

Part 3

First Lessons for the Left-Hand

Lesson 4. Notes on the Third String

Lesson 4a introduces the third string “A”.

The “A” is played on the second fret with the second finger on the third string. Look at the picture below. Notice how the second finger is curved at all the joints and the tip joint of the finger is mostly perpendicular to the fret board. These are essential mechanics. It is best to place the finger just behind (to the left) of the fret wire.

Try to keep the palm of the hand close to the neck while keeping the wrist straight. The knuckles of the left-hand are parallel and just above the plane of the finger board. This parallel presentation is the “default” position for the left-hand.

The third string “A” is played with the second finger on the second fret.



The third string “A” is notated on the second space from the bottom of the staff.



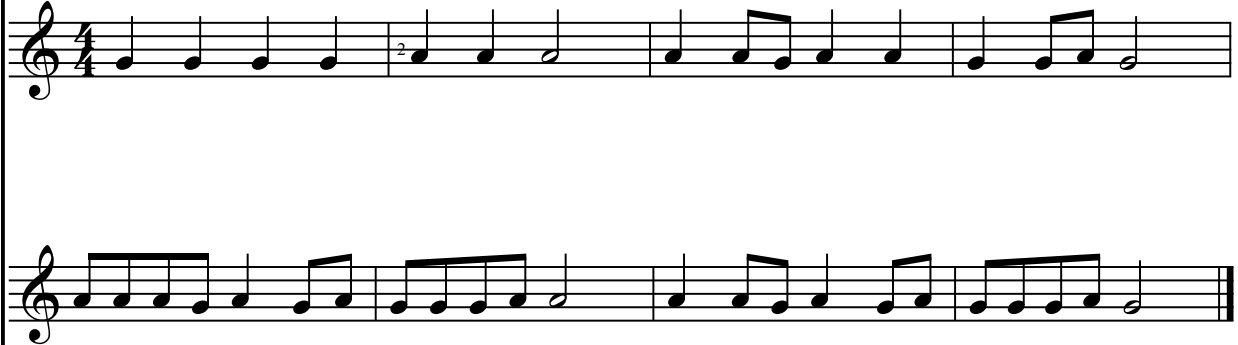
When you play with the fingers of the left hand, it is best to move them from the knuckle joint, without changing their shape. If you look at the above picture again, you will see that the bend of the joints of the second finger look similar to those of the other fingers; ie, the general shape of the finger is unchanged when it “stops” a string. Maintaining the general shape of the finger, regardless of whether it is “powered” or at rest above the strings, is one of the essential mechanics you will need to play at the advanced level. This can be learned in the very first lessons.

Lesson 4a should be played with “i-m”, “m- a”, and “i- a”, using both rest stroke and free stroke. To help you to acquire these essential mechanics, the rhythm in Lesson 4a is the same rhythm that was used in Lesson 2c.

Lesson 4a

CD TRACK 14

i a i a etc.
m a m a etc.
i m i m etc.



You successfully performed lesson 4a if you:

- Kept your palm parallel to the guitar neck.
- Kept the general shape of the finger as you flexed the knuckle joint.
- Played directly behind the fret wire.
- Kept the tip joint of the second finger mostly perpendicular to the fret board

PROFESSIONAL TIP

It seems that there are a lot of things to remember about playing correctly with the left-hand. But because you will make so many repetitions of these positions and movements over the next few days, they will too quickly become habits. This is the time to be very patient and uncompromising about the mechanics of playing the guitar.

Lesson 4a. Supplemental Pieces

Third String Notes with Bass

CD TRACK 15

1.

1. *m* *m* *m* *i* *m* *i*
p *p* *p* *p*

m *i* *m* *i* *m*
p *p* *p* *p* *p*

CD TRACK 16

2.

2. *m* *i* *m* *i* *m* *i* *m* *i*
p *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*

m *i* *m* *i* *m* *i* *m* *i*
p *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*

CD TRACK 17

3.

3. *i* *m* *i* *m*
p *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*

i *m* *i* *m* *i* *m* *i* *m* *i*
p *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*