Day 1: The Right Hand Rebuild → Becoming the Terminator on your Right Hand.

Hey guys! Welcome to my Metal Guitar Bootcamp! This Free Course is designed to give you a big kick start back into your Guitar journey and get you on the right track with a bit of structure, momentum and accountability.

Most people who come to me have come from a background of wanting to get back into the guitar. They had classes before, sometimes a very long time ago, sometimes recently but learned off of more generic Guitar teachers.

As you've probably seen researching me and my background, I have done all sorts of cool and crazy things as a guitar player. I've toured Japan and Australia, I've been the main songwriter and driving force in multiple bands, including my own solo project and I've fulfilled my Guitar playing dreams of being able to play the solos of all of the bands I looked up to as a younger player, namely Necrophagist, Dimebag Darrell from Pantera and Alexi Laiho from Children of Bodom.

I've invested literally hundreds of thousands of dollars into my Guitar playing and its journey, made a shitload of mistakes and really have a mission as a Teacher and Guitar Instructor to help save other guitar players from the same mistakes, pitfalls, frustrations and setbacks that I had as a player, so learn from me and my mistakes and you'll save so much time, money and angst and get to your guitar playing goals quickly!

Now I need to start off by saying that Guitar is hard. It requires a tonne of discipline, commitment, accountability and patience. I equate it to learning a language. Its a pursuit that will take years but if you are prepared for that will give you so much joy and fulfillment in return and be a lifelong partner through all of the ups and downs that life has to offer. Thats what I love most about the guitar, its always been there, through some really hard life moments and challenges, I've always been able to seek comfort and refuge in it and also have it as a continual source of challenge, fun and fulfillment. This is my goal for all of my students, to replicate that relationship and unlock the same thing for you.

So todays first lesson is going to dive into right hand mechanics and setting up a foundation for your right hand so that you can play all of your favourite metal songs. Unfortunately, most Guitar teachers that introduce us to the guitar, aren't terribly great players or technicians and I had to go through long periods of feeling like i had a ceiling in place on my playing that I couldnt break through. I couldnt get as fast as I wanted, as clean or as efficient or comfortable as I wanted. I sort out some great players and studied under them and paid a fortune to do so but learned how to correct a lot of mistakes in my mechanics that some of these run of the mill teachers had taught me growing up.

So lets talk about the right arm. We have three mechanical points of importance that we need to discuss

1. The contact point of the pick and the string and where we hold that (1st finger and thumb).
2. The wrist and forearm.
3. The shoulder and upper arm.

Each of these three mechanical leverage points serves a unique purpose and if one or all of them are out of whack, which is common in most aspiring players and systemic when I have a new student come to me, our playing is going to suffer. We wont feel comfortable on the guitar, we wont be able to build or unlock speed, stamina and endurance which are all important things for Metal Guitar Playing.

So lets look at the first mechanical point. The thumb and first finger and pick.

We need to hold the pick about a centimeter away from the crease our knuckle creates on the thumb. You then make the "OK" sign around it to lock it into place. We need a pretty good pressure when striking the strings with this "joint" and thats the tricky thing to develop over time.

Next we want to look at the wrist joint.

Unlike the thumb and first finger, the wrist must be loose and we want to develop its ability to lift upwards which is unnatural and not a motion we do much in average day to day life. We need to keep this joint really loose and relaxed as well which is a super difficult thing to develop particularly when we want the thumb and first finger to be quite firm and rigid.

Now we want to look at the shoulder and upper arm. The shoulder and upper arm determine your relationship with each string and basically move the first two joints we've looked at, like a crane to each new string. We want to replicate the same motion and pressures of joint 1 and 2 on each string which is difficult because each string is a different thickness and requires a different force or feel when striking but our shoulder and upper arm, essentially moves joint 1 and 2 up and down onto each different string and keeps the angles similar so that we dont get a changing angle on each string.

This is a super common pitfall for most guitarists, particular metal players. We are comfortable on the bottom strings because this is our home. We riff down here and we learn rhythm first but then because we aren't using our shoulder and upper arm correctly, we change the angle and start to scrape on the upper strings. This means we get poor tone, poor attack and our hands can't really learn muscle memory because on every string, our angles are different which means our playing is different. This is why most players can't do quick multiple string runs like a lot of shredders.

Ok so this is the theory and practical side behind what we need to start doing if we want to get better at Metal Guitar playing. I've had heaps of students correct this and YES it will feel like a backwards step at first and take at least 2 weeks to start to feel comfortable, but once those 2 weeks are over students usually start to feel comfortable, pick up some speed and confidence and start seeing some results. After a month or so, they look back at their technical changes and wonder how they ever did it with their previous technique.

Lets now move into some exercises that you can work on to start to correct your technique today!

Ok fantastic. So hopefully you've enjoyed today's lesson and content. Keep an eye on your email inbox for tomorrow's lesson which will be exploring left hand technique and correction and waking up the beast that is your left hand!

See you then!