

Beginner Guitar Course – Lesson Plan

Course Title: Foundations of Guitar: Beginner Level

Course Duration: 12 Weeks (1 session per week, 90 minutes each)

Target Audience: Absolute beginners (suitable for any age)

Course Objective: By the end of the course, students will be able to play basic chords, strumming patterns, simple melodies, and understand fundamental guitar techniques.

Week 1: Introduction to Guitar

Objectives:

- Identify parts of the guitar.
- Learn proper posture, hand positioning, and holding the guitar.
- Introduction to tuning and strings.

Lesson Outline:

1. **Welcome & Orientation (10 min)**
 - Introduce the course structure.
 - Discuss what students will achieve by the end of the course.
2. **Guitar Anatomy (20 min)**
 - Parts of the guitar: headstock, tuners, nut, fretboard, body, bridge, soundhole.
 - Demonstrate and let students identify parts on their guitars.
3. **Posture & Hand Positioning (15 min)**
 - Proper sitting position.
 - Fretting hand technique (thumb behind neck, fingers curved).
 - Picking/strumming hand position.
4. **Tuning the Guitar (20 min)**
 - Introduction to standard tuning (E-A-D-G-B-e).
 - Demonstrate tuning by ear and with a tuner.
 - Let students tune their guitars.
5. **Basic Open Strings Exercise (20 min)**
 - Practice plucking each open string with the right hand.
 - Count aloud to develop finger-eye coordination.

Homework:

- Memorize string names.
- Practice plucking open strings cleanly for 5 minutes daily.

Week 2: First Notes and Simple Melodies

Objectives:

- Learn to read guitar tablature (TAB).
- Play single notes on the fretboard.

Lesson Outline:

1. **Recap Previous Lesson (10 min)**
2. **Introduction to TAB (15 min)**
 - Explain lines (strings) and numbers (frets).
 - Show simple exercises.
3. **First Notes (25 min)**
 - Learn notes on the first 3 frets of the low E string (E, F, F#, G).
 - Practice moving fingers between frets.
4. **Simple 2-Note Melodies (30 min)**
 - Play simple melodies like “Mary Had a Little Lamb” or “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” using one string.
5. **Right Hand Picking Exercises (10 min)**
 - Alternate picking with index and middle finger.

Homework:

- Practice first string melodies 10 min daily.
- Memorize the first 5 notes on the low E string.

Week 3: Introduction to Chords

Objectives:

- Learn basic open chords: E minor, C, G, D, A minor.
- Practice chord transitions.

Lesson Outline:

1. **Recap Notes (10 min)**
2. **Introduction to Chords (20 min)**
 - Explain chord diagrams.
 - Demonstrate E minor chord.
3. **Chord Practice (30 min)**
 - Practice E minor → A minor → C → G → D.
 - Emphasize clean fretting and avoiding string muting.
4. **Strumming Patterns (20 min)**
 - Basic down-stroke pattern.
 - Slowly strum along with chord changes.
5. **Chord Transition Drill (10 min)**
 - Switch between two chords repeatedly, e.g., Em → G.

Homework:

- Practice 5 chords, 10 minutes daily.
- Work on smooth transitions between chords.

Week 4: Rhythm and Strumming

Objectives:

- Understand timing and simple rhythm patterns.
- Apply strumming with basic chords.

Lesson Outline:

1. **Recap Chords (10 min)**
2. **Introduction to Rhythm (20 min)**
 - Counting 1-2-3-4.
 - Clapping exercises with simple rhythms.
3. **Strumming Techniques (30 min)**
 - Down-stroke and up-stroke.
 - Strum along with 4/4 rhythm.
4. **Chord + Strum Integration (20 min)**
 - Practice chord changes while maintaining steady rhythm.

- Use songs like “Knockin’ on Heaven’s Door” simplified.

5. **Review and Feedback (10 min)**

Homework:

- Practice chord transitions with strumming 15 min daily.
- Record yourself to check timing.

Week 5: More Chords and Finger Placement

Objectives:

- Learn remaining basic chords: A, B7, D minor.
- Develop finger strength and accuracy.

Lesson Outline:

1. **Warm-Up Exercises (10 min)**
 - Finger stretches and chromatic exercises on frets 1–4.
2. **New Chords (30 min)**
 - Demonstrate and practice A, B7, D minor.
 - Focus on finger placement and muting unnecessary strings.
3. **Chord Progression Practice (30 min)**
 - Combine all chords learned so far into simple progressions.
 - Example: G → C → D → Em.
4. **Strumming Variations (15 min)**
 - Introduce simple patterns: D-D-U-D-U (D=down, U=up).
5. **Assessment Drill (5 min)**
 - Students play a short progression individually.

