GUITAR BOOK 1

LEARN TO SING AND PLAY!

MELODIES for GUITAR

by S PARKER GOUBERT

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Introduction

There is a classic joke that goes something like this: How do you get an electric guitar player to turn the volume down? Put a sheet of music in front of him! The humor of this joke was reinforced for me when I was in music school. We guitar players seemed to be the worst note-readers of any student musicians. Piano players always seemed to be the best and I wondered why. In searching for an answer, I thought about the advantages of the piano. Each pitch can only be played in one spot on a piano. All the notes are in a row, from low to high, left to right (which is also how we read). The pattern of white and black keys repeats over and over (so every 'E', for example, looks the same at every point on the keyboard). Then it hit me: maybe the design of the piano just makes more sense than the design of the guitar! After this epiphany, I started trying to look at the guitar like a piano. Doing so made me realize that the guitar is designed much like a stack of six short keyboards, one on top of the other. To make things more confusing, the notes are in different places on each one. What a headache!

Traditional guitar methods dive straight into this complexity, introducing notes on the first four frets of all six strings (known as a 'position'). They also introduce the staff and rhythm immediately. While this approach is nicely integrated and can be effective, it adds layers of complexity to an already complex instrument!

The purpose of this book is to make it easy for guitar players to memorize the notes on their fretboard so they can focus on playing and having fun. If playing the guitar is like playing six different pianos, wouldn't it be easiest to learn them one at a time? In contrast to traditional methods, therefore, this book introduces notes across 12 frets, one string at a time. Doing so demystifies the fretboard because, like a piano, the notes are in order and in a straight line on one string. Also, a single string is always in tune with itself, so students have the opportunity to develop their ear before ever having to use it to tune the strings to one another.

To simplify the learning process, neither the staff nor any rhythmic symbols are introduced in Book 1. This ensures that the focus stays on memorizing notes. Students are encouraged to rely on their familiarity with each tune for tempo and rhythm at this stage.

Finally, it should be stated that this is not intended as a technique book. Students can use one finger to play through this entire book (and should!). This ensures that technique doesn't distract from playing the tune or getting familiar with the fretboard. That being said, one brief exercise is included in order to help the pure beginner get a clear pitch to ring out when they play.

Who This Book Is For

Although it is written with the pure beginner in mind, it is equally useful for experienced guitar players who want to improve their familiarity with the fretboard. The book is also designed as an effective ‘crash-course’ for musicians who play other instruments but are interested in the guitar. Teachers can also improvise accompanying chords in order to play along with their guitar students.

About The Author

S Parker Goubert is an experienced musician who has been playing guitar since the age of 10 and teaching since the age of 16. His love for the guitar eventually led him to music school, where he studied music theory and composition. Throughout that time he has been lucky enough to play guitar in rock bands, classical ensembles, and even music theater! His teaching career has included one-on-one lessons with students ranging in age from 6-65 and classes at the elementary, middle school, and college level. He loves the guitar more than ever and continues to write, record, perform, and teach to this day.

Background

Part I: The Musical Alphabet

Music deals with sound, which is purely abstract. In order to talk about music clearly, it's important to have different words to describe different sounds. How high is one sound? How long does it last? How loud is it? Luckily, we don't have to start from scratch to answer these questions. The standard terms we use to describe sound have been developed over the last thousand years by countless people, and we get to inherit that knowledge. It's just a matter of learning the vocabulary. In this book we'll explore **pitch**, which *measures sounds from low to high*.

The **Musical Alphabet** represents any given pitch with one of seven letters:
A B C D E F or G. Each pitch sounds a little higher than the one before it. We can obviously hear a lot more than seven pitches, so what happens when we go higher than G? The answer is easy, it's just like the days of the week. We repeat the names of each day over and over again. Likewise, if G is the highest pitch in our musical alphabet, we'll start from A again to go even higher.

Further, just like the days between one Monday and the next are called a week, there is a special name for the distance between one A and the next. It's called an **Octave** and it's easy to remember. "Oct-" means eight and there are 8 pitches in an octave:

A B C D E F G A
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

We can easily measure an octave from any pitch, because we always end up at the same letter we started with.

Thus, B to B… B C D E F G A B
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 …is the distance of an octave, and
C to C… C D E F G A B C
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 ...is also the distance of an octave.

Remember, if we were to play these pitches on an instrument, each one would sound *slightly higher* than the last. This means the final C would sound an *octave higher* than the first C in our musical alphabet.

The distance of an octave can also be measured backwards. For example...

D C B A G F E D
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 ...is still the distance of an octave.

