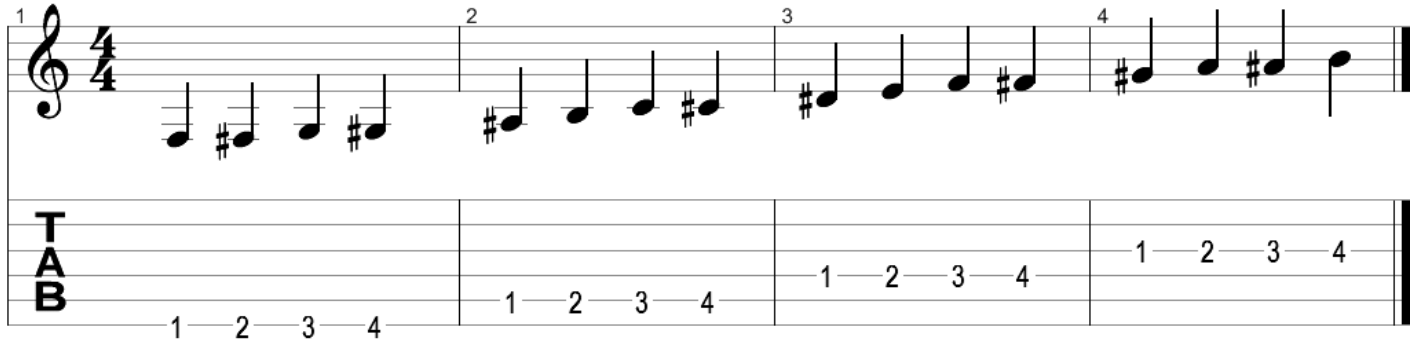


# 1-2-3-4 FINGER WARM-UP

Finger exercises are crucial for all players at all skill levels. These exercises will stretch your fingers out, which helps to make everything easier to play. If you ever feel pain while working through these exercises, stop and have a break from playing. Focus on playing the notes perfectly, rather than trying to play fast.

## Exercise 1



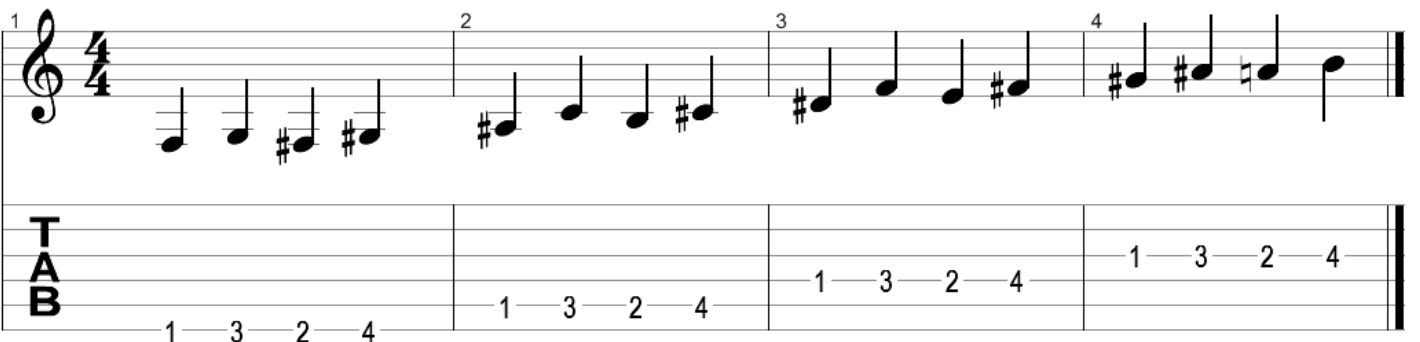
Exercise 1 is a four-measure piece in 4/4 time. The first measure contains notes G4, A4, B4, and C5. The second measure contains notes D5, C5, B4, and A4. The third measure contains notes G4, A4, B4, and C5. The fourth measure contains notes D5, C5, B4, and A4. The TAB below shows the fret numbers for each note: 1-2-3-4 for the first measure, 1-2-3-4 for the second, 1-2-3-4 for the third, and 1-2-3-4 for the fourth.

## Exercise 2



Exercise 2 is a four-measure piece in 4/4 time. The first measure contains notes D5, C5, B4, and A4. The second measure contains notes G4, A4, B4, and C5. The third measure contains notes D5, C5, B4, and A4. The fourth measure contains notes G4, A4, B4, and C5. The TAB below shows the fret numbers for each note: 4-3-2-1 for the first measure, 4-3-2-1 for the second, 4-3-2-1 for the third, and 4-3-2-1 for the fourth.

## Exercise 3



Exercise 3 is a four-measure piece in 4/4 time. The first measure contains notes G4, A4, B4, and C5. The second measure contains notes D5, C5, B4, and A4. The third measure contains notes G4, A4, B4, and C5. The fourth measure contains notes D5, C5, B4, and A4. The TAB below shows the fret numbers for each note: 1-3-2-4 for the first measure, 1-3-2-4 for the second, 1-3-2-4 for the third, and 1-3-2-4 for the fourth.

