



## *Level 1 Week 3 Assignment*

Your fingers should be feeling the strain and, at about the 5th or 6th week, the callouses should be developing and most of the pain will be over until third term when most of you will start learning to play bar chords. You will probably start thinking you're just not going to get this. "The metronome is too hard to play along with." "My fingers won't get to the chords fast enough and it all seems better when I shut off the metronome." "My hand gets tired and my strum is kind of jagged." GOOD!!!

This is all normal, and it is the beginning of your development so, **STICK WITH IT**. I will be glad to give you some pointers on improving.

First I will tell a short story about diligence in practice routines. The first student who helped me start to compile this method book was David Gill. A second generation graphic artist working for his father's publishing and book creating business in Portland Oregon. I had published the book earlier, 1977 with lots of "shop manual" style hand drawn, hand written stuff (some of which is still in the current version). So, Dave agreed to help and I would take him on as a student. He was about 24 years old and was a

fine graphics man as well as a third degree black belt in the Korean martial art of Karate' (extremely disciplined). He followed my instructions to the max, practicing just his scales and the movement up and down the neck through the Five Chord Forms. (The latter exercise is for 3rd term and beyond) He had played a little in high school. So this very beginner stage some of you are in right now he had past. BUT! He had not been playing recently. As a matter of fact he hadn't played in about three years.

In just three weeks with about an average of 2 hours daily he was able to meet the Third year criteria for scales (see Syllabus for Third Year Program Juries). Now I know he was an exception but I have had people who have gotten over the "Beginner's Hump" and really started making the guitar sound musical no later than the end of the first term, but it takes that PRACTICE COMMITMENT - So enough of the mini-lecture.

Your assignment... should you choose to accept it, will be the easiest of all the scale studies. Take on the "C" Form scale study this week. It is a one octave study so your count remains the same but, you will go up and down, octave to octave in four measures rather than eight, when playing 1/4 notes. Remember to stay with the metronome and gradually move it up in speed by 6 to 10 bpm every five reps or so.

As for your chord cadences; go to Chord Primer #2 and give yourself a new set of changes to play but don't stop practicing Chord Primer #1. You have an easy reference for all the chords in your Text so consult the text reference pages often in the case that the new chord symbols are familiar. Remember too, I am giving you all the same set of instructions. Each individual beginner "can be" at slightly different levels. As a matter of fact I often have beginners that already know the Five Major Chord Forms in open position and some of their, modified to the minor form alterations, but just haven't been able to make the changes smoothly yet. WE ALL NEED PRACTICE. It is truly the only way. So.... look at all of your exercises as aerobics for the left and right hands.

Tips:

1. Don't lean your fingers. Push straight down on the neck and keep them curved.
2. Don't squish them together or bunch them.
3. Keep them aligned with the FOUR FRETS, FOUR FINGERS RULE and use the tips not the pads to push down the strings.
4. This is the time when you must learn to move all your fingers together.

5. Think about the shape of each chord and how it feels in your hand.

6. Try NOT to put your fingers down one at a time instead try to move them smoothly all at once to their exact positions.

If you need further help watch the video segments. There is more to come, so stay on the practice trail. Always feel free to email me for more info. I am glad to help.