

# Lesson 1

## Strings and plectrum technique...

Grab your Guitar! As you look down at your instrument you can see the guitar has six strings.

- The nearest (thickest) is E, then A D G B and finally another E.
- We can also refer to them as numbers 1-6
  - E(thickest string)=6, A=5, D=4, G=3, B=2 and E (thinnest string)=1.
  - When we are referring to a string by number it appears in a circle.



### Activity One – Focus on the E note (open string ①)

Hold the pick between your thumb and index finger as shown – tight enough that it will not slip but loose enough so it feels comfortable in your hand.



Are you ready for the first of the 20 'JamPod Laws of Rock Guitar'?

Below is the E note on the staff and in tablature. The notes you see with the tails going downwards are crotchet beats. To play these notes count 1,2,3,4 in your head as you play the 4 bars of music, strike each note with the pick playing downwards towards the floor.

Exercise 1

| Bar 1   | Bar 2   | Bar 3   | Bar 4   |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |

Tip!

Try resting the heel of your hand on the bridge or string ⑤ and ⑥ for stability as you would when writing with a pen. The plucking action is from rotating the wrist.

### Activity Two – Adding an F and G

Be economical - use your 4 left hand fingers to cover 4 frets – avoid sliding 1 finger between notes (unless that effect is required) so.....

The F note (string ①, position 1) – this is the note in the middle of the top line on the staff.  
Use fretting hand finger 1 to play the 'F' note.

Exercise 2 a

= 4 beats

The last note in the tune looks different? This is a semi-breve and lasts for 4 beats.

The next note we are going to add is the 'G' note (string ①, position 3) – this note sits on top of the staff. Use fretting hand finger 3 to play the 'G' note.

Exercise 2 b

= 2 beats

The last two notes look different again? These are minims and last for 2 beats.

Take the time to absorb the new notes and their position on the staff as you progress through the lessons. Make sure you are happy with reading the E, F and G notes on string ① in the previous activities before we move on.

### Activity Three – Applying Dynamics

Music is not always performed at one volume. To keep tunes exciting we have quiet bits and loud bits. This keeps you and your audience interested.

In music we have terms for this:

'*p*' = quiet

'*f*' = LOUD!!

'<' = getting louder

'>' = getting quieter

To play a quiet note, pluck the string softly – but hard enough to hear the note clearly

To play a loud note, pluck the string harder – be careful not to pluck too hard or you may make the string buzz

Try the following exercise using *p* and *f*

#### Exercise 3

Exercise 3 is a 4-measure exercise in 4/4 time. The first measure starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second measure starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The third measure starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fourth measure starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The exercise is divided into four measures, with a fermata over the final note of each measure. The notation includes a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a key signature of one sharp (F#).

#### Tip!

When plucking the string softly – make sure you are attacking the string hard enough that you hear more of the 'note' and not the sound of the pick striking the strings.

### Activity Four – Putting it all together

It's time to put everything we have learnt so far into practice and play along with our first tune "A New Beginning"!

Listening is really important when playing music – make sure you can hear the pulse from the drums and the sounds from the other instruments to ensure your part fits.

- Try playing it through at your own pace.
- When you are ready have a go with the CD.
- Listen for the 4 'clicks' at the beginning of the track and go for it.
- If you get a little lost don't worry, try again.
- If there are any areas that seem a little difficult - zone in on them and practice those a little more.
- 'Good Luck!'

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of six staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a dynamic marking of *f* (forte). It contains four measures of whole notes. The second staff starts at measure 5 and also contains four measures of whole notes. The third staff starts at measure 9 and contains four measures of quarter notes, with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). The fourth staff starts at measure 13 and contains four measures of quarter notes. The fifth staff starts at measure 17 and contains four measures of quarter notes, with a dynamic marking of *f*. The sixth staff starts at measure 21 and contains four measures of quarter notes, with a dynamic marking of *p* and a fermata over the final note. The piece concludes with a double bar line.