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Guitar Lesson Plans



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Not Just A Commercial!

This material is presented by my guitar teacher's downloadable resources website <http://teachwombat.com>

I sell (and lets be honest, would like you to buy?) my materials but this guide is not only a promotional device for my website.

The principles an ideas contained in the following pages are relevant (unfortunately for me?) whether you choose to download my stuff or not?

Guitar teachers have been getting along without teachwombat for years and you can make your own handouts and backing tracks if you have the time, technology and inclination to do it?

I would claim that my materials are there for guitar teachers who would rather get on with the business of teaching the guitar but then again I'm hoping to sell you stuff?

I genuinely hope that there is something in here that you can use in the never ending quest to avoid (or give up?) the dreaded day job?

Cheers!

Rob Hylton

The "Big Picture"

Before we take a detailed look at individual lessons it can be a good idea to develop an overview of the typical beginner guitarist and to make some projections with relation to the kind of situations that you are likely to experience as a teacher?

If there is a single tip I would pass on to anyone setting out to teach guitar to novice players it would be to be aware of the following.....?

People new to the guitar will try to "hold" the neck rather than play on it?

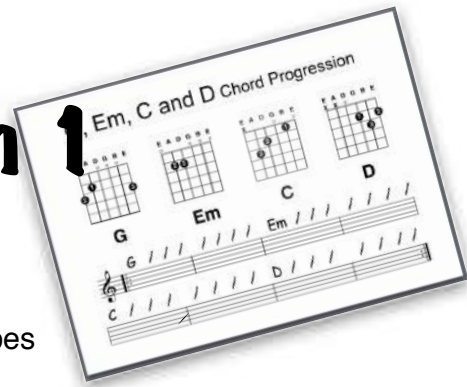
Most students will try to form the chord shapes with their fingers too "flat" to the neck of the guitar. This will result in them unintentionally "killing" other strings that are supposed to ring out?

The solution is to be found by encouraging them to press down on the strings with just the tips (rather than the flattened pads) of their fingers. in order to do this their fingers should be curled around so that they approach the fretboard at something like a ninety degree angle. This will dictate that they do not accidentally stop a guitar string from "ringing out" whilst trying to hold down a string that is physically quite close?

This single problem is likely to come up time and time again during early lessons and the trick is not to get too hung up about it while ensuring that you (and your student) pay it sufficient attention to it that together you are able to gradually improve the situation?

anyway..... On with the guitar lesson plans.....

lesson 1



- 1: Learn four chord shapes
- 2: Become familiar with changing between the four shapes
- 3: Play the chords along with a supplied backing track

In the first lesson you should spend some time with your student helping them to understand the difference between music theory (which may be introduced at a later stage) and developing a technique (the physical ability to move between chord shapes and notes on the neck of the guitar) which will be the focus of the first few months of study

the lesson

Explain how chord diagrams work and spend a little time making sure that your student understands how the numbers inside the black dots on each chord diagram relates to the four fingers of the left (fretting) hand

Give them a chord sheet featuring the shapes G Em C and D

Spend as much time as you need to with the student learning and then familiarising themselves with the four shapes on the sheet. This stage will probably take up quite a lot of the session and you need to resist the temptation to move too quickly here?

As the student learns the shapes in turn encourage them to change from one to the other and when having done so to sound each chord once with a single downstroke of their strumming hand.

Mix the chords up so that they start do develop the facility to move from any of the four chords to any other?

The session is focussed on four chord shapes (G Em C and D) and uses a backing track (that you can give to your student on CD or you could even send it to them as an email attachment?)

When they are able to change (slowly) between the chords introduce the backing track. Count your student ("1-2-3-4") into each chord change and ask them to play a single chord with a downstroke of the plectrum as each chord changes

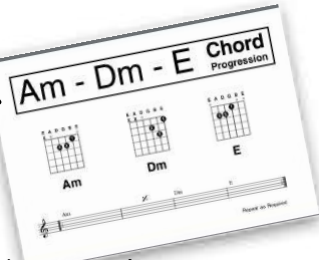
Give your student a copy of the backing track and the handout with the chord sequence on it so that they can practice before the next session.

