

Building Guitar Fills Part 1: Seeing Chords as Intervals

Standard tuning

The G Major Scale

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What is an Interval? An Interval is the distance between two notes, a harmonic interval are two notes played together. To build a harmonic interval, choose any note in the scale and any other note in the scale above it and play them together.

T
A
B

To determine what kind or how wide of an interval you have count up from the bottom note starting at 1, play and continue to count up in the scale until you reach the top note.

1 2 3 4 4th

T
A
B

1 2 3 4 5 6 6th

T
A
B

G Major

T
A
B

First, let's break it down into it's intervals on adjacent strings

5th 4th 3rd 3rd 4th

The musical notation shows a sequence of intervals on adjacent strings in G major. The first interval is a 5th (G4 to D5), followed by a 4th (D5 to G5), then a 3rd (G5 to B5), another 3rd (B5 to D6), and finally a 4th (D6 to G6). The tablature below indicates the fret numbers for each note: 5 (G4), 5 (D5), 4 (G5), 3 (B5), 3 (D6), and 3 (G6).

Next, Let's skip a string between notes

Octave 6th 5th 6th

The musical notation shows a sequence of intervals skipping a string in G major. The first interval is an Octave (G4 to G5), followed by a 6th (G5 to E6), then a 5th (E6 to B5), and finally a 6th (B5 to G6). The tablature below indicates the fret numbers for each note: 5 (G4), 4 (G5), 5 (E6), 5 (B5), and 4 (G6).

The most useful and best sounding intervals for creating fills are 3rds, 4ths and 6ths. We will discard everything else

G Major 3rd 3rd 4th 6th 6th

The musical notation shows a sequence of intervals in G major. The first interval is a 4th (G4 to D5), followed by a 3rd (D5 to F#5), then another 3rd (F#5 to A5), a 4th (A5 to D6), a 6th (D6 to B5), and finally a 6th (B5 to G6). The tablature below indicates the fret numbers for each note: 5 (G4), 4 (D5), 3 (F#5), 3 (A5), 4 (D6), 4 (B5), and 4 (G6).

C Major

The musical notation shows a sequence of intervals in C major. The first interval is a 4th (C4 to F4), followed by a 3rd (F4 to A4), then another 3rd (A4 to C5), a 4th (C5 to E5), a 6th (E5 to C6), and finally a 6th (C6 to G5). The tablature below indicates the fret numbers for each note: 10 (C4), 9 (F4), 8 (A4), 8 (C5), 9 (E5), 9 (C6), and 10 (G5).