

FOREWORD

Hello everyone and welcome to 'Foundations of Guitar Technique'.

Firstly, I think it's worth looking at a definition:

'Foundation'

- an underlying basis, or principle.

It's essential to have a *foundation* in order to be able to progress your ability in anything - guitar is no different. I have been teaching guitar for almost 10 years, and regularly come across the same issues with regard to student's technique when they first start lessons with me, particularly if they have previously been self-taught or had a 'lazy' teacher – unfortunately it happens a lot!

There's absolutely nothing wrong with being self-taught, and it can lead to some really unusual and innovative ways of approaching things. However, if bad habits have formed and are affecting your ability to move on with your playing, they can be extremely difficult to correct. Therefore, the idea behind this course is to look at the fundamental aspects of playing guitar, and building your technique and understanding so you can progress with speed and enjoyment.

I'd recommend everyone start at the beginning. Regardless of whether you've played a bit before, you never stop learning, even on subjects you think you've nailed. We're going to cover everything from the basics of tuning and holding the guitar, through to some more advanced techniques such as palm muting, legato and bending with plenty in between. Along the way we're going to learn some popular riffs to demonstrate how these techniques are used in the real world, as well as exercises I have provided.

A quick word on practising.

Practising the guitar is not simply picking up the guitar and playing. There's nothing wrong with this, and after all it's why the majority of us wanted to learn in the first place, to play some tunes and have some fun. However, improving your technique takes practise – that is focussed time spent specifically dealing with an issue. Often what I do in practise is simplify and break down elements. For example, if I were working on some left hand chord changes, I'd keep the right hand nice and simple so I can *focus* on what I'm practising with the left hand. This is a great idea to take away when learning new things outside of this course. Approach new music in a logical manner, rather than just jumping in head first (it's so tempting – we've all done it) – try to break the music down into manageable blocks, start slow and build. Above all – LISTEN to the sounds coming out of the guitar when you play. It sounds so obvious, but often we're concentrating so hard we forget to listen, and that can give us the clue as to why something isn't working, or at the other end of the scale, be extremely gratifying when it just sounds great!

Good luck with the course. I hope you find it useful, and enjoy working through it as much as I did putting it together. Let's get to it!



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