

Virtuwul Teaches Acoustic Mastery

**The Fastest Way To Go From Zero To Guitar
Hero On The Acoustic**

by Claude Johnson

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Introduction:

Hello and thank you for purchasing Acoustic Mastery. There are a great many example and techniques here, and there is a lot to learn from. The goal of this course is to expand your knowledge of the acoustic guitar, and get you on the fast path to becoming a better player.

I recommend printing out the E-book and using it to supplement the DVD. Most of the examples are actually viewable on the DVD itself, but it is sometimes difficult to read the on screen examples because they go by rather quickly, they are harder to read on the screen. Also, while we tried our best during the editing process to make things as clear as possible, once in a while the timing is slightly off of the examples. So, to avoid all confusion, print this out and follow along.

I am impressed with Virtuwl's course. I have learned several things myself and I know this knowledge will continue to help my playing. I put this ebook together to clarify any uncertain points about Virtuwl's lessons.

I hope you enjoy this course! - Claude Johnson

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DVD I

Acoustic Mastery Principle #1: Approach the material 15-20 minutes a day.

Practice each part or technique separately and focus on one part at a time. Consistency is the key to mastery. It is better to practice every day , even if its only for a limited amount of time.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #2: Not all picks are created equal.

As I personally favor the electric, and am used to heavy picks, Virtuwl's advice on using lighter picks for the acoustic was a shock to me and probably will take a little getting used to, but this opens more opportunities for dynamic playing.

Try getting a bunch of different picks from the music store so you can experiment... Discernment of the differences between small things like different picks will improve your awareness and phrasing.

Virtuwul recommends 0.4 to 0.6 mm for acoustic.

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You may not think this is a big deal, but if there's a theme, to this course, it's this...

Acoustic mastery is in the DETAILS!

It is when all the little things are put together, and flaws are eliminated, that the beauty of the acoustic comes to life.

Also Virtuwal did not talk much about guitar tone or guitars on this video, but let me say that having a good guitar is crucial for acoustic mastery.

If you don't already have a nice one, and you're willing to spend \$350-\$450 bucks, you can get something really sweet... Virtuwal likes Yamahas, I play a Taylor Big Baby which cost \$400. (I thought it sounded better than all the guitars under \$1000) Check out all the acoustics in your area and pick the one you like the best!

Acoustic Mastery Principle #3: Each chord fingering is a DIFFERENT chord, even if it has the same name.

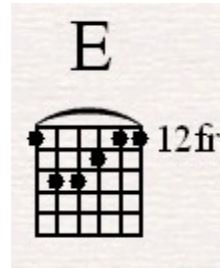
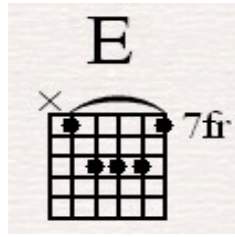
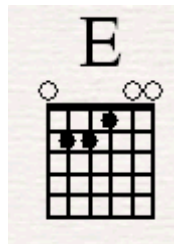
E major in the open position (2nd fret) is NOT the same chord as E major barre chord at the 7th fret.

What follows is the chordal section of the DVD. There aren't a lot of hyper-advanced chords, at least for now. Learning these chords is considerably easy. If you've never played before it might take you a couple months to get strong with them so you're able to quickly switch back and forth between any of these chords.

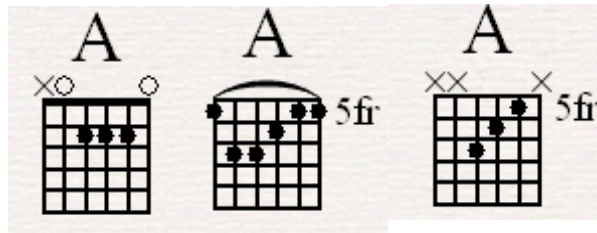
If you've been playing a while, you probably already know most of these. But an important skill in acoustic mastery is being able to play the right voicing in the right context! Let's go over the basic chords. It is interesting to see which ones Virtuwal thinks are the most essential...

Virtuwal gives us the three most common voicings of E:

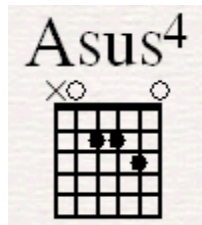
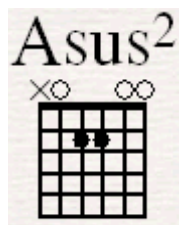
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Next, his favorite voicings for “A”...

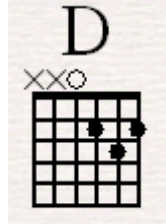


Next, other variations of A:



Next, we have D Major:

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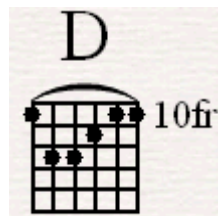
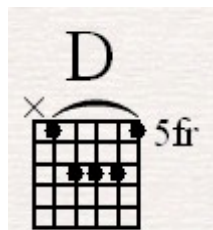


There is also this important voicing:



This D/A (pronounced D slash A), means a D major chord with A in the bass.

Of course, we have the usually shapes to play major chords:



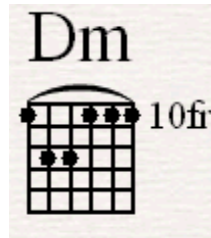
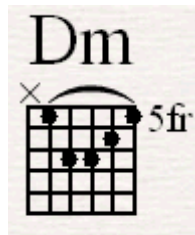
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Next comes D minor.



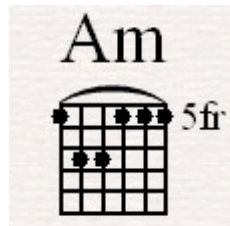
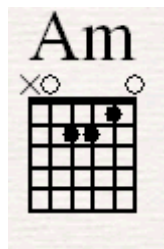
Notice the high C can be pulled off to a B for melodic movement.

Here's more Dms:



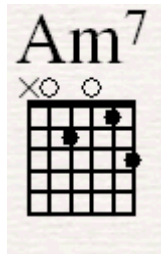
Here notes can be hammered on after the barre.

Next is A minor, and the following examples are slightly more advanced, although still just essential chord voicings.



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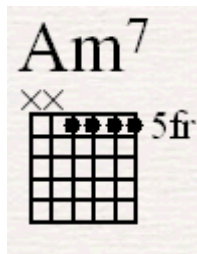
Here is a cool voicing of Amin7:



Many guitarists (including me) usually just play open Am7 with by letting the high E ring open (the 5th) . But don't forget, we can grab the 7th (G) on the high E string for a great voicing. In general, this 7th in the melody note of a chord seems to be a favorite of Virtuwl.

Go through your own personal “chord library” and see if there are any chances to bump a high 5th up to a 7th for a cool new chord.

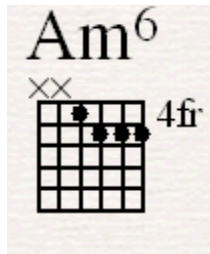
Here's another “Virtuwul favorite” voicing:



Very convenient, very usable chord shape. From bottom to top we have 7th, 3rd, 5th, root! Try sliding around individual notes to see how that affects the sound. Plus, with the root at the top, you can combine this shape easily with licks that use the root.

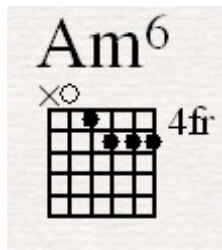
Here's another usable chord with a great voicing: Aminor6.

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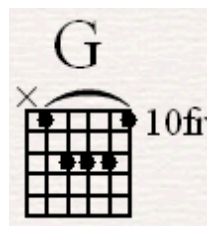
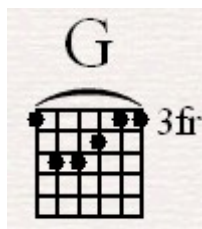
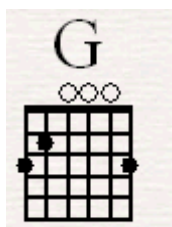


Remember how I said to slide the notes around from Am7? Well slide the bottom note (the 7th) down one fret, and it becomes the 6th!

Also you can play the A string open:



Next, let's look at G and it's variations. The basic "G", of course, is:



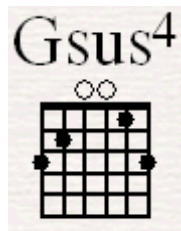
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Here's a cool G7:

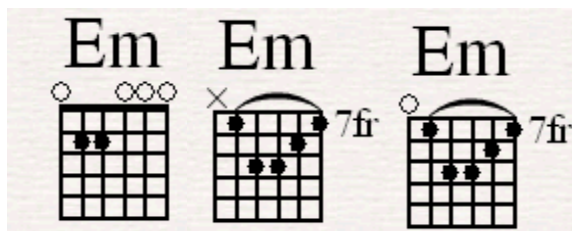


with the first finger on "F" on the high E string.

Here's an uncommon Gsus4 position. You can pull off the C to a B to go to a normal G chord.



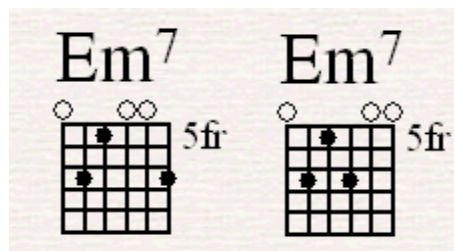
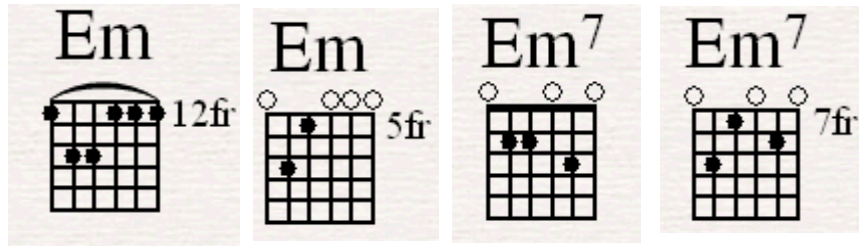
Let us move onto E minor.



