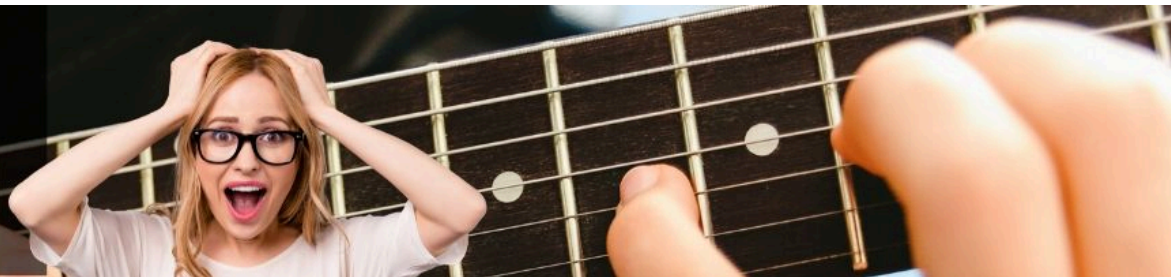


FINGER STRETCHING EXERCISES



Finger & Hand Flexibility

Have you ever reached for a chord and thought to yourself “There’s no way my fingers can ever stretch that far!” While there is a limit to how far the hand will reach, a better way to look at it is hand flexibility - and we can certainly get our hand muscles to be more flexible.

The great fingerstyle guitarist Phil Keaggy said “It’s not an issue of hand size – it’s an issue of hand flexibility.”

Despite what you may initially think your hand can become more flexible.

The exercises outlined here have proven time and again to give the average guitar player more flexibility and strength to reach wider chords and larger reaches on the fretboard.

BUT, they take time. It doesn’t happen after the first time you do them.

Do them faithfully each day for a week and you will notice a strength and flexibility in your hand that you didn’t have before.

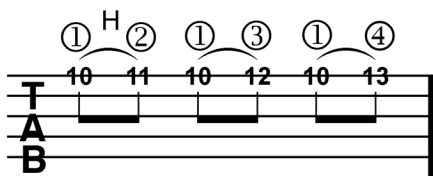
Before we begin, one final caution. If you develop hand pain while doing these, STOP – especially if you have pre-existing hand issues.

Finger Flexibility Exercise: Single Note Stretches

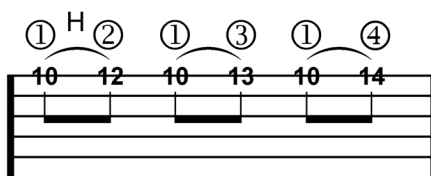
This exercise keeps one finger stationary while the others move and stretch. Start high up on the neck where the frets are closer then gradually work your way down the neck. The circled numbers indicate which finger to use.

Initially, play these exercises without hammer-ons. Then, for additional practice, play them hammering-on to the upper notes as shown.

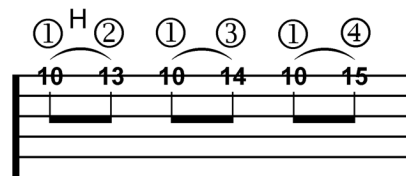
**No Frets
In Between
Root**



**1 Fret
In Between
Root**



**2 Frets
In Between
Root**



The next exercise uses pull-offs in a descending motion going down the neck starting at the 12th fret on the 1st string.

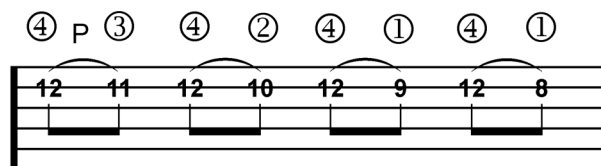
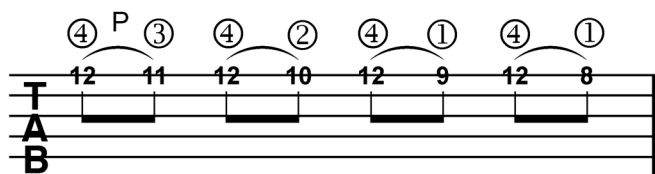
The last pair of notes uses a big stretch between the fourth and the first finger.

Play them on a variety of strings gradually moving down the neck.

Initially, practice without the pull-off then add the pull-offs.

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.



Phil Keaggy Hand Stretching Exercise

Legendary fingerstyle guitarist, Phil Keaggy, teaches this exercise to increase hand flexibility.

In this exercise your hand will move between five chord shapes that gradually move down the neck.

