

# How to Play Guitar

Have you ever wished you could play the guitar? Maybe you received a guitar as a gift and have yet to pluck up the courage to pick it up. Never fear, our simple beginner's guide is here to help you get started with your very first power chord, so you can start rocking out in no time.



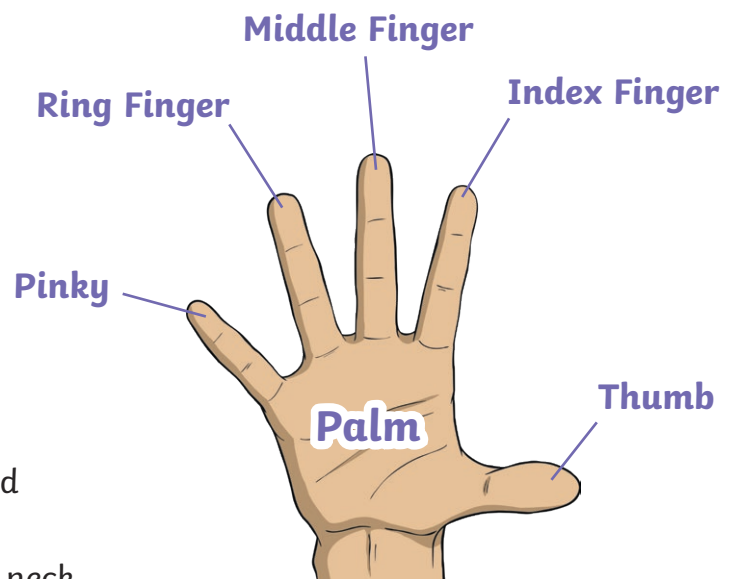
## What is a power chord?

A power chord (also known as a fifth chord) is a type of chord that is played commonly in rock music because of its crunchy, powerful sound. These chords are easy to play as they are only made up of three notes and the shape can be moved around the fretboard to play any chord you like. In this step by step guide, you will learn how to form the shape of a power chord by playing an F chord.

## How to Play a Power Chord.

1. Place the guitar in a comfortable position on your knee and grip the neck of the guitar with your left hand. Your thumb should rest on the back of the neck and your fingers are free to be able to touch the strings.

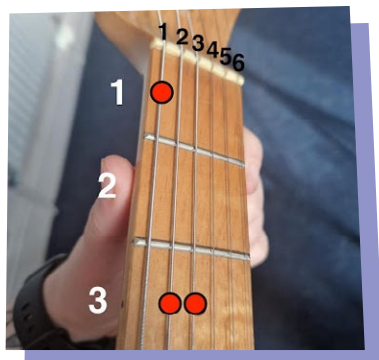
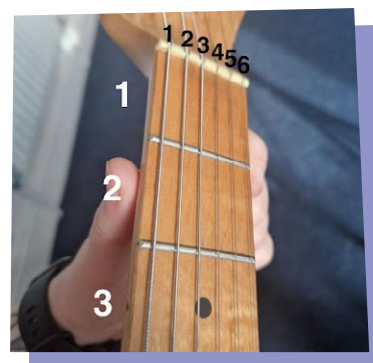
2. A power chord shape uses three fingers - the index finger, the ring finger and the pinky. Practise wiggling those fingers separately so you know which is which.



## Twinkl Tip

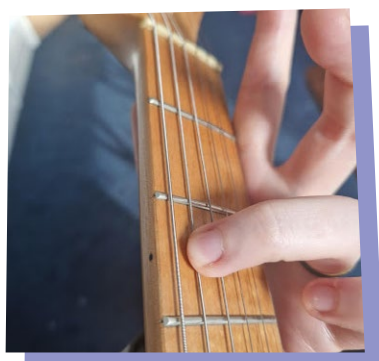
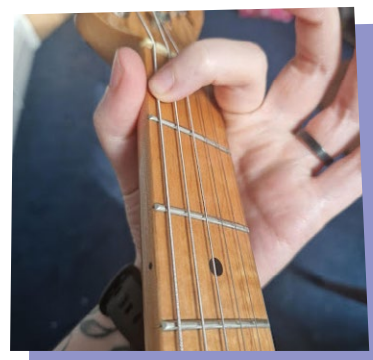
A guitar's fretboard is made up of frets and strings. In this diagram, the frets are the sections numbered in white - a dot on the neck shows you where the third fret is. The strings are numbered in black.

