

Finger Flexibility Exercises

Often people get frustrated because their hands can't make the big stretches that playing guitar sometimes requires. They mistakenly think that their hands are too small to play guitar well. I've found this is not true. The issue for most people is hand and finger flexibility, not size.

This lesson gives three incredible hand and finger flexibility exercises that can potentially change your facility on the guitar in a major way. I guarantee that a few weeks of doing these exercises faithfully will allow you to reach chords and stretches that you may have thought impossible.

Hammer-on Ascending Exercise

This exercise keeps one finger stationary while the others move and stretch. Start high up on the neck where the frets are closer then gradually work your way down the neck. The circled numbers indicate which finger to use.

**No Frets
In Between**

**1 Fret
In Between**

**2 Frets
In Between**

Pull-off Descending Exercise

This exercise uses pull-offs in a descending motion going down the neck. The last pair of notes uses a big stretch between the fourth and the first finger.

Playing Tip

Don't over do it! Stretching muscles takes time. Go as far as you can comfortably go. Over time you will be able to go farther down the neck.

Chord Shape Exercise

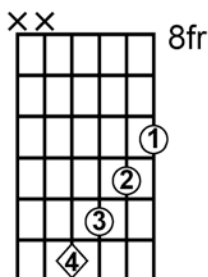
This last exercise works on stretching the hand while doing chord shapes. In this exercise your hand will move between five chord shapes that gradually move down the neck.

Each of these five shapes has only one finger change between them, so only one finger will be shifting between them at a time. It begins with an Ebmaj7 chord form.

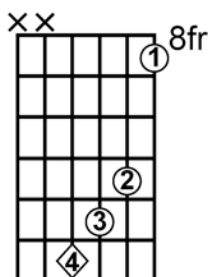
Playing Tip

When working on large hand stretches it helps to have the guitar neck angled up slightly to give your hand more space.

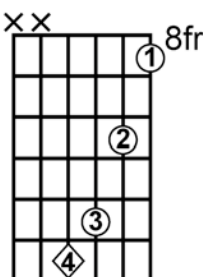
Shape 1



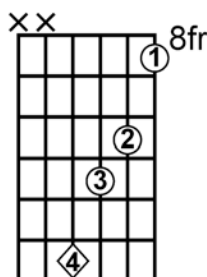
Shape 2



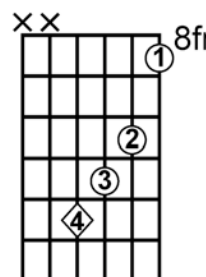
Shape 3



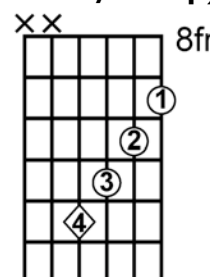
Shape 4



Shape 5



Shape 1
(down 1/2 step)



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Steve Krenz

As an educator, Steve is best known for the top-selling guitar instruction course, **Gibson's Learn & Master Guitar** that received the 2011 Acoustic Guitar Magazine Player's Choice Award for Best Instructional Material. As a professional guitarist in Nashville, Steve's broad playing experience includes playing guitar with a symphony orchestra, to jazz big bands, to performing with numerous Grammy-winning artists like Donna Summer, Michael W. Smith, Bryan White, The Fifth Dimension, Israel Houghton, and Tommy Sims.

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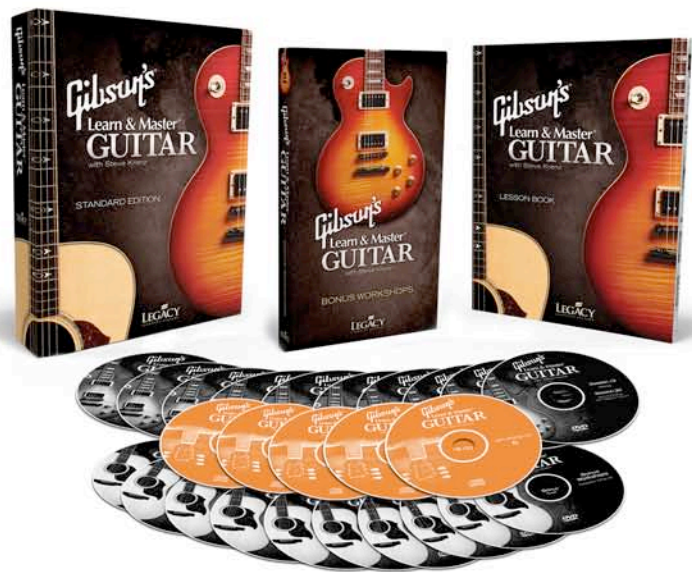
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