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Audio access

# Introducing **Guitar**

Sample booklet

Pieces, exercises and tips for the beginner  
Electric and Acoustic guitarist

by **Tom Fleming**

NOT FOR SALE

# Topics covered in Introducing Guitar

Getting started  
Guitar notation  
The 6th string  
The 5th string  
The 4th and 3rd strings  
Power chords  
Fun stuff: slides  
The Rock 'n' Roll shuffle  
Chords and chord boxes  
Fun stuff: drones  
Downstrokes and upstrokes  
The 2nd and 1st strings  
Fingerstyle basics  
Fun stuff: improvising  
Essential skill: tuning  
Putting it all together

## About the author

Tom Fleming is a busy and experienced live/session guitarist, audio producer/mixer and teacher. As well as being an active Trinity Rock & Pop examiner he has written guitar and general music tutor books for major publishers including Faber Music (Ultimate Guitar Tutor series), Hal Leonard (Guitar Fretboard Memorization), Reader's Digest (Step-By-Step Guitar Course) and many others.

Tom has played an integral role in producing much of Trinity's Rock and Pop material where he arranged the guitar pieces for the 2012 and 2017 syllabuses. In addition, he produced and mixed the R&P syllabus tracks for all instruments - playing guitar, bass and providing much of the incidental instrumentation/orchestration.

## Dedication

This book is dedicated to Isaac, my buddy on the journey that led to writing it.

## Fretting and picking hands

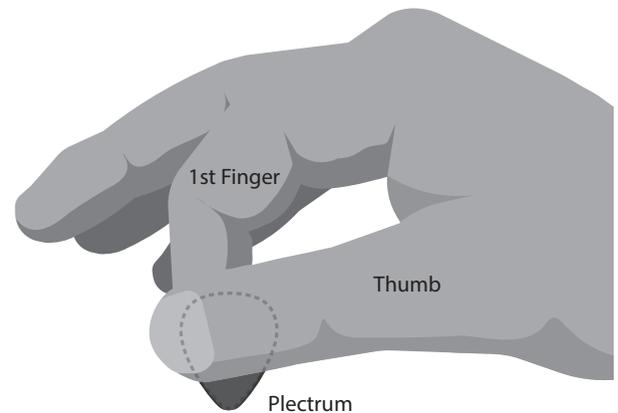
If you are right handed, you will pick or strum the strings with your right hand while using the left hand on the fretboard; if you are left handed this will be reversed. To avoid confusion we will refer to the picking hand and fretting hand in this book.

## Picking hand – plectrum or fingers?



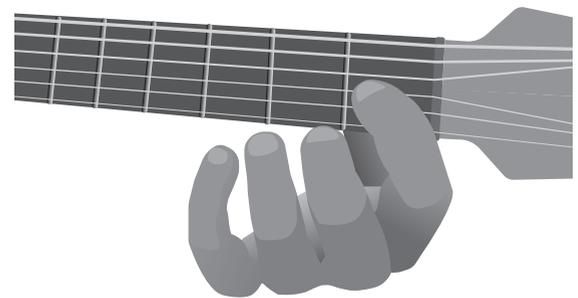
Notes and chords are played either using a plectrum (also known as a pick) or using the thumb and fingers on their own. It's good to be able to do both, but for now we'll work mainly with the plectrum.

The plectrum is held between the thumb and 1st finger of the picking hand. Plectrums vary in shape, but generally the most pointed corner is used to pick the strings. There should only be a few millimetres protruding from between the finger and thumb.



## Fretting hand

The fretting hand fingernails should be kept short. If you ever feel them contacting the strings or fretboard, they are too long and need to be trimmed. The fingers of the fretting hand push down on the strings to produce the notes or chords that are picked or strummed by the picking hand. Usually, only the tips of the fingers are used. Avoid flattening the finger as this will often get in the way of other strings.



## Tuning

It is important to make sure the guitar is in tune. This can be challenging for beginners and often requires help from a teacher, friend or family member with some musical experience.

Tuners come in many forms including clip-on and app versions. There is a tuning exercise towards the end of this book.



# The 6th string

## The 6th string (low E string): open E and first position

The lowest note on the guitar is an E: the open 6th string or low E string. 'Open' means that the string is picked without being fretted.

