

THE FOLKSING GUITAR GU AN INSTRUCTION RECO PETE SEEG

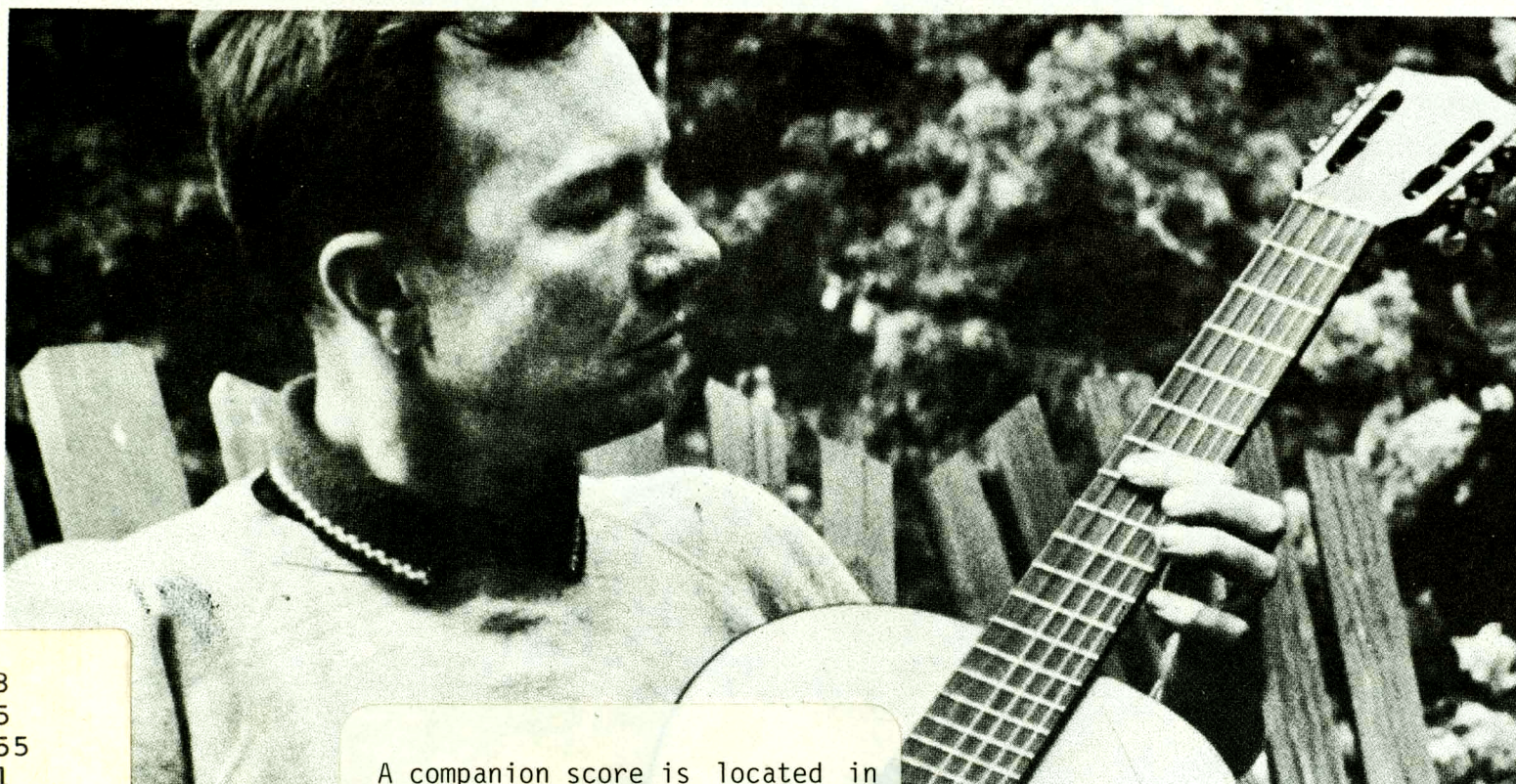


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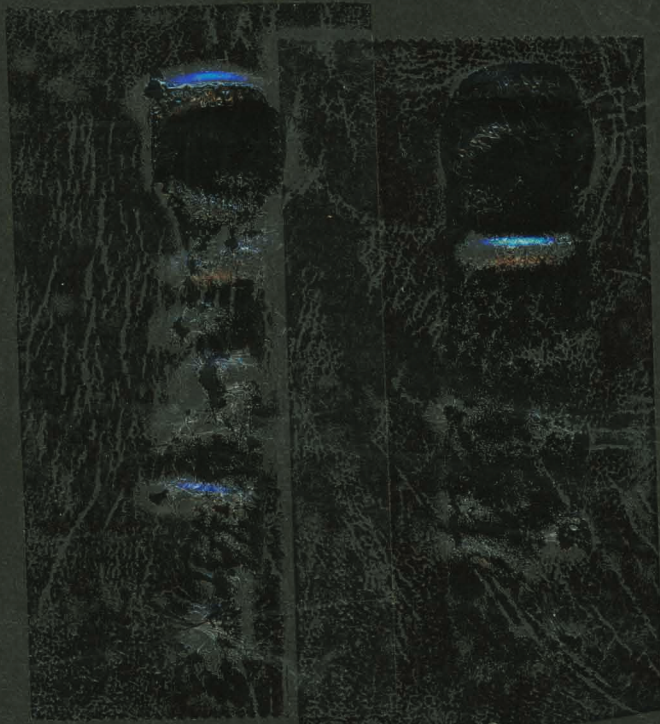
MT
588
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1955
v.1

A companion score is located in

MT 588 S45 1955. V-1
SEEGER PETE 1919-
THE FOLKSINGER'S GUITAR GUIDE
SOUND RECORDING --
39966671 MUSIC LP



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The Folksinger's GUITAR GUIDE

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AN INSTRUCTION RECORD
BY Peter Seeger

HOW TO USE THIS INSTRUCTION RECORD

Play through it, and at the same time read this manual; see what its scope and approach is. Some musicians may want to skip large parts of it. Beginners will have to ignore other sections.

