

# PLAYING A 4 STRING CIGAR BOX GUITAR



*For fretted 4 string guitars tuned GDGB*

Flatpicking and Fretting

# LESSON 2 PICKIN'

*What goes down must come up*

The upstroke

The upbeat

In time

## Before You Start

Make sure before you start this lesson that you can pick in time along with your foot tapping in time. You pick down onto the string every time your foot hits the floor. You should be able to play Spoonful from the previous lesson.

## When You've Finished

At the end of this lesson you'll be able to use the pick to pick down on the downbeat and back up on the upbeat and know the difference between the two..

1. Again your arm and hand should be relaxed. This is a given now so I won't keep bugging you about it.
2. You'll be picking down and up on the beat.
3. You'll be picking down on the downbeat and up on the upbeat.
4. You'll be learned to use the timing exercise audio file to improve your timing.

## The Upstroke

To play an upstroke you simply strike the string in an upward direction with the opposite movement you used for a downstroke.

1. Again there'll be a combination of movements through the wrist and fingers.
2. Keep it efficient by not making any movements that you don't have to.

## The timing exercise

The timing exercise is an important part of this early section of the course. As I've said developing your ability to play in time while learning these movements will make a big difference down the track. The timing exercise is an audio file which:

1. Contains a drum track at a medium tempo with a straight feel. The bass drum and snare are on the downbeat and hi-hat cymbals play on and off the beat, 8 to the bar.
2. There's also a bass drum on an upbeat just before beat 3. See if you can find it although it's not necessary just now.
3. Play along with the first 4 bars of the drum track.
4. After 4 bars there'll be a one bar gap, continue to play in time through the gap so that you come back in with the drums right in time.
5. Continue to play through the next 4 bars and likewise the second gap of just one bar, again listen to see if you can come back in with the drum track.
6. Continue to play through the next 4 bars and then a gap of 2 bars.
7. And finally another 4 bars of drums with a 2 bar gap.

## Exercise #1

Practice your upstrokes with the timing exercise by playing down and up on the beat.

1. Watch the video to see how I do it.
2. Listen to the timing exercise audio file and tap your foot along with it. Listen for the bass drum and snare, they are on the downbeats so your foot should be tapping down with each one.
3. For this first exercise simply pick a note on every downbeat, firstly with a downstroke and then with an upstroke. Continue to alternate between the two as I do in the video.
4. Focus and listen closely to see how close you can get to coming back in with the drums.

## Exercise # 2

Only once you're comfortable with the first exercise should you move on to this one. You'll be doing the same thing but twice as fast.

1. Again make sure that you've watched the video, listened to the audio file and can tap your foot along with it. This time pay special attention to the hi hat cymbals that play both on and off the beat. 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 &.....
2. Run through the exercise as I do in the video playing a downstroke when your foot hits the floor and an upstroke in between.
3. If you're struggling with this try just playing downstrokes on the downbeat and then go back to number 2.
4. Can you hear that you're playing along with the cymbals?

Don't expect to get these perfect every time, instead monitor your improvement over time. They'll always be useful so don't let it hold you back for now if you're not getting it. It'll come.