

Click and Strum



How to Teach Yourself Guitar Online. By Mac Randall

Here are the four reasons why the guitar has been the dominant instrument in popular music over the last 50 years:

- **Guitars look cool.**
- **Guitars sound cool.**
- **Guitars are easy to carry.**
- **Even a novice can get a halfway decent sound out of a guitar.**

Getting a *fully* decent sound out of a guitar takes a lot of work, and a good teacher can be a big help. And there are plenty of teachers—virtual ones—on the Internet.

Of course there's no shortage of sites trying to sell you stuff. There are also plenty of sites that sell individual instruction. But you don't have to spend a cent. Many top-notch sites, featuring notation, audio files and video clips, are completely free.

Two places for 6-string wisdom are Harmony Central (harmony-central.com) and Guitar Notes (guitarnotes.com), both with a wide range of info on musical subjects.

Both sites have useful tutorials with incredibly thorough links (Guitar Notes' color-coded list is particularly mind-boggling).

To get the most out of online guitar instruction, you should learn to read tablature (tab for short), a type of musical diagram that indicates notes by their position on a fretboard. If all you want is to be able to play the chords, there's no point in learning the difference between a G and C clef. Tab won't tell you how long a note lasts though, so unless you already know the song, it's not that much of a help.

Some sites will give you scales, chords and tips, and others will show you how to play songs, but rarely do the twin meet. Lots of sites can tell you what the chords to "Satisfaction" are, but you'll have to go somewhere else to learn how to finger those chords. So browse around for complementary sites. •

Many top-notch instructional sites, featuring detailed notation, audio files and even video clips, are completely free.

For more info about learning to play guitar and other instruments online, go to steamtunnels.net and search using keyword "guitar."

Links to Guitar Instruction Sites

harmony-central.com

Excellent lessons for all levels, and links to most other major instructional sites.

guitarnotes.com

The on-site tutorials are solid, though beginners may feel they're getting more than they need. Link index is second to none.

wholenote.com and activeguitar.com

These sites are run by the same people and offer a lot of the same features. Clear instruction, plenty of tab and sound files.

www.guitarists.net

Mainly tab-based lessons.

guitar-masters.com

Comprehensive chord and scale charts with strong music theory info.

visionmusic.com

Packed with high-quality lessons sporting notation, tab and audio files.

guitar4u.com

Downloadable lessons in PDF file format. Very informative, but not for novices.

olga.net

The On-Line Guitar Archive once included chord charts and tab for thousands of songs. In 1998, legal issues shut the site down, but its search engine can still help you locate OLGA files in cyberspace.

On Tour

Deftones and Incubus

12/3—Tampa, FL: USF Sundome

12/5—New Orleans, LA: State Palace Theater

12/7—St. Louis, MO: Fox Theatre

12/8—St. Paul, MN: Roy Wilkins Theater

12/14—Portland, OR: Roseland Theater

12/15—San Francisco, CA: Cow Palace

12/16 and 12/17—Universal City, CA: Universal Amphitheater

Barenaked Ladies

11/29—Portland, ME: Cumberland Civic Center

12/2—Buffalo, NY: HSBC Arena

12/4—Indianapolis, IN: Conseco Fieldhouse

12/5—Milwaukee, WI: Bradley Center

12/6—Auburn Hills, MI: Palace of Auburn Hills

12/31—Boston, MA: Fleet Center

Ben Harper

11/20—Asheville, NC: Asheville Civic Center

12/26 and 12/27—Aspen, CO: Wheeler Opera House

moe

12/1—St. Louis, MO: The Pageant

12/2—Chicago, IL: Vic Theater

12/5—Cincinnati, OH: Bogart's

12/6—Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan Theater

12/7—Cleveland, OH: Odeon Theater

12/8 and 12/9—Washington, D.C.: 9:30 Club

Paul Simon

11/24—Chicago, IL: Auditorium Theater

12/1—Boston, MA: Orpheum Theater

12/7, 12/8, 12/9—New York, NY: Beacon Theater

Dixie Chicks

11/27—Bakersfield, CA: Centennial Garden and Convention Center

12/1—Houston, TX: Compaq Center