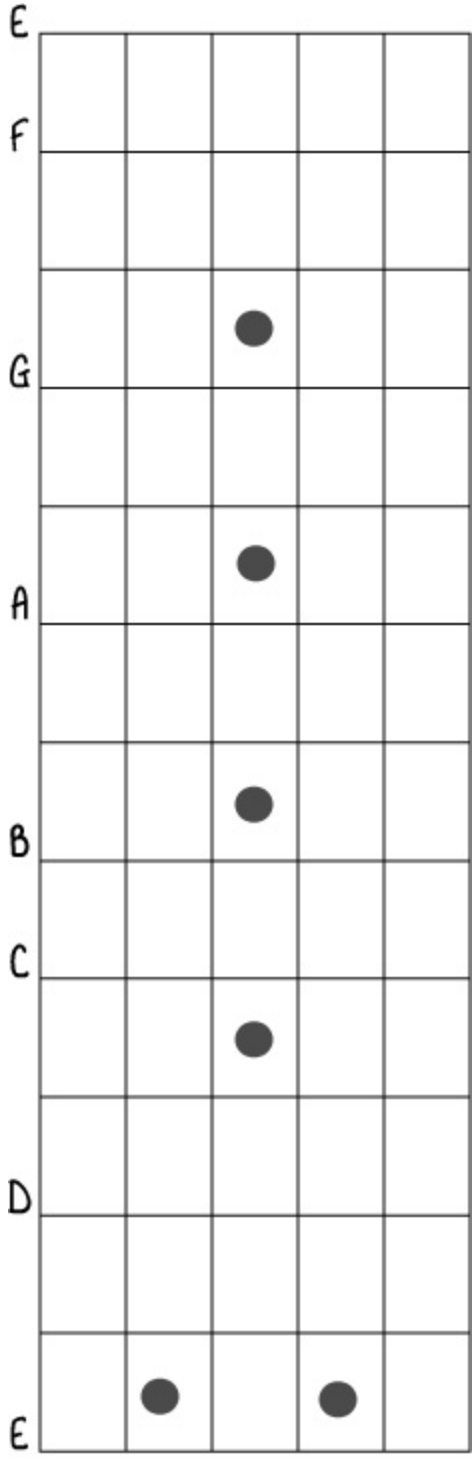
The only difference is that going backwards, each pitch sounds *slightly lower* than the one before it. In this case, the last D would sound an *octave lower* than the first.

Finally, because our musical alphabet repeats endlessly we can measure distances of more than one octave. To illustrate, let's repeat our letters and numbers:

C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

This shows us that the last C sounds *three octaves higher* than the first!

Melodies for the 6th String (E)



Memorize the notes:
G, A, and B are **ON** dots
C and D are **BETWEEN** dots

It's Raining, It's Pouring

B | D | B E | D | B C |	It's raining, it's pouring the
D | B E | D | B B |	Old man is snoring, he
C C | A A | C C | A A |	Went to bed and bumped his head and
D D | D A | B | G	Can't get up this morning

Jingle Bells

B B | B |	Jingle bells
B B | B |	Jingle bells
B D | G A | B |	Jingle all the way
C C | C C | C B | B B B |	Oh, what fun it is to ride in a
B A | A B | A | D |	One-horse open sleigh, hey!
B B | B |	Jingle bells
B B | B |	Jingle bells
B D | G A | B |	Jingle all the way
C C | C C | C B | B B B |	Oh, what fun it is to ride in a
D D | C A | G	One-horse open sleigh

London Bridge Is Falling Down

D E | D C | B C | D |	London Bridge is falling down
A B | C | B C | D |	Falling down, falling down
D E | D C | B C | D |	London Bridge is falling down
A | D | B G	My fair lady

Mary Had a Little Lamb

A G | F G | A A | A |	Mary had a little lamb
G G | G | A C | C |	Little lamb, little lamb
A G | F G | A A | A A |	Mary had a little lamb whose
G G | A G | F	Fleece was white as snow

My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean

G | E D C | D C A | G E |	My Bonnie lies over the ocean
G | E D C | C B C | D |	My Bonnie lies over the sea
G | E D C | D C A | G E |	My Bonnie lies over the ocean
G | A D C | B A B | C |	Oh, bring back my Bonnie to me
G | C | A | D C |	Bring back, bring back, oh
B B B | B A B | C D | E |	Bring back my Bonnie to me, to me
G | C | A | D C |	Bring back, bring back, oh
B B B | B A B | C |	Bring back my Bonnie to me