

From Zero to Guitar Fingerpicking in 30 Days



A Udemy Course by Patrick O'Malley

www.learnfingerpicking.com

Section 3 – Lesson One

Alternating Bass Notes

For me, one of the things that I really appreciated when I was first listening to guitar - one of the things that was really magical to me - was when I heard guitar players playing and I asked myself how many guitar players were playing on a record and it turned out that there was only one. I couldn't believe it. I was so excited. It made me want to learn guitar, to play guitar.

The way to get to this level with fingerpicking guitar is for the thumb playing baselines and the fingers playing melody lines so that they are almost independent of each other. That's why right now we are going to focus on the thumb. We are going to focus on how the thumb can choose which notes to play. This will make it sound like you are playing a bass line at the same time as you are playing all these other notes.

Alternating Bass On A G Chord

One great way to work on the thumb being independent is to give it a second note to play. Let the left hand just fret a G chord. And then with the right hand , we just play two notes with the thumb first the 6th string then the 5th string.

So the bass is going to go like this:



And then I am going to fill in the notes and play T123 (where T = thumb on 6th string) and then T123 (where T = thumb on the 5th string)



So you can hear that the bass is alternating there between playing this note on the 6th and this notes on the 5th (this is called alternating bass). The great thing is that on the right hand you are just playing a G chord!
Let the fingerpicking fingers do the work and it sounds great

Exercise

Your exercise for today is to play this for 10-15 minutes.

If you have another 15 minutes, then take another chord (so the left hand just frets that - no need for chord changes) and then let the thumb play two notes (using either the 6th, 5th or 4th strings) and see how it sounds!

A good choice would be E minor (Em).

Try to figure out an alternating bass pattern that you can play on it!

In the next section, we will see what you did.

And give you some helpful pointers if you need some!