

Guitar for Beginners & Beyond — Workbook

This workbook turns the course into a daily practice habit. Each section pairs with a course module and gives you exercises, trackers, and checklists to measure real progress. Print it, fill it in by hand, or use the editable templates, and revisit your scores weekly to see how far you have come.

Setting Up and Your First Chords

Lock in tuning, posture, and your first four open chords with clean, reliable shapes.

Exercise: Chord Clarity Audit

Build each starter chord, then strum the strings one at a time. Note any string that buzzes or sounds dead and write what you adjusted to fix it.

- Which chord was hardest to make ring cleanly, and which string caused the problem?

- What single finger adjustment fixed the buzz or dead note?

- Can you remove your hand and rebuild the shape without looking? For which chords?

Worksheet: Daily Tuning and Posture Log

Fill this in at the start of each practice session for one week to build the habit of tuning first and checking your posture.

Date

Tuner used (clip-on / app / by ear)

All six strings in tune before playing (Y/N)

Thumb behind the neck, not over the top (Y/N)

Any hand or wrist tension noticed

Posture fix applied

Checklist: First-Week Setup Checklist

- Identified all six string names from low E to high E
- Tuned the guitar accurately using a tuner or app
- Sat with relaxed posture and correct thumb position
- Played Em, C, G, and D with every string ringing clearly
- Read a chord diagram and located fingers from it unaided

Rhythm, Strumming, and Fingerpicking

Develop a steady pulse and the strumming and picking patterns that turn chords into songs.

Exercise: Metronome Strumming Ladder

Start the down down up up down up pattern on one chord at 60 bpm. Once it is clean for one full minute, raise the tempo by 5 bpm and repeat. Record the fastest clean tempo you reach.

- At what tempo does the pattern start to fall apart?

- Does your strumming hand keep swinging in time even when it misses the strings?

- Which beats are you accenting to create a groove?

Exercise: Travis Picking Build-Up

Isolate the alternating thumb on the bass strings of a C chord for two minutes, then add one finger note at a time. Keep the tempo slow enough that the thumb never stumbles.

- Can the thumb hold a steady beat on its own before you add fingers?

- How many finger notes can you layer in while keeping the thumb even?

- What tempo lets you play the full pattern without a mistake?

Worksheet: Strumming Pattern Tracker

Log each pattern you practice and its cleanest tempo so you can watch your rhythm improve week over week. Pattern (e.g. D DU UDU)

Chord or progression used

Cleanest tempo in bpm

Pattern played with eyes closed (Y/N)

Notes on timing or feel

Checklist: Rhythm Skills Checklist

- Strummed even downstrokes in time with a metronome
- Played the down down up up down up pattern automatically
- Kept the strumming hand moving like a pendulum
- Played a basic fingerpicking pattern cleanly on a held chord
- Used palm muting to create short, percussive notes

The Fretboard: Barre Chords and CAGED

Move beyond open chords with power chords, barre chords, and the CAGED map of the neck.

Exercise: Barre Chord Endurance Drill

Hold an F major barre at the 1st fret for short bursts, strumming and checking each string. Rest, then repeat, slowly extending how long you can keep it clean.

- Which strings buzz first, and does rolling the index finger onto its edge help?

- Is the barre positioned right behind the fret rather than in the middle?

- How many clean strums can you get before the barre weakens?

Worksheet: CAGED Position Map

Pick one chord such as C major. For each of the five CAGED shapes, fill in the fret position and confirm whether it rings cleanly.

Chord being mapped

C shape position and clean (Y/N)

A shape position and clean (Y/N)

G shape position and clean (Y/N)

E shape position and clean (Y/N)

D shape position and clean (Y/N)

Checklist: Fretboard Mastery Checklist

- [] Named the notes on the 6th string from fret 1 to 12
- [] Played E5, G5, and A5 power chords and named each root
- [] Played an E-shape barre chord cleanly at three different frets
- [] Connected the E shape and D shape using CAGED
- [] Found one chord in at least three positions on the neck

Scales, Soloing, and Genre Styles

Learn the scales behind solos and apply every skill across folk, blues, rock, and pop.

Exercise: Pentatonic Phrasing Practice

Over a 12-bar blues backing track in A, improvise using box 1 of the A minor pentatonic. Focus on short, singable phrases with space between them rather than fast runs.

- Can you play a lick you could hum back?

- Where does adding the blue note create the most tension and release?

- Are you leaving space and repeating motifs, or filling every beat?

Exercise: Genre Tone Comparison

Record yourself playing the same chord progression four ways: folk fingerpicking, a blues shuffle with seventh chords, a palm-muted rock riff, and a clean pop strum. Listen back and describe the differences.

- What changed most between genres: the chords, the rhythm, or the tone?

• Which genre feels most natural to you right now and why?

• What one technique would most improve your weakest genre?

Worksheet: Solo Technique Log

Track your expressive techniques so you can hear them improve. Fill in after each soloing session.

Date

Scale or position used

Bends in tune to target pitch (Y/N)

Techniques practiced (bend / slide / hammer-on / vibrato)

Best phrase you played (describe or tab it)

Checklist: Soloing and Style Checklist

- Played box 1 of the minor pentatonic ascending and descending in time
- Added the blue note to create a bluesy phrase
- Bent a string accurately to a half-step and full-step target
- Added controlled vibrato to the last note of a phrase
- Played a full song from one chosen genre start to finish

Your Action Plan

1. Tune the guitar and check posture at the start of every single practice session
2. Spend the first week mastering Em, C, G, and D until every string rings cleanly
3. Run the one-minute chord change drill daily and log your score to track improvement
4. Practice the down down up up down up strum to a metronome, raising tempo only when clean
5. Add ten minutes of fingerpicking, building Travis picking thumb-first
6. Introduce power chords, then the E-shape and A-shape barre chords in short bursts
7. Map one chord with the CAGED system, learning one shape connection per week
8. Learn box 1 of the minor pentatonic and improvise over a 12-bar blues backing track
9. Drill bends, slides, and vibrato in isolation, then combine them into short phrases
10. Choose one song each from folk, blues, rock, and pop and learn each from start to finish

