

Get Into Guitar

Practice

Guide



WELCOME TO GET INTO GUITAR

We are genuinely very excited that your child has joined Get Into Guitar. This guitar guide is designed to help children and parents get the most out of our lessons and kick start your child's journey to stardom. If you want advice on buying a guitar or have any other questions please do contact us at info@getintoguitar.co.uk

PRACTICE



Practice is the most important thing your child can do to improve their guitar skills. However this should be fun! Follow these tips to help.

1. Make sure the guitar is in tune.
2. Practice little and often.



- "Play a concert for me" – Use a makeshift stage, dim the lights, set the crowd and cheer like crazy.
- "Teach me how to play that" – This requires the child to think about what they know and will reveal any gaps in their understanding. It also empowers them as they become the teacher.



- "How fast can you play that?" – When learning a song encourage your child to start out slow and steady while they become familiar with it. Then see if they can get faster and faster. Don't worry about mistakes, just gently correct them if they happen. Use a stopwatch. Can they beat their time?

- "Lets have a jam" - Grab the pots and pans, keyboards or backing music and try to play together as a band. Encourage your child to listen to any other musicians in the band too to play at the same time. This is an important skill when playing with others.

3. Take part in Get Into Guitar performances when available. This gives real purpose to practice.

4. Take part in Get Into Guitar competitions to win great prizes. Again this gives the children the incentive to 'get good'!

5. If your child can't remember the tune they are trying to play then rejig their memory by playing it using online media.

6. Check your child understands how to read our music sheets (below). Ask them to explain it to you so you can learn too.



TUNING

For children who bring their own guitar to lessons we make sure to tune their instrument every week. However they can drop out of tune quite easily. If the notes of a song don't sound quite right the guitar probably needs a little tuning. Therefore downloading a free tuning app on your phone is a great idea. We use GuitarTuna.



HOLDING THE GUITAR

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Holding the guitar in either of positions 1 or 2 is advised. Most children choose position 2. Although not all these pictures show it, it is very important for your child to have a strap on their guitar as this keeps it in position for playing. Sitting on a low seat is best as it stops the guitar from sliding down the child's legs and away from them. If they have an electric guitar then holding it as displayed in picture 2 is recommended.

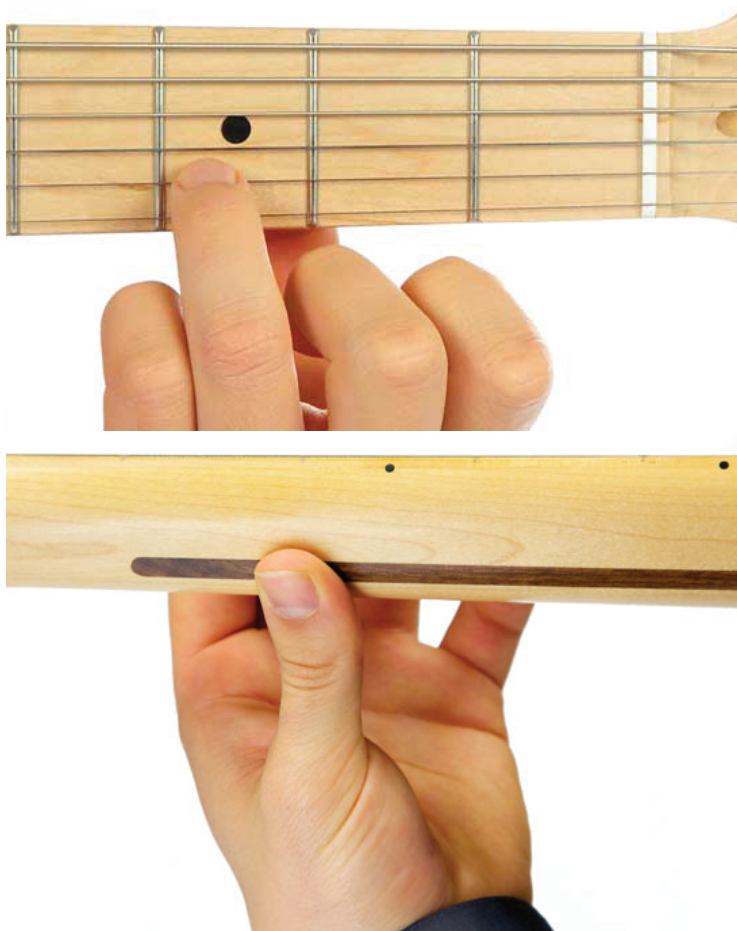
A strap also enables your child to try playing stood up too. It is important that your child holds the guitar the correct way round! If they are right handed their right hand should be the one that will pluck/strum the strings.

PLAYING THE STRINGS

We would advise your child to start by using their thumb to pluck the string in a downward fashion towards the floor. Some children favour using their index or middle finger to pluck the string by pulling it upwards. Let your child experiment to see what feels best. Finally they may want to try using a pick which should be held between their thumb and index finger or thumb and index and middle finger.



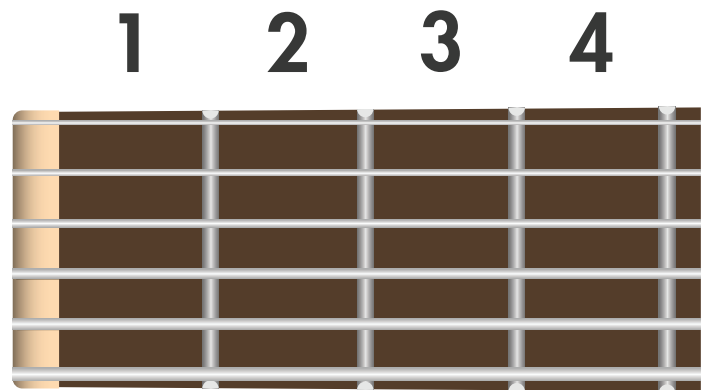
PRESSING DOWN THE FRETS



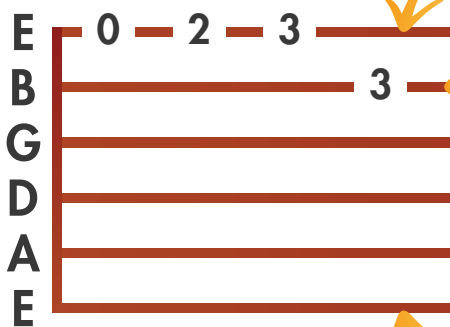
With their other hand your child will need to press down on the string in different frets on the guitar. This is called the fretting hand. The technique involves curling the fingers so the string can be pressed down with the finger tips. Encourage your child to practise using each of their fingers to press down. They might even try using their pinky too after a while. Using the thumb round the back of the guitar neck adds strength and helps to get a nice clean sound on each note.

THE FRETBOARD

These are called frets. You must press the string down in the middle of the fret and pluck the string with the other hand to make a sound and play a clean note.



READING TAB



This is the thinnest string and is closest to your feet when holding the guitar.

This tells you to press down on fret 3 and pluck the string. Make sure you are playing the correct string.

This is the thickest string and is closest to your head when holding the guitar.



READING CHORDS

This chord diagram shows an Am chord. When playing chords your child may want to use a pick or their thumb to strum the strings. Number 1 should be pressed by finger 1, number 2 by finger 2 etc. The x's tell you which strings should not be strummed for a particular chord. Again curling the fingers so the strings are pressed with the finger tips helps more strings to sound correctly and makes for a better sounding chord overall.