If you don't read music it will be of especial help to learn how to read the tablature. (inside cover). Tablature is the six lines given under each example of music. Each line represents a string of the guitar, and the number on each string stands for the fret at which the left hand stops the string.

Practice each small section over and over, until it comes easy. Actually, if you enjoy playing the guitar, you shouldn't think of it as practicing, in the formal sense. Rather, simply play for your own enjoyment and that of your friends.

Beg, borrow, or steal some of the records listed on page 20. They will be of help to you in giving you an idea of the scope and possibilities of the instrument.

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MT
588
S45
1955
v.1

MUSIC LP

54

701 Seventh Ave., NYC NY

INTRODUCTION

Many folk songs need no instrument to accompany them. Some old ballads, for example, sound much better with the solo voice alone. Some work songs and spirituals are taken out of character when accompanied by pianos and orchestras - or guitars. And as for lullabies -- I am sure many a child has been bedded 'a cappella.'

Nevertheless a guitar can make beautiful music, and has proven itself the most adaptable of accompanying instruments. Every nation has developed its own style of playing it. The guitar started off in Asia (the Persian "tar") thousands of years ago. In the 12th century gypsies brought it to Europe. It entered the folklore of every country. The New World developed it further. In the USA alone we find 'blues' guitar, 'hillbilly' and 'steel' guitar, and of course, many jazz guitar styles.

If you would like to play a guitar while you and your friends sing folk songs, this record can help you get started, even if you can't read a note of music. In the end you will work out a personal style of your own, after you have passed through a period of imitating many others.

So - let's get started.

You need a phonograph, to play this record. (See page 20).

You need a guitar. (See page 20 for suggestions on how to select and buy one.) Perhaps later on you'll need thumbpicks or flat picks (see page 21) and perhaps a pitch pipe to tune it.

You also need a capo. This little device fastens on to the neck of the guitar and makes it possible for you to play in any key, just by moving it up and down. See page 8 for more details on its use.

Now put the needle in the groove, play the record completely through. Later on you may spend a whole day mastering some 15-second segment of it, but now get a general idea of what you have ahead of you.

SIDE I

BAND I -- Tuning Up:

VOICE:

GUITAR

you get a line and

RIGHT HAND: T I M I T I M I T I M I ETC.

TAB

you get a line and

TAB

I'll get a pole Honey —

TAB

I'll get a pole Babe!

TAB

You get a line

I'll get a pole

T T T T H

Honey

T T T T H

sugar ba-by mine

etc.

"... I guess any musical instrument can be as hard to play as you want to make it. And if you wanted to be a person like Andre Segovia or Merle Travis, why it would take a lifetime of training. But for most of us, playing a guitar can be about as simple as walking. Of course, remember, it took us all a couple of years to learn how to walk."

"Well, if you want to play a guitar, let's take the first step, and that is, get it in tune. Do you have a pitchpipe? The lowest string should be a bass E."

middle C

↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑
6th 5th 4th 3rd 2nd 1st
E A D G B E

And the next string to it is called the fifth string; should be an A

And the next string to it is called the fourth string; should be a D

Notice that each one of these notes is four notes apart

And the third string is called G

Oh, oh, you went too high. Can't hurry this process

Too low now--slower

Second string is B; that's one note below middle C, in case you ever want to use a piano to tune it on

And the top string, the first string is again an E, just two octaves above the lowest string

There, now we're in business.

(Note: A common method of tuning a guitar, if you have no piano or pitchpipe to help you, and your ear is not yet sufficiently well trained to do it alone, is to get relative pitch between the strings by the following method.

- 1) Assume your lowest string is fairly on pitch:

2) Press that string down just below the 5th fret.

The 5th string, next to it, should now sound the same pitch.



3) Now press the 5th string down at the 5th fret.

The 4th string should now sound this pitch.



4) Press the 4th string down at the same place, and the third string should sound the same pitch.



5) Press the third string down just below the 4th fret, and it should sound the same as the 2nd string.

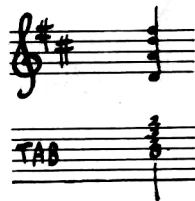
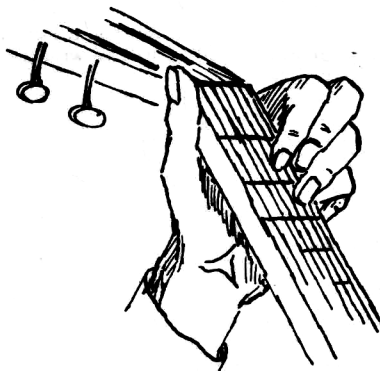


6) Press the 2nd string down just below the 5th fret again, and tune the 1st string to it. The 1st string should now be just exactly two octaves above the 6th string.)



