

Contemporary Guitar Grade 1 - Technical Exercise 1

As part of your Grade 1 exam on the Contemporary Guitar syllabus, you will be required to play through a number of technical exercises.

In this lesson, and accompanying video, we will be looking at Technical Exercise 1.

This exercise can be played on an electric or an acoustic guitar using your fingers or a plectrum.

The tempo of this exercise is 40bpm, you can also play this with, or without a metronome to guide you.

As this is quite a long exercise, it is useful to break it up into shorter segments. Once you've learnt each segment, you can then put it together as a full piece.

The first segment of the exercise is shown in the image. It consists of three bars. The first bar is a G major chord, indicated by the text 'G major' above the staff. The second and third bars contain ascending eighth notes in the G major scale. The notes are G (open), A (open), B (open), C (2), D (3), E (open), F# (2), G (open). The fret numbers are written below the notes: 3, 0, 0, 0, 2, 1, 0, 3, 1, 0, 3, 2, 0, 3, 2, 3, 3.

The first bar is a G major chord strummed with a single downward motion.

Bars 2 and 3 are single notes ascending through the G major scale in non-linear note groupings. This is using the G Major scale. Take care when putting this phrase together because you'll sometimes be playing notes on adjacent strings.

The rhythm for all of these notes are eighth notes, this means you'll be playing 2 notes per beat, with the exception of the final note in the phrase which is held for an entire beat.

The second segment of the exercise is shown in the image. It consists of three bars. The first two bars contain descending eighth notes in the G major scale. The notes are G (open), F# (2), E (open), D (3), C (2), B (open), A (open), G (open). The fret numbers are written below the notes: 2, 3, 0, 1, 3, 0, 1, 2, 0, 0, 3, 3, 0. The third bar is a strummed E minor chord, indicated by the text 'E minor' above the staff. The notes are E (open), G (open), B (open).

Over the next 3 bars you'll be descending down the same scale shape. Once again you'll be using eighth notes except for the final single note which is a half beat that is held for a full 2 beats of the bar. This segment ends with a strummed E minor chord held for a full bar.

The E Minor chord signifies a change of key here to the key of E Minor (Although this shares the same notes as the key of G Major). You're now going to ascend through the E Minor scale across 2 bars, using eighth notes, once again ending up with a quarter note beat on the final note.

The exercise concludes by descending through the E Minor scale back to the root on the 2nd fret of the D string which is held for half a bar.

Once you've played through all the sections in this way, you can then try to piece the whole thing together as one continuous piece of music. This is how you'll be expected to perform this for your graded examination.

About the Author

Leigh is an experienced guitar teacher and professional guitarist, helping students of all learning abilities to progress their guitar playing. He is part of a guitar teaching team at [MusicTeacher.com](https://www.musicteacher.com) who are able offer [guitar lessons](https://www.musicteacher.com/guitar-lessons) to students across the world. To find your perfect guitar teacher to help with your Music Teachers Board graded exam, search our international music teacher database at MusicTeacher.com.