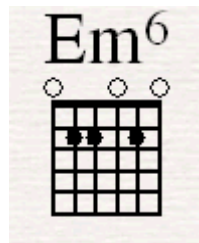
Notice you can play with or without open low E.

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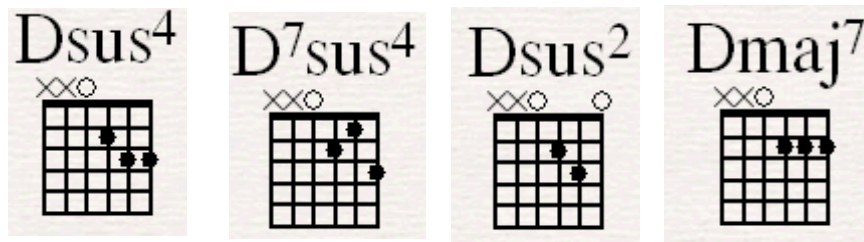
Then, here are some more open sounding chords, all effective.



Next, we have Em6:



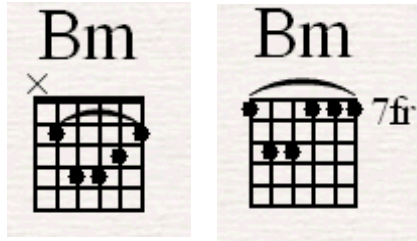
Here are the D variations:



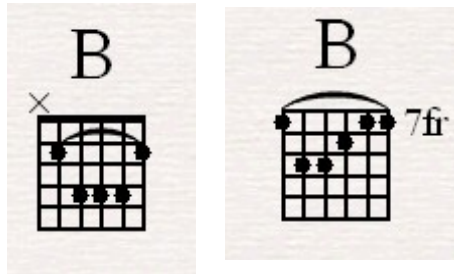
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Here's your basic Minor & Major chords...

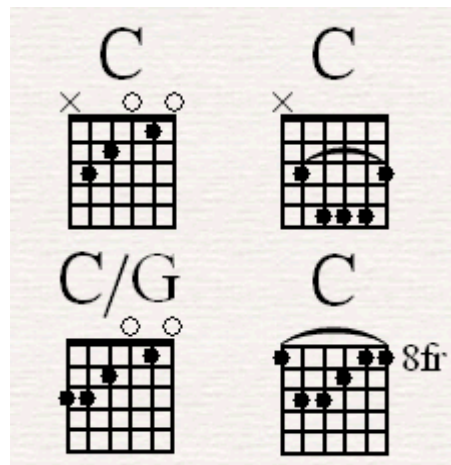
B minor:



B Major:

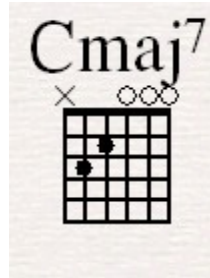


Here's C major,

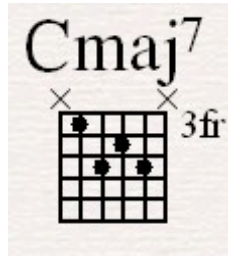


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and finally, C major7.



Another essential shape that both Virtuul and I use is this:



Acoustic Mastery Principle #4: Get a few chords to sound amazing

Notice how Virtuul's approach to acoustic mastery doesn't involve memorizing a ton of chords. I like this.

Don't get me wrong, the more chords you know, the better, and I love learning all kinds of crazy chords, variations, and voicings. You better believe it. BUT...

This course is not coming from that angle. It's coming from the angle of "Get a few chords to sound amazing"... This is powerful on many levels.

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I have played guitar for 16 years now and in the beginning I tried to get way too complicated in hopes of being totally original. The fact is, simple stuff sounds better most of the time, especially in rock.

Some time later, after getting over trying to be 'original', and practicing for a while on lead, i went back and bought a bunch of books like Beatles, Guns-N-Roses, Bob Marley, Greatful Dead, and Van Halen. The genius of the songwriting was staggering.

I noticed that all the songs , with a few exceptions, could be made into a killer arrangement with just one acoustic guitar and vocals. And the uniqueness, beauty, and magic of each song was discovered not to be coming from some complex guitar part, but mostly just from the combination of the vocal melody and the underlying chord pattern.

Now, jazz gets complex, but rock music its a roots type music, meaning very basic structures are used.

However, it is the variations, the melody, the arrangement, the lyrics, etc, of these basic structures that make rock so interesting. But the point is, you really do not need to learn that many chords.

You got your majors, your minors, your maj7,min7,dm7 chords, maybe a sus chord and a few other chords. In jazz, complex chords are common, and simple chords are uncommon. In rock, the opposite is true.

So the point is to focus on the basics and a few different voicings for each one...AND... treat each voicing as a separate chord because you don't have that many of them to know.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #4: Use Power Open Chords

What Virtuwl calls “Power Open Chords” means using the dynamics

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of the acoustic, along with open strings, to create a more fluid texture, and Virtuwl gives a perfect example of this technique with an D → E ⇒ D→E , ⇒ B ⇒ A progression

The D is pretty much a passing note to E, and not shown on the screen. Anyway, the point is that when you're playing a 3 note power chord on the A, D, and G strings, then all you've got left are E and B, so you are free to hit the other strings.

I picked up my axe and played this riff, i found it was cool to play the low E starting out, and then play the top strings open maybe on the 2nd beat or on the B chord. Play around with it, getting the phrasing right takes some practice.

Another example Virtuwl gives is using the major chord (barre) but leave the top 2 strings B and E to ring open.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #5

Know Your Basic Barre Chords

This one is a no brainer, and you've already played all the essential shapes above, hopefully. Just make sure you know where you are on the neck, for example A# being at the first fret for a major chord starting on the A string.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #6

Explore the world of Jazz Chords

This course is mostly about how to play Rock, but I'd include some basic info on how to get started playing jazz.

QUICK OVERVIEW:

C MAJOR:

C – D – E – F – G – A – B

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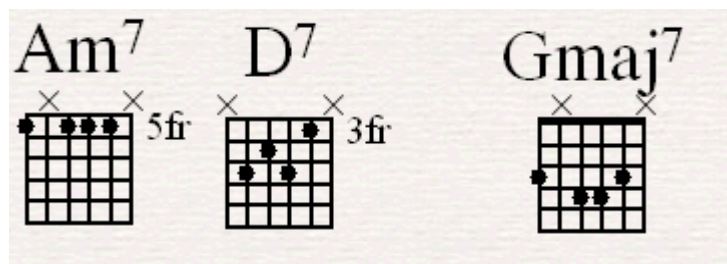
whole step, whole step, half step, whole step, whole step, whole step, half step

C major – C E G
D minor – D F A
E minor – E G B
F major – F A C
G major – G B D
A minor – A C E
B dim – B D F

4 note chords are:

I C major7 – C E G B
II D minor7 – D F A C
III E minor7 – E G B D
IV F major7 – F A C E
V G Dom7 - G B D F
VI A minor – A C E G
VII B min7#5 – B D F A

Try this progression: (II – V – I)



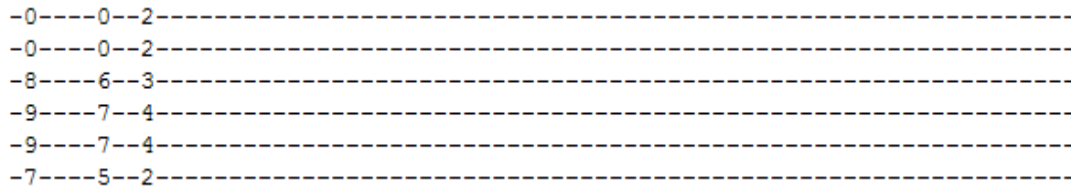
This is slightly off topic, so let's continue with Virtuwal's teachings:

Acoustic Mastery Principle #7 Create Your Own Chords

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barre chord with some open strings added...

EXAMPLE 1: (25:00, DVD I)



There are a lot of ways to explore your own chords, first of all, simply pick any finger and move it either one or two frets up or down and you'll have a new chord.

Understanding music theory can also help you create more chord voicings, because you can do things like “throw in the 11th”, “throw in the flatted 13th”, play the chord with no fifth, etc.

**Acoustic Mastery Principle #8
Become a Master at Strumming**

Learning chords is cool, it is mostly a left hand skill, but the right hand is just as important, perhaps more important. So, spend a lot of time strumming.

Also, pick a light pick and watch the video to see why Virtuwal thinks this helps dynamics.

Also, practice strumming at different intensities.

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Acoustic Mastery Principle #9

How to Achieve Strumming Mastery

Virtuwul stresses the following principles when practicing rhythm:

1. tap the foot
2. use a metronome
3. get the whole body into it.

Very simple. The “hard part” is finding the time to consistently practice with a metronome. But, the fact is, even 5 min a day will go a long way.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #10

Create Strum Rhythms In Your Head First

This is the #1 way to play a killer rhythm, with or without a beat. Practicing just strumming with the strumming hand. First get the strum in your head... Then play it just with one hand, then apply it to an actual picking pattern.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #11

Incorporate “rake chords”

Also you can muffle the strings with the fretting hand and just “rake” the strings. These are great, and you can also hit the harmonic rake chords at the 12th, 5th, 7th, and even the 9th fret.