BAND 2 -- The First Chord:

Now put the fingers of your left hand firmly where the dots and the diagrams are. Don't put your finger directly on top of the fret, but a little south of it so to speak. The strings should now sound like this.



D major



Try plucking just the fourth string with your thumb...

And then brush down across the third, second and first string...

Try it over and over until it comes easy...



When you can do that so well that you don't need to think about it, you're the man with an educated thumb...

Or the girl with the educated thumb.....

You know you can sing a lot of songs with just this one chord....

(Here are complete verses to the song. It is an Anglo-American variant of a type of song known throughout all Europe.)

The Riddle Song

I gave my love a cherry that has no stone
I gave my love a chicken that has no bone
I told my love a story that has no end
I gave my love a baby that's no cryin'

How can there be a cherry that has no stone?
How can there be a chicken that has no bone?
How can there be a story that has no end?
How can there be a baby that's no cryin'?

A cherry when it's blooming, it has no stone
A chicken when it's pippin', it has no bone
The story that I love you, it has no end
And a baby when it's sleeping is no cryin'.

Try moving your thumb around the different strings; in other words, pluck the fifth string occasionally..

And then strum across the rest....



And try playing some of the songs that are listed.

(These songs can all be accompanied by the D chord alone, if necessary.)

When a body meets a body
Coming through the rye
If a body kiss a body
Need a body cry?

Every lassie has a laddy
None, they say, have I
But all the laddies smile on me
When coming through the rye.

In Scarlet Town where I was born
There was a fair maid dwelling
Made many a youth cry well-a-day
And her name was Barbara Allen

T'was in the merry month of May
When green buds they were swelling
Sweet William came from the West Country
And he courted Barbara Allen

He sent his servant unto her
To the place where she was dwelling
Said, my master's sick, bids me call for you
If your name be Barbara Allen

Then slowly, slowly got she up
And slowly went she nigh him
But all she said as she passed his bed
Young man, I think you're dying

Oh, lightly tripped she down the stairs
She heard those church bells tolling
And each bell seemed to say as it tolled
Hard hearted Barbara Allen

Oh, mother, mother, go make my bed
Go make it long and narrow
Sweet William died for me today
I'll die for him tomorrow

They buried Barbara in the old churchyard
They buried Sweet William beside her
Out of his grave grew a red, red rose
And out of hers a briar.

They grew and grew up the old church wall
Till they could go no higher
And at the top twined in a lovers knot
The red rose and the briar.

Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home
Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home

I looked over Jordan, and what did I see
Coming for to carry me home
A band of angels coming after me
Coming for to carry me home

Swing low, etc.

Rye whisky, rye whisky, rye whisky I cry
If you don't gimme rye whisky I surely will die

If the ocean was whisky and I was a duck
I'd dive to the bottom and never come up

Rye whisky, etc.

Rye whisky, rye whisky, you're no friend to me
You killed my poor daddy, G-- D-- you, try me.

Rye whisky, etc.

I'm a rambler and a gambler and a long ways from
home
And them that don't like me can leave me alone.

OR, to almost the same tune:

My horses ain't hungry, they won't eat your hay
So, fare ye well, Polly, I'm going away
Your parents don't like me, they say I'm too poor
They say I'm not worthy to enter your door.

My parents don't like you, you're poor I am told
But it's your love I'm a-wanting, not silver or gold
Then come with me Polly, we'll ride till we come
To some little cabin, we'll call it our home.

Oh, sparking is pleasure, but parting is grief
And a false hearted lover is worse than a thief
They'll hug you, they'll kiss you, and tell you more
lies
Than cross ties on railroads, or stars in the skies.

Day is done, gone the sun
From the fields, from the hills, from the sky
All is well, safely rest
God is nigh.

Down in some lone valley, in some lonesome place
Where the wild birds do whistle and their notes do
increase
Fare well Pretty Saro, I bid you adieu
And I'll dream of Pretty Saro wherever I go

My love, she won't have me, and I understand
She wants a free holder, and I have no land
I cannot maintain her with silver or gold
Nor buy all the fine things that a big house can hold.

Froggy went a-courtin and he did ride, uh huh
Froggy went a-courtin and he did ride
Sword and pistol by his side, uh huh

(3426 1/2 more verses)

(Tune of: The Girl I Left Behind Me)

I took a job on an extra gang, away up on the
mountain
I paid my fee and the shark shipped me
And the ties I soon was counting.

The boss put me to driving spikes,
And the sweat was enough to blind me
He didn't seem to like my pace,
So I left the job behind me.

I grabbed a hold of an old freight train
And around the country travelled
The mysteries of a hobo's life
To me were soon unravelled.

I travelled east and travelled west
And the shacks could never find me
Next morning I was miles away
From the job I left behind me.

I am a roving gambler, I've gambled all around
Whenever I meet with a deck of cards, I lay my
money down.

I've gambled down in Washington, I've gambled over
in Spain
I'm on my way to Georgia to lay down my last game.

I had not been in Washington many more weeks than
three
When I fell in love with a pretty little girl, and she
fell in love with me.

She took me to her parlor, she cooled me with her
fan
She whispered low in her mother's ear, I love that
gambling man.