Explain the importance of practice and encourage them to take on board the following principle

"You do not learn to play guitar during guitar lessons. You learn to play BETWEEN them"?

Ask your student if there is anything that they do not understand with relation to the material covered and let them know the focus of the next session where three new chords (Am Dm and E) will be introduced along with some more involved right hand strumming patterns?

lesson 2



objectives

- 1: Learn three more chord shapes (Am Dm and E)
- 2: Develop more capability with regard to (down and upstroke) strumming patterns
- 3: Play the chords along with a supplied backing track

This lesson introduces three more chord shapes and gives the opportunity to help our students begin to develop a right (strumming) hand technique.

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the lesson

Spend the first part of the lesson checking on the progress that the student made with the (G Em C and D) material covered during the previous lesson

When you have made sure that they are able to change between the chords from the last session in time to the music ask them to strum four down strokes on each beat of the first bar of the G-Em-C-D progression covered in the previous session. This has the effect of obliging the student to strum the guitar more while still giving them time (the second bar of each chord) to change the chord shape

Following on from presenting this activity (which should also make up some of the student's practice before the next session if required) present your learner with a new chord sheet featuring the Am Dm and E shapes

Repeat the process outlined in the previous session whereby the student learns each shape individually before being asked to change (slowly) between the new shapes in response to random instructions from the teacher

When you are convinced that they can move between the new chord shapes competently let them hear the (funkier?) backing track that accompanies the "Am Dm E" handout

As in the last session request that the student sounds each chord once as it changes along with the backing track (again you should count "1-2-3-4" into each chord change as required)

Depending on your student's progress to this point you can spend the remainder of this session introducing more complicated right hand strumming patterns to both of the backing tracks used up to this point?

The next session introduces the chord of A which means that by its conclusion your student will be familiar with all eight chords (C A Am G E Em D and Dm) that make up The "CAGED System" of guitar chords used by teachers worldwide to teach beginners to play guitar

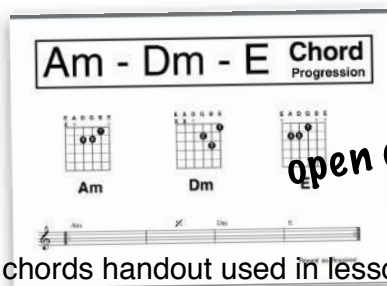
Let your student know this and emphasise the importance of the (hopefully significant) progress to date

Ask if there are any areas of concern and make sure that your student can tell you what they have to practice before the next lesson (playing along to the two backing tracks presented so far with a variety of right hand strumming patterns)

Backing Tracks and Handouts

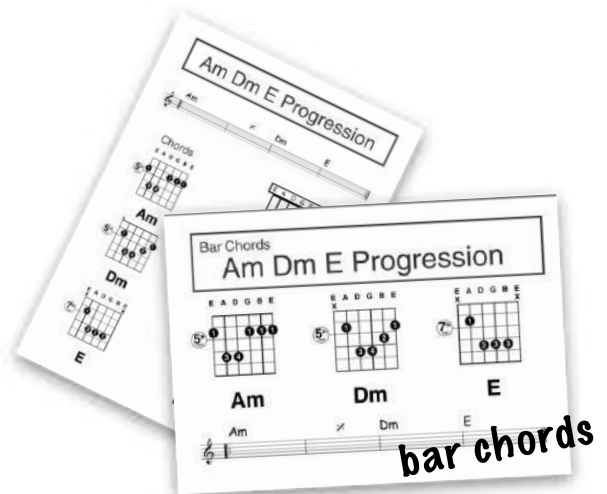
Many of the backing tracks that feature as part of the teachwombat.com materials are truly "multi purpose" in that they can be used at more than one stage of a guitar student's musical development.

An example is the Am Dm E progression used with the beginner in lesson 2 which can also be utilised in order to develop student's ability with relation to playing Bar Chords and developing the facility to play guitar solos using the Am Pentatonic Scale (perhaps the "favourite" scale of guitar players and teachers around The World?)