Watch how Virtuwul demonstrates this technique.

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Acoustic Mastery Principle #12

upstrokes vs. downstrokes

Virtuwul says “knowing when to do an upstroke vs. a downstroke is what creates the nuances in your playing”. In the example on the video, Virtuwul plays basically two downstrokes, and then a strum starting on an upstroke.

The idea here is to get used to the differences in the sound and play around with a few combinations of upstrokes and downstrokes.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #13

Using your palm

You can mute the strings of the guitar with your right hand palm. You can accentuate a chord by releasing the mute, and you can make the accents more pronounced in a rhythm. You can shut off the sound suddenly and smoothly with palm stops. You can combine palm stops with lefting your fretting hand slightly. This is somewhat hard to describe, so watch the DVD for this part!

Acoustic Mastery Principle #14

Sweep Strums

You can use “sweep strums”, which is sort of a slow strum...Your hand is sweeping across the strings, not abruptly or quickly, just slowly enough that the notes ring out a little bit separately from each other, but not so slow that

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you can't hit the entire chord in one beat.

This is a great technique to change up the strumming. You can also do reverse sweep strums. Again, please watch the DVD for a demonstration.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #15

Partial Chord strumming

Here's an example of partial chord strums.

The chords are being played too fast on the screen to really keep up with the tab, here's the example printed out more clearly:

Example 2: (39:03, DVD I)

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1

Eminor7 Aminor7 Csus4 GMaj Dmaj DSus4 Dmaj DSus2

2

E
B
G
D
A
E

3

Eminor Aminor7 CMaj GMaj FMaj

4

Again, this one might be a little hard to read on the TV, so print out the chords.

Pay attention the dynamics of strumming, sometimes you need to be louder, sometimes quieter. The most common time to strum louder is on the chorus of a song.

Example 3 (41:22, DVD I)

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```

-9----12-7---9--7--5-----
-9h10-10-7h9-9--7--5-----
-9----9--7h9-9--7--6-----
-9h11-11-7h9-9--7--7-----
-9----9--7---7--5--7-----
-----5-----

```

This example illustrates several techniques, including partial strumming.

Example 4 (42:20, DVD I)

```

-----| -3-x-2-x-0-----
-3x10-x12-x7-\3--x/10--5x-7-x-5---| -3-x-0-x-0-----
-4x11-x13-x8-\4--x/11--6x-8-x-6---| -4-x-2-x-0-----
-5x12-x14-x9-\5--x/12--7x-9-x-7---| -5-x-1-x-2-----
-5x12-x14-x9-\5--x/12--7x-9-x-7---| -5-x-2-x-2-----
-----| -3-x---x-0-----

```

Palm mute the "rakes"...2nd time repeat with full open chords

This example illustrates rake chords, slides, and other techniques. Combining several techniques is often a part of mastery.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #16 Open Strumming

Making use of open strings is a key technique. By allowing the strings to ring open, the guitar creates a sort of "drone" affect and you can get a much fuller sound.

Example 5 (44:05, DVD I)

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```

-0---0--0---0-0--0-0-0--2-0--0--0--0--0--0--0--0-0-7-0--
-0---0--0---0-0--0-0-0--2-0--0--0--0--0--0--0--0-0-0-0--
-1-/-6--1-/-7-6--1/6-2--3/11\9--11-12-9--11-9--7-6-6-6--
-2-/-7--2-/-9-7--2/7-4--4/12\11-12-12-11-12-11-9-7-7-7--
-0---0--0---0-0--0-0-0--4-0--0--0--0--0--0--0--0-0-0-0--
-----2-----
Strum all strings open except for the E String

```

Also, check out the “good times strum”, found at 46:29!

Here's another example:

Example 6 (46:22, DVD I)

```

--9---9-x9--9-|-----
--9h10-10x10-9-|-----
--9---9-x9--9-|-----
--9h11-11x11-9-|-----
--9---9-x9--9-|-----
-----|-----
                2x          Repeat...

```

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DVD II

Acoustic Mastery Principle #17 **Sliding Chords**

Virtuwul points out that one of his favorite techniques for spicing up an ordinary riff is to slide into the chords. Most guitarists are used to sliding into a single note, but the sliding technique can be powerful when you slide into an entire chord.

Slide exercise one – slide from G to A to B to A to G

Slide exercise two – slide from Bm7 to Em7 to Bm7 etc

Slide exercise three – Bm to Amaj barre chords

Slide exercise four – Am to Bmaj barre chords

These slide chords are not very difficult but doing these exercises improves your phrasing.

Homework: Practice these until you can play each one flawlessly... And then write at least 3 sliding chord riffs of your own. If the above examples are easy for you, try more advanced chords.

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Acoustic Mastery Principle #18

“Octave Slides”

When I first heard Virtuwl say “Octave Slides”, I thought he meant sliding from a low note somewhere on the fretboard to a higher note 12 frets away on the same string. No! Although that certainly is a valid technique too, this is not what he means here...

He means creating an octave interval, playing both the root and the octave together, such as using the first finger to play the low string and ALSO muffle the string directly below it, for example, with your first finger on the E string fifth fret, your ring finger is on the 7th fret D string, both notes are “A”, and your first finger also muffling the A string.

Now slide this entire shape up to D, 10th fret and play a D barre chord... What an awesome but overlooked technique! Hendrix used octave slides, so did Wes Montgomery who was famous for octaves, definitely check out his stuff if you haven't.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #19

More on Slide Chords

You can also play with un-muffling the open string; it would sound fine if A was your chord anyway, but experiment with sliding it around. Virtuwl's style makes good use of open strings, and you should know how to also.

You can switch back and forth from muffled to unmuffled too. Virtuwl also mentions combining a single note slide going

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into a chord, which is another good combo.

And he mentions that it is particularly effective to slide around major barre chords that start on the A string... So practice this one until you're a master at it.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #20 **Use Hammer Ons & Pull Offs**

First, if you don't know what hammerons and pulloffs are, watch the video for an explanation.

Next, try playing these example with a metronome. Start slow, and play it a little faster each week.

Example 7 (8:30 – DVD II)

```
-----0h3-----  
-----0h3-----0h3-----  
-----0h2-----0h2-----  
-----0h2-----0h2-----  
-----0h2-----0h2-----  
-----0h3-----0h3-----
```

Example 8 (9:30 – DVD II)

```
-----3p0-----  
-----3p0-----3p0-----  
-----2p0-----2p0-----  
-----2p0-----2p0-----  
-----2p0-----2p0-----  
-----3p0-----3p0-----
```

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Acoustic Mastery Principle #21 Study Real Life Examples of Hammer-ons and Pull-offs

Let's look at two examples of hammer-ons and pull-offs.

Example 10 (10:40)

```
-----3-----3-----  
-----3-----3-----  
-----0-----0-----  
-----0-0h2-2-0h2p0-----0-----  
---0h2-----0-----0h2p0-2-----  
-3-----3-----
```

Sounds like Floyd... Pay attention to the opportunities to use of hammer on and pull offs to make cool licks for your transitions.

Example 11 (12:05)

Sounds like Neil Young... Pay attention to the use of downstrokes vs upstrokes and where they fit in with use of the transition.

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```

-0-----2-0-----
-3-----3-0-----
-0-----2-0-----
-2-----0-2-----0-0h2--
-2-----2-0h2-----
-0-----0-----

```

Hit the Emin7 a few times with downstrums

Acoustic Mastery Principle #22 Hammer On Chords

You can really make a riff come alive, even if its only one chord, if you throw in a bunch of variations, and hammer-on chordal playing is a great way to do this. Virtuwl demonstrates on the E chord. Nice juicy riffs, one after another...

Example 12 (13:45, DVD II)

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```

-----|-----|
-----|-----|
-----| -1hp2p1---1h2p1--1h2p1|
-0h2-2-0h2-2-0h2|-----2-----2-----|
-0h2---0h2---0h2|-----|
-----|-----|
E Chord Hammer Ons... Strum the E chord

```

```

-----|-----|
-----|-----0-----|
-----| -1h2---2p1---1-----|
-----0---0h2|-----2---2---2-----0h2p0--|
0h2-2---2---|-----0h2p0-2-----|
-----|-----|

```

and throw in these "flavors"

The basic technique is to hammer on several notes of the fretted chord at the same time, perhaps keeping some of the notes already fretted at the beginning. For example, with E major, keep the G# on the G string first fret, fretted the entire time, and then hammer on the B on the 2nd fret A string and the E on the 3rd fret D string.

Virtuwul also suggests hammering on a single note onto the chord; this is another variation.

Other variations involve hammering on and pulling off to open strings. Notice the favored keys for this of playing are usually keys like E,A , etc, where the open strings fall into the key.

On the A chord, Virtuwul demonstrates playing around on the melody string and sliding around into other chords, in this case, a sus chord... These are two more important techniques to practice.

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On the D chord, sus2 and sus4 chords are easily found...

On the A minor chord, Virtuwal shows how to combine rake chords with a hammer on chord. Practice this riff!

Finally Virtuwal demonstrates combining partial chord strumming with hammer-on chords. Try creating a riff of your own using this combination.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #23 Hammer On Chords

Hammer On Chords means just what it sounds like – you are hammering on the notes. Often, you'll form a barre or fret some notes first, then hammer on other notes.

Example 13 - (20:10, DVD II) - A to D

```
-----2-----0-----  
-2p0-3-0h2-2-----  
-2p0-2-0h2-2-----  
-2p0-0-0h2-2-----  
-0-----0-----  
-----  
This is a cool way to change chords...
```

Example 14 – (21:00) G to C - D , C, B melody

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```

-3-----0-----
-03p1p0-1-----
-0-----0-----
-0-----2-----
-2-----3-----
-3-----
Cool C Transition

```

Example 15 , (21:30, DVD II) D minor...

In this example, first of all notice the D minor shape , (D, F, A) played on the top three strings, on the 7th, 6th, and 5th frets. To this we add the open D string.