Homework:

- Practice all 8 chords with transitions.
- Aim for clean, even strumming.

Week 6: Basic Fingerpicking

Objectives:

- Introduce fingerpicking technique.
- Play simple fingerstyle patterns on open chords.

Lesson Outline:

1. **Recap Chords and Strumming (10 min)**
2. **Fingerpicking Basics (20 min)**
 - Assign thumb → bass strings (E, A, D), index/middle → G/B strings.
 - Practice plucking strings individually.
3. **Simple Fingerstyle Patterns (30 min)**
 - Example: P-I-M-A (Thumb, Index, Middle, Ring) pattern.
 - Apply to Em, C, G chords.
4. **Integrate with Chords (25 min)**
 - Play simple fingerpicked song like “Ode to Joy” or “House of the Rising Sun” simplified.
5. **Q&A / Review (5 min)**

Homework:

- Fingerpicking 10 min daily.
- Focus on smooth transitions between chords while picking.

Week 7: Combining Chords, Strumming, and Fingerpicking

Objectives:

- Learn when to strum vs. fingerpick.
- Develop musicality and dynamics.

Lesson Outline:

1. **Warm-Up (10 min)**
 - Chord transitions and chromatic exercises.
2. **Review Strumming & Fingerpicking (20 min)**
3. **Dynamic Exercises (25 min)**
 - Play chords softly, then loudly.

- Mix strumming and fingerpicking in one exercise.
- 4. **Song Practice (30 min)**
 - Simplified song that requires both techniques.
- 5. **Feedback & Troubleshooting (5 min)**

Homework:

- Practice a full song combining techniques.
- Note any difficult chord transitions.

Week 8: Simple Melodies on Multiple Strings

Objectives:

- Play melodies across multiple strings.
- Introduce slides and hammer-ons.

Lesson Outline:

1. **Warm-Up (10 min)**
 - Finger independence exercises.
2. **Notes Across Strings (30 min)**
 - Learn the first 3 frets on strings A, D, G.
 - Play simple two-string melodies.
3. **Basic Techniques (30 min)**
 - Hammer-ons, pull-offs, slides.
 - Practice in short exercises.
4. **Integrate Techniques (15 min)**
 - Play a simple melody incorporating hammer-ons and slides.
5. **Homework Assignment (5 min)**
 - Practice melody exercises daily.

Week 9: Simple Songs and Practice Routines

Objectives:

- Play complete beginner songs.
- Learn structured practice habits.

Lesson Outline:

1. **Warm-Up (10 min)**
2. **Song Selection (30 min)**
 - Teach a complete beginner-friendly song.
 - Focus on chords, strumming, and timing.
3. **Practice Routine Discussion (25 min)**
 - Warm-up → chord practice → songs → technique exercises.
4. **Group Play-Along (20 min)**
 - Students play together, emphasizing rhythm and timing.
5. **Review (5 min)**

Homework:

- Practice selected song 15 min daily.

Week 10: Introduction to Simple Scales

Objectives:

- Learn the C major scale.
- Understand the concept of scales and their importance.

Lesson Outline:

1. **Warm-Up (10 min)**
2. **Scale Basics (15 min)**
 - Explain whole and half steps.
 - Demonstrate C major scale on one string.
3. **Playing the Scale (30 min)**
 - Use proper fingering and pick technique.
 - Ascending and descending practice.
4. **Simple Melody with Scale (25 min)**
 - Combine scale notes into a short melody.
5. **Homework:**

- Practice C major scale daily.
- Compose a 4-bar melody using scale notes.

Week 11: Review and Integration

Objectives:

- Integrate all techniques learned.
- Prepare for mini-performance.

Lesson Outline:

1. **Warm-Up (10 min)**
2. **Chord Review (20 min)**
3. **Strumming + Fingerpicking Review (20 min)**
4. **Melody & Technique Review (30 min)**
5. **Mini Jam / Group Performance (10 min)**

Homework:

- Practice for final performance.
- Identify personal areas for improvement.

Week 12: Student Showcase / Assessment

Objectives:

- Perform a simple song learned in class.
- Demonstrate basic techniques.

Lesson Outline:

1. **Warm-Up (10 min)**
2. **Individual Performances (60 min)**
 - Each student plays a prepared song or exercise.
3. **Feedback & Encouragement (15 min)**

- Constructive critique.
- Tips for continued practice.
- 4. **Course Wrap-Up (5 min)**
 - Recap achievements.
 - Provide next steps for intermediate learning.

Additional Resources

- **Books:**
 - Hal Leonard Guitar Method – Book 1
 - Mel Bay's Modern Guitar Method
- **Apps:**
 - GuitarTuna (tuner)
 - Yousician or JustinGuitar for guided practice