

Book Recommendation One

I am very interested in some of the books that you publish but I'm unsure as to whether there would be a best way to progress. I'm an intermediate level guitarist that is seeking to become a jazz guitarist and therefore music theory is a must. I've purchased Vol.1 and Vol.2 of "Music Theory for Guitar" but where would you suggest I go from there?

Recommendation:

Well that's a pretty broad question, but I'll try to answer it without overwhelming you.

I think the first thing you need to do is to start working on your aural perception. Because of the high complexity of jazz you are really going to need a great ear to get anywhere meaningful. All the great jazz players I've played with have amazing ears, so this is the most important thing and in some ways will be the hardest thing to consistently practice everyday. I would get Ear Training One Note Complete and Fanatic's Guide to Sight Singing and Ear Training.

I would go to the Music Workshop at www.brucearnold.com and download the 19 scales listed under "scales." You should learn a new scale each week and be able to play it in 7 positions as listed on each sheet. Don't worry if you don't have them perfect you are going to be playing through these scales over and over throughout your life. You should start with the C major scale then go to C dorian, C Phrygian. etc.. (as a side note I would go to amazon.com e-books and download the "Guitar Technique" Book. If you don't play with the right technique all this work will be in vain).

All great players nowadays can read really well. Because of limited rehearsal time and fast-pace schedules, if you are really serious about this you need to get your reading together. Keep in mind that reading on guitar is one of the hardest things to do (except maybe for the ear training). There are quite a few books in this series so if you have limited resources start out with one or two and work yourself into it. When you are up to speed you should be reading an hour each day out of these books and other books (scores, solo transcriptions, etc.) that you find in your local library.

I've listed the books in order of importance:

Single String Studies for Guitar Volume One

Chord Workbook for Guitar Volume One

Rhythm Primer

Rhythms Volume One

Lines

Most of these books have additional volumes which you should get to as you finish each book. When you get one or more of these contact me and I'll give you a practice schedule for the sight reading and for the ear training and scales. When you write back let me know how many hours a day you have to practice this will help me organize your time better.

Book Recommendation Two

I LOVE your web site! It is truly awesome. I got here from a link at Rick Stone's site. I am writing because I wanted your recommendations on some of your books. I am a professional guitarist in the Washington D.C. area, who plays well, and has studied extensively. I still feel, however, that there are MAJOR holes in my playing from improvising on more complex tunes to chord melody to ear training. I am very impressed with the clarity of thought and comprehensiveness with which you express yourself, and feel as though I could greatly benefit from your books. Where would you recommend that I start. I have a degree in Music, but would like to study a comprehensive method.

Any help or advice you could offer would be greatly appreciated. You should know that I feel pretty comfortable playing on standards such as "There Is No Greater Love," "Have You Met Miss Jones," "Scrapple From the Apple", etc. It is with more complex tunes such as "Moment's Notice," Wayne Shorter Tunes, and tunes with quick twists and turns that I feel confined to arpeggios and licks, as opposed to improvising.

Recommendation

Here is the stuff you will definitely need:

Chord Workbook for Guitar Volume One

Music Theory for Guitar Volume Two

Ear Training One Note Complete

Fanatic's Guide to Sight Singing and Ear Training

Single String Studies for Guitar Volume One

Guitar Clinic

Guitar Technique (ebook)

Later you should get:

Chord Workbook for Guitar Volume One

Big Metronome

The Rhythm Series i.e. Volumes 1-3, Rhythm Primer, Odd Meters

I know this probably seems like a lot of stuff but I want to make sure you get all those holes in your playing patched up. First, let me tell you why I want you to get each book.

Chord Workbook for Guitar Volume One. You will already know most of the chords in this book; it's really the 36 chord progressions and reharmonization theory in the back of the book that's going to be great for you. Especially after we talk more about how you can use this info.

Music Theory for Guitar Volume Two. You probably know a lot of these scales but I need you to understand all 23 scales presented and how they can be used. There are also downloadable midifiles so you can practice these scales over vamps. (I want you to also download the scales at www.brucearnold.com. Go to the music workshop and download the scales. This is how I want you to practice the scales. i.e. 3 notes on every string).

Ear Training One Note Complete and Fanatic's Guide to Sight Singing and Ear Training are the two books to start with for the ear training. Of all the things you will learn from me this will be the most important.

Single String Studies for Guitar Volume One. This book is for general fret knowledge and will have you pulling your hair out. It is a very difficult book.