```

-5p0-0-|--5-----5-----5---5p0-----0h3p0---0--
-6---6-|----6-----6-----6-----6-----5-----5-3--
-7---7-|-----7-----7-----7-----7-5-----4--
-0---0-|-0-----5--
-----|-----
-----|-----

```

Virtuwul uses open strings and pull offs to create this riff. Listen to the DVD and then follow along in the tab. Notice that Virtuwul hits the open D string, then plays the triad three times, then a fourth time, but he plays the open E string instead of the normal fifth fret A.

Then he shifts positions and plays a hammer-on pull off transition to a chord to finish the riff.

Example 16 (22:40, DVD II)

```

-0---| -0---0---0---| -0---0---
-0h1-| -3p1-1p0-0h1-| -1---1---
-2---| -2---2---2---| -0h2-2---
-2---| -2---2---2---| -0h2-2---
-0---| -0---0---0---| -0---0---
-----| -----| -----

```

Next we have this A minor based riff. Practice this one and try to get the phrasing as smooth as possible.

On the DVD , the part where it says “Example 17” , we actually put that label too soon, it was meant for the next riff. My mistake!

At around 23:30 on DVD #2, Virtuwl is just demonstrating another way to riff on the D chord, similar to the one in the previous section.

```

-0h2-3p2-2p0-0h2---
-3---3---3---3-----
-2---2---2---2-----
-0---0---0---0-----
-----
-----

```

So this is example 17 (at 24:00 , DVD II)

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```

-2-----3 | -0-----2 | -2-2-3-2h3p2p0-----
-3-----3 | -2-----3 | -3-----3p0-0h3p0
-2-----0 | -2---0h2p0-2 | -2-----
-0-4h5p4p0--0-----0 | -2-0h2-----0 | -0-----
-----5--4h5p4---0-2 | -0----- | -----
-----5---3 | ----- | -----

-2-3/5--2-3-2h3p2p0 | 23/5-3p2-2p0- | -----0-
-3----- | 33/5-3---3--- | -3/5\3-2/3-2-
-2----- | 2----- | -----2-
-0----- | 0----- | -----2-
----- | ----- | -----0-
----- | ----- | -----

```

This riff sounds awesome but when you break it down, it is not tough to play. Essentially, we are dealing with a D – D – G – A progression, and the transitions are played on bars 2 and the last part of bar 4.

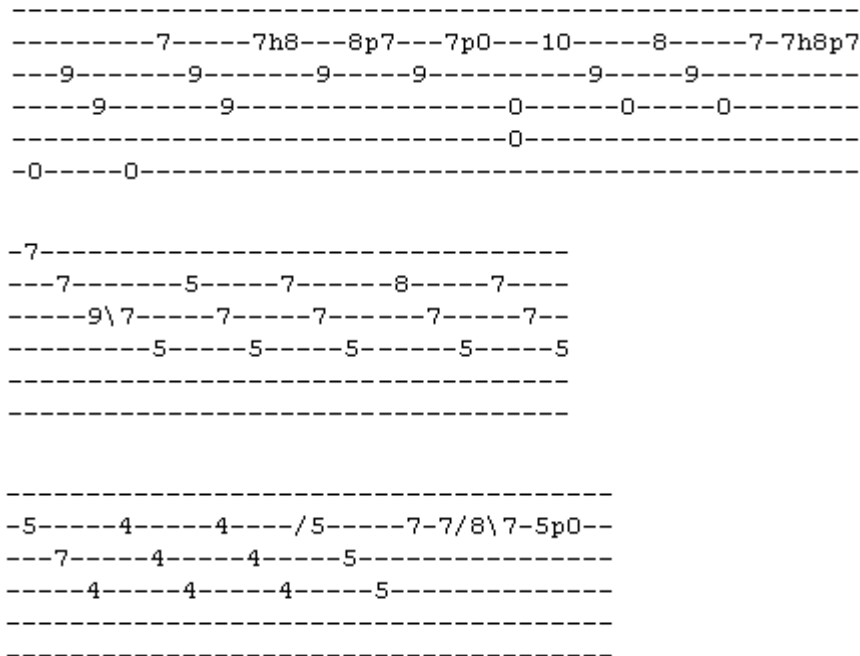
So its D, with a riff, then G, then A and a riff...

Try playing the exact riffs VirtuWul plays using the video and tab. And then play your own riffs...

Also notice the double-stop slide technique.

Example 18 (25:45, DVD II)

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There's a lot going on in this example, so take your time here. Watch the video and following along in the tab printed from this ebook.

First of all, if you analyze the notes, you can see that that it is constantly changing, rather than going from chord to chord.

We start of in E Minor. This is an interesting fingering – ring finger on 9th fret D string, pinky on 9th fret G string, middle finger on 8th fret B string... The first finger could go on the 7th fret high E string. Although we dont need it for right now, you can play other variations using that note. So, for this example you can keep the first finger on the 7th fret , ready to play that hammer on pull off...

So, we start off on the E minor, then we are playing Dadd9,

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with the open D string, the pinky fretting E on the 9th fret, the A on the 10th fret B string...When this A goes down to a G on the 8th fret, the chord becomes Dsus4.

You aren't hearing any thirds yet against the D root to establish a major or minor sound... Then the G drops to F# on the 7th fret B string, with another hammer-on pull-off and we hear the melody resolving to a major sound, and then we hit the B note on the top string with the first finger.

[This is a common technique, fret the top two strings on any fret , play a hammer-on pull-off on the B string, and then play the note on the high E string]

E again, so it is slightly ambiguous, constantly flowing...

Then we go down into this nice shape:

first finger on 5th fret D string, ring finger on the 7th fret G string, and pinky on the 7th fret B string.

This forms the notes G, D, F#, which is a Gmaj7 (no 3rd)

`Notice when the F# slides up to a G, it becomes simply G5, or a higher-voiced powerchord. So, alternating between the root and the major 7th a fret below can be a cool way to add texture to an arrangement.

Virtuwul finishes with some arpeggiated chromatic movement from B major to C major and then wraps it up with an lick from E minor.

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Although there are a ton of cool tricks being used in this short example, Virtuwl wants us to focus on the hammerons and pulloffs being used... So, once you can play the basic riff, go back to the DVD again... listen... and try to pick up all the subtleties...

Acoustic Mastery Principle #18

Experiment with a Capo

The obvious advantage is to be able to play familiar riffs in new keys. You can instantly transpose a song to a better range to sing in, etc.

Of course, you should learn how to play everything without a capo... But playing with a capo makes your guitar sound more interesting, which ultimately increases your skill through increased involvement.

You will also get better at open position playing. There's a lot of amazing riffs just in the key of E, which you can take with you to any key with the capo, and even if you go back to playing without a capo, those licks will at least work in E, and you'll have understood them at a deeper level... Then those licks can usually be adapted to other keys like A.

I used to think of a capo as a sort of gimmick, but once I actually had one in my possession, I thought it was the coolest thing ever for the acoustic...It really gives the guitar a different "ring"...

Acoustic Mastery Principle #19

Learn to Play Harmonics

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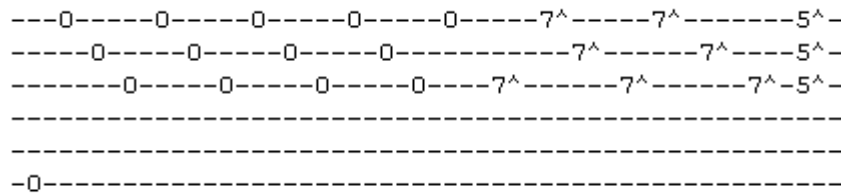
The most common harmonics are on the 12th, 7th, 5th, and 9th fret, although others do exist, but are quite hard to play or hear....

Notice the 12th fret harmonic is an octave above the open string and the 5th fret harmonic is two octaves above. Cool...

The two examples that VirtuWul gives should be easy to play after watching the video.

One is not notated, but it is so simple, you are just playing the open low E, and the 12th fret harmonics on the E and B string. Here's the other example:

Example 19 (30:55)



Play around with harmonics and try to write a riff or two incorporating them.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #20 Become a Master of Picking Patterns

Picking patterns, after the strumming, is the #2 key to beginning an acoustic guitar master.

Lets say we number the strings from 1 to 6, with high E being 1 and Low E being 6...

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1 ----- High E
 2 ----- B
 3 ----- G
 4 ----- D
 5 ----- A
 6 ----- Low E

The first picking pattern you should memorize is

6,3,2,1,2,3

Example 20, (32:45, DVD II)

The key thing right now! just always go back! And after the root I hit the bottom 3 strings: G,B,E

Now you can use this simple pattern on pretty much any chord progression.

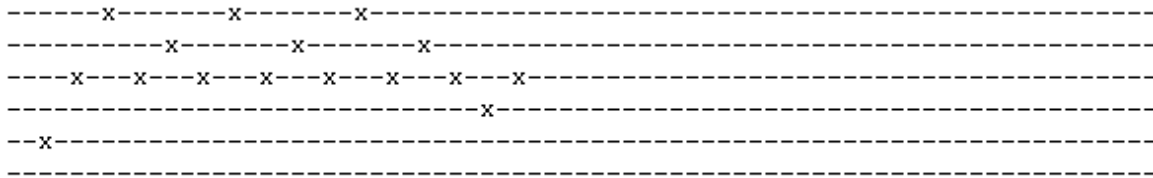
Exercise: Take the simple 6,3,2,1,2,3 picking pattern, write a basic chord progression, modify the pattern slightly in your own style, and come up with an original riff.

