

## Veteran Guitarist Archives Free Guitar Lessons

*By Ricky Sharples*

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*New collection of guitar teaching materials for students unable to afford lessons*

Veteran guitarist Ricky Sharples is offering a solution to aspiring guitarists whose lives have got in the way of their guitar playing. Ricky has compiled a blog called Learn To Play A Guitar For Free ([www.playaguitarforfree.com](http://www.playaguitarforfree.com)) as a resource for amateur guitarists to go back to learning how to play the guitar as and when the urge takes them and time allows. The blog consists of articles on various aspects of learning to play the guitar, plus links to a wealth of free guitar lessons and guitar-related tools that are available on the internet.

The guitar is still a powerful symbol in today's culture. It's been many years since we had a real guitar hero like Eric Clapton or Jimmy Page but millions of young people are living the dream through the video game "Guitar Hero". What we see in the popularity of the game is the image. The guitar hero game has given millions of teenagers a legitimate reason to jump around the room with a fake guitar in your hands without having to be embarrassed if somebody walks into the room.

Young men and women are still spending money on real guitars. Some actually learn to play. They might not become professionals, or play on a regular basis but they get to the stage where accompanying themselves on the guitar or playing instrumental pieces turns into a very rewarding hobby. But there are others whose interest never quite dies but they don't get those basic chords and picking techniques into their bloodstream. Ricky Sharples sees his blog as the kickstart that these stalled guitar playing careers are crying out for.

Like most blogs, Learn To Play A Guitar For Free is organized into categories, but the overall feeling is of a grab bag of lessons, essays, biographies and tutorials compiled as a resource for guitar players to dip into in the middle of the night when sleep won't come and your muse is calling. The kind of resources offered on the site are similar to what you would find in a packaged online guitar course but it is up to the visitor which teaching elements to use. By having all this material available for free you can take advantage of those tools that you find useful without feeling that you "should" make use of other resources simply because you paid for them.

Maybe the Sharples philosophy could be summed up by this quote from his "About" page:

"The conventional wisdom for teaching guitar is to give the student a wide background of theory and practice that he can draw from later in his career as a professional guitarist. The end result is a well-rounded musician who can play and improvise in many styles of guitar playing and be able to step into a recording studio and provide backing for a singer at short notice. This is an ideal view of teaching guitar but it doesn't suit everybody and if you look at the procession of guitar innovators of the past four or five decades, there are almost no "well rounded" musicians amongst them.

Learn To Play A Guitar For Free is aimed at helping the aspiring guitarist who wants to use his own musical tastes and whatever small amount of self discipline he has to begin exploring his interest in the guitar. The blog is like a smorgasbord he can choose from as his interest takes him and if he winds up being a guitarist who is happy to play a small repertoire of music using techniques he has chosen to work with, then that's better than an enthusiastic amateur being discouraged by a teacher who insists that he "needs" to learn to read music or be master of a number of techniques."

A distinctive feature of Learn To Play A Guitar For Free is its collection of links to free guitar software that performs guitar functions such as tuning in any number of non-standard tunings, tab editors and chord generators. The blog is similar to a directory of guitar sites except for the fact that Sharples lists sites unasked. The decision to list any guitar resource is based on Ricky Sharples' judgement of the quality of the site and the uniqueness of the resource.

As new guitar players emerge and begin sharing their knowledge and experience on the internet, Ricky Sharples is always finding new resources to add to his blog. You can find Ricky's collection of guitar learning resources at [www.playaguitarforfree.com](http://www.playaguitarforfree.com)

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