

7 & 8 STRING GUITAR EXERCISES

EXERCISE 1 – FINGER DEXTERITY

This classic 1-2-3-4 is a great warm-up exercise and will help you get used to the wider fretboard of your guitar. Start by focusing on accuracy and holding your hand in the correct position.

Use a metronome to avoid rushing and prevent sloppy playing. Start at a slow tempo (eg: 60 bpm), then gradually build up the tempo as you improve. Avoid the temptation to crank the tempo up and play as fast as you can – build the tempo gradually and you'll become a better guitarist.

Here is the **7 string version**:

Musical notation for the 7 string version of Exercise 1. The exercise is in 4/4 time and one sharp (F#). It consists of four measures of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5; D5, E5, F#5, G5; A5, B5, C6, D6; E6, F#6, G6, A6. Below the staff is a TAB line with fret numbers: 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4. The word 'etc' is written at the end of the staff.

Here is the **8 string version**:

Musical notation for the 8 string version of Exercise 1. The exercise is in 4/4 time and one sharp (F#). It consists of four measures of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5; D5, E5, F#5, G5; A5, B5, C6, D6; E6, F#6, G6, A6. Below the staff is a TAB line with fret numbers: 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4. The word 'etc' is written at the end of the staff.

It's a very simple exercise, but it will help you build more control over your guitar.

If you have trouble playing the exercise in the lowest position, move the exercise up the fretboard where the frets are closer together. Then you can gradually work your way back down as your fingers stretch out.

EXERCISE 2 – STRING SKIPPING

String skipping exercises will help you feel more comfortable with your position on the fretboard while playing complicated solos or lead lines.

Here is the **7 string version**:

Musical notation for a 7-string exercise in 2/4 time. The top staff shows a melodic line with five measures, numbered 1 to 5. The bottom staff shows the corresponding guitar tablature with string numbers 5, 7, and 8.

Here is the **8 string version**:

Musical notation for an 8-string exercise in 2/4 time. The top staff shows a melodic line with six measures, numbered 1 to 6. The bottom staff shows the corresponding guitar tablature with string numbers 6, 8, 5, 7, and 8.

Once you are comfortable with this pattern (2 strings up, 1 string back), try some different string skipping patterns with wider jumps. Wide jumps really help you develop your accuracy on the fretboard.

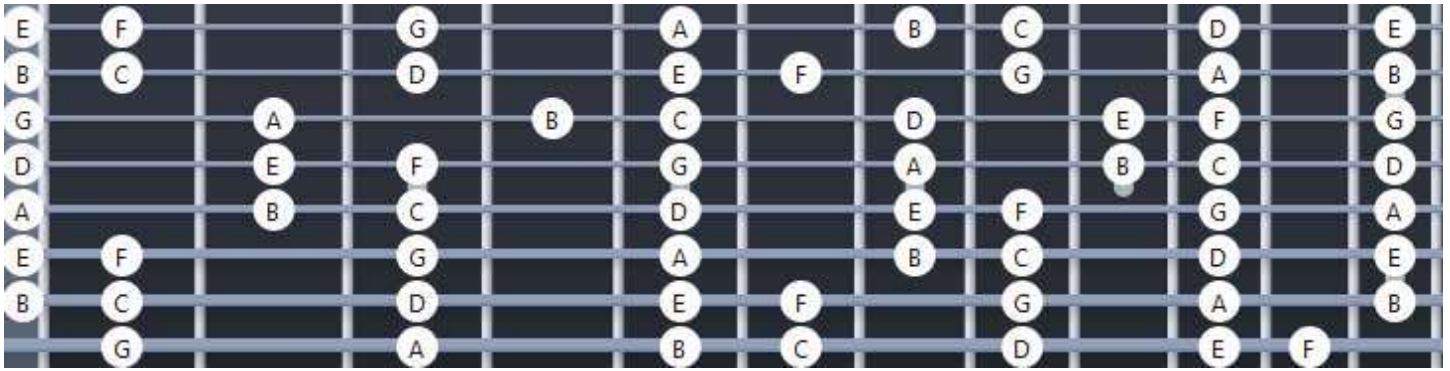
Here is an example of an 8 string exercise with wide jumps:

Musical notation for an 8-string exercise with wide jumps in 2/4 time. The top staff shows a melodic line with six measures, numbered 1 to 6, followed by "etc". The bottom staff shows the corresponding guitar tablature with string numbers 6, 8, 5, 7, 5, 8, 5, 8, 5, 7, and 5, 8.

While you might be tempted to repeat the same jumps over and over, try to keep varying the number of strings you skip between.