The next picking pattern you should learn is:

5,3,1,3,2,3,1,3,2,3,1,3,2,3,4,3

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Example 21, (33:50, DVD II)



You change the root and you change the melody on the b-string

This is obviously more complex, but technically, not too hard.

Advanced guitarists, watch out for the tendency to throw in some finger picking. We are practicing flat picking here – no right hand fingers allowed! Finger picking/plucking comes later. Part of the master's technique is being able to pick something as smoothly as you can pluck it.

The camera shots show a lot of left hand, showing the movement from A minor to E minor, along with some accessible melodic licks/variations. The picking pattern is straightforward.

The recommended picking pattern is mostly alternate picking, but you want to pick in the same direction where it makes sense, for example skipping strings in the same direction in the beginning, use a downstroke on the first three notes, and also at the end, when going to the D string and back to the G string,

^ ^ ^ v ^ v ^ v ^ v ^ v v ^
5,3,1,3,2,3,1,3,2,3,1,3,2,3,4,3

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Now we are at

Example 22 (35:30, DVD II)

Example 22 (35:30, DVD II) guitar tablature, measures 1-4. The strings are labeled E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom. Measure 1: E (3), B (0), G (2), D (3), A (0), E (3). Measure 2: E (0), B (2), G (3), D (2), A (0), E (3). Measure 3: E (0), B (1), G (0), D (2), A (1), E (0). Measure 4: E (0), B (2), G (3), D (2), A (3), E (0). Slurs and accents are present over various notes.

Example 22 (35:30, DVD II) guitar tablature, measures 5-6. The strings are labeled E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom. Measure 5: E (2), B (3), G (2), D (0), A (0), E (0). Measure 6: E (0), B (2), G (3), D (2), A (0), E (0). A red triangle points to the G note (6) in measure 5, and a blue triangle points to the D note (4) in measure 6. A slur labeled 'H Po' covers the notes 0-2-0 in measure 6. The text 'Here's the other transition' is written above the tablature. Below the tablature, the text reads: 'Transitions are great to throw in with a picking pattern'.

In this case, you see that the G chord and the D chord each begin with the root being played... The G is 6 and the D is 4, so we have this, the C is on the A string which is 5... So you have this:

G: 6,3,5,1,2,3,4

D: 4,2,3,1,2,3,4

C: 5,3,2,4,1,2,3,5

and then the C lick starting with 4,3,2,1, slide...

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This are not necessarily difficult to play technically, but this combination of variations is choice.

These picking patterns should be a springboard to dozens of your own ideas for picking patterns.

Notice in the above example, the G and the D each start with a quarter note followed by 6 eighth notes, which makes a full bar. Then the next bar is 8 eighth notes.

Notice Virtuwl throwing the triplet hammeron pulloff lick on the D chord, along with slide. Those elements make 3 chords sound sweet.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #21

Picking Practice

Practice your picking technique by itself. Practice playing the notes of a chord, one at a time with all downstrokes. Get as smooth as you can. Practice alternate picking by picking out the different notes (strings) of a chord. Alternate picking means alternating between an upstroke and a downstroke.

Then, memorize your picking patterns, and play them against different chord progressions. Go slowly until you have a picking pattern mastered, then speed it up.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #22

Learn Fingerpicking

Good acoustic guitar players can play both with a pick and

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also with their fingers. The sound is completely different, so by learning fingerpicking, you become a lot more versatile. In this technique, you throw the pick away for certain songs or certain parts of songs at least.

The classical technique involves arching your wrist and making sure there is space between your arm and the body of the guitar. Watch the video for VirtuWul's explanations.

Example 23

The image displays five measures of guitar notation for a fingerpicking exercise. The strings are labeled E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom. Measure 1 (labeled '1') shows a sequence of notes: E5, B7, G5, D5, A5, E5. The first two notes are marked 'H' (hammer-on) and the next four are marked 'Po' (pull-off). Measure 2 (labeled '2') shows notes: E3, B5, G3, D3, A2, E0. The first two notes are marked 'H', and the next two are marked 'Po'. Measure 3 (labeled '3') shows notes: E0, B0, G0, D0, A0, E0. Measure 4 (labeled '4') shows notes: E0, B0, G0, D0, A0, E0. Measure 5 (labeled '5') shows notes: E0, B0, G0, D0, A0, E0. The notation includes various fingerings (e.g., 5-7, 3-5-3-2) and techniques like 'Sl' (slide) and 'Si' (sustain).

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5

6

SI SI SI

E
B
G
D
A
E

7

8

H H 9

9

10

E
B
G
D
A
E

11

12

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13 14 Repeat Beginning

E 7 7 7 8 7 7
 B 7 7 7 7 7 7
 G 7 9 7 9 7 7
 D 7 9 7 9 7 7
 A 7 9 7 9 7 7
 E 0 0 0 0 0 0

15 16

E 0 0 0 0 0 0
 B 0 0 0 0 0 0
 G 2 2 3 2 0
 D 2 2 3 2 0
 A 2 2 3 2 0
 E 0 0 0 0 0 0

H Po Po

I know, that seems like a long example, but you can do it... Just take your time, watch and listen to the DVD, and follow along with the printed E-book.

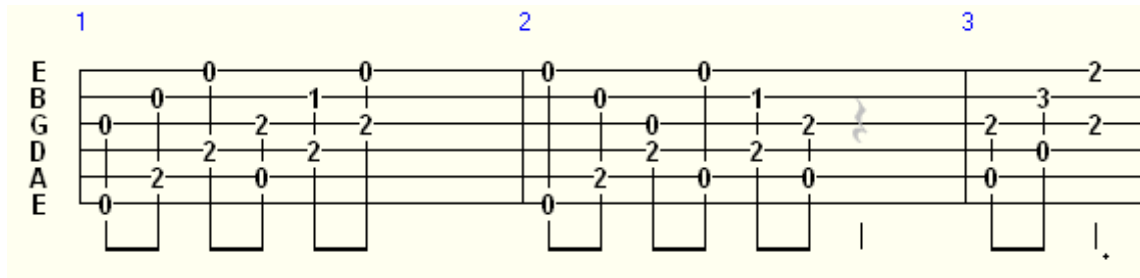
Acoustic Mastery Principle #22

Learn Fingerplucking

“Fingerplucking”, as opposed to fingerpicking, means playing with the pick and fingers together. This is an excellent technique because unlike pure fingerpicking, you don't have to drop the pick. This lets you throw in the technique and quickly combine with picking.

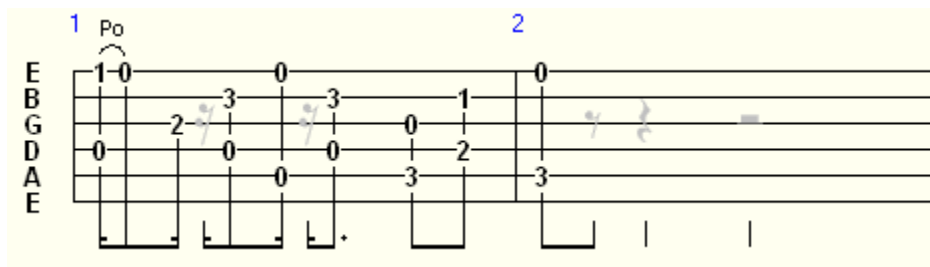
Example 24: (44:00 – 45:00 , DVD II)

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This particular riff is a great addition to any guitarists bag of tricks. There is a lot here. Study the note intervals. Study the gaps between the strings. And if in doubt, remember Virtuwl's advice: "pick a high one and a low one". Pick the low one with the pick and the high one with your fingers.

Example 25 actually starts at 46:00, the on screen notation comes in way too early on the video, my apology for that. It involves Dm and C by plucking and pull off.



It's just Dminor to C. Try to write your own plucking variations.

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Example 26 (46:30, DVD II)

The image displays a guitar tablature for Example 26, consisting of 12 measures. The strings are labeled E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom. The tablature includes various fret numbers (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) and techniques such as Harmonic (H), Picking (Po), and Slurs (Sl). The measures are numbered 1 through 12. Measure 1 has a Harmonic Picking (H Po) technique. Measure 6 has a Picking (Po) technique. Measure 12 has a Harmonic Picking (H Po) technique. The tablature is presented in a clear, legible format with a yellow background for each measure.

This is a more complicated example. Once you have your basic skills, try learning this one note for note and then bang out your own variations.

