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**The Beginner  
Guitarist  
Primer**

# The Beginner Guitarist Primer

Chords - Chord Theory - Online Access To FREE Video Lessons

Al Wielder - RIFF TV

<http://www.rifftv.com>



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## Forward And Dedication

As an independent guitarist/composer/publisher/producer for more than 25 years, I have decided (at the request of friends and colleagues) to publish a **beginner guitarist primer**. My goal is to help new guitarists jump start their musical journey. This ebook is dedicated to those of you who share a burning passion to play the guitar. It is also dedicated to the ideology that hard work, perseverance, and practice can overcome what you lack in musical genius.

My musical career has included more than two decades of writing, arranging, performing, recording, and producing my own original music. I have appeared on television as well as live radio, and have produced 1 album and 3 CD's. My roots are in traditional Bluegrass music. However, the bulk of my compositions and live performances have been based on Blues, Rock and Roll, and Blues-Rock Fusion. I love traditional acoustic music as much as I love the electric guitar.

## My Advice To Beginner Guitarists

So, you have decided to learn to play the guitar. Congratulations! You have made a great choice. If you are willing to work hard, you will enjoy a great sense of accomplishment and personal satisfaction as you learn to play the guitar.

This ebook is designed to provide a roadmap as you begin your study as a new guitarist. It is not designed to teach you everything there is to know about the guitar. This ebook will help you understand the importance of becoming a rhythm guitarist **first**. Do not fall into the trap of thinking that being a "super-shredder" makes you a good guitarist. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Master the concepts of rhythm guitar and guitar theory and you will lay the foundation for becoming a guitar legend.

Understanding music theory concepts are essential if you are going to become an accomplished guitarist. Do not be frightened by the words "music theory". Theory is easier than you think and learning the fundamental concepts in theory will make all the difference in your accomplishments as a musician. Guitar theory and music theory are your friends.

Master the simple theory based lessons in this ebook and you will have the foundation to become a monster guitarist. Also, be sure to register for your free membership at [Riff TV.com - FREE Video Guitar Lessons](http://RiffTV.com) . In the members area you will have access to **free beginner guitar lesson videos** and more. Thank you for supporting Riff TV by purchasing this ebook. Now go forth and master the guitar!

- Al Wielder

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# CHAPTER 1:

Get Some Inspiration: Legendary Guitarist Profiles



## Guitarist Profile - Stevie Ray Vaughan

Stevie Ray Vaughan was born in Texas at Methodist Hospital on October 3, 1954. Stevie had a great love for music from a very early age. Jimmie Vaughan, Stevie's older brother inspired him to play the guitar.



[Stevie Ray Vaughan: Lightnin' Blues 1983-1987](#) Performed by Stevie Ray Vaughan. Guitar tablature songbook.

Stevie left school at the age of 17. He played in a series of rock bands before joining a blues band called The Nightcrawlers. It was near this time of his life that Stevie purchased a used 1963 Stratocaster from Ray's Music Exchange in Austin, Texas.

Stevie grew very fond of the '63 Strat and he named the guitar "Number One". It has also been reported that he liked to call the guitar "First Wife". This Stratocaster became Stevie's favorite guitar and he would keep it throughout his career in music.

The Nightcrawlers never hit the big time, but Stevie kept pressing on with his music. He found his passion and his sound in blues and blues-based rock. Stevie played in a series of successful blues bands before forming his own group, "Double Trouble".

Stevie got a break when a tape of the group found its way into the hands of Mick Jagger. Mick invited "Double Trouble" to play at a party for the Rolling Stones. This break led to Stevie Ray being hired by David Bowie.

Soon afterward "Texas Flood" was released. The album was a blockbuster and was nominated for two Grammys. A series of hit albums followed "Texas Flood".