Oh daughter, dearest daughter, how could you treat
me so
To leave your poor old mother and with a gambler go

Oh mother, dearest mother, you know I love you well
But the love I hold for the gambling man no human
tongue can tell.

I wouldn't marry a farmer, he's always in the rain
The man I want's the gambling man, he wears that
big gold chain.

I wouldn't marry a doctor, he's always gone from
home
The man I want's the gambling man, he won't leave
me alone.

I hear the train a coming, she's coming round the
curve
She's whistling and a blowing and straining every
nerve.

Oh mother, dearest mother, I'll tell you if I can
If you ever see me coming back, it'll be with the
gambling man.

BAND 3 -- Two More Chords:

(Second lesson)

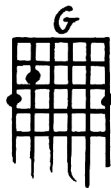
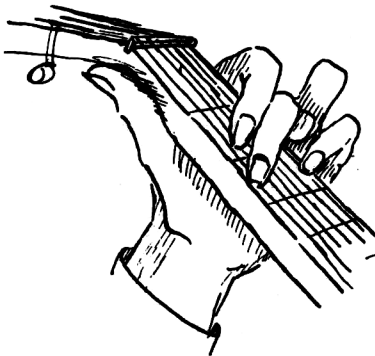
Now your left hand is going to have to learn at least two more chords if you're going to sing very many songs. First, an A⁷ chord we call it. That is, your index finger presses down across three strings at once and your little finger on the top string and now the guitar should sound like this.....



And if we learn one more chord still, between these three chords you'll find you can play most of the folk songs you know. Your left middle finger stops the sixth string at the third fret. Your left index finger stops the fifth string at the second fret, the fourth, third, second strings are open; that is, they sound their natural pitch....

And your left little finger again stops the first string at the third fret...

So altogether it should sound thus....



(Note: No two guitar players use exactly the same way of fingering chords. Fingers and hands are built differently. So if you can devise an easier way of pressing these strings down, more power to you.)

Now you just play back and forth with these three chords until you know them so well that you can sing a song without thinking about it....

D
I've been working on the railroad
G D
All the livelong day
D
I've been working on the railroad

A⁷
Just to pass the time away
A⁷ D
Can't you hear the whistle blowing
G D
Rise up so early in the morn
G D
Can't you hear the captain shouting
D A⁷ D
Dinah, blow your horn
D
Dinah won't you blow
G
Dinah won't you blow
A⁷ D
Dinah won't you blow your horrrrrrrn
D
Dinah, won't you blow
G
Dinah, won't you blow
A⁷ D
Dinah won't you blow your horn
D
Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah
D A⁷
Someone's in the kitchen I know
D G
Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah
D A⁷ D
Strumming on the old banjo
D
Fee, fi, fiddleeio
D A⁷
Fee, fi, fiddleeioooo
D G
Fee, fi, fiddleeio
D A⁷ D
Strumming on the old banjo

You try some of the songs in the list.

(A few songs to practice on.)

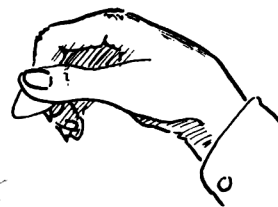
D A⁷
Down in the valley, valley so low
A⁷ D
Hang your head over, hear the wind blow
D A⁷
Hear the wind blow, love, hear the wind blow
A⁷ D
Hang your head over, hear the wind blow

Write me a letter, send it by mail
Send it in care of Birmingham jail
Birmingham jail, etc.

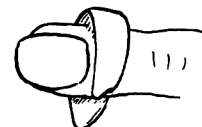
D
It takes a worried man to sing a worried song
G D
It takes a worried man to sing a worried song
D
It takes a worried man to sing a worried song
A⁷ D
I'm worried now, but I won't be worried long.

Well, now you'll find this works just right. . . .

You see, it now fits your voice. Now practice with this capo until you find just where to put it for a lot of your favorite songs.



This is useful if you have to make a lot of noise, but it's not really necessary if you're just playing at home, for yourself and friends. Along this line is also the possibility of using a thumb pick. See the picture.



It's good for getting a good sharp thump out of the bass strings. . . .

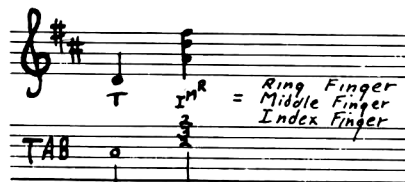
Which leads us into our next lesson.

(Note: There are literally hundreds of different methods of strumming the strings. Some stroke up, some down, some use the thumb, some one or another finger. Long fingernails will sound differently than well-clipped ones. Experiment!)

BAND 5 -- Methods of Strumming:

Before trying to learn any of the hundreds of different chords you see listed in the appendix, (page 21) I'd suggest you experiment with some different methods of picking with your right hand until you find the very method you'd like to concentrate on for the moment. For example, instead of just brushing your thumb down across the top three strings,

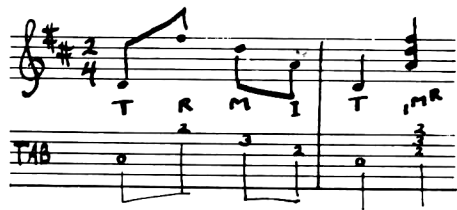
You could pluck each string with a separate finger; your index finger on the third string, the middle finger on the second string, the ring finger on the first string. See how different it sounds. . . .