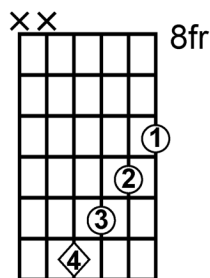
Each of these five shapes have only one finger change between them, so only one finger will be shifting between them at a time.

It begins with an Ebmaj7 chord form.

Playing Tip

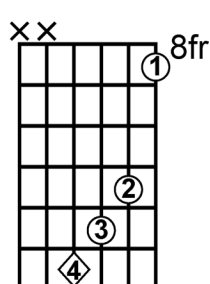
When working on large hand stretches it helps to have the guitar neck angled up slightly to give your hand more space.

Shape 1



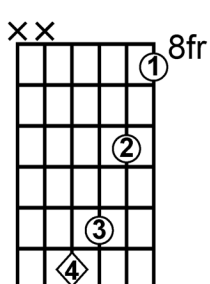
Each finger on adjacent strings

Shape 2



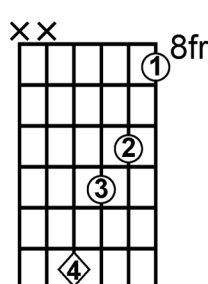
Move 1st finger down 2 frets.

Shape 3



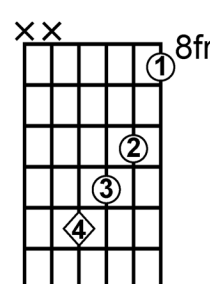
Move 2nd finger down 1 fret.

Shape 4



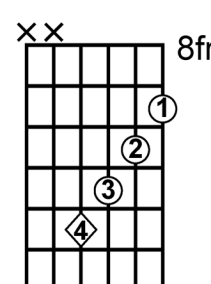
Move 3rd finger down 1 fret.

Shape 5



Move 4th finger down 1 fret.

Shape 6

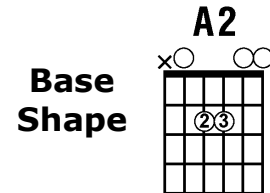


Move 1st finger up 1 fret.

Shape Chords: Chord Flexibility Stretches

Each of the following chord exercises begins with a base shape that moves to various places on the fretboard to create other chords.

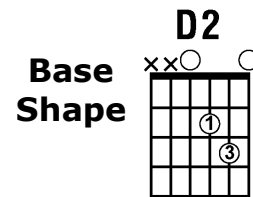
1) Two Fingers on Adjacent Strings Same Fret



|| **A2** | **A6/9** | **Am9** | **Amaj9** | **Asus9** | **A2** | **Fmaj7(b5)/A** | **A11** ||

2nd Fret 4th Fret 5th Fret 6th Fret 7th Fret 9th Fret 10th Fret 12th Fret

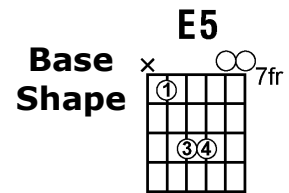
2) Two Fingers on Adjacent Strings One Fret Apart



|| **D2** | **D6/9** | **Dm9** | **Dmaj9** | **Dsus2** | **D2** | **Bb(b5)/D** | **D11** ||

2nd Fret 4th Fret 5th Fret 6th Fret 7th Fret 9th Fret 10th Fret 12th Fret

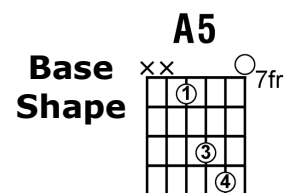
3) Three Fingers on Adjacent Strings Two Frets Apart



|| **E5** | **D6/9** | **C#m7** | **Cmaj7** | **Bsus** || **Em7** | **Emaj7** | **E11** ||

7th Fret 5th Fret 4th Fret 3rd Fret 2nd Fret 10th Fret 11th Fret 12th Fret

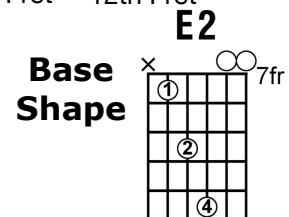
4) Three Fingers Two & Three Frets Apart



|| **A5** | **G6** | **F#7** | **Fmaj7** | **E5** || **Bsus** | **C** | **D2** ||

7th Fret 5th Fret 4th Fret 3rd Fret 2nd Fret 9th Fret 10th Fret 12th Fret

5) Three Fingers Two & Four Frets Apart



|| **E2** | **D6/9** | **C#m9** | **Cmaj9** | **Bsus9** || **Fmaj7(b5)** | **F#sus9** | **G6/9** | **A2** ||

7th Fret 5th Fret 4th Fret 3rd Fret 2nd Fret 8th Fret 9th Fret 10th Fret 12th Fret