Guitar Clinic. There are a bunch of advanced improve techniques in the back of this book so it's a good one to have.

Guitar Technique (ebook). If your technique is messed up, nothing I tell you to do will be worth it in the long run.

2nd Tier Books

Chord Workbook for Guitar Volume Two. This book will have all your upper four string voicings, another reharmonization method, 24 chord progressions, and some very important information about scales.

Big Metronome will give you a complete overhaul of how you think about rhythm and time. It will probably take you 2 to 3 lifetimes to get through this book.

The Rhythm Series i.e. Volumes 1-3, Rhythm Primer, Odd Meters. You need to develop your rhythmic understanding along with your sight reading skills. These books will definitely put you through the ringer.

OK, so we got through all that. Now as soon as you order some books I need you to contact info@muse-eek.com

Give them this info:

Full Name

Street Address

e-mail address

This information will help us to contact you as the member's area is updated. All information is held in the strictest confidence and is not share or sold to any 3rd party.

You will be sent back a username and password.

Book Recommendation Three

I've played the cello for twelve years and have been singing for at least as long. I picked up the guitar about six months ago because I wanted to write songs, play in and/or front a band, etc. Right now I'm at the level where I can do coffee-shop open mikes without embarrassing myself, as long as I keep the guitar arrangements pretty simple. (Arakawa's Guitar Chords and Accompaniment series has been my favorite source for learning chords and rhythmic ideas up to this point.)

I've been frantically searching for a good guitar method that can take me from mindless strumming to being an accomplished lead and rhythm player. As a cellist, I've improved primarily through graduated etude collections, and I've been having a lot of trouble finding comparable material for the pop/rock/jazz guitarist (Right now I'm working my way through Leavitt's Modern Method...Vol I, which I bought because it was the only method I could find that didn't totally stink). Anyway, I stumbled onto the muse-eeek website, and I was impressed and intimidated by the thoroughness of your guitar, music theory, rhythm, and ear training series.

OK, I'll cut to the questions:

1. My ear's pretty decent from lots of experience with high school, semipro and collegiate orchestras and choirs, but I haven't had any formal ear training, and I know it can get better. If I were to purchase a book or two from your ear training sequence, which would you recommend? Similarly, I've picked up a lot of theory here and there, but no formal training, particularly in jazz. Where would you recommend I start in your sequence?

2. I can read music well on cello, but that's because I know where everything is. Given my experience, what sources would be most effective for obtaining a working knowledge of the fretboard?

3. Do you recommend any good etude books, or would you not recommend taking that approach with this instrument?

Recommendation

Well I have quite a few books I would recommend. Basically I'm giving you the books that freshman guitar majors use at NYU and Princeton Universities.

For Sight Reading:

Single String Studies for Guitar Volume One
Lines: Sight Singing and Sight Reading Exercises
Rhythm Primer
Rhythms Volume One
Rhythms Volume Two
Chord Workbook for Guitar Volume One

For Music Theory:

Music Theory Workbook for Guitar Volume One and Two

For Ear Training:

Ear Training One Note Complete

Fanatic's Guide to Sight Singing and Ear Training

I would also get the ebook

Guitar Technique

I know this is a lot but this will have you totally set for the next couple years and cover all the things you are interested in. Email me when you are ready and I'll give you a specific practice schedule and additional information for studying out of these books. I'm figuring you have 2-3 hours a day to practice so that you can work through all of these books each day.

Book Recommendation Four

I'm a singer/songwriter with only some intuitive ear-training and an intellectual - but not much practiced - understanding of major/minor scales and interval relationships. I don't need the ability to sight sing (since I mostly work on original ideas), but I do want to be able to work and communicate with other musicians and to really develop my craft of songwriting as a truly proficient musician. Which book or combination of books and cd's will get me started?

Recommendation

In order to be a well rounded musician you will need to know music theory and be proficient with rhythm. It is also important to develop your ears so you can understand what you hear from an aural perspective. I would get Music Theory Workbook for all Instruments to improve your overall knowledge and understanding of music theory. I would also start on a rhythm study so you can improve your recognition and ability to play/understand all rhythms. The 1st book I would get in the rhythm series is Rhythm Primer. In order to improve your ear I would get Ear Training One Note Complete and Fanatic's Guide. These are all pretty technical books so if you could set aside 1 and 1/2 hours a day to work out of these books I think you would be able to communicate well with other musicians within 6 months to a year. Of course, it will take longer to really be proficient because these first books are only the beginning of a series of books to bring your ability up to the highest standard.