The pressures of stardom, life on the road and the music business took a toll on Stevie for a short time. He went into a drug rehabilitation program after collapsing during a performance. Following his release from rehab, Stevie was clean and sober. He went on to record two more hit albums before his tragic death on August 26, 1990. Stevie Ray Vaughan was killed in a helicopter crash following a concert with blues legend Eric Clapton.

The talent and style of Stevie Ray Vaughan cannot be overstated. He was an incredible guitarist with a true soul for the blues. Stevie's influence on blues and aspiring blues guitarists will be felt for years to come.



## Artist Profile: Jimmy Page



Jimmy Page was born James Patrick Page in Heston, Middlesex-Britain on January 9, 1944. Jimmy's artistic talents were evident from an early age. He began playing guitar at age 12. It has been reported that Jimmy was inspired by James Burton and Scotty Moore, both of whom played guitar for Elvis Presley. When Jimmy was 14, he was featured on ITV's Search For Stars (talent search) program.

During his teen years, Jimmy played with Neil Christian and the Crusaders. It was around this time that Jimmy's diverse artistic talent prompted him to temporarily move from music to painting. It was not long before Jimmy returned to the guitar with a fervor. During the 1960's, Jimmy became recognized as Britain's best session guitarist. During his time as a session artist, Page appeared on records by The Kinks and The Rolling Stones. While working as a session guitarist for Decca Records, Page appeared on a recording called "Diamonds" by Jet Harris and Tony Meehan. The recording went to Number 1 on the singles chart in 1963. It has been reported that Page appeared on about 60% of the rock music recorded in England from 1963 to 1966.

Jimmy soon joined "The Yardbirds" and played both bass and guitar at different times in the band. As time passed and personnel changes in the band took place, "The New Yardbirds" was formed. The band enjoyed limited success when compared to the "Super Group" status achieved by its metamorphosis into the legendary "Led Zeppelin".



Jimmy Page will be identified forever by his work in Led Zeppelin. The band is recognized as one of the greatest Rock and Roll bands of all time, and rightfully so.

It is also important to remember the influences and the contributions Page has made to the sound of rock music. Jimmy Page is innovative and very creative in his approach to guitar. He is widely recognized as the first rock guitarist to use the violin bow with the electric guitar. It is important to note that some dispute the claim that he was the first. It has been reported that Eddie Phillips of "The Creation" used the bow before Page in the 1960's. It matters little who actually used the technique first, the fact of the matter is, Jimmy Page is associated with making the world aware that the concept is not only doable, but has awesome effect.

Page was also very instrumental in the development of the "Roger Mayer Fuzz Box". In 1964, when Jimmy was a young session guitarist, his friend Roger Mayer worked for the British Admiralty in vibration and acoustic research. Page encouraged Mayer to build him a guitar effects unit. The result of the collaboration was the creation of one of the first guitar "fuzz boxes". The early unit featured germanium transistors. The effects box was readily accepted and made it's way into many of Jimmy's studio recording sessions. It is reported that Jimmy used the "fuzz box" on the recording of The Who's "My Generation". Jimmy is also remembered for his innovative session work that includes the use of the "Maestro Echoplex".

Jimmy Page is the quintessential rock guitar super-hero. Many aspiring guitarists have poured over his discography and compositions in order to emulate his innovative sound. Modern rock and roll music would not be what it is today without the contributions of Jimmy Page.



If you would like to learn more about Jimmy Page, his career and his music, check out these cool resources:

[Presence - The Unauthorized Biography Of Jimmy Page](#)

[Stairway to Heaven](#)

[Jimmy Page & Robert Plant No Quarter - Unledded](#)

[Jimmy Page & Robert Plant Walking Into Clarksdale](#)

## Guitarist Profile - Carlos Santana

Carlos Santana is recognized as one of the premier guitar players of our time. His versatile style blends Latin music, Jazz and Rock into a fusion of melody and sonic marvel. Carlos Santana is an amazing guitarist. This article is a brief history of Carlos' life and music.