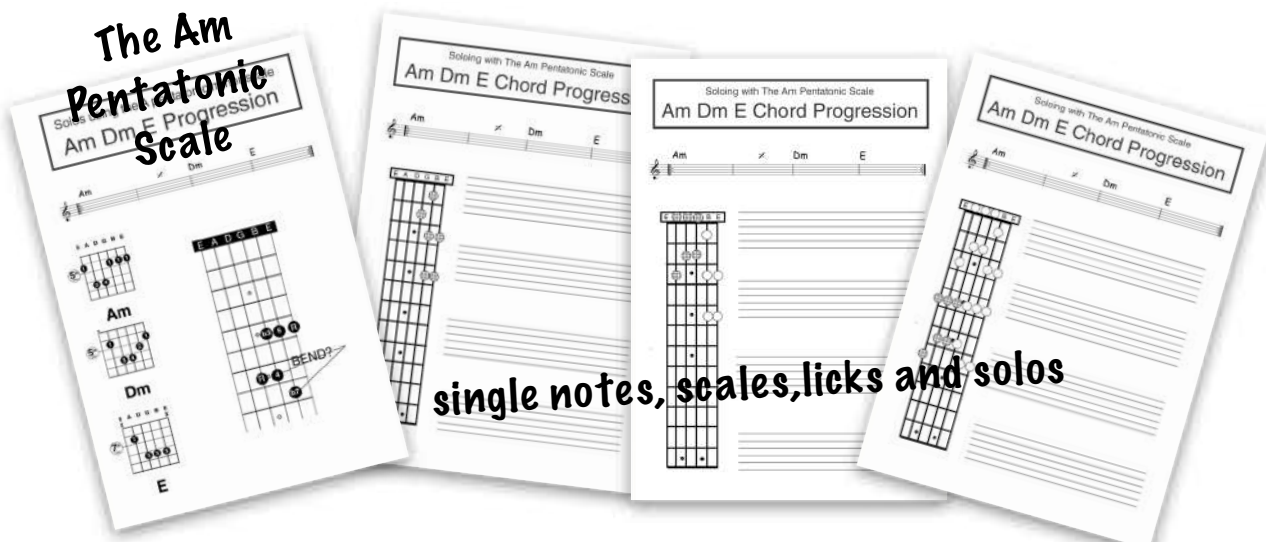
open chords

The open chords handout used in lesson 2



bar chords

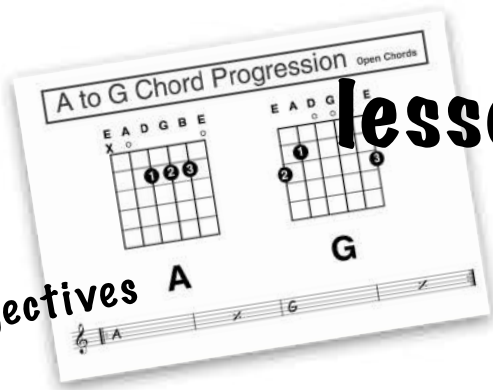
Two handouts looking at the Am, Dm and E Bar Chords



single notes, scales, licks and solos

A series of student handouts defining the A Pentatonic Minor Scale through four positions. Three of the sheets also feature four lines of tablature so that a teacher can supply appropriate licks and patterns designed to encourage students to learn and combine scale shapes in a variety of positions.

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Lessons 3 - ?

objectives

- 1: To make a student aware of the final chord (A) in the "CAGED System"
- 2: Further develop the ability to move easily and in time between chords
- 3: To encourage the student to develop capabilities in a variety of musical genres