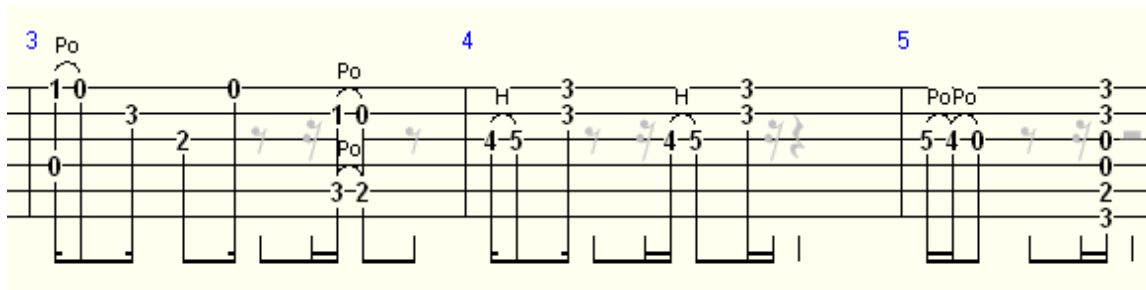
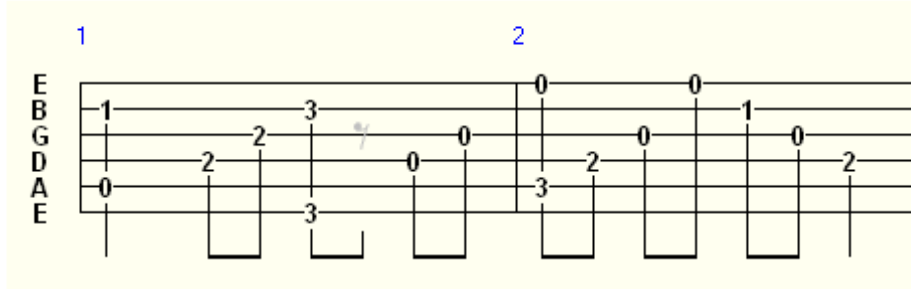
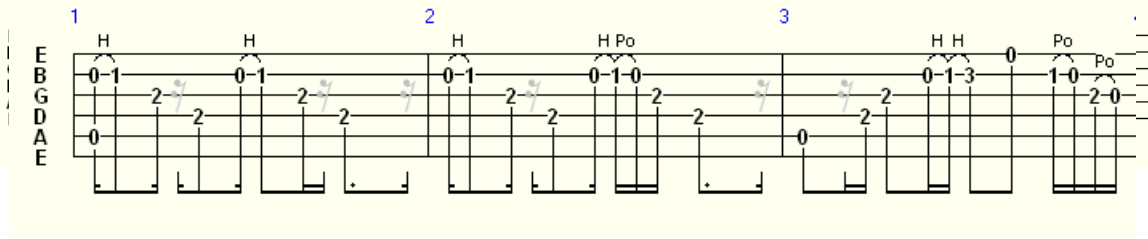
Acoustic Mastery Principle #22 **Make your arrangements come alive**

Pluck and pick in between the chords. This is the key to making this arrangement come alive.

Another example...

Example 27 (47:30, DVD II)

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Acoustic Mastery Principle #23

Make these examples your own

Any learning on the guitar is good, but it is ideal if you can take something learned and incorporate into your own style and what you're used to playing.

As an example of how to take these riffs and make them part of your style, I'm going to write a simple 4 bar vamp inspired by the above example. I'll choose

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Am | Am/G | F#m7b5 | D E

Then, I'll start off the with maybe the same picking pattern for the first few notes, but then do something different, such as plucking the high E and G string followed by the B string.

Notice how each bar follows the main theme of the first bar. Also notice i often throw in the bass note on the first and third beat of each bar. Pay attention to the bass notes!

I'll follow the theme, but do something unique in each bar with special attention being paid to the overall flow. Often the picking itself will influence the chord progression and may prompt you to use a different chord when you are writing a song. At the end , the turnaround (D E), i did something different again, and made sure it sounded good leading back to bar 1:

Example 28:

Use these chordal templates as a base for plucking your own right hand combinations:

Example 29: (48:00, DVD II)

Try creating your own picking pattern

Try slides, pull offs and hammer ons...

Example 30:

Try plucking and picking between chord (slide to the next chord...)

Do some pull-off and hammer ons on the b string

Acoustic Mastery Principle #22 Use Your Hands

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A pick doesn't always give you the best sound in every situation. Sometimes it is better to strum with the fingers. One technique is to use your nails in a downward strum, almost as if you are “flicking” the strings with your nails.

You can also strum with the front of your thumb. In addition, you can pretend you are gripping a pick and play that way.

Here's another tip – you can vary the timbre of the notes based on where you pick. Virtuwal demonstrates this as well.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #22

Learn to Play a Variety of Chord Progressions

You'll want to learn the progressions here, and also all the progressions in the bonuses. This should give you a good start. The more songs you play, the more you'll see what chords work together and how.

The next few examples are examples of chord progressions. Here, we are actually paying attention to the notes, instead of just technique. However, each progression can be used as a platform to practice all the techniques.

Example 31 (51:45, DVD II)

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A famous Metallica Song uses this progression:

1

Eminor

Dmaj

CMaj

2

3

E
B
G
D
A
E

3 2 0

Repeat part 3 times

2

Dmaj

CMaj

3

GMaj

Bminor

4

Eminor7

E
B
G
D
A
E

3 2 0

Repeat part 3 times

5

Eminor Barre

Dmaj Barre

6

CMaj Barre

GMaj Barre

Bminor Barre

Eminor Barre

7

7

7

7

7

7

7

Try the same chords with different positions

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Example 32 (52:15, DVD II)

This progression is found in Patience.

1

CMaj GMaj A major Dmaj

1 2

E B G D A E

Do some hammer ons and pull offs on the b-string

Do some hammer ons and pull offs on the E-string when playing the D-chord

Practice each progression several ways – plucking, picking, and strumming. Don't forget to include hammer-ons and pull-offs. Watch what Virtuwl is doing and keep in mind, these examples are more challenging because you aren't being given a note for note tab – it's up to you to master the techniques, then the notes come automatically.

Example 33 (53:50, DVD II)

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1 2

E
B
G
D
A
E

Repeat these 4 chords 4 times...

3 4

This is the chorus... Change the strum a bit...

G
D
A
E

Just another progression. You can do a lot with just minor and major chords.

Example 34:

Example 35: (56:00, DVD II)

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5 6

E
 B
 G
 D
 A
 E

3 4

Example 36 & 37 (56:00 – 57:00, DVD II)

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The image displays two guitar tablature examples. The first example, labeled '1' and '2', shows a sequence of notes on the E, B, G, D, and A strings. The fret numbers are 1, 2, 3, 0, 1, 0, 2, 0, 1, 0, 2. The second example, labeled '1', '2', and '3', is more complex, including techniques like hammer-ons (H), pull-offs (Po), and triplets (3) across the same strings.

More great picking patterns and ideas from Virtuwal...
 The possibilities are endless.

Example 38 (57:45, DVD II)

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Example 40: (1:00:00, DVD II)

Listen to Virtuul play this and you should recognize the melody as used in a popular song! Virtuul shows a few different things you can do on this one.

The image displays guitar tablature for Example 40. At the top, three chord diagrams are shown: B minor (x21232), A Major (x02220), and E Major (022100). Below these, a picking pattern diagram is presented on a six-string staff. The strings are labeled E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom. The diagram includes various techniques: 'H' for hammer-ons, 'Po' for pull-offs, and 'P' for plucking. Fingering numbers (1-4) are placed above the notes. The pattern is divided into two sections, labeled '1' and '2'. Section 1 covers the first two measures, and section 2 covers the next two measures. The text 'Practice Your Picking Patterns and Plucking' is centered at the bottom of the diagram.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #26 Keep working the techniques

Keep playing various progressions and spice them up using the techniques taught, such as picking patterns, strumming, etc. Here's another cool progression to try:

Example 41: (1:01:30, DVD II)

E B C#m7 G#m A

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E B C#m7 A

Diagram 1: E Maj Barre (7 fret), B Maj Barre H (7 fret), C# Min 7 (4 fret), G# Minor (4 fret), AMaj Barre (5 fret).
Diagram 2: Fretboard showing the first two measures of the progression. The strings are labeled E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom. Measure 1 contains E Maj Barre and B Maj Barre H. Measure 2 contains C# Min 7 and G# Minor.

Diagram 3: E Maj Barre (7 fret), B Maj Barre H (7 fret), C# Min 7 (4 fret), AMaj Barre (5 fret), E Maj7 (7 fret).
Diagram 4: Fretboard showing the last two measures of the progression. Measure 3 contains C# Min 7 and AMaj Barre. Measure 4 contains E Maj7.

This chord progression was used by the Red Hot Chilis in one of their hit songs. Throw in those triplet hammer-on, pulloffs. Jam it up!

Example 42 (1:02:00 – 1:03:00)

This is one of Virtuul's songs called "Become the Stars",

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and it has some really sweet picking.

1 2

E B G D A E

H Po Po

0-5-0 5-0 5-0 0

7 6 7 6 7 7 7 7 6 0

Repeat First 2 Bars Twice

Detailed description: This block shows the first two measures of a guitar piece. The guitar is in standard tuning (E2, B2, G2, D2, A2, E3). Measure 1 starts with a downstroke on the open E string (0), followed by a pick-up stroke on the 7th fret of the A string, then a downstroke on the 6th fret of the D string, a pick-up stroke on the 7th fret of the G string, a downstroke on the 5th fret of the B string, and a pick-up stroke on the 0th fret of the high E string. Measure 2 starts with a pick-up stroke on the 5th fret of the B string, followed by a downstroke on the 0th fret of the high E string, a pick-up stroke on the 5th fret of the B string, a downstroke on the 0th fret of the high E string, and a pick-up stroke on the 0th fret of the high E string. The text 'Repeat First 2 Bars Twice' is written below the second measure.

3 4

H

4-5 4 5 6 6 4 4 4

4 6 6 6 4 6 6 6 4 4 4

Detailed description: This block shows measures 3 and 4. Measure 3 starts with a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, followed by a pick-up stroke on the 6th fret of the D string, a downstroke on the 6th fret of the D string, a pick-up stroke on the 6th fret of the D string, a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a pick-up stroke on the 5th fret of the B string, a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, and a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string. Measure 4 starts with a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, followed by a pick-up stroke on the 6th fret of the D string, a downstroke on the 6th fret of the D string, a pick-up stroke on the 6th fret of the D string, a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, and a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string.