Carlos Santana was born on July 20, 1947 in Autlan De Navarro, Mexico. It was there he spent the early years of his life. Carlos began playing the violin at age five. At the age of eight, Carlos began to play the guitar. As time passed, the family moved to Tijuana. While living in Tijuana, Carlos began his music career playing in local clubs and bars.

In the early 1960's, the family moved to San Francisco. Carlos graduated high school in 1965. In 1966 Carlos formed The Santana Blues Band. The Santana Blues Band was not your typical blues band. Carlos and the band stood apart from typical blues bands by fusing the elements of Latin, Jazz and Blues into a rich and unique sound. Word spread quickly and the band soon signed with Columbia Records. In 1969 the band released their first album.

Carlos gained notoriety and instant stardom following the band's performance at Woodstock. In 1970 Santana released the blockbuster album titled Abraxas. This album showcased Santana's massive talent. Abraxas was a mix of blues, jazz, salsa and rock. The sound was precise, masterful and filled with the distinctive tone and sound of Carlos Santana's lead guitar style.

Carlos Santana continues to establish new frontiers in his musical legacy. At 58, he is still considered a masterful virtuoso and his concerts sell out on a regular basis. To date he has sold over 50 million records and entertained more than 30 million fans. Carlos and his band have recorded more than 35 records.

Carlos Santana's original band members are as follows:

Guitar - Vocals: Carlos Santana

Bass Guitar: Gus Rodrigues

Keyboards - Vocals: Greg Rolie

Drums: Rod Harper



**Carlos Santana: Santana** Performed by Carlos Santana. Guitar tablature songbook for guitar and voice. 80 pages. Published by Warner Brothers.  
Average customer rating: ★★★★★

Since 1966 more than 60 musicians have played with the band.

Carlos Santana's influence on Rock and Blues music cannot be understated. Carlos Santana has also played an enormous part in the development of the electric guitar. The early endorsement of Paul Reed Smith guitars by Carlos Santana was pivotal for the guitar maker. The endorsement helped PRS establish themselves as the premier guitar maker they are today.

## Roy Buchanan: The World's Greatest Unknown Guitar Player



Roy Buchanan was born in Ozark Arkansas on September 23, 1939. His given name was Leroy Buchanan. Roy's love for music and the guitar were very evident from an early age. At the age of 9, Roy's parents bought him a lap steel guitar. It is reported that Roy bought his first conventional electric guitar at the age of 13. The guitar was a Fender Telecaster. The Fender Telecaster would become the "trademark" guitar of Roy Buchanan.

At the age of 14, Roy dropped out of school to pursue his passion for music. Roy was staying with his older brother and sister in Los Angeles when he met Johnny Otis. Johnny mentored Roy and the two became friends. Shortly after meeting Johnny, Roy formed a band called The Heartbeats.

The Heartbeats was short lived and Roy moved on to a gig in Tulsa, Oklahoma playing for Oklahoma Bandstand. It was in Oklahoma that Roy met Dale Hawkins. Roy joined his band and toured with Dale for three years. Roy made his recording debut playing the solo on Hawkins tune: 'My Babe'.

Soon, Roy met Ronnie Hawkins (Dale's cousin), joined his band and moved to Canada. It was during this time that Roy met bass player Robbie Robertson. Roy taught Robbie to play the guitar. Robbie and other members of Ronnie Hawkins band went on to form "The Band". This fact proves that Roy's impact on popular music in the 60's was much greater than most imagine.

In the summer of 1961, Roy married Judy Owens and the couple settled in Washington. Roy struggled with his music career during the 60's. In 1970 Roy was back on the club circuit. He formed a new band, "Buch and The Snake Stretchers". During this time Roy made his debut as front man. The band soon developed an underground following. "Buch and The Snake Stretchers" played a gig with singer Danny Denver at the Crossroads bar in 1970. During this gig Roy Buchanan was 'discovered' by the media.

