you’re using the appropriate finger on the appropriate fret throughout the exercise. For instance, when you start playing frets two and three, make sure you are using fingers two and three. When you’re playing frets three and four, make sure you are playing with fingers three and four. Exercise three is a unique exercise that will seriously challenge you and require you to play on your fingertips. Don’t be concerned if you can’t do this exercise right away. It’s definitely one you want to work up to. This third exercise can be fingerpicked or sweep picked. If you are going to use a guitar pick to do the sweep pick, pick the first three notes down and the second three notes up. Also make sure that when you do pick each string, that it’s done in a sweeping motion - NOT picking each note individually. It should be a smooth motion letting the pick do the work. If you still have questions after reading this, please see the associated videos.

At the bottom of these dexterity exercises, you will see I also cover four things that you always want to remember when playing these exercises. Let me give you a little bit of theory as to why we are doing each of these things.

1. Playing on your fingertips makes a guitar player faster and more efficient. The more you play on your fingertips the lighter your touch will be and the less hand fatigue you will experience. It's very important to also have control over what part of the finger you use. Since the fingertips seemed to be the hardest part to master, learning this first will make everything else seem easier. Guitar players that play on their fingertips tend to play chords cleanly. Guitar players that play on the pads of their fingers tend to play chords sloppily.
2. Playing right behind the fret requires much less pressure than playing further back. Think about the leverage of a seesaw. The position of the fulcrum - that part under the center of the seesaw that balances it - determines how much leverage you have. On a see-saw, if the fulcrum is in the correct place, a small child can easily lift a large man off the ground. Similarly, leveraging your finger closer to the fret will allow you to play more quickly and efficiently.
3. Playing with all your fingers is very important because, as you become a more accomplished guitar player, you will most likely be playing faster and/or more complex arrangements. Running out of fingers sucks! So be proactive and use that third and fourth finger. I have had many students over the years thank me for insisting that they use their third and fourth fingers.
4. Lastly, it's helpful to leave some space between the palm of your fretting hand and the guitar neck because it allows you to more easily play on your fingertips and ultimately have more control of your hand. At first, this can be a little awkward. Most beginners grab the guitar neck like a shovel and their thumb comes right over the neck. And that's perfect... if you are digging a hole with your guitar! But you ain't ...so don't!

What we do on the guitar requires a lot more finesse and a much different approach than digging a hole. If we have a guitar strap holding up our guitar or if our guitar is being cradled by our legs and/or arms, then the guitar is not going anywhere. Once you are truly aware of this, it will liberate your hand from grappling the neck. For new guitar players, grappling the neck can really limit your playing. Later on in your playing you may be able to be more carefree, but for now try to stick to good technique.

I am often times asked, "how long should I practice this exercise?" To which, I pose this question, "how good do you want to get?" Obviously, the more you practice these exercises, the better you'll become. If you want to become fast, you should practice it a lot. If you are perfectly fine with mediocrity, then you don't have to play as much. Alright, enough talk! Off you go!!!

# Dexterity Exercises

	1 2 3 4				
T	1 2 3 4				
A		1 2 3 4			
B			1 2 3 4		
				1 2 3 4	
					1 2 3 4

*For some extra-special-bonus-points type practice, try using the following variations on the "1,2,3,4" picking exercise (use alternate - up/down - picking)*

<b>1234</b>	<b>2134</b>	<b>3124</b>	<b>4123</b>
<b>1243</b>	<b>2143</b>	<b>3142</b>	<b>4132</b>
<b>1324</b>	<b>2314</b>	<b>3214</b>	<b>4213</b>
<b>1342</b>	<b>2341</b>	<b>3241</b>	<b>4231</b>
<b>1423</b>	<b>2413</b>	<b>3412</b>	<b>4312</b>
<b>1432</b>	<b>2431</b>	<b>3421</b>	<b>4321</b>

# How to master strumming quickly and easily

Strumming the guitar can be frustrating if you are not shown the proper way to think and if you don't allow yourself some time to master some basic guitar rhythm skills. Here are some fundamental concepts that I want you to think about when practicing strumming.