Book Recommendation Five

I'm a total beginner when it comes to playing the guitar. I don't know how to read music. I've just purchased a book - 'Guitar For Dummies' to aid me in my learning process. I've managed to play all the nine major and minor chords in the basic position, but I do have problems switching between them fluidly and I can't seem to find any information in the 'For Dummies' book on how to switch chords in a fluid manner. They (the books writers) just say to keep switching and you'll get good at doing it, gradually building speed and fluidity.

Please keep in mind that I'm not looking to become the next Jimi Hendrix or Eric Clapton. In short, I'm not looking to become a professional musician. Playing the guitar is just a hobby I've recently picked up, as I wanted to introduce some music in my life (I'm nineteen years old). I'm certainly not looking to become a profession musician, just to master the guitar so I can have lots of fun playing it. That's my long-term goal for playing the guitar.

I'm going to university soon, so I doubt if I can practice 4-5 hours a day on the guitar. Playing music is a passion for me, but not what I'll be using to earn money with in the distant future. I need a realistic method (doesn't take too much time daily) that enables me to become an excellent guitarist and still be able to get good grades in my university courses.

Starting out as a complete beginner, what books would you recommend for me? And it would be pretty useful if you could provide a list of the books that you recommend to guide me along the path from a complete beginner to an advanced guitarist. What I mean to say is, I would like to have the complete list of the necessary books to buy to take me from a complete beginner to an intermediate, and then from an intermediate to an advanced guitarist. I don't have much money to spend, so I certainly can't buy all the books you have listed on your site. I just need the suitable ones to help me become an excellent guitarist. I might be wrong, but I think that some of the books you sell are geared toward the professional musician who plays music for a living, not one who plays music for a hobby.

Book Recommendation

Thanks for contacting me. 1st Steps for a Beginning Guitarist would be the best book for you. This book was expressly written for students with a problem switching from one chord to another. Try the graduated exercises in the book for each chord progression and you should find that your chord switching will improve rather dramatically. If it doesn't let me know and we will examine the problem closer. I've included a list of books to get immediately and then a course of study for the future. This list figures you have 1 hour a day to practice along with time between classes to use a discman to listen to ear training exercises. Hopefully this listening could be done 4 to 5 times a day for 5 minutes during down time like walking between classes or waiting for a class to start.

Books to start.

1st Steps for a Beginning Guitarist
Music Theory for Guitar Volume One
Ear Training One Note Complete
The Essentials (not mandatory)
download C major scales from Music Workshop at www.brucearnold.com

ASSIGNMENT

- Work on one chord progression from 1st Steps book each week
- Do one page of theory from Music Theory book each week
- Learn One scale position from website each week
- Use scales or the lead patterns from Essentials if you want to start to improvise
- Do ear training between classes or other down time.

keep downloading scales as you complete them, do all scales in key of C first then begin learning them in all keys moving cycle 5 i.e. C, F, Bb, Eb etc.

NEXT LEVEL

Chord Workbook for Guitar Volume One
Music Theory for Guitar Volume Two
Rhythm Primer

- Chord Workbook: learn one page of chords a week. After 6 weeks start on chord progressions
- Music Theory: do exercises for one scale a week.
- Rhythm Primer: One page a week to start learning rhythm and how to read
- Continue with scales

Continuing work to learn to read:

Single String Studies for Guitar Volume One

LINES

Rhythms Volume One

Continuing work for chords:

after One year study in Chord Workbook One move on to Chord Workbook for Guitar Volume Two.

Book Recommendation Six

I could use help on deciding which books to get. I've played fingerstyle guitar on and off for more than 15 years. I can move up and down the neck without trouble, can read fairly well, and have a decent grasp of theory. I'm doing some arranging and composing and I was thinking of getting one of the chord workbooks (1 or 2?) to get a better understanding of chords and to explore progressions. I'm also interested in one of the ear training books but I am not sure which one to get. My goal is to be able to pick out melodies and basic progressions with ease.

The new "The Essentials: Chord Charts, Scales, and Lead Patterns for Guitar" looked interesting, too.

Where do I start?

Recommended Books

Thanks for contacting me. I would get the following books:

Chord Workbook for Guitar Volume One

The back of this book contains 36 chord progressions with a theory section before which explains how you can build, analyze or compose your own progressions. If you need any help with this section let me know.