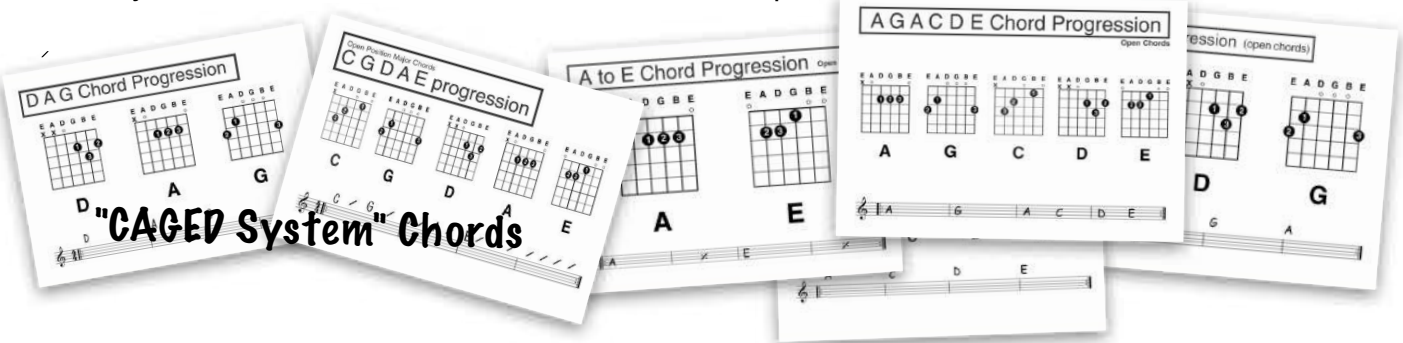
the lesson

The backing track for this lesson moves between the chords of A and G and is presented in a Rock style

By now you should be becoming familiar with this kind of lesson in which a student is presented with new chords or styles of music and asked to familiarise themselves with the new situation?

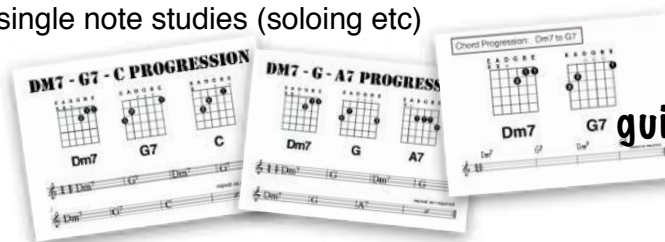
Developing the ability to move between the open A and G chords is another step on the student's journey from the novice to the early intermediate stage of musical development

There are a whole load of other backing tracks in the teachwombat download featuring the chords of the "CAGED System" with various combinations of chords tempos and genres.



As well as the CAGED sequences there are several progressions that introduce new chords suited to players in the early stages of their study that will help to move the student from the "beginner" to the "intermediate" phase of musical development.

The lesson plans presented up to this point can be adapted as required and used repeatedly as either "stand alone" lessons on their own or the material can be incorporated into lessons alongside other areas of student development such as the development of repertoire (learning songs or fragments of them) and single note studies (soloing etc)



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IMPORTANT!

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Although the material from this point onwards is presented as a series of separate sessions based on introducing a set of new topics such as single note and solo playing or bar chords the reality is that this material is probably best presented to your students "alongside" more work using backing tracks and chords etc.

