

David Cullen
Guitar Instructor
Website: WWW.CULLENGUITAR.COM
E-mail: dcullen@ptd.net
Order CDs www.acousticmusicresource.com

GUITAR AUDITION REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES FOR JAZZ OR CLASSICAL GUITAR

Jazz Guitar

Two (2) contrasting pieces from the standard Jazz repertoire. The guitarist should be able to play the melody in single note style. The guitarist should also demonstrate the ability to comp the chords to the jazz standard. The guitarist will be expected to improvise a melodic musical solo over the chord changes to the jazz standards.

Major and Minor Scales in OPEN Position with down and up picking
8th notes, Triplets and 16th notes. Quarter note equals 60.

Sight Reading

Suggested Study Guides: Berklee Series Book 1-2 (*Modern Method*)
 by William Leavitt/Berklee

 The Real Easy Book Volume 2 by Sher Music Co.

Classical Guitar

Two (2) contrasting pieces from the standard Classical Guitar repertoire. Works by Bach, Sor, Giuliani and Carcassi. Audition must be performed on Nylon String Classical Guitar.

Major and Minor scales in OPEN position with alternating index/middle rest stroke.
Quarter note equals 60.

Sight Reading

Suggested Study Guides Solo Guitar Playing Book 1 Frederick Noad
 Solo Guitar Playing Book 2 Frederick Noad

The Open Position

The open position is the usual starting place in most guitar method books. (Hopefully, by this time you understand why this present volume doesn't start with open position!) By the open position, we mean the six open strings and frets 1, 2, 3, and 4. The open position amounts to a small melodic instrument unto itself, with a range of two octaves plus a major 3rd (E, G#). Every note in the chromatic scale is present. Each note has only one location and one fingering with the exception of the B, which can either be played as an open string or on the 4th fret of the G string. Compared to the oval complexity of the entire guitar, the open position is a very simple (but none the less complete) melodic instrument.

In most method books the open position is used like training wheels on a bicycle: discarded as soon as possible. After you learn the C scale (and maybe a few other scales) you are usually encouraged to proceed to position playing, which is usually portrayed as much more important than the open position. You are also usually discouraged from using the open position as much as possible in favor of playing in one or another of the higher positions. Now to a certain extent, this approach makes sense and is fairly logical. However, I think in other ways it's not enough for someone who is *really* interested in learning as much about the guitar as possible. The open position is a fascinating area unto itself. It also happens to be a great preparation for the apparently awesome task of position playing. But this preparation aspect can only be appreciated if the open position is examined in great detail (which, as you may have gathered by now, is exactly what I'm proposing!) By great detail I mean:

Observations

The main difference between the open position and position playing (which follows, soon enough) is that in the open position, the open strings function for the notes that in position playing would require 1st and 4th finger stretches. (This may take a little time to understand.) From another angle: no finger stretches in open position.

The open strings tend to ring out when we don't want them to. This means that we need to develop techniques of stopping open strings. This is usually accomplished with a left hand-finger. Finger-style people also have options with using right-hand fingers to stop open strings from vibrating. (See exercises that follow.)

Interesting and very accessible possibilities of slurring (hammer-ons and pull-offs) exist in the open position. Check'em out!

In this approach to the open position there is one rule to be followed: same finger-same fret.

A note on the 1st fret *must* be played with the 1st finger.
A note on the 2nd fret *must* be played with the 2nd finger.
A note on the 3rd fret *must* be played with the 3rd finger.
A note on the 4th fret *must* be played with the 4th finger.

NO EXCEPTIONS !

Consequently, we will not explore counterpoint and harmony in the open position because the rule of same finger/same fret would make many voicings impossible. (Later on, of course, you could explore counterpoint and harmony in the open position. When you decide to do that, just use *any* fingers you have to for whatever the notes are.)

In this particular approach, the open position is our first truly "chromatic area of substantial melodic possibilities." All scales, all modes, all arpeggios are there. (Think about what that means!)

Twelve Major Scales

C, G, D, A, E, B, F#

F, B^b, E^b, A^b, D^b