EXERCISE 3 – NOTE MEMORIZATION

Here is the 8 string fretboard to help you memorize the note positions:



If you play 7 string, just ignore the bottom string in the above diagram.

An easy way to start memorizing the notes is to simply go up and down each string while calling the note names out loud.

Here is how you would do it on the low F# string on an 8 string guitar:

Musical notation for the low F# string on an 8-string guitar. The notation is in 4/4 time and consists of two measures. The first measure contains notes F# (fret 1), G (fret 2), A (fret 3), B (fret 4), C (fret 5), D (fret 6), E (fret 7), and F (fret 8). The second measure contains notes F (fret 11), E (fret 10), D (fret 8), C (fret 6), B (fret 5), A (fret 3), G (fret 1), and F# (fret 0). Below the staff is a TAB line with the following fret numbers: 0 1 3 5 6 8 10 11 | 11 10 8 6 5 3 1 0.

Here's the low B string on a 7 string guitar:

Musical notation for the low B string on a 7-string guitar. The notation is in 4/4 time and consists of two measures. The first measure contains notes B (fret 0), C (fret 1), D (fret 3), E (fret 5), F (fret 6), G (fret 8), A (fret 10), and B (fret 12). The second measure contains notes B (fret 12), A (fret 10), G (fret 8), F (fret 6), E (fret 5), D (fret 3), C (fret 1), and B (fret 0). Below the staff is a TAB line with the following fret numbers: 0 1 3 5 6 8 10 12 | 12 10 8 6 5 3 1 0.

Remember to call the note names out loud while you play them as it will help you link the note name to the correct positions.

If you haven't already memorized the note positions on a 6 string guitar, continue this exercise across all the other strings.

EXERCISE 4 – SCALES

Practicing scales may not be fun, but it will help you develop your skills on your guitar. It will also help you feel comfortable with the new strings and positions.

Here are the steps to follow for this exercise:

- Pick a scale you want to work on (eg: G Major: G A B C D E F#)
- Find the root note on your lowest string (eg: G is on the 8th fret on a 7 string guitar and 13th fret on an 8 string guitar)
- From that starting position, play three notes on that string in the scale
- Move up one string at a time following the scale
- Once you reach the 1st string, move backwards until you return to the first root note

Here is what the above steps could look like on a 7 string guitar:

The image shows a musical score for a G Major scale run on a 7-string guitar. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of three measures. The first measure starts on the 8th fret of the 7th string and moves up to the 12th fret of the 6th string. The second measure starts on the 9th fret of the 6th string and moves up to the 12th fret of the 5th string. The third measure starts on the 10th fret of the 5th string and moves up to the 12th fret of the 4th string. The tablature below the staff shows the fret numbers for each note: 8 10 12 on the 7th string, 8 10 12 9 10 on the 6th string, 12 9 10 12 9 11 12 8 on the 5th string, and 10 12 8 10 12 on the 4th string.

The above scale run is just one possible path you could take. You should try to come up with different paths and finger positions. You can move across the fretboard in a straight line like the above example or you can move diagonally across the strings.

For example here is the exact same scale (G Major) following a different path on a 7 string:

The image shows a musical score for a G Major scale run on a 7-string guitar, following a different path. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of three measures. The first measure starts on the 8th fret of the 7th string and moves up to the 12th fret of the 6th string. The second measure starts on the 14th fret of the 6th string and moves up to the 15th fret of the 5th string. The third measure starts on the 17th fret of the 5th string and moves up to the 20th fret of the 4th string. The tablature below the staff shows the fret numbers for each note: 8 10 12 10 12 14 10 12 on the 7th string, 14 12 14 16 14 16 17 15 on the 6th string, and 17 19 17 19 20 on the 5th string.

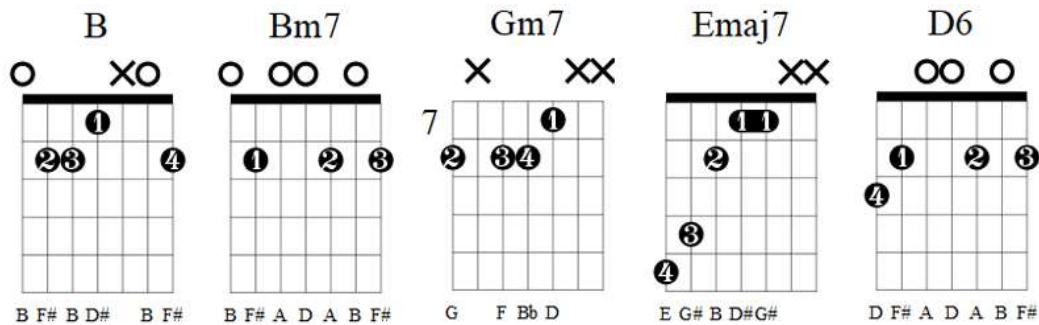
Here are some ideas on how you can come up with different scale runs to practice:

