

Beyond The Woodshed

Intro to fingerpicking

In this lesson, I am going to start to show you how to play finger style guitar. We'll tackle this lesson in a few separate parts. First we'll look at chords that we will be playing, and then we'll talk about fingerpicking pattern. Lastly we'll see how we can expand on this idea and use the same chord forms, but play in different keys.

The Chords

So let's dig right in. To start with we are going to be using the chords, C, G, and Am. From the key of C major.

If your not familiar with the C and Am chords, first look at the chord diagrams below, if you look close enough you can see that the 1st and 2nd finger are placed on the same string and fret for both chords. The only difference between the chords is placement of your 3rd finger. So to switch between these chords all you have to do is hold down the 1st and 2nd finger, and just move your third finger to the fifth string third fret for C and third string second fret for Am. You can also reference my lesson, Chords 1.

Once you have a handle on those two chords, all we have left to work on is the G major chord. You start to play this chord from C, first move your second and third finger down toward the sixth string one string. Then place your fourth finger on the first string third fret.

If you find that you are having trouble using your fourth finger for the G chord, you can use an alternate fingering for G. With this chord form, to move from C to G you would take your first and second finger and move up one fret and then down to the fifth and fourth strings then place your third finger on the first string third fret.

For now just strum the chords 1 time per bar and get use to the changes. As an example 1.

The image shows three chord diagrams for C, G, and Am. Below them is a guitar tab for three measures. The first measure contains the C chord, the second the G chord, and the third the Am chord. The tab uses a 4/4 time signature and shows the fret numbers for each string (T, A, B) for each chord.

Chord	6th	5th	4th	3rd	2nd	1st
C	x	0	2	3	0	0
G	0	0	2	0	0	3
Am	x	0	2	2	0	0

Measure	6th	5th	4th	3rd	2nd	1st
1	0	0	2	3	0	0
2	0	0	2	0	0	3
3	0	0	2	2	0	0

Right Hand Fingerpicking

To start this section, let's work on playing just open notes with your right hand. We will bring in chords later. This will make it easier just to concentrate on the right-hand.

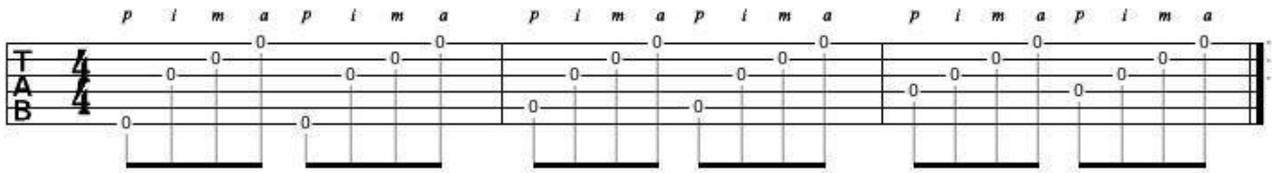
First we are going to divide the strings in the two groups, the first group will be the 4th, 5th, and 6th strings. You will use the thumb (indicated as p in tab) of your right hand to play notes on the strings.

The second group will be the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st string . Any note on the 3rd string ,you will use your 1st finger (indicated as i in tab). On the 2nd string you will use the middle finger(indicated as m in tab). On 1st string you will use the 3rd finger (indicated as a in tab) . Let's look at ex.2

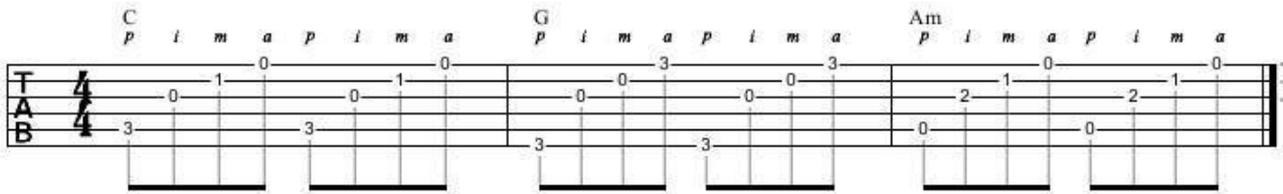
The image shows a guitar tab for a right hand fingerpicking exercise. It consists of three measures. The first measure has notes on the 6th, 5th, and 4th strings (p, i, m) and the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st strings (a, m, i). The second measure has notes on the 6th, 5th, and 4th strings (p, i, m) and the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st strings (a, m, i). The third measure has notes on the 6th, 5th, and 4th strings (p, i, m) and the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st strings (a, m, i).

Measure	6th	5th	4th	3rd	2nd	1st
1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	0	0	0	0	0	0

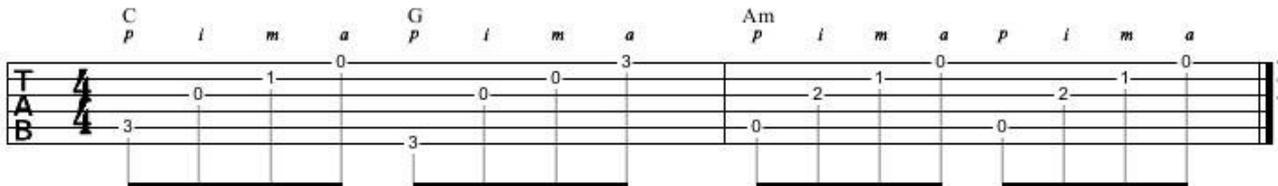
Now that we have a basic understanding of how to play the pattern with right hand, let's talk about the rhythm. For the pattern in example 3 we will be using eight notes, 2 notes to a beat. Let's first try it like we did in example 2 without chords.



Now that we have that's let's put in the chord progression, will play each chord for one bar. Notice that the pattern stays same for every each chord the only thing that changes is a bass note for each chord change. Even though some of the notes of the chords are not played I still finger them.



In example 5 we are taking the same chords, but this time we are taking C and G chords and only playing them for two beats each. The A minor chord will continue to be played for 4 beats.



In our last example (ex 6) let's look at a simple way to change keys, and get a little more mileage out of this progression. This will come in handy when your vocalists wants to change the key of the song you're playing . We are going to use a device called a capo. For this example we will place the capo on the second fret. Once the capo is on, this will be considered a temporary nut, and you can play all the strings open to that. Everything you played open can he played the same way 2 frets up. In ex.6 the capo is indicated right under the chords, and shows what fret to place the capo. Playing the chords C, G and Am 2 frets up with the capo puts you in the major of D.

