

Lesson 1

Time

The most important skill you can have as a musician is the ability to play in time. If you are in time you will sound musical, no matter how simple your playing is, if you're not you'll sound like a mess, guaranteed. The effort you make now to train yourself to play in time will pay enormous dividends down the track.

PERFORMANCE TASK 1.1

- ▶ *The first task, as illustrated in the video in lesson 1, demonstrates how to pick with your thumb. Take note particularly of your hand position and of keeping your whole hand and arm relaxed as you practice bringing your thumb down on to the string.*
- ▶ *Play along with the timing exercise backing track as demonstrated in the video to help with your internal sense of time and to get your thumb working in time as well*

SELF ASSESSMENT

If you can play the bass notes with your thumb comfortably then you can move on. Don't go to fast though, give yourself at least a few days. The timing exercises will get easier over time, there's no need to stall this early getting those perfect.

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Playing Clean

Recap your [introductory lesson](#) by making sure that you can play each note cleanly.

- *To play a note rest the slide gently on the string and pick it with your pickin hand. Experiment to find the least amount of pressure on the string that you need to get a clean sound with no buzzing.*
- *This note has a particular pitch. Now move the slide to one of the dots on your guitar neck, and then to another. These notes are of a different pitch, you're now learning how to recognise and name them, the next step will be learning how to play them from tab.*

Lesson 1

Intonation

While your picking hand controls when you play the note and needs to be in perfect time. Your other hand, we'll call it the slidin' hand, controls which note you play and it needs to be in perfect pitch. Playing slide on your cigar box guitar can sound angelic but it can also sound like an out of tune band saw. The difference will be how disciplined you are with your pitch.

Don't make excuses for having a slide on your finger!

PERFORMANCE TASK 1.2

- ▶ *The second video from lesson 1 demonstrates how to use the slide to play a note.*
- ▶ *Listen to the sound of the bass and the top string, it is the note that names the key you're in and the one that all the other notes refer to, we call it the tonic, or just the 1 (one).*
- ▶ *Place the slide gently on the string just behind the note you want to play, pick a dot, and slide up to the right position, listening carefully when you hit it.*
- ▶ *The note, any of the 12, will sound OK relative to the tonic if you play it in exactly the right position.*
- ▶ *Repeat this exercise for other notes.*

SELF ASSESSMENT

If you can accurately pitch a note with your slide then you are ready to move on. Feel free to rely on your ear for this, it will be good training, you can also use a tuner to check.