- Add string skipping into the scale runs
- Add in hammer-ons, pull-offs, bends and slides
- Play 2, 3, 4, 5 or more notes per string
- Use your picking hand to tap some notes from the scale on each string
- Try different scales such as the Pentatonic scale, blues scale, exotic scales, modes, etc.
- Practice the scales over a backing track to help develop your ear at the same time

EXERCISE 5 – CHORDS

Even if the style of music you play doesn't make use of many chords and most of the riffs you play use one string at a time, it's worth learning how to play new chords on your guitar.

Here are a few random 7 string chord shapes to get you started:

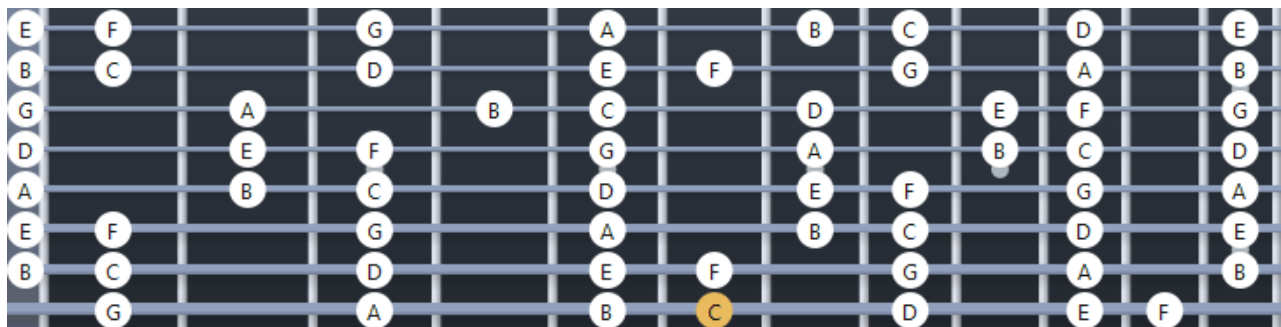


Try playing the above chords in a progression to get used to the stretching some of them require. While you can look up a lot of chord shapes, you're going to learn a lot more when you try to figure out chord shapes on your own.

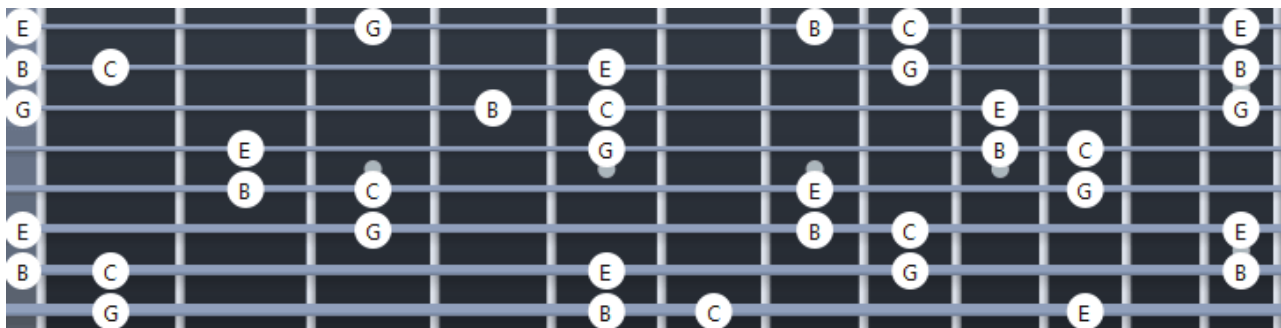
Here are the steps to coming up with new chord positions on your guitar:

Step 1: Find the notes that make up the chord (eg: Cmaj7 uses the notes: C E G B)

Step 2: Find the root notes on your guitar (eg: C is on the 6th fret on the low F# string on an 8 string guitar as shown below)



Step 3: Find the other chord notes within reach of the root note (the diagram below shows note positions for Cmaj7)



Try coming up with your own chord shapes based on the above notes. Make sure the chords you create use all four notes for it to be a Cmaj7 chord.

Then you can try other chords and repeat the steps.

<http://guitargearfinder.com/lessons/7-8-string-guitar-exercises-get-started/>