1. Mute the guitar strings with your fretting hand (if you are a "righty", this would be your left hand). This will allow you to focus all of your attention on your strum.
2. For the following exercises, the numbers will ALWAYS be "down strums" (strumming towards the floor), while the "+" symbol (also known as the "and" of the beat) will ALWAYS be an "up strum". This is the KEY to good strumming. Be diligent with this basic principle.
3. Each strum should be equal distance from the last. If you are counting 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +, the count should be smooth and even like a watch or clock ticking (unless you are "swinging the beat", which is not recommended before learning a basic straight strum).
4. Say the rhythm out loud, slowly. Once you get the idea, try to say that same rhythm in a seam less "loop" (meaning, don't stop at the end of the 4+). Once you get the hang of this, it should stream together like 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +
5. Once you can count it smoothly like this, strum it slowly and steadily. If you are new to strumming, try to the very first strum, which is 4 down strums on the down beats.
6. When the strum calls for a space or void like 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 or 1 + 2 + 3 4+ , your hand should STILL move as if it were going to hit the strings. This way your down strums will always be where your down beats are and your up strums will be where your up beats are. Get it?

**For a video representation of this technique, check out the following videos inside of my free course:**

**"Basic Strum Technique and Exercises" (Video 24)**

**"If You Are Still Having Issues With Your Strumming- Try This!" (Video 26)**

[Sign-up / Sign-In to the Free course Here](#)

**NOW for the exercises! For this study, take it slow and go through ALL levels in order.**

**Level 1**

<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>+</b>

**Level 2**

<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>	
<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>	
<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>+</b>

**Level 3**

<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>		<b>+</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>		<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>		<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>+</b>
	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>+</b>

### Level 4

<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>		<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>+</b>		<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>		<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>
	<b>+</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>

### Level 5

<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>+</b>		<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>
	<b>+</b>		<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>4</b>

If you find that you are having trouble with a rhythm or two, check out these videos inside my free course which will teach you a couple of ninja guitar tricks and will help you through the rough patches and allow you to master any rhythm.

**“Basic Strum Technique and Exercises” (Video 24)**

**“If You Are Still Having Issues With Your Strumming- Try This!” (Video 26)**

[Sign-up / Sign-In to the Free course Here](#)

Remember to TAKE IT SLOW and don't get the fretting hand involved until you feel consistent about the strumming hand. With diligent time and practice you will get REALLY good at this.

# Diatonic Harmony

- The musical alphabet goes from A to G (there is no “H, I, J” etc.)
- A half-step is the distance between one fret and the next on the guitar
- A whole-step is equal to two half-steps or two frets distance
- A sharp(#) is when we raise a pitch by a half step
- A flat(b) is when we lower a pitch by a high step
- Every note has a sharp, except for **B** and **E**

So the musical alphabet reads like this: **A A# B C C# D D# E F F# G G#**

<b>E</b>	F	F#	G	G#	A	A#	B	C	C#	D	D#	E
<b>B</b>	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	A#	B
<b>G</b>	G#	A	A#	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G
<b>D</b>	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	A#	B	C	C#	D
<b>A</b>	A#	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A
<b>E</b>	F	F#	G	G#	A	A#	B	C	C#	D	D#	E

If W=whole step and H=half step then:

**Major Scale= W W H W W W H**

**Scale steps:** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8(or 1)

**Distance between notes:** W - W - H - W - W - W - H

Have you heard the vocal exercise “Do-Re-Mi-Fa-So-La-Ti-Do”? Those are the musical steps for the major scale...or “Do Re Mi” by Julie Andrews in “Sound of Music”? That is a song based on the Major Scale steps. It is VERY important to learn the major scale if you want a good foundation for learning everything else on the guitar. It is the basis of music theory which is the field of study that deals with the mechanics of music and how music works

## Definitions to know

Interval-the distance between two notes

Chord-3 or more notes played together

Arpeggio-broken chord, or notes from a chord played apart from each other

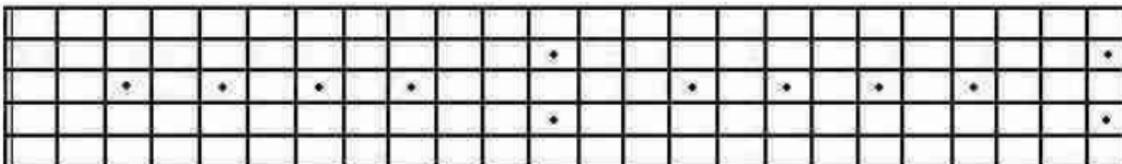
Major Chord-1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> scale steps (notes) from the Major Scale

1,3,5

Minor Chord-1<sup>st</sup>, b3rd and 5<sup>th</sup> scale steps (notes) from the Major Scale

1,b3,5

Fill in the notes below starting with the open strings. Put your answer directly on the string (not above or below), like the example above. Don't cheat! Use the concepts 1. Musical alphabet is A-G and 2. Every note has a sharp EXCEPT for B & E (very important to memorize your fretboard).



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