An article about Roy appeared in the Washington Star, and in Rolling Stone magazine. Soon, a producer for WNET in New York, John Adams saw the article in Rolling Stone. Shortly after reading the article he arranged to make a documentary about Roy. The documentary was called "The Best Unknown Guitarist in the World". The film was broadcast on November 8, 1971 and it received rave reviews. The film earned Roy a contract with Polydor Records.

Rumor has it that Roy was offered the job of guitarist for the Rolling Stones when Brian Jones left the group. It has been reported that Roy turned the band down. Roy Buchanan is one of the only artists to have sold out Carnegie Hall before ever releasing a record. Roy cut 5 records for Polydor and 3 for Atlantic, earning one Gold record for each label. Soon the pressures of forces within the music business took their toll on Roy and in 1981 he left the studio in disgust. Roy vowed to never return to the studio

without artistic freedom and latitude.



In 1985 Roy was persuaded to return to the studio by Alligator Records. The first album for Alligator, "When A Guitar Plays The Blues" was released in the spring of 1985. It was Roy's first true blues album and was created with total artistic freedom in the studio. Fans responded and the album soared into Billboard's pop charts like a bullet. The album stayed in the charts for 13 weeks. The album was a critically acclaimed success. Roy went on to record 2 more LP's for Alligator Records.

On the night of August 14, 1988, Roy was arrested for public intoxication and taken to the Fairfax County Virginia Adult Detention Center. Official accounts say that Roy Buchanan hanged himself in his cell by his shirt. He was the father of seven children and had five grandchildren. The death of Roy Buchanan is shrouded in mystery and controversy. Jerry Hentman was the man in the cell opposite Roy's at the time of Roy's death. Jerry Hentman reports his version of the events in the "Sweet Dreams of Roy Buchanan" biography. Regardless of the events that took place to end the life of Roy Buchanan, one thing is certain, the world lost one of its greatest guitar players ever the night Roy Buchanan died.

If you want to accept the challenge and try to learn some of the incredible licks of Roy Buchanan, these books are a must:

[Roy Buchanan - American Axe](#)

[Roy Buchanan: The Roy Buchanan Collection](#)

Roy's Discography:

Buch and The Snake Stretchers - 1971

Roy Buchanan - 1972

Second album - 18 January, 1973

That's What I Am Here For - 1973

Rescue Me - 1974

In the Beginning - 1974

Live Stock - 1974

A Street Called Straight - 1976

Loading Zone - 1977 (featuring Steve Cropper)

You're Not Alone - 1978

My Babe - 1981

When a Guitar Plays the Blues - July, 1985

Live in USA and Holland 1977-85

Live in Japan - 1977

Live - Charley Blues Legend Volume Nine - 1985-87

Dancing on the Edge - 1986

Hot wires - 7 July, 1987

Early Years - October, 1989

In the beginning - May 24, 1991

Guitar on fire - The Atlantic sessions - 1993

Roy Buchanan - Sweet dreams - The Anthology - September 22, 1992

Malaguena (The Collectors Edition) - 1997

Deluxe Edition - 2001

The Millennium Collection - 2002

American Axe: Live in 1974 - 2003



# CHAPTER 2:

Getting Started:  
Valuable Information To Jump Start A New Player



## **Begin Your Practice Sessions With Finger Exercises**

It is important to warm-up as you begin your daily practice routine. There are several techniques you can employ as you prepare to practice. In this lesson I want to briefly mention some fingering exercises that you may find useful. These techniques will help you loosen your fingers while increasing your flexibility and dexterity over time.

Begin your guitar practice session by flexing your fingers rapidly for a minute or two. Create a rhythmic motion by balling your fingers into a fist followed by extending the fingers fully in rapid succession. Add a second part to this exercise by including a galloping motion with the fingers of each hand while your thumbs are extended. Combine both parts of the exercise in rapid succession for approximately one minute.

