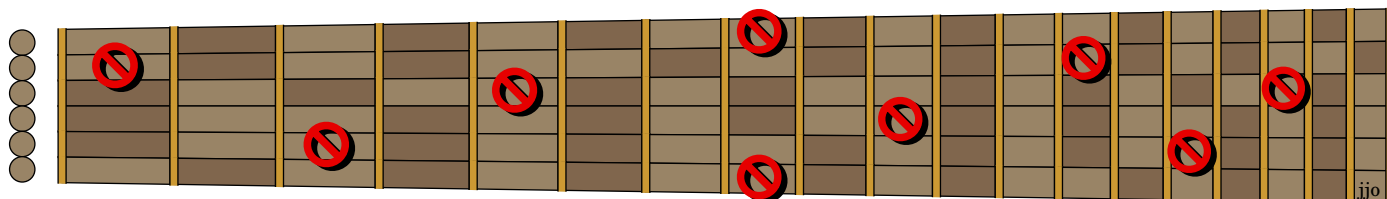


# November Fretboard Exercises

## Sightreads for the “No” in November

(when all the leaves are brown)

J. J. Olson



### Tunes that say “No!”...

**Exercise 1:** I 2 II 5 III 4 IV 4 V 3 VI 7 VII 2 VIII 4 IX 3 X 5 XI 9 ③ ④



**Exercise 2:** I 1 II 1 III 5 IV 3 V 1 VI 5 VII 1 VIII 5 IX 3 X 1 ④ ⑤



**Exercise 3:** I 1 II 2 III 4 IV 3 V 3 VI 7 VII 3 VIII 6 IX 3 X 3 XI 7 ④ ⑤



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There are over 500 years of “No!” in these tunes.

Exercise 1 is a sly English folksong going back to 1719. It's a story of a courtship thwarted by a daughter's promise to “always answer No” until John learns to negate his questions so that a reply of “No” can express consent. Play in positions I and VII, or entirely on string ③

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No%2C\\_Sir%2C\\_No](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No%2C_Sir%2C_No)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5se6byRD4A> (...more to see chords and lyrics)

Exercise 2 goes back at least to 1520 and expresses frustrated love. The repeated opening line “Calabaza, no sé, buen amor, qué te faza” translates roughly as “Pumpkin, I do not know, my love, what's wrong with you”. It's surprisingly upbeat, considering it's in Dorian mode. Fast but playable in lots of positions (I, II, V, VII and even X) or on string ④

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cancionero\\_de\\_Palacio](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cancionero_de_Palacio)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1nm1yUp6-I> (...more for translated lyrics)

Exercise 3, published in 1923, is based on a cultural idiom where every reply begins with “Yes!” even when the answer amounts to “No”. Wikipedia mentions musicologist Sigmund Spaeth hearing several other melodies within this one, e.g. as though the first line were “Hallelujah, Bananas! Oh, bring back my Bonnie to me”. Easiest to play in positions I and II, but doable in IV, V, VII, IX, and X. String ④ is a bit harder due to interval jumps.

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yes!\\_We\\_Have\\_No\\_Bananas#History](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yes!_We_Have_No_Bananas#History)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vQ0XUNxJyQ> (Muppets)

*These exercises are from the yet to be released books “Diatonic Fretboard Exercises”, and “Chromatic Fretboard Exercises”, which together contain over two thousand such exercises and will be made available for free on IMSLP. The contents may be freely copied and modified, but with the condition that they be attributed to J. J. Olson (CC-BY license).*

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