# BEG-06 1-2-3-4 FINGER WARM-UP (TEACHERS GUIDE)

---

Material can last between 10-20 minutes depending on the skill level of the student.

## Pre-lesson explanation (~2 minutes)

Points to discuss with student before walking through content:

- All players of all skill levels use exercises like these to get their fingers ready to play. Expert guitarists such as Joe Satriani and Steve Vai are known to use these exact exercises as warm-ups before a concert.
- Warm-ups like these prevent strain and injury to your fingers, as well as help to stretch the fingers out wider than normal. A wider finger stretch allows players to play chords more easily, along with riffs and licks.
- These exercises may be a bit tricky at first, because they are on the lowest four frets (which are the widest apart from each other). If the student has small hands or struggles in this position, simply move up the neck.
- Students should play through these exercises every time they sit down to practice.

## Exercise 1 Explanation (~1 minute)

- The idea with this exercise is to feel comfortable playing single notes at a time and using different fingers.
- Each fret is played with a different finger. 1<sup>st</sup> fret with 1<sup>st</sup> finger, 2<sup>nd</sup> fret with 2<sup>nd</sup> finger, and so on. This makes it easy to remember which fingers to use.
- After the student places their finger on the fret, they are to hold the finger in position until all four fingers are held in place. This is what helps stretch them out. If they lift their fingers off the frets after playing the note they won't be stretching their fingers out.

## Exercise 1 Demonstration (~1 minute)

- Play slowly through the exercise ensuring all four fingers are in perfect position and are held down after playing the note.
- After the fourth fret is played, mention to the student that all four fingers are still firmly in position and therefore stretching out as much as possible.
- Continue to play on the fifth string and continue all the way across all six strings.
- Before moving on, demonstrate the *incorrect* way of playing (where the fingers lift off the frets as you play). Explain that playing this way does nothing to stretch the fingers out.

## Exercise 1 – Have student work through exercise (~6 minutes)

- Ensure student plays extremely slow, and each note sounds perfect before playing the next note.
- If the student makes a mistake, tell them to start again. This is not a punishment; it is to ensure that they only practice making perfect-sounding notes, rather than practicing constant mistakes.
- If the student struggles to hold fingers in place, move up the neck (eg: 5-6-7-8<sup>th</sup> frets) or even higher.

## Exercise 2 Demonstration (~1 minute)

- Explain that this lesson is to get students used to playing the exact opposite of Exercise 1.
- Start with all four fingers in place on the first string, and then slowly remove one finger at a time. After all four frets are played, move all four fingers into position on the second string and continue through all six strings.
- Explain that this exercise is slightly harder than Exercise 1, so they need to perfect Exercise 1 before trying this one.

## Exercise 2 – Have student work through exercise (~6 minutes)

- Make sure all four fingers are in correct position before starting. Again, move up the neck if the student cannot make this stretch.
- Ensure student repeats the entire string if there any mistakes played (for example, buzzing note or muted sound).

## Exercise 1 & 2 Overview (~2 minute)

- Explain that Exercises 1 and 2 can be combined to form a circle of playing. In other words, the student starts with Exercise 1, then when they reach the end of the first string, they work backwards through the strings (Exercise 2) until they return to the starting position.
- Demonstrate this to show how the two exercises form a ‘circle’ when connected together.

## Exercise 3 Explanation (~1 minute)

- Explain that Exercise 3 is simply the same as Exercise 1, except for the order of the fingers. The idea with this exercise is to get used to placing the fingers down in different combinations. Unlike Exercises 1 and 2, this time some fingers will need to be lifted off the frets after they are played (for example, the third finger). This exercise is more of a dexterity exercise, rather than a stretching exercise.
- Demonstrate this exercise slowly, to show how each finger moves into place and moves out of the way. Explain that the order of the fingers can be reversed when the end is reached- similar to Exercise 2.
- Explain that there are many other finger combinations that can be used, and once the student has perfected all three exercises they can come up with other combinations to keep pushing themselves.

## Exercise 3 – Have student work through exercise (~4 minutes)

- As this exercise is quite a bit harder than Exercise 1 and 2, only have the student play this if they can easily play the first two.
- If the student has trouble with this exercise, tell them to practice Exercises 1 and 2, and then they can try Exercise 3 in the next lesson.

## Suggested Practice Plan for student

1. Practice Exercise 1 slowly enough so that every note sounds perfect.
2. When student reaches end of Exercise 1, continue backwards through Exercise 2.
3. Continue practicing this circle over and over, until it becomes fluid (without any finger strain).
4. Only when student feels they have mastered Exercises 1 and 2, should they attempt Exercise 3.

## Other uses for this lesson content

- Use these exercises to help demonstrate how a student can play along with a metronome.
- Students can use this exercise to help them build up speed and finger dexterity, using a metronome or speed-trainer.
- If the student ever feels like their hand is in an incorrect position, they can use this exercise to correct themselves (for example, when all four fingers are in position, their hand will automatically correct posture).