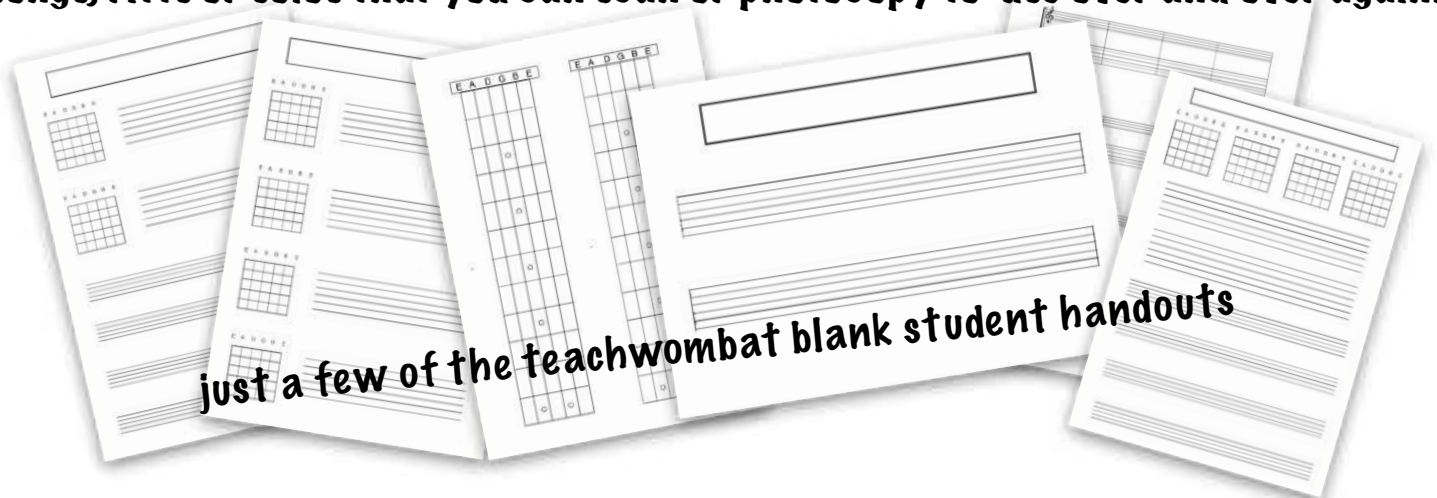
Lessons should now be "split" between helping your student to continue progression with regard to playing chords in time and encouraging them to be able to sound single strings rather than strumming full chords

The above (aside from the fact that all students are different and learn at their own pace?) is really the reason why I don't supply a suggested "time to spend" on each activity within a lesson plan.

The reality is that after the first few lessons (when they are learning to move between a limited number of "suitable" chord shapes) students are generally ready to develop and reinforce their learning to this point by practicing songs (or fragments of songs) that they know and (hopefully) like.

The teachwombat materials contain loads of handouts featuring a huge variety of blank chord, fretboard and guitar tab that you can use to make your own sheets tailored to the kind of music that you and your students like?

You can either write them as you go during lessons in response to a particular situation and/or "pre prepare" handouts featuring favourite chord sequences, songs, riffs or solos that you can scan or photocopy to use over and over again.



just a few of the teachwombat blank student handouts

Teaching How Tab Works and an Introduction to Single Note Playing

objectives

- 1: To encourage the student to develop the facility to sound individual notes rather than just chords
- 2: Help learners to understand how to read Guitar Tab
- 3: Help your student to develop repertoire

the lesson

Talk to your student about developing the facility to play single note riffs and explain that a good introduction to improvisation and a way to boost left hand dexterity and left/right hand co-ordination is to learn a variety of riffs and passages featuring single notes.

There are a whole bunch of "obvious" ones out there and it is a good idea to talk to your student and to come up with a couple (thats all you need at this stage) of riffs or tunes that will help to get them started with single note playing

It is important at this stage to select a passage or riff that your student is already familiar with,

"Satisfaction"

"Seven Nation Army"

"Sunshine Of Your Love"

"Apache"

"Come As You Are"

"Smoke On The Water"

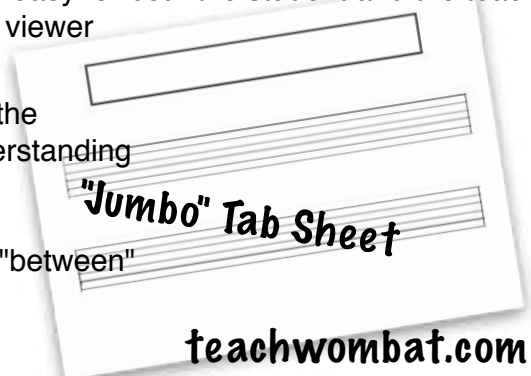
Having selected a suitable (short and simple?) single note passage or riff it is time to explain to your student how guitar tablature works.

An effective way to do this is for you to write the riff that they are going to study during the lesson itself taking care to explain how the numbers that you are putting on the tab sheet relate to the strings and fret numbers on the guitar.

Our materials ("Oh No! Here comes another plug") feature some sheets (like the one shown below) that have Just a couple of lines of "Jumbo Sized" giant tab that is easy for both the student and the teacher to see when rested on a music stand a couple of feet from the viewer

Towards the end of the lesson (or the part of the lesson that the activities outlined here takes up?) check your student's understanding of guitar tab by having them explain it to you?

