

Fret Hand Exercise - all plucked instruments

Move your fretting hand to a part of the neck that does not require much stretching.

Assign fretting hand fingers the following numbers:

1 = Index

2 = Middle

3 = Ring

4 = Pinky

I suggest you do rows on Day 1 - 6, then columns on Days 7 - 10. Repeat each string of four notes across the neck 3 times, low pitch to high. Strings are numbered like floors of a building. On guitar, string 1, the treble E, is closest to the floor; 6, the bass E, is closest to the ceiling. For other instruments, string 1 is still the closest to the floor.

Day One's sequence 1-2-3-4 means play these notes on the 6th string, then 5th, then 4th, across the neck to the 1st string., return to string 6 and repeat twice to total 3 times.

	Day↓7	Day↓8	Day↓9	Day↓10
Day 1 →	1 - 2 - 3 - 4	2 - 1 - 3 - 4	3 - 1 - 2 - 4	4 - 1 - 2 - 3
Day 2 →	1 - 2 - 4 - 3	2 - 1 - 4 - 3	3 - 1 - 4 - 2	4 - 1 - 3 - 2
Day 3 →	1 - 3 - 2 - 4	2 - 3 - 1 - 4	3 - 2 - 1 - 4	4 - 2 - 1 - 3
Day 4 →	1 - 3 - 4 - 2	2 - 3 - 4 - 1	3 - 2 - 4 - 1	4 - 2 - 3 - 1
Day 5 →	1 - 4 - 2 - 3	2 - 4 - 1 - 3	3 - 4 - 1 - 2	4 - 3 - 1 - 2
Day 6 →	1 - 4 - 3 - 2	2 - 4 - 3 - 1	3 - 4 - 2 - 1	4 - 3 - 2 - 1

- I. Use **all down strokes** of the pick to play the above series.
- II. Repeat this exercise, now using **all up strokes**.
- III. Next, use a **down - up** alternating picking pattern.
- IV. Switch to **up - down**. Run through all the patterns in the Scale Variations exercise handout.
- V. Reverse direction and repeat the row or column descending from the high-pitched 1st string to the low 6th string.

These exercises and many others can be made more interesting through a number of variations.

Emphasize or make louder specific beats of a measure, for example, **1** – 2 – 3 – 4 or 1 – 2 – **3** – 4. (**Bold** means emphasize.)
 Or you might try damping the note on a specific beat in each measure like 1 – **2** – 3 – 4 or 1 – 2 – 3 – **4** (Grey # means damp.)

Play the exercises using a different beat, perhaps the shuffle above.

Or you might try all 8th notes (all down-strokes, all up, down-up, up-down, etc.):

or you could use an Irish jig with the pick strokes.

Down-Up-Down **Down-Up-Down** **Down-Up-Down** **Down-Up-Down**
1 - 2 - 3 **2** - 2 - 3 **3** - 2 - 3 **4** - 2 - 3

Jigs can be felt as 12/8 time with stronger 1-4-7-10 beats, but it's easier to think of four strong beats in triplets as shown above.

All exercises, scales, etc., benefit from the handout named "Strumming – Acoustic Folk – Rock." Pick any strum pattern and apply it to the scale or exercise, add a bit of pick dynamics and you're likely to inadvertently produce something that sounds suspiciously like music.