3. Before we start, it's a good idea to practise holding down the strings, as it can be a little uncomfortable to begin with. Practise pushing down one string at a time, using different fingers too. Make sure you push down hard so the string is fully pressed against the fretboard. It is best to do this in the centre of the fret to avoid any string buzz.



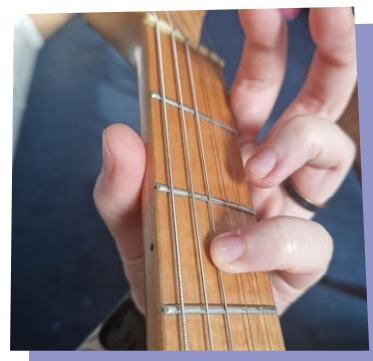
4. The shape we are going to make today will look like this - with each red dot being where a finger is pressing on a string. We are going to press all these strings down at the same time, combining the individual notes to make a chord.

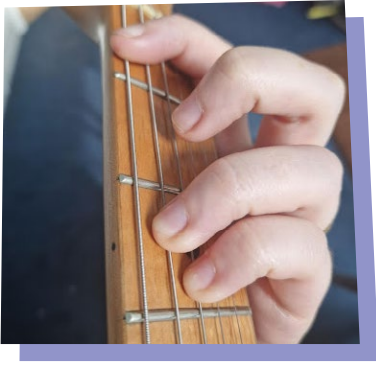
5. Let's practise hitting those notes individually first. Use your index finger to press down the 1<sup>st</sup> string on the 1<sup>st</sup> fret. This is an F note.



6. Now, we're going to skip a fret and use the ring finger to hold down the 2<sup>nd</sup> string on the 3<sup>rd</sup> fret. This is a C note.

7. Next, use your pinky finger to press the 3<sup>rd</sup> string on the 3<sup>rd</sup> fret. This is also an F note, but it is one octave higher than the first F note we played.





8. Now we're going to put all those together. Start with your index finger - 1<sup>st</sup> string, 1<sup>st</sup> fret. Then your ring finger - 2<sup>nd</sup> string, 3<sup>rd</sup> fret. Finally - the pinky finger, 3<sup>rd</sup> string, 3<sup>rd</sup> fret. Now you have an F power chord. It should look like this.

9. Finally, you are ready to play! Make sure to hold each note down tightly and strum the strings from 1<sup>st</sup> string to 3<sup>rd</sup>. You don't need to worry about the rest of the strings for now.

10. Practise moving this shape around the fretboard to play different chords starting on the 1<sup>st</sup> string. Then, move it down to the 2<sup>nd</sup> string!



# Questions

1. What kind of music is a power chord used for?  

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2. Why is a power chord good for that style of music?  

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3. How many notes is a power chord made up of?  

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4. What fingers do you need to use to play a power chord?  

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5. Why do you think it is important to practise playing the notes individually first?  

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6. Why might a power chord be good to learn for beginners?  

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7. What do you think 'strum' means?  

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8. Why do you think it is called a 'power' chord?  

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9. Who might find these instructions useful?  

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10. What could the writer have included to make these instructions even simpler?  

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# Answers

1. What kind of music is a power chord used for?  
**Rock music.**
2. Why is a power chord good for that style of music?  
**It is crunchy and powerful.**
3. How many notes is a power chord made up of?  
**Three.**
4. What fingers do you need to use to play a power chord?  
**Index finger, ring finger and pinky finger.**
5. Why do you think it is important to practise playing the notes individually first?  
**So you can practise pressing the strings down and finding the notes.**
6. Why might a power chord be good to learn for beginners?  
**One shape can be used for lots of chords.**
7. What do you think 'strum' means?  
**Play the strings.**
8. Why do you think it is called a 'power' chord?  
**It sounds powerful.**
9. Who might find these instructions useful?  
**People who like rock music, who want to learn to play guitar quickly.**
10. What could the writer have included to make these instructions even simpler?  
**A glossary of the technical words.**