



LearnCigarBoxGuitar.com

How to use your Flatpick

Prepared for: 3 string fretted cbg

Prepared by: Patrick Curley



Using the pick

Objective

The way that you hold your pick is integral to how you use it. While I try to shy away from the term 'correct' when referring to technique it is important early on to learn a proven method that we know will continue to work for you later on. In this lesson you'll learn how to hold your pick so that it's comfortable in your hand and allows you to play a note cleanly and in time.

Goals

For this lesson your goal is learn a sound way to hold your pick and use it to play a note on your guitar.



Holding the pick

Follow the procedure that I use in the video, it's summarised here.

- Gently curl your fingers and rest your thumb across your first finger
- Grip the pick loosely between your thumb and index finger with the pick pointing in the same direction as your finger
- Your other three fingers can curl up inside your hand or open out depending on your preference.

Playing a note

The first thing to be aware of when playing a note is what NOT to do. When playing just one note on a single string your movements should be as small as possible. Keep your shoulder and elbow still and focus on making your movement as economical and concise.

You can move your whole hand from the wrist, or just move your fingers, or use a combination of these movements as described in the video lesson. Don't try to get it perfect just yet, there's plenty of time for that. For now just make sure that you can do the following exercises and the notes sound clean and your hand is relaxed.

- Play a note by moving your pick down across the string
- Play 2 notes by moving your pick down across the string
- Play a whole series of notes in the same way, all of them the same distance (in time) apart, like the ticking of a clock.

Once you've done that

- Play a note by moving your pick down across the string
- Play 2 notes by moving your pick first down and then up across the string
- Play a whole series of notes in the same way, all of them the same distance apart, like the ticking of a clock.



When learning new movements, particularly movements as specific as these, your nervous and muscular systems are working overtime to firstly make the movements happen and secondly commit them to some sort of physical memory. This process necessarily takes time and it is crucial, especially early on, that you allow yourself that time.

Before doing the next exercise make sure that those previous are comfortable, you may even want to stop here for now if this is your first time through. It is also important that you're already comfortable with the fretting lesson that accompanies this one. Learning a new movement can be hard enough but combining movements that have not yet begun to be embedded is never a good idea.

Playing two notes

Having heeded the above advice you can play notes on the open string and the third fret as described in the video with the same up and down motion as you learned earlier.

- Play a note by moving your pick down across the string
- Play 2 notes by moving your pick first down and then up across the string
- Play a whole series of notes in the same way, all of them the same distance apart, like the ticking of a clock.