5 6

E B G D A E

H

4/2 0-2 2 4 3 4 4

0-2 2 4 2-4 2-4 2-0

Detailed description: This block shows measures 5 and 6. Measure 5 starts with a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, followed by a pick-up stroke on the 0th fret of the high E string, a downstroke on the 2nd fret of the D string, a pick-up stroke on the 2nd fret of the D string, a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a pick-up stroke on the 3rd fret of the G string, a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, and a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string. Measure 6 starts with a downstroke on the 0th fret of the high E string, followed by a pick-up stroke on the 2nd fret of the D string, a downstroke on the 2nd fret of the D string, a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a downstroke on the 2nd fret of the D string, a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a downstroke on the 2nd fret of the D string, a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string, and a downstroke on the 0th fret of the high E string.

8 9

0 0 1 2 1 2 2 4 4 6 6 4 4 4 6 4/2 0-2-2 4 3 4 4 2- 2- 3- 4- 4- 4-

Detailed description: This block shows measures 8 and 9. Measure 8 starts with a downstroke on the 0th fret of the high E string, followed by a pick-up stroke on the 1st fret of the D string, a downstroke on the 2nd fret of the D string, a pick-up stroke on the 1st fret of the D string, a downstroke on the 2nd fret of the D string, a pick-up stroke on the 2nd fret of the D string, a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a downstroke on the 6th fret of the D string, a pick-up stroke on the 6th fret of the D string, a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, and a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string. Measure 9 starts with a downstroke on the 0th fret of the high E string, followed by a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a pick-up stroke on the 6th fret of the D string, a downstroke on the 6th fret of the D string, a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a downstroke on the 0th fret of the high E string, a pick-up stroke on the 2nd fret of the D string, a downstroke on the 2nd fret of the D string, a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a downstroke on the 3rd fret of the G string, a pick-up stroke on the 4th fret of the A string, a downstroke on the 4th fret of the A string, and a pick-up stroke on the 2nd fret of the D string.

Notice the use of using a hammeron-pull off in place of a normal note that would be in the picking pattern. The note is pulled off, conveniently, to the open string. Experiment with this idea.

There are permutations of this idea, which VirtuWul talks us through, and it really makes you realize a lot of possibilities

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for cool melodic devices.

Example 43 (1:05:00, DVD II)

Another part of a Virtuul song, this one is called “The Way”

The image displays a guitar tablature for a piece titled "The Way". It is divided into four measures, each with a corresponding chord diagram above it. The strings are labeled E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom. Measure 1 is labeled "1" and features an A minor chord diagram (x02023). The fretting includes a hammer-on (H) on the B string from fret 0 to 1, and a slide on the D string from fret 2 to 3. Measure 2 is labeled "2" and features a G/A minor 7 chord diagram (00203x). The fretting includes a slide on the B string from fret 1 to 0 and a slide on the D string from fret 2 to 3. Measure 3 is labeled "3" and features an F# minor/G chord diagram (00023x). The fretting includes a slide on the B string from fret 3 to 5 and a pull-off (Po) on the B string from fret 5 to 3. Measure 4 is labeled "4" and features an E minor chord diagram (00023). The fretting includes a slide on the B string from fret 0 to 2 and a slide on the D string from fret 2 to 3.

Watch for the slide-pulloffs and pay attention to the picking patterns, as always.

Virtuul plays a good part of this song, including the chorus which you saw earlier... Watch how he switches between strumming, plucking, and picking; you can achieve this level of playing if you study the material and practice consistently.

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Example 44 (1:07:00, DVD II)

This is a fast strumming pattern, listen to the DVD and then play this riff:

Chord diagrams for measures 1-4:

- 1: C9 (x x 0 0 3 3)
- 2: Eminor (0 2 2 3 3 3)
- 3: GMaj (0 2 3 3 3 3) and F#i/G (x 0 0 0 0 0)
- 4: Eminor (0 2 2 3 3 3), CMaj (x 0 0 2 3 3), B/Emin 7 (x 0 0 0 x), and Aminor (x 0 2 2 3 3)

Staff notation for measures 1-4 (E B G D A E):

Measure 1: C9 chord (x x 0 0 3 3)

Measure 2: Eminor chord (0 2 2 3 3 3)

Measure 3: GMaj chord (0 2 3 3 3 3) and F#i/G chord (x 0 0 0 0 0)

Measure 4: Eminor chord (0 2 2 3 3 3), CMaj chord (x 0 0 2 3 3), B/Emin 7 chord (x 0 0 0 x), and Aminor chord (x 0 2 2 3 3)

Chord diagrams for measures 7-8:

- 7: C9 (x x 0 0 3 3) and GMaj (0 2 3 3 3 3)
- 8: C9 (x x 0 0 3 3) and Eminor (0 2 2 3 3 3)

Staff notation for measures 7-8 (E B G D A E):

Measure 7: C9 chord (x x 0 0 3 3) and GMaj chord (0 2 3 3 3 3). Fingering: H (4-5), 3, Po (5-0-0-4-0).

Measure 8: C9 chord (x x 0 0 3 3) and Eminor chord (0 2 2 3 3 3). Fingering: H (0-0-2), 0-0-2.

Chord diagrams for measures 9-10:

- 9: C9 (x x 0 0 3 3) and GMaj (0 2 3 3 3 3)
- 10: C9 (x x 0 0 3 3) and Dmaj (x x 0 2 3 3)

Staff notation for measures 9-10 (E B G D A E):

Measure 9: C9 chord (x x 0 0 3 3) and GMaj chord (0 2 3 3 3 3). Fingering: H (4-5), 3, Po (5-0-0-4-0).

Measure 10: C9 chord (x x 0 0 3 3) and Dmaj chord (x x 0 2 3 3). Fingering: H (4-5), 3, Po (5-0-0-4-0).

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13 14

E
B
G
D
A
E

15 16 17

Repeat 3 times

This is a long example with some juicy parts and you should follow along with VirtuWul's explanation of the nuances.

The C9 that starts this riff is one of my favorite chords. It has many uses in blues, jazz, rock, and funk.

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DVD III

Acoustic Mastery Principle #27 **Explore Alternate Tunings**

Alternate Tunings are a sort of a “secret world” where you can open up a lot of new sounds fairly easily. Some sounds are impossible to get in standard tuning. So open your mind to the possibility of playing in a different tuning.

Here is the first tuning we'll play around with:

Example 45: (4:15, DVD III)

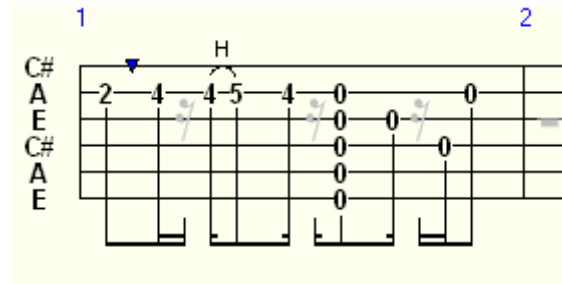
Open A Major:

C#
A
E
C#

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A
E

Example 46: (4:30, DVD III)



This is a simple lick in demonstrating this tuning.

How to play in alternate tunings:

1. Find where there the fretboard is the same (or almost the same) as standard tuning. In the open “A” tuning notice that the low E and low A are the same, so for example, a root-fifth two-note powerchord works the same here. This is just one example; in other tunings look for patterns which could be on different strings, or even different notes with the same intervals.
2. Learn where your octaves are.

In the A major tuning, you have each string repeating twice...So in this case, just memorize the one position, which is two notes on the same fret, four strings apart.

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Try moving a chordal octave shape around and strumming the other strings open. This works well in most open tunings.

Example 47, (6:30, DVD III)

Musical notation for Example 47. It shows two staves, C# and A, with notes 12, 10, 8, 7, 5, 7, 8. Slurs labeled 'Sl' indicate sliding between notes. The E string is open (0). The notation is repeated for a second staff with the same notes and slurs.

3. Practice picking patterns on the open tunings

Take any picking pattern and apply to moving a chordal shape around with the open strings.

Here is one pattern Virtuwl shows here: 4,3,2,3,2

Now try your own picking patterns with this tuning on

Example 48 (at 9:15 – 10:00, DVD III)

Musical notation for Example 48, divided into four measures labeled 1, 2, 3, and 4. The notation shows notes on the C# and A strings (12, 14, 11, 9) and the E string (0). Slurs and arrows indicate sliding and picking patterns. The text 'Try your own picking pattern' is written below the notation.

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As you can see, this tuning is easy and fun. Let's try another tuning. (10:00, DVD III)

Open D major tuning:

D
A
F#
D
A
D

alternatively, you can use this tuning:

D
A
A
D
A
D

(which is all Ds and As!)

This tuning can be used in a similar fashion when it comes to octaves.

Example 49: (11:30, DVD III)

This example makes good use of sliding octaves.

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Example 50: (12:11, DVD III)

This example makes use of a picking pattern:

Essentially, nail down a simple picking pattern and move a note around on one of the strings. You can apply these open tuning principles to standard tuning at certain times, also, such as when you have an open string.

Example 51: (13:40, DVD III)

This example is “Rocking out with riffs” on open tunings... You can use hammer-ons and pull-offs here...

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Let's look at one more tuning...
 14:40 – Alternate Tuning #3

Open Csus2 tuning:

D
 C
 G
 C
 G
 C

Play around with this tuning, then go for

Example 52: (15:45, DVD III)

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In these examples, we use the “drone” approach again, this time playing a melody on the highest string. Oops, I almost said “high E”. In this case, high D.

