## So you want to become a guitar player? Lesson 1 of 3: Theory

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So you want to become a guitar player, or you want to become a better guitar player than you already are. As guitar players we are always striving to get better, but how do we actually get there? Should you quit your day job and go off to some college? or spend 8-10 hours a day practicing and wood shedding your skills? While these are not bad ideas most people can't take it to that extreme. So how do we go about getting better? These are some questions that we re going to address in this new and continuing column. Some of the things we will discuss are: How to practice, what to practice and how to get the most out of the time you have to practice. I will also give you the same material that I give to my private students and to those who attend my seminars and guitar clinics.

## Things to be discussed:

- 1) Theory All scales and their uses which will include Major Minor Melodic Minor Harmonic Minor Diminished Whole tone- Major Pentatonic Minor Pentatonic And Blues.
- 2) Chord construction and Chord inversions.
- 3) Interval studies.
- 4) Triad Studies.
- 5) Arpeggio Studies .
- 6) Chord progression analysis and scale use.

Well enough said, lets get going. I am going to assume that we are starting from the beginning, so the first thing we must do is to learn the notes on the neck of the guitar. Lets start with some basic guitar theory.

**The Musical Alphabet** – In the musical alphabet there are naturally occurring whole steps that occur between each of the seven notes. Two exceptions to this rule are half steps that occur between the E and F and the B and C notes. (remember whole steps skip one fret and half steps are right next to each other)



By knowing this rule we can figure out all the natural notes on the guitar neck.

E	6 <sup>th</sup> string
A	5 <sup>th</sup> string
D	4 <sup>th</sup> string
G	5 <sup>th</sup> string 4 <sup>th</sup> string 3 <sup>rd</sup> string 2 <sup>nd</sup> string
B	2 <sup>nd</sup> string
E	1 <sup>st</sup> string

Lets start with the  $6^{th}$  string . (low E) E is the  $6^{th}$  string open. (no fingers) F is a half step away from E so it is on the  $1^{st}$  fret. G is a whole step up from F so it is on the  $3^{rd}$  fret A is on the  $5^{th}$  fret B is on the  $7^{th}$  fret C is on the  $8^{th}$  fret D is on the  $10^{th}$  fret E is on the  $12^{th}$  fret

Now do the same thing on the 5<sup>th</sup> or A string 4<sup>th</sup> or D string 3<sup>rd</sup> or G string 2<sup>nd</sup> or B string 1<sup>st</sup> or E string

Learning all the notes on the neck of the guitar is extremely important, they will tell us where to play chords , Triads , Arpeggios , and Scales. So get really familiar with all the natural notes on the neck and next time we will learn how to construct Scales and learn the **seven positions** of the Major scale plus much more! Remember that **repetition is the mother of skill**. So practice!!

George Collichio is a national recording artist. With eight CDs to his credit he regularly tours Southern California and other parts of the country doing concerts and guitar clinics. He also does studio work in California and Nashville. George is fully endorsed by Whirlwind and uses Whirlwind DIs and Leader cables exclusively during the performances and workshops that he conducts around the country. He is the owner of Collichio School of Music in Rochester, N.Y. with over 300 students and has a Bachelors Degree in Guitar Performance from the State University of New York.