And you needn't pluck these top three strings exactly at the same time. See what happens when you do this. Bass string. . . . First string. . . . Second string. . . . Third string. . . . Bass string again. . . . All three. . . .

Now do that over and over again. . . .

A little faster. . . .



Or you might experiment with brushing down on those top strings with the back of the fingernails of your right, middle and ring fingers. This way. . . .

See the difference in the way it sounds. The first strumming with your thumb sounded like this. . . .

But now you pluck with your thumb. . . . And brush down with your fingernail. . . .

Or you might use a flat pick or a plectrum the way professional guitarists do. . . .

BAND 6 -- Bass Runs:

To play an endless series of chords on the guitar can in the end be very, very boring. You'll find it a lot more interesting to introduce what we call bass runs. That is, melodies and counter-melodies in the bass strings. They can be very simple like this, starting on the fifth string:

And going up. . . .

On the fourth string, like this. . . .



Or down. . . .



Or you can play an entire melody on the bass string...

But now might be the best time to learn some new chords, because it's much easier to play melodies in, for example, the key of C. Now look at your diagram, and here's how a C chord should sound:

Or like this:

And to go with it a G7th chord.....

And to complete the customary three chords, an F chord.....

Now try this.....

Oh there's a number of other melodies you could pick out by ear or by studying the tablature in the music given in the brochure. Pick out the ones you like, try them. Often, folk singers will play one verse, and then sing it, and while singing they just play the bass notes and chords.

SIDE II

BAND 1 -- "The Church Lick":

When playing with a flat pick, you'll find a nice rhythm is achieved by stroking the chord on the way up... As well as the way down... Woody Guthrie, who taught me this, used to call it the "church-lick" and he used to use it to play many of the songs which he heard recorded by the famous country music group, the Carter family, back during the 1930's.

Try this for example. Make an E chord, E major, with your left hand. Look it up....

Now, pick the bass string... and then all the rest... but then come back....

Try it over....

Over and over.....

BAND 2 -- "Hammering On":

And in addition you can get some notes with your left hand, by fretting a string very sharply right after picking it with the right hand. Let me show you what I mean. For example, pluck the third string... but raise your left index finger and pluck it open, and right away bring your left index finger down. Listen to it....

When you bring it down, it sounds the new pitch... Now add the other strokes to it and it comes out like this....

Try it again.....

I call this "hammering-on," and you can do it with many chords. For example in the C-chord....

Or an F-chord....

Or a D-chord....

Or a G-chord....

And try figuring up some new ones all on your own.

BAND 2 -- The Blues:

If you know any friends who like to play the guitar, you can have a lot of fun improvising the blues with them. Let's try a blues in the key of A. Now the average blues has three lines of verse, spaced out across twelve bars of music, like this....

And then the next verse begins. The easiest way for two guitarists to do it, is to have one guitar outline the harmony in the bass, like this....

Meanwhile, another guitar can play in the top strings.....

"Top part"

III I IHI IIII THIII THIII III III

8 7 5 2 | 1 2 5 3 7 5 2 0 | 3 0 5 2 | 2 0 5 2 2 5 7 5

TAB

WALKING BASS

TAB. 0 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4

Tossing from side to side

III I IHI THIII

8 7 5 3 2 0 2 0

TAB.

Could not sleep, I was just dissatisfied etc.

I IHI IH

12 8 9 5 5 0 2

TAB.

TOP PART

I-stretch I I I I I H T

7 7 7 5 10 8 7 5 5 1 2

TAB

WALKING BASS

TAB. 0 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4

And so on. That slur on the string is one of the most typical blues effects. And it's usually done only on steel string guitars. But since you're learning on a nylon, I'll show you it can be done. Supposing you fret your second string way up on the one-two-three-four-five-sixth-seventh fret. Now press that string way up near you....

See, you stretch the string and raise the pitch..... Try it again.....

"BEFORE" "AFTER"

I - stretch

TAB.

If someone's singing the verses, you play in the "holes".....

VOICE:

Late last night, tossing from side to side Oh

"TOP PART"

(WALKING BASS PLAYS THE PREVIOUS 12 BARS OVER AGAIN)

IIII THIII

5 3 2 0 2 0 2 3

TAB.

Now you can do that all through the blues.....

UNSTRETCH!

I-str. I I I I I I-str. I-str. I-str. I T T I

7 7 5 3 2 0

TAB.

Your ear only can best tell you whether you want a rich, kind of a full effect, or a clean, sparkling kind of accompaniment. Some folk musicians use their right middle finger, as well as index finger, for the melody notes. Now check on the tablature, and see how this is played.

BAND 4 -- Other tunings:

While the customary tuning of guitars is the one you've been using up till now, it's by no means the only ones you can use. In Argentina, for example, there are eighteen common tunings for guitar. Sometimes you just change one string for a special effect in playing a song. For example, supposing you try lowering your sixth string from E down to D

Now it's an octave lower than your fourth string

Now if you'll check with the diagram, and start off with this rather interesting way of getting a D chord, here's one song you could use this with

INDEX F.
THUMB
INDEX FINGER
TAB.
THUMB

I
TAB.
T

TAB.

ETC

TAB

TAB

TAB



You know, that song's too low for me to sing it down there. I'll put a capo on the neck of the guitar, take it up, say, half a tone, so now the strings would sound like this

Let's try the song over

D⁶ G G⁶ A⁷ D⁶

Time's a-getting hard, boys, money's getting scarce. If

TTTTTT TTTTTT TT etc.