This should loosen your fingers and increase blood flow to the hand without triggering the onset of fatigue. As you become accustomed to this daily exercise, you may want to consider adding a minute or two to the warm up process. Be careful not to over-do it. It is possible to increase your flexibility and hand strength by adding time to this warm-up exercise, just be sure to do so gradually.

Another good exercise to add to this regimen is to spread your fingers as far apart as possible. Using the fingers of one hand, spread the distance between the index and middle fingers as far as possible. Repeat this process between the middle and ring fingers, and the ring finger and pinky. Spread the fingers as far as possible and flex the separation action in and out. Repeat this process for several minutes. The goal is to increase the flexibility in your fingers and stretch your reach.

The long-term results of these exercises will increase flexibility, co-ordination and dexterity. The immediate results will include increased blood flow to the hand and fingers. It will also raise your level of finger awareness. Try closing your eyes and concentrating on your fingers during these exercises.

It is also beneficial to use grip strengthening devices. These devices can be tennis balls or spring loaded grip exercisers. The idea is to strengthen your grip in each hand. It is possible to enhance the results with any isometric device.

The goal is to develop solid stretching, strengthening and flex techniques. As you add these and similar exercises to your practice routine, your guitar playing will improve. It is not as fun or glamorous as burning up your favorite guitar riffs on-stage, but it does work.

For additional information and exercises for guitarists be sure to check these out:

[Accelerate Your Guitar Playing](#)

[Exercises](#)

## Finger Drills And Pick Techniques

In this lesson I would like to discuss finger drills and pick techniques. It is very important to practice repetitive finger drills and pick techniques. It is not much fun in the beginning, but it will increase your hand mobility and your guitar playing skills.

First, let's practice a basic finger drill. This exercise will help you develop speed and precision on the fretboard. And, it is a good drill to practice over the years no matter how proficient you become with the guitar.

Start on the sixth string (the low E string) and pick the string once with no fingers on the fretboard (open). Pick the sixth string again while pressing the string at the first fret with the index finger. Add the middle finger at the second fret and pick the string again. Now, add the ring finger at the third fret and pick the string again. Finally, add the pinky at the fourth fret and pick the string again. Repeat the progression.

Next, start with the pinky on the fourth fret and play the sequence in reverse. Combine the two progression sequences and play them at a slow speed. Practice the sequences forward and reverse at a slow speed and play each note clearly. When you have become comfortable with a slow speed, increase your speed to a moderate tempo.

Repeat this process and add the fifth string (A String). Continue to repeat the process and add the fourth, third, second and first strings. Play all six strings in succession from the first to the fourth frets. Then repeat the progression sequence in reverse. Practice the finger exercises slowly. When you are comfortable performing the progression sequence forward and reverse at a slow tempo, change to a moderate tempo. When you are proficient at a slow and moderate tempo, add a faster tempo (also known as "Presto").

Establish a discipline in your practice routine by making yourself play this exercise slowly, moderately and fast. Do not fall into the bad habit of playing fast all the time.

As you become proficient with this exercise at frets 1 through 4, change the locations on the fretboard to include all frets. Practice the sequence (forward and reverse) while playing up and down the entire fretboard.

Finally, let's discuss the pick technique or pick drill. This part is simple and there is only one rule to follow. Always pick each string using an up and down picking action. Never use only "down" strokes or only "up" strokes. Always alternate the strokes: Down - Up, Down - Up, Down - Up, Down. The pick technique is simple but can not be over emphasized. Develop the habit of picking the strings using a Down - Up, Down sequence. This habit will increase your speed as you develop your playing style.

It is possible to develop good habits by the methods and practices you employ during your practice time. Unfortunately, it is also possible to develop bad habits along the way. A good rule of thumb is to evaluate the procedures you include in your practice regimen. It is a good idea to cross reference them with reputable instructional materials which will include:

Guitar Technique Manuals

Guitar Technique DVD's

Guitar Wall Charts

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