

ToneBase Guitar Two-week intensive:

'Lego' Guitar Technique With Emmanuel Sowicz

Week 1

Introductory Remarks:

- Legos: Basic units of technique are like legos
- Simple elements that are learned in isolation so they are resilient
- Exercises are distillations of essential motions

Exercise 1: Basic open string apoyando and tirando RH

Exercise 1a: Single finger apoyando and tirando

- Relax body.
- Play on B string for ima and A string for p.
- Rest stroke (apoyando) then free stroke (tirando):
- Use apoyando with finger $x' = i, m, a, p$; followed by same finger tirando, x
- Try not to move your right hand at all. Aim for similar volume and sound. Aim for a similar effort.
- The tip joint can deflect a bit if necessary.

Exercise 1b: Two-finger tirando

- Two-finger tirando in rapid succession using tirando $xy = mi, im, am, ma, ai, ia$

Exercise 2: Apoyando across open strings

- Alternate fingers on strings E, B, G, G, B, E
- $x'y' = im, ma, ia$
- Start with inner RH finger on the way down and outer RH finger on the way up to avoid string crossings
- Apoyando is good for highlighting a note.

Exercise 3: LH Quasi-slurs Descending and Ascending, only LH

- Play in position IV, all six two-finger combinations descending and ascending quasi-slurs
- Descending: Think of weight transferring from top note finger to the lower note finger.
- Descending: Lift finger perpendicularly (a "vertical"; finger-lifting descending slur)
- Finger contacts string midpoint between nail and fleshy body of fingertip.
- Think of quick finger action, even when playing the overall pattern at a slow tempo
- Snappy, direct, "electric shock";, but economical motion of fingers
- Relaxed shoulder, Wrist in line with forearm. Hand hangs from fingertips. Relaxed wrist, elbow hangs. Hand relaxed
- Fingers do the work without tensing up other arm parts

Exercise 4: Chromatic Scales

- LH and RH coordination, combining RH apoyando with LH chromatic scale in position I
- Practice LH alone first without RH. 4321 / 1234 on EBG strings.
- Active and passive finger: move weight from active playing finger to next finger,
- Keep non-playing fingers as relaxed as possible
- Prepare descending fingers ahead of time.
- Leave ascending fingers on previous string until used on next higher string
- Use im in RH for entire exercise
- Play mezzo piano, as evenly as possible
- Also play in triplet groups

Exercise 5: Shifting

- Avoid "Jumping shift" (no legato, lack of security in hitting notes). Shift rather than jump.
- Play first note, release finger pressure, then slide along string to second note.
- Allows for lyrical playing and portamento.
- Play first 5 notes of min/dim scale using two fingers with a shift
- Use one as guide finger, Lift thumb a bit before shift to avoid friction on neck.

Exercise 6: Extensions

- Best way to extend a finger is to prepare from the center of the hand.
- Extension extends outward from a centrally positioned hand
- Use rest im stroke in RH
- Play on G string, Play in position IV or higher. Play on string B