Time's don't get no better, boys gonna leave this place.

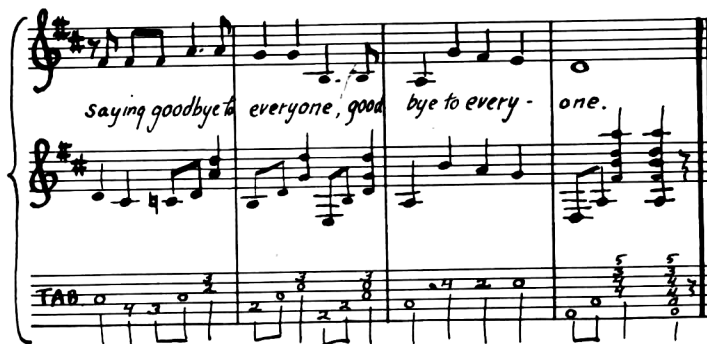
TAB



Take my true love by the hand lead her thro the town



saying goodbye to everyone, good bye to every one.



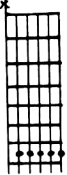

And then another common way to retune the guitar is not just to lower the sixth string but the fifth string, too, a whole tone.....

And lower the first string also.....

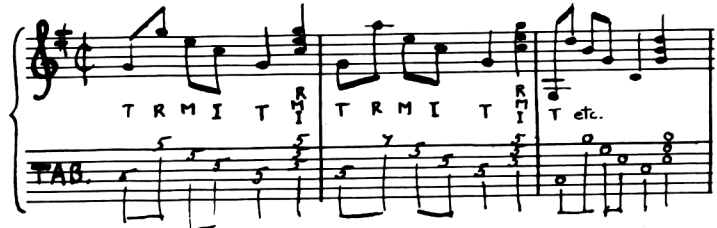


A whole tone.....

I'll take the capo off and you'll see how it really sounds. An open G chord..

And here's a favorite little song for this tuning.....

TRMITRY TRMITRY T etc.




(Perhaps you'd like more verses to this song.)

Poor Howard's dead and gone
Left me here to sing this song (twice)

Poor Howard's dead and he's gone (four times)

Who's been here since I've been gone
Pretty little girl with a red dress on (twice)

Pretty little girl with a red dress on (four times)

Who's been here since I've been gone
Great big man with a derby on (twice)

Great big man with a derby on (four times)

Now the student can easily experiment with other tunings. The advantage of using them is the special effects you can gain thereby. The disadvantage is that when you are playing with other people, they are liable to get impatient with your taking so much time tuning and retuning your instrument.

BAND 5 -- A hint of flamenco:

Without going deeply into the fantastic high art of flamenco guitar playing of Spain, you might be interested to learn just one of the typical flamenco devices. The thumb takes the melody. Now, let's try an E chord... Pluck the fourth string... That is your left middle finger stops the fourth string at the second fret. Pluck it with your thumb... Now pluck up on the open first string with your right middle finger....

And pluck up on that same first string with your right index finger... Do these three notes over and over until they go smooth and fast....

Now the thumb can play a melody and the top string keeps playing the same...

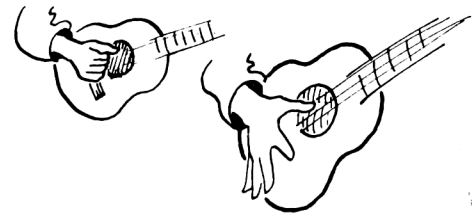
That last is known among Spanish guitarists as a rascado...rascado. Makes a mighty effective ending at times. Double up your right hand as shown in the picture. And unroll it now slowly. First your little finger....

Then your ring finger....

Then your middle finger....

Then your index finger....

And actually do it so fast that it all comes out like this....



BAND 6 -- A Rhumba Rhythm:

Down in Latin America you can find many wonderful methods of strumming a guitar. And they bring out the rhythmic character of the instrument. The rhythm of a guitar is, after all, in some ways more important than the harmony or the melody. Here, for example, is just one way to strum a sort of rhumba rhythm, and if you meet any Mexican or Puerto Rican guitarists, they can show you many others.

First, brush down across all strings with the back of your fingernails. Let's take a C chord... Follow down with your wrist and strum across all strings with your thumb... Now strum up across all strings with your index finger... Now repeat those three strokes again.... Down... Down again with your thumb... And up.... Finally, brush down with your fingernails and up with your index finger....

Add all those strokes together, they total eight-- eight short beats. But do it over and over again and you'll notice that the accents seem to fall in a syncopated way, like this....

Try it over and over.....

This is a typical Latin-American rhythmic effect and you can use it for all kinds of songs.....

And so on.

BAND 7 -- The Mexican Blues:

Now just to end off. I'll show you that you can also get the same rhythmic effect by playing single strings with single fingers. Look at the tablature there and you'll see how this particular piece is played.....

* The tremolo here is played by the right index finger, held as shown in the picture, brushing back and forth lightly over the top two strings.

The little finger and the ring finger are braced against the guitar. The thumb is braced against the joint of the index finger, high enough so that the latter can move freely. The middle finger can wiggle uselessly if it so wishes.



It's easiest if the index finger doesn't cross the string perpendicularly, but on a slant (the same as that of the right forearm). Thus the fingernail is less liable to catch on a string.