First position covers the first four frets. Any notes played at the 1st fret are played by the 1st finger; notes at the 2nd fret are played by the 2nd finger, and so on.

Our first two fretted notes on the 6th string are F (1st fret) and G (3rd fret). In first position these are played using the 1st and 3rd fingers respectively.

Musical notation for the open E note on the 6th string. The top staff shows a treble clef with a whole note E on the 4th line. The bottom staff shows a guitar TAB with the letter 'E' on the 6th line and a '0' below it, indicating the open string.

Musical notation for the F note on the 6th string. The top staff shows a treble clef with a whole note F on the 3rd space. The bottom staff shows a guitar TAB with the letter 'F' on the 6th line and a '1' below it, indicating the 1st fret.

Musical notation for the G note on the 6th string. The top staff shows a treble clef with a whole note G on the 2nd space. The bottom staff shows a guitar TAB with the letter 'G' on the 6th line and a '3' below it, indicating the 3rd fret.



Tracks 1a & 1b

## Play & Rest

This piece alternates between 1 bar (4 beats) of open E and 1 bar of rest. To make sure the notes do not continue to sound during rests, touch the string lightly with the fretting hand.

Play 4 times

Musical score for the 'Play & Rest' exercise. It consists of a treble clef staff in 4/4 time and a guitar TAB staff. The score is divided into four measures. The first and third measures contain a whole note E (open string) on the 6th line of the treble staff and a '0' on the 6th line of the TAB staff. The second and fourth measures contain a whole rest on the treble staff and a '0' on the 6th line of the TAB staff. Fingerings are indicated below the notes: 1, 2, 3, 4 for the first measure and (1, 2, 3, 4) for the third measure.



# Fun stuff: improvising

## The pentatonic scale

The **pentatonic scale** is a really useful scale for improvising.

Here's an E minor pentatonic scale on the top four strings:

Musical notation for the E minor pentatonic scale on the top four strings. The top staff shows the scale in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The bottom staff shows the fretboard with fingerings: 2, 0, 2, 0, 3, 0, 3, 0, 3, 0, 2, 0, 2, 0, 2.

Chord box diagram for the E minor pentatonic scale. The strings are labeled T, A, B from top to bottom. The frets are numbered 1 to 5. Notes are indicated by black dots: 2 on the 2nd fret of the T string, 0 on the 2nd fret of the A string, 2 on the 2nd fret of the B string, 0 on the 3rd fret of the T string, 3 on the 3rd fret of the A string, 0 on the 3rd fret of the B string, 3 on the 4th fret of the T string, 0 on the 4th fret of the A string, 3 on the 4th fret of the B string, 0 on the 5th fret of the T string, 2 on the 5th fret of the A string, 0 on the 5th fret of the B string.

A chord box can be used to show the notes of the scale. This does not mean all these notes are played at the same time (which would be impossible). It's just an easy way to visualise all the notes you can use if you are going to improvise using this scale.



Tracks 68, 69 & 70

Try using the notes of the pentatonic scale (in the chord box above) to make up ideas that work over the backing tracks below. Start simple and build from there as you get more confident. Try making use of the chords shown too, either strumming or picking, as a contrast to melodic playing, think about your rhythm, and try repeating some notes or phrases – the possibilities are endless!

68

Backing track 68: Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Chords: Em, C, D, Em. Rhythm: four measures of eighth notes. Repeat sign after the D chord, then a diamond symbol.

69

Backing track 69: Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Chords: Em, G, Em, G. Rhythm: four measures of eighth notes. Repeat sign after the G chord, then a diamond symbol.

70

Backing track 70: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Chords: G, Em, C, D, G. Rhythm: four measures of eighth notes. Repeat sign after the D chord, then a diamond symbol.



Tracks 73a & 73b

# Interstellar Rock

8

E<sup>5</sup> G<sup>5</sup> A<sup>5</sup> N.C.

T  
A  
B

2	2	5	5	2	2	2	5
0	0	3	3	0	0		

5

B<sup>5</sup>

T  
A  
B

2	2	0	0	2	2	4	4	4	4	4
						2	2	2	2	2

9

T  
A  
B

3	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	2	0

13

Em G C D E<sup>5</sup>

Improvise using the E Minor Pentatonic scale or chords

T  
A  
B

						2	2	2	2	2
						0	0	0	0	0