Emphasise to them (as always) the importance of practicing "between" guitar lessons.



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The A minor pentatonic scale (the guitar teacher's favourite scale?)

The pentatonic minor scale is a great place to start for your students when setting out to teach them how guitar solos "work"

objectives

1: To encourage the student to develop an awareness that single note riffs patterns melodies and solos are all often constructed from scales

2: Help learners to be able to play a one octave A minor pentatonic scale

3: (Possibly) Introduce the concept of "bent" notes to your student

the lesson

Talk to your student about the importance of scales to any guitarist who wants to play solo lines or compose original melodies.

Refer back to the single note studies that were the recent subject of (at least part of?) a recent lesson and if possible demonstrate how the notes that made up the single note patterns studied were drawn from a scale. It does not matter if the scale in question is The A pentatonic minor or not as we are just trying to get our students to "buy in" to the notion that scales are the "raw materials" of music

Give a handout to the learner outlining the position and fingering pattern for the A minor pentatonic scale.

Guide your student (slowly) through the fingering until they are able to ascend and descend the scale

Teach them a few (very) short phrases using only the first three notes of the scale (A,C and D). Do not bend any strings yet and be at pains to demonstrate that it is ok to play the same note more than once before moving onto a new one (the short phrases that you teach should reflect this). Many novice guitar players think (probably understandably) that a guitar solo is a "stream of different notes" when in reality it is often surprisingly few notes and repeated rhythmic phrases

The pentatonic minor scale is a great place to start for your students when setting out to teach them how guitar solos "work"

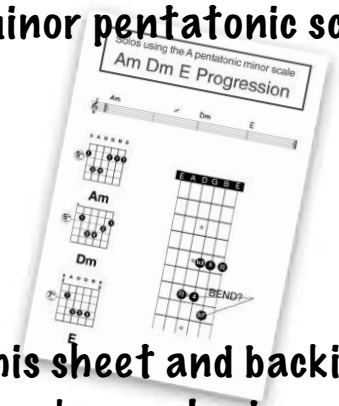
The "Am Dm E" backing track that was used in the second lesson plan can be utilised again, this time to give a relaxed "funky" background to the exploration of the A minor pentatonic scale

If your student appears "ready" for it spend some time looking at bending the D note (7th fret of the G string)

If they have trouble bending the string just wait and put bending strings onto the "back burner" for a couple of weeks or so until they are more accustomed to moving between single notes?

Give your students a copy of the track (either on CD or you could email the mp3 to them?) and encourage them to "mess about" with the scale over the track before the next session

**a handout featuring the
A minor pentatonic scale**



**this sheet and backing
track can also be used
later to teach your
student about major and
minor bar chords?**

Important Stuff!

The next part of this guide will be based around teaching power chords and from there making the move into full major and minor bar chords but I can't stress enough.....

Don't try to teach too much too soon!

There are Probably months of lessons (and income?) before you get a novice to the point that they are ready to hold down bar chords and if you try to take it too quickly you won't do either of you much good?

Encourage the development of a basic technique

The eight chords of the "CAGED System" and the ability to change between them in time to music offers an ideal "solid foundation" to anyone who wishes to become a guitarist.

Once they have the eight chords down its time for your students to.....

Develop "repertoire"

Use the chords (C A Am G E Em D and Dm) alongside fairly simple single note material as appropriate to get your student playing songs (or fragments of songs) that he or she recognises and (hopefully) likes.