Example 55: (20:00, DVD III)

Here is an important concept when building a picking pattern: Hit the root, and typically, hit the root first!
 Also Virtuwl talks about the concept of moving the entire picking pattern up one string... For example,

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6,4,5,2,3,4,5 on some E-string rooted chord, (E, G, etc)

then

5,3,4,1,2,3,4 on some A-string rooted chord (A, C, etc)

Also 6,4,5,2,3,4,3 to 5,3,4,1,2,3,2

Choose a chord progression, go slow, and focus on mastering certain picking patterns. Mastering this doesn't require superhuman chops, just a little consistent practice.

Example 56: (23:00, DVD III)

1 2 3 4

E B G D A E

10 0 10 0 10 0 10 0 12 10 10 9 9 0 9 0 9 0 0 0 7 0 0 0

5 6 7 8

E B G D A E

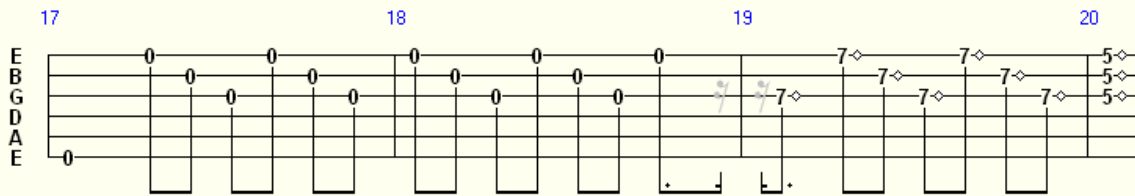
0 0 0 0 7 0 7 0 7 0 5 7 5 4 4 4 3 5 3 0 3 2 0 2 1 0 2 1 2

9 10 11 12

E B G D A E

0 0 0 0 7 0 7 0 7 0 5 7 5 4 4 4 3 5 3 0 3 2 0 2 1 0 0 0 0 0 2 1 2

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This is from Virtuul's songs, and this is a perfect example of taking an open-tuning concept and applying it to standard tuning. The G and B strings are played open while the melody slides around on the D string. Of course, there is a lot of other things going on here too. Throwing in open strings into a normal picking pattern is another technique.

Another thing that makes this example somewhat unique is the large melodic range – we are playing melody notes as high as high B, but also dipping down low, but it all sounds smooth. Get this example under your belt and try these concepts on other progressions.

Those funny symbols at the end of bars 8 and 12 are just $\frac{1}{2}$ tone bends, give a slight tug on the string.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #28 **Make Your Guitar Sing**

This is just a metaphor. Of course, your guitar doesn't actually sing, but when you play notes that sound sweet, it is as if the guitar is singing. The #1 trick to making your guitar “sing” is to emphasize melody notes while you are playing chords. In other words, to play melodies and also strum or

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pick at the same time.

“Always look for the melody note and move it around.”

Virtuwul also demonstrates how to emphasize a melody **within** a picking pattern:

Example 58: (29:35, DVD III)

The image shows a guitar tablature for three measures of music. The strings are labeled E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom. Measure 1 starts with a 0 on the E string, followed by a 2 on the A string, then a 2 on the D string, and a 1 on the G string. Measure 2 starts with a 2 on the A string, followed by a 2 on the D string, and a 2 on the G string. Measure 3 starts with a 2 on the A string, followed by a 3 on the G string, a 4 on the D string, and a 2 on the A string. The tablature includes a pick stroke symbol at the beginning of each measure and a bar line at the end of each measure.

Passing chords are a great technique, and here's another chord progression to try that contains this idea:

Example 58b (31:10, DVD III)

Another great progression:

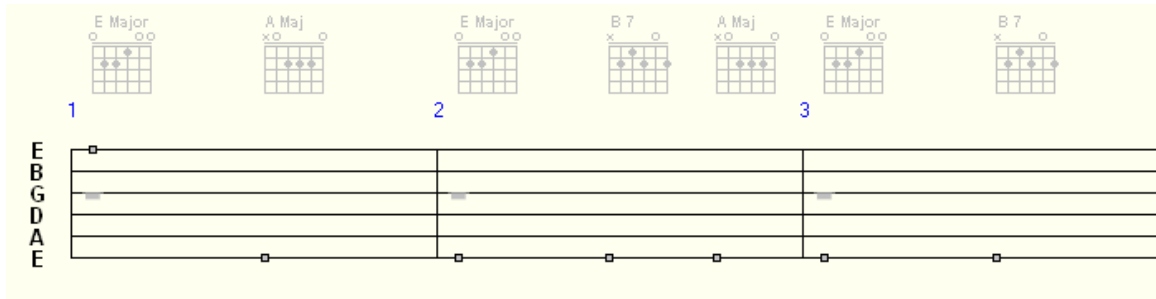
Example 59, (32:15, DVD III)

Acoustic Mastery Principle #29 Country Strumming

Not everyone likes country, but the more strumming rhythms you know, the better. The easiest way to learn this part is just to listen to the DVD.

Example 60: (24:00 – 26:00, DVD III)

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Acoustic Mastery Principle #29

Create 2-Guitar Arrangements

When you're playing with another guitarist, it's important not to trip over each other.

In most cases, you should avoid playing the exact same part as the other guitarist. An exception would be when you want to have "doubled" guitars, which would be a very thick sound, perhaps to emphasize a prechorus or something. And, it would normally be just chords, not single notes. Although, double-tracking leads in the studio is a favored trick of many pros.

For live playing, you'll want to play a different part.
Examples:

Guitar 1 Plucks, Guitar 2, Picks

Guitar 1 Plucks, Guitar 2 Strums

Guitar 1 Plucks, Guitar 2 Strums and Picks

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You can also have one guitar play a melody while another guitar strums. See (42:00, DVD III). Notice the melody is jiving with the chords , both in terms of being in the right key, and also emphasizing the downbeats along with the rhythm guitar.

Another arrangement idea is to play 2 notes together (double stops) in a melody setting, instead of single notes. The other guitar strums. When you're choosing double stops, try to harmonize with the scale, such as by playing the third of the chord, along with the root. Try to choose notes from either the chord or underlying scale.

You can also have one guitar strum, and the other pick.

You can also play variations of the same chords, for example with a higher voicing. This is an important technique. But don't overdo it. Don't play a different voicing unless it sounds good!

A simple technique is just to strum each chord once or twice while another guitar plays a more active strumming pattern.

You can also throw in reverse sweep strums.

Also, it goes without saying,

- 1) BE IN TUNE , and
- 2)GET THE TEMPO RIGHT....
- 3) DEFINE THE ROLES (don't both try to play lead guitar!)

Acoustic Mastery Principle #29

Play Bach on the Guitar

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At 48:00, DVD III, I play a minuet from J.S. Bach. His music is some of the most beautiful ever written. I prefer to play classical with a fingerplucking technique rather than fingerpicking. Either way, there is some technical stuff that will challenge your chops and is great music to be able to play.

Acoustic Mastery Principle #30 Jam As Often As Possible

Virtuwul and I jam a few songs at the end of the video. Here is another one of Virtuwul's songs, called "A note to You"

Example 61:

The image displays guitar chord diagrams and a corresponding tablature for the song "A note to You".

Chord Diagrams:

- 1. F# min barre H (9 fret)
- 2. E Maj Barre (7 fret)
- 3. F# min barre H (9 fret)
- 4. DMaj barre (5 fret)
- 5. AMaj Barre (5 fret)
- 6. F# Minor (2 fret)
- 7. E Major (0 fret)
- 8. F# Minor (2 fret)
- 9. DMaj barre (5 fret)
- 10. AMaj Barre (5 fret)
- 11. E Major (0 fret)
- 12. E Major (0 fret)
- 13. Bminor (x fret)
- 14. A Maj (x fret)
- 15. D Maj7 (5 fret)
- 16. AMaj Barre (5 fret)
- 17. E Major (0 fret)

Tablature:

The tablature is written on a six-line staff representing the guitar strings (E, B, G, D, A, E from top to bottom). It is divided into two sections: "Pre-Chorus" and "Chorus".

- Pre-Chorus:** Shows the first four measures of the piece, corresponding to chord diagrams 1 through 4.
- Chorus:** Shows the next four measures, corresponding to chord diagrams 5 through 8. The final measure includes a hammer-on (H) and pull-off (Po) technique: `7 1-2 0 2-1 2`.

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13 14 15 16 17

E B G D A E

Chorus Verse

Example 62:

Here's another bonus song called "Our Time"

1 2 3 4

E B G D A E

Verses Chorus

5 6 7 8

E B G D A E

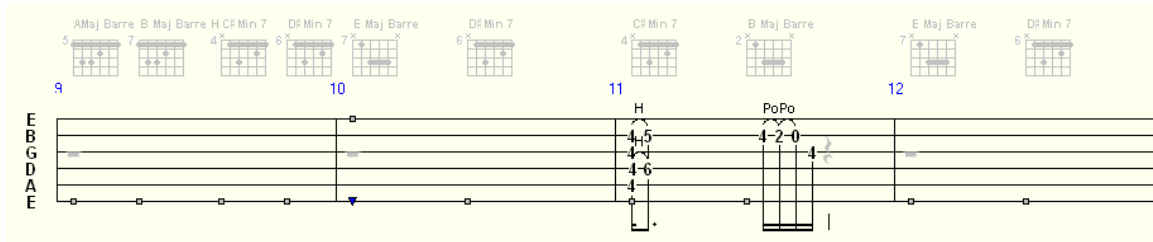
After 1st Chorus After 1st Chorus

13 14 15 16

E B G D A E

Do a picking pattern

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Conclusion:

I hope you have enjoyed this course. Practice the techniques and your playing will make great improvements in a small amount of time. The most important things to master are the strumming and the picking patterns. Good luck! And let me know how you make out. You can email either myself or VirtuWul anytime with your guitar questions.

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