

# PLAYING A 4 STRING CIGAR BOX GUITAR



*For fretted 4 string guitars tuned GDGB*

Flatpicking and Fretting

# LESSON 1 FRETTING'

## *Getting a note*

Left hand position

Fretting a note

## Before You Start

This is the first Fretting lesson so there are no skill prerequisites. Just make sure that you've watched the video through once and that your guitar is in tune G D G B.

## When You've Finished

At the end of this lesson you'll be able to position your left hand at the guitar and fret a note cleanly enough so that you can play the song for this lesson, Willie Dixon's Spoonful. Here's a checklist so that you know when you're ready to move on.

1. Again your arm and hand will be relaxed as you play a note.
2. You'll have learned a comfortable position for your arm and hand.
3. You'll have learned how to place your finger with just enough pressure that the note sounds clean and clear and your hand stays relaxed.
4. You'll have positioned your hand to allow for more advanced techniques later on.

## Hand position

Your left hand also hangs off the end of your arm and likewise the position of your shoulder is crucial in getting your wrist into a neutral position down the line.

1. Your shoulder can relax so that your upper arm simply hangs vertically. Your elbow then bends just enough to position your hand at the guitar and your wrist is straight.
2. Away from the guitar make the shape demonstrated in the video, the one with the ripe peach in it.
3. Take that position to your guitar so that the thumb points straight up behind the neck and the fingers straight up in front.

## Fretting a note

This too is best learned by watching the video. The main points:

1. Keep the movements to a minimum. You only need your first finger for this, keep the rest of your hand still.
2. Keep your wrist straight.
3. Have the finger come down on to the string as close to perpendicular as possible without bending your wrist.
4. Use as little pressure as is needed in order to hear the note cleanly.
5. Co-ordinate your right and left hands by playing in time at a slow tempo.