Ear Training: One Note Complete

Fanatic's Guide to Sight Singing and Ear Training

These two books will give you the tools to start with ear training. You really should have both, but you at least need Ear Training One Note Complete

The Essentials

This book is jam packed with chords, scales and lead patterns. Probably the best quick reference you can find to the beginning information on these subjects. I will be coming out with a more complete survey of these subjects in the future.

Book Recommendation Seven

I browsed your site and also read about several of Bruce Arnold's books on amazon.com. I've been playing the guitar for a little over 2 years. I took lessons for about 8 months, but my teacher left the state and I've been floundering since then. Your books look interesting and get rave reviews, but I don't know which one to try.

I know lots of chords (can play a few barre chords—not well, but can play them) and I have a great memory for chords and little pieces I learned in lessons. I know nothing about theory, and can't figure out the strumming patterns of songs even when I know them like the back of my hand, can sing them, and have the tabs for them—I can play the chords, but that's it. I love music and playing is a joy, but I have found myself very unmotivated the past 6 months or so and hardly playing at all (even losing my calluses) So, to summarize: not a rank beginner, know lots of chords, great memory, no music theory, no "ear", no sense of figuring out strumming patterns, sad because I have lost direction and motivation.

What book would you recommend I buy?

Recommended Books

First I think 1st Steps for a Beginning Guitarist will be a good starting place for you. This book will show you the proper technique you need to use when playing the guitar but will also help you with your rhythm and chord changing problems.

Second, I would recommend Music Theory Workbook for Guitar Volume One. A completely "not fun" book, but it is a very valuable book to work through. This book will help you memorize all chords both in you head and with your hands. This will be very useful information when you start to process and understand the music theory aspects of each scale or chord progression you might learn. This is a workbook where you fill in answers to music theory questions. This is an excellent book to work on when you have breaks throughout the day or when commuting etc.

Last I would recommend Ear Training: One Note Complete. This will improve your ear so you are more "connected" with music and will in the long run help you to learn music directly from CDs and to hear and understand what others are playing. Once again this book and CDs are excellent tools to practice when commuting or any 5 to 10 minute down time throughout a day.

If you end up getting some of these books please write back and give me a detailed outline of how much time you have each day to practice and what kind of down time you have throughout the day to do a little music work. I will then send you back a schedule so you can get organized and improve at your fastest rate.

Book Recommendation Eight

I'm a total beginner when it comes to playing the guitar. I can't read music, and I have no idea whatsoever on how to play the guitar. But I'm willing to learn! I was browsing through amazon.com and I came across your books. I would like to learn to play the guitar very well, but as I'm going to university soon, I don't have much time to play and practice. I don't intend to become a professional musician by the way. I just want to get good at playing the guitar. Money is rather tight, as I have spent a considerable amount on the university fees and the recommended books to be used for my courses. I would appreciate it if you could provide me with a suitable list for a raw beginner, only emphasizing the necessary books, as I don't have much cash to spend. After your provide me with the basic list, please provide me with a list of where to go from there. To sum it up, please start by providing me a list to go from a raw beginner to an intermediate, and from an intermediate to an advanced player. Thanks in advance.

Recommended Books

Well first if money is tight contact Muse-EEK publishing

212-473-4601 – fx

info@muse-EEK.com

I would start with

1st Steps for a Beginning Guitarist
Music Theory Workbook for Guitar Volume One
Ear Training One Note Complete

I would then move on to:

Chord Workbook for Guitar Volume One
Music Theory Workbook for Guitar Volume Two
Fanatic's Guide to Sight Singing and Ear Training

From there I think we should talk and decide what direction you would like to concentrate on. You also might find problems along the way. In which case I might recommend other books to help a more specific problem.

You should also start learning scales by downloading the C major scales from Music Workshop at www.brucearnold.com

ASSIGNMENT TO START

- Pay close attention to the guitar technique section of 1st steps
- Work on one chord progression from 1st Steps book each week
- Do one page of theory from Music Theory book each week
- Learn One scale position from website each week and start improvising with audio files from princeton website
- Do ear training with discman while commuting or other down time.
- Keep downloading scales as you complete them do all scales in key of C first then beginning learning them in all keys moving cycle 5 i.e. C, F, Bb, Eb etc.