This method of achieving a tremolo is similar to that used by classical guitar players. A totally different method is commonly used by guitarists using a plectrum. The whole wrist vibrates in a relaxed yet controlled manner, as in mandolin playing, for example.

Musical notation for the first system, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth notes. The guitar tablature below the staff shows fingerings: I (7 0 9 0 7 0) and T H I I (5 1 2 0 2).

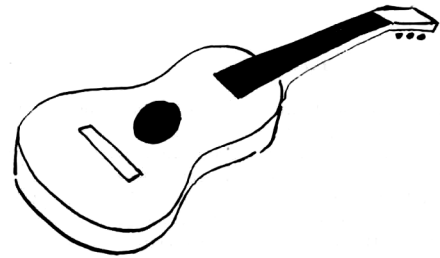
Musical notation for the second system, continuing the melody. The guitar tablature includes fingerings: I I T I I I I (5 5 0 2 0), I (tremolo) (4 3 2 0 3 2), and I I I I (5 5 0 2 0).

Musical notation for the third system, ending with a double bar line and the instruction "to beginning". The guitar tablature includes fingerings: I (tremolo) (2 2 0 3 3), I I I I (2 2 0 3 3), and I I I I (2 2 0 3 3).

Musical notation for the fourth system. The guitar tablature shows fingerings: I (9 7 7 8 7 5) and T T T I I (7 5 2 2 0 2).

Musical notation for the fifth system. The guitar tablature shows fingerings: I I T I I I I (5 2 7 5 4 2) and I (tr.) I I I I (0 8 9 5 2).

Musical notation for the sixth system. The guitar tablature shows fingerings: I (tremolo) (0 9 0 10 0 10 0 9 0).



HOW AND WHERE TO GET A GUITAR

A good new guitar - like any good musical instrument, is expensive. \$25 up to several hundred dollars. If you are in a hurry, and can afford it, any music store will be glad to help you spend your money.

For accompanying yourself singing folk songs, steer clear of electric guitars, guitars with "f" holes in the sounding box, instead of a round hole, and instead, select a "Spanish" style guitar. Especially if you have never played a guitar, I'd suggest you start with nylon strings, even if later on you decide you prefer the twang of steel strings. Much easier on the fingertips.

If you have time to poke around second hand stores, and if you have a guitar playing friend to accompany you, you might get a better buy. Bewary of the following points: lay a straight edge (such as a ruler) along the fingerboard to determine if the neck is warped. Cracks can be mended. Straightening a warped neck is a major operation, useless to attempt except in the case of an unusually fine instrument worth saving. See if all the frets are smooth and of even height. If the pegs don't turn easily, it will cost you a few dollars to replace them.

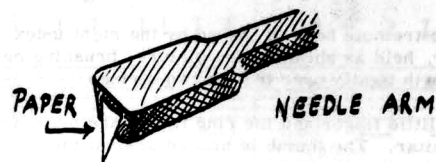
Listen to the tone of several dozen instruments, and you'll be able to tell which please you best. Some are weak in the bass notes, others weak in the high notes. Some are not loud at all, but still have a superlative quiet balance of tone.

When you have it, treat it as you would a violin; keep it dry, and don't put it near too much heat - as on top of a radiator. Remember, one drop on a hard floor will produce a crack expensive to mend. Change the strings when they get to sound too dull, and oil the tuning pegs to make them turn smoothly. (If the guitar has old fashioned wooden friction pegs, that is a separate problem! They're awfully tricky to use.)

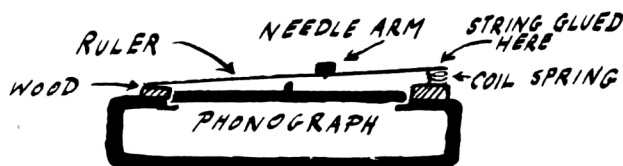
HOW TO USE THIS RECORD

The student will find that one of the most difficult things about using this record is to put the needle down in the right band. Each band in the record, after all, has to be played many times over before the student masters that section. A new portable phonograph issued by the Du Kane Company of St. Charles, Illinois, has an automatic device to instant stop a turntable from moving. This would be a help. Here, however, are two schemes which could with ingenuity be adapted to your present phonograph.

a) With rubber cement, paste a small triangle of stiff white paper to the end of the needle arm, so that it points to the exact groove the needle is in at the time. Then when lifting the needle arm, point the triangle at the groove you wish the needle to fall in, and set the arm down.



5) Glue a small block of wood to the phonograph, and with adhesive tape, hinge a 12" ruler, extending horizontally, under the needle arm, to rest on another block of wood, on the other side of the turntable. Glue a small coil expansion spring to the top of this second block of wood, which will push the end of the ruler up, thus lifting the needle arm off the record. Glue the end of a piece of string to the free end of the ruler, and extend the other end to the floor, where you make a loop in it, to fit around the toe of your shoe. Now, with your foot, you can depress the ruler, thus dropping the needle arm into the same groove it was in before it was raised by the spring.



RECORDINGS OF FOLK GUITAR PLAYING

Folk music is an art best learned by ear, rather than off the printed page. Careful listening to some of the recordings listed below will teach you much.