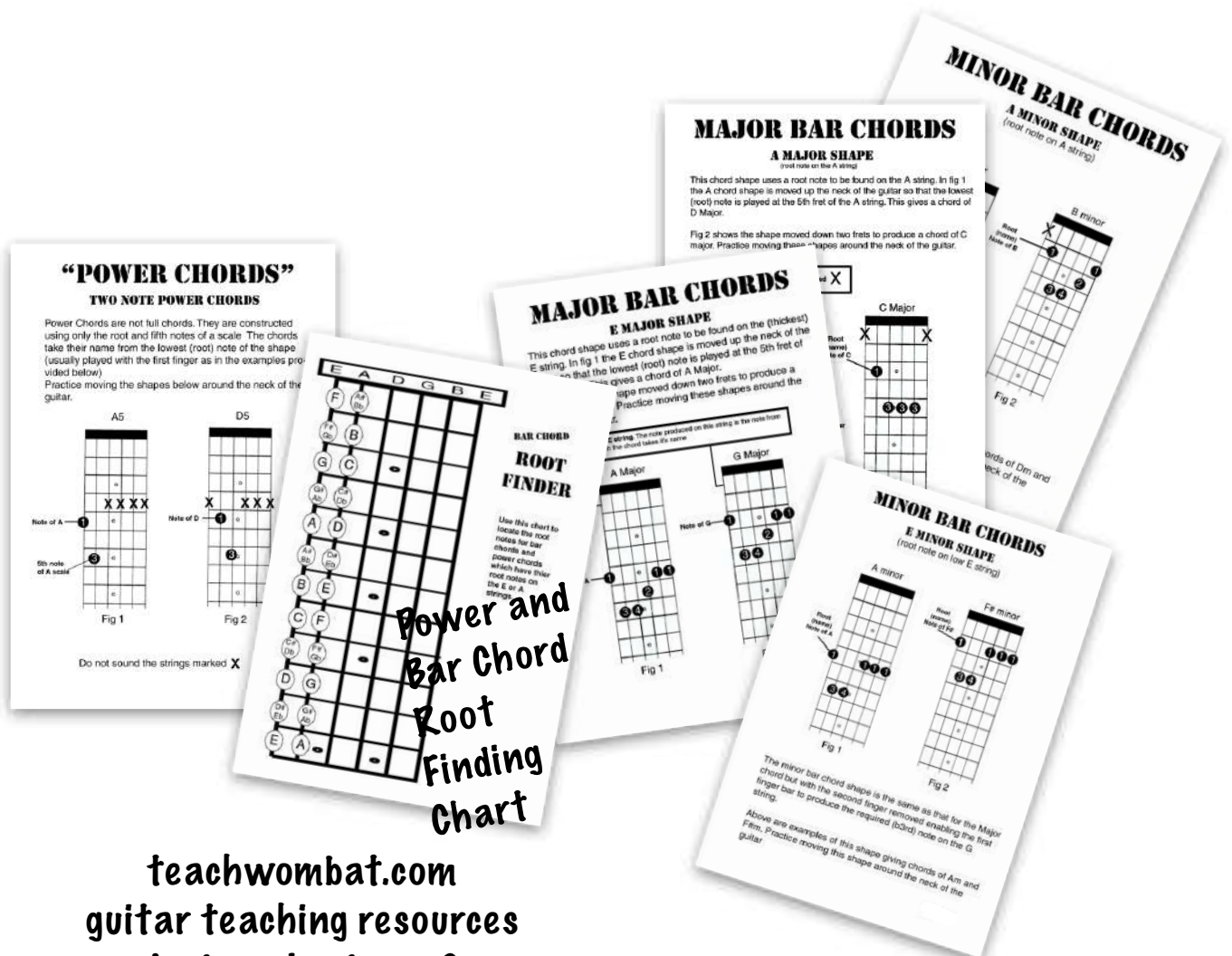
Students get a real "buzz" from this (remember how it was for you?)

Power and Bar Chords

This document is a "work in progress" and if you download it again a few weeks from now it will have more lesson plans etc on it.

The next stuff that I'm going to cover concerns using backing tracks to help your guitar students to master power chords and from there make the move to "full" bar chords

The student handouts relevant to this material are shown below and to be honest if you have looked at the guitar lesson plans up to this point you should have a fair idea of the kind of thing I'm going to write?



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"work in progress"

More material will be added as time goes on

Please return to <http://teachwombat.com> and download it again soon for more help with lesson planning.

Thanks for reading this far

Cheers!

Rob Hylton

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