Book Recommendation Nine

I have been playing guitar for a year now, and have found that just by looking at tablature and listening to music it comes to me pretty easily. Now I am interested in starting to write my own songs and my own solos. I was wondering if you could suggest some books that would set me on the right path?

Recommended Books

Well my books are more serious than looking at tablature but I think if you are serious about learning about music and the guitar these books will help you immensely. I've started you with "1st Steps for a Beginning Guitarist" because you need the information on the proper way to play the guitar. All your work will be in vain if you play the wrong way. Also you will notice the strumming patterns for the chord progressions in the book are written with rhythmic notation. You need to know this notation when you write out your original songs for people to play. The rhythmic notation presented is what musicians expect to see when a specific rhythmic pattern is needed. If you are planning on playing with other musicians and don't want to look like an amateur, I would suggest you get your music theory together as much as possible. This will be a 1 to 2 year study for you but will put you in a position where you can speak in musical terms with confidence. I've only put down Music Theory Volume Two because that contains the scales you need to know but really you should work through Music Theory Workbook for Guitar Volume One too because the tedious work contained in this book will teach you intervals and chord construction. The ear training may seem like an odd recommendation but it is really the most important thing you can do to educate your ear so it understands the music you hear inside of you. So the books are listed below:

1st Steps for a Beginning Guitarist
Music Theory Workbook for Guitar Volume Two
Ear Training One Note Complete

Also, "The Essentials" covers some of the lead patterns you will need for soloing. You could order all these books from the muse-eek.com website.

Book Recommendation Ten

I have an hour a day to physically practice the guitar, plus an additional hour on the train (during my commute to work) to study away from the instrument. What books do you suggest I purchase?

Recommended Books

I think we should deal with the following subjects first:

Music Theory and it's implementation on the guitar
Chord Knowledge and Application
Ear Training

I'm going to give you two lists of books. One you should get immediately and others will be the books we will be working out of soon and also may be used for reference.

Immediate

Music Theory Workbook for Guitar Volume One
Chord Workbook for Guitar Volume One
Ear Training One Note Complete
Guitar Technique EBOOK

Reference and future study

Music Theory Workbook for Guitar Volume Two
Rhythm Primer
Rhythms Volume One
Fanatic's Guide to Sight Singing and Ear Training

Explanation of Immediate books:

The Music Theory Volume One book will get you started on learning all the various types of chords with added tensions. Quite a tedious book but everyone needs to get this information to a point that you just know it instantly.

Chord Workbook Volume One will teach you all the chords with a root on the 5th and 6th string that a professional guitarist needs to know. We will spend quite a bit of time on the progressions in the back of the book.

Ear Training One Note Complete will get you started on developing your aural perception skills. This is extremely important to your musical ability.

The Guitar Technique EBOOK will show you the proper way to play the guitar with both hands. This is extremely important. You don't want to have to relearn everything because of bad technique.

Explanation of Reference and future study books:

The Music Theory Volume Two book covers 22 scales, how to use them, exercises to memorize their location on the guitar fretboard and notes contained in each scale.

Rhythm Primer and Rhythms Volume One will help you develop your sense of rhythm and also start you on the path of learning to read on the guitar.

Fanatic's Guide is a sight singing book that you will use in conjunction with Ear Training One Note Complete. By working on listening exercises (Ear Training One Note) and singing exercises (Fanatic's Guide) your aural skills will improve at their fastest rate.

Once you get the books write back to me and I'll set up a practice schedule for you. One hour is really tight and it would be great if we could bump that up to 1 1/2 hours a day and 2 1/2 hours on Saturday and Sunday. Then you will make much faster progress.

Book and Guitar Recommendation

I am thinking of starting to play the electric guitar but I really don't know what kind of guitar I should buy and where should I start. I need some guidance with this adventure. I am willing to work hard and I would appreciate any help you could give me.

Recommendations

I would get a Fender Stratocaster Guitar. Get one made in Mexico. It will run you around \$350.00. You will also need an amplifier. I would get a Fender Princeton Amplifier. There are a few different types of Fender Princeton Amps, any of them would be great. You will also need a patch cord to plug in your guitar into the amp and a strap to hold your guitar up when you play. Both of these extras are available at any music store.

For books I would get:

1st Steps for a beginning Guitarist
Music Theory Workbook for Guitar Volume One
Ear Training One Note Complete.

After you get the guitar, amp and books write back to me with a detailed explanation of the amount of time you have to practice each day and I'll give you a practice schedule.