AMERICAN FOLK GUITAR STYLES

Merle Travis, Folk Songs Of The Hills, Capitol

Anthology of American Folk Music, Folkways

Blind Lemon Jefferson (blues), Riverside

Leadbelly Memorial Series, Stinson

Leadbelly's Last Session, Folkways

CLASSICAL GUITAR

Andre Segovia, Decca

FLAMENCO GUITAR

Escudero, Flamenco Guitar, Folkways

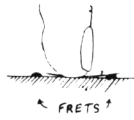
Carlos Montoya, Folkways

(Note: All the above record companies have offices in New York City.)

FINGERNAILS

In case you haven't noticed already it's of utmost importance that the fingernails of each hand be the right length.

Those of the left hand will have to be short, so the fingers can come down directly and firmly on the string, without the nail touching at all.

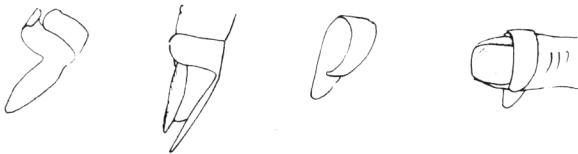


Those on the right hand should be neither too long or too short. When plucking, the flesh of the fingertip should touch the string first, but the nail be last to leave it.



People who play a great deal of two-finger guitar picking often wear finger picks and thumbpicks to save their nails, and to get a crisper tone from the strings.

Hardly any two people like the exact same kind of picks. The kind I like looks like this:



If you don't like to use fingerpicks, but your nails break and tear, you might experiment with spreading a coat of Dupont cement on them, as reinforcement. Or a commercial preparation, such as 'Patti-Nail', is harder yet. But nothing stays on permanently.

Guitar chords

Here are the basic guitar chord patterns plus less common chords. A small circle (o) indicates an open string is to be played with the other fingered strings. Some chords are to be played with a barre -- (the first finger laid across all six, although sometimes four or five strings.) The barre, indicated by Barre chords can be moved up the neck as far as you wish.

This page reproduced from "Lift Every Voice", "The 2nd People's Songbook", courtesy of People's Artists, 124 West 21 Street, New York City.

BASIC PATTERNS

OTHER CHORDS

HOW TO READ MUSIC - SLIGHTLY

If you don't already know how to read music, you might take a gander at this page. It's really very simple - like touch typing, a matter of learning a few simple things well. Though you may never be so proficient as to be able to pick up a concerto and read it at sight, if you learn enough to pick out a tune in a songbook, you'll find it of much help.

First, most melodies are written in the "treble clef". This means that you'll see a spiral thingummy at the left end of the staves; it circles a line which represents a G note, as you see below. Here are two scales in the key of "C" (they start and end on C).



A "sharp" sign preceding any note (#) raises its pitch a half tone. A "flat" sign (b) lowers it half a tone. Thus when a song is in some other key than C, and you "have to start playing on the black notes", these black notes will be pointed out by putting the appropriate sharps or flats at the beginning of a song. Below are some of the most common of these "key signatures".



If at any time you want to go back, say, from F# to ordinary F ("F natural"), you put a "natural" sign (n) in front of the note.

Now go through any songbook and pick out melodies you already know, and try following the notes up and down.

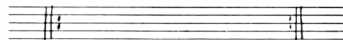
Second, the rhythm of a song is marked by "measures", signified by vertical bars across the staff, as shown below. Within a measure there may be several beats; the most common rhythms are known as 2/4 (two quarter notes per measure), 3/4, 4/4, and 6/8 (six eighth notes per measure).

A whole note (O) is the longest note - for anything longer than that you tie two notes together, thus: O-O. A dot right after a note increases its length by 1/2. Thus, all measures below have four beats in them (including "rests" - the noise stops but the rhythm keeps going!)



The following sign over a note > means you should accent, or emphasize it.

The music written between two double bars with dots, as below, is meant to be repeated.



The above rudiments are only a start; any music store has manuals which will teach you the meaning of dozens of other hieroglyphics and Italian terms which it will help you to know. The best way for you to learn, though, is to go through songbook after songbook, checking your knowledge first with songs you know, and then trying to decipher unfamiliar melodies.

BOOKS OF AMERICAN FOLK SONGS

Literally hundreds of folk song collections are now available through bookshops and libraries. Here are just a few of them, with apologies to the many whose titles have had to be omitted.

- 1) A Treasury of Folksong, Kolb, Bantam Books, 35¢ The cheapest, but one of the very best.
- 2) Various song 'kits' put out by the Cooperative Recreation Service, Delaware, Ohio, 25¢ each.
- 3) Lift Every Voice, People's Artists, 124 West 21 St. N.Y. N.Y. \$1.25
- 4) The Weaver's Sing and The Caroler's Songbag, P. Seeger, Folkways Music, 151 West 46 St., N.Y. NY 75¢
- 5) Songs to Grow On, Beatrice Landeck, Marks and Sloane, N.Y.
- 6) American Folk Songs For Children, Animal Folk Songs, and American Folk Songs For Christmas, all edited by Ruth Seeger, Doubleday, N.Y.
- 7) The American Songbag, Carl Sandburg, Harcourt Brace, N.Y.
- 8) American Ballads and Folk Song, Our Singing Country, and Folk Song USA, all by J. and A. Lomax.
- 9) Crown Publishers has the series of 'Treasures' edited by Ben Botkin. Good also are the Treasury of Mexican Folklore and the Treasury of Jewish Folklore.