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TEACH YOURSELF GUITAR TIPS

Your guitar strings are represented by the vertical lines. You can see in the chord diagrams which strings are thickest and which are skinniest. The small "x" means do not play that string. The small "o" means play that string, but don't put a finger on it.

The strings are counted 1 through 6 starting with the skinniest string. This string is named high E. Low E is string 6 -- the thickest string.

To help teach yourself guitar, it can be very useful to memorize the names of the guitar strings. They are E-A-D-G-B-E from low sounding to high sounding. Or ceiling to floor to make it visual. You can do this by simply pointing to them randomly and saying their name out loud. Also think "E-A-D-G-B-E" at various points throughout the day. You'll have it down "cold" in no time!

The numbers inside of the dots represent which finger to use to push down on the string. Your index finger is 1. Don't count your thumb.

The horizontal spaces in the diagrams are the fret markers. Let's use A7. Put your 2nd finger on string 4 at the 2nd fret and push down. Also put your 3rd finger on the 2nd fret of string 2 and push down.

Now strum 5 strings starting with string 5 -- which is played open (represented by the small "o").

Try to adjust your fingers so that all the strings and notes can ring clearly. Everyone's different -- it may take you anywhere from a few days to a couple of weeks.

Use the tips of the pads of your fingers to push down. Push down as close behind the fretwire as possible.

NOTE: See the video on the lesson page at the site. Go to my website, then Beginners and then Teach Yourself Guitar. There you can also find the links for free printable guitar chord charts and blank guitar charts.

Now that you know how to get the chords off the diagrams and onto your guitar, you need a method to help speed things up. No, there are no shortcuts to teaching yourself guitar -- despite whatever marketing hype you may have been subtly influenced by. There are definitely ways to be more efficient though. These time

tested methods can mean the difference between success had failure.

If you want to teach yourself guitar, you need to memorize a handful of basic guitar chords. One of the most powerfully effective methods of doing that is to draw the chords out on paper by hand.

Many students balk at this suggestion. They think they don't need to bother with such a thing. Then at the next lesson, they are still struggling with remembering the "grip" for a chord they "learned." The students who do this? I think you know the answer already :-). The progress of these students is faster and more consistent. And because of this, they don't give up out of frustration.

So draw the chords out! Of course, you'll also be practicing playing the chords on your guitar. Here's a list of practice tips for teaching yourself guitar chords.

Select a chord to learn.

Find where to put your fingers on your guitar.

Check the sound and that the strings are ringing clearly. If not, adjust your fingers. If a particular string still isn't ringing, don't sweat it. You just need to develop a little muscle memory. It won't take long. Stay consistent. 5 days a week is optimal for results. 3 or 4 is good if life is hectic. If you want to make a living at it? Well, you'll need to practice everyday.

Once your hand is on the guitar, take it off. Close your eyes for a second or two. Now put your hand back on the chord from memory. Excellent work!

Do this for batches of 3 chords. Stick with these 3 chords for a week or two. Then add 3 more into the batch.

Once you've worked out with the chords on your guitar for a bit, put your guitar down. Pick up a blank guitar chord chart and try drawing the chord out by hand. If you need to refer to the original diagram at first, that's fine. Try drawing it the ones you are working on until you can do it from memory.

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