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1.1 Introduction



What is The Guitar Conspiracy?

The Guitar Conspiracy is the result of over twenty years of research into how to understand the guitar, both harmonically and rhythmically.

The theories are based on what the most logical way to understand popular music and the fret board in standard tuning would be.

If the guitar itself could have written a book, this would have been it!

No matter what style of music you wish to play, the rules of The Guitar Conspiracy can always be applied, enabling you to improvise and write freely.

What is Spytunes?

Spytunes.com is a community that will give you a chance to communicate with other guitar players who wish to achieve similar goals to yours.

At Spytunes you can learn songs, find all The Self-Eliminating Practice Routines (S-E P R) and discuss your progress in the forum.

If you ever felt that you wanted to properly learn and understand the guitar, this is your chance.

1.2 Levels

To make life easier for you I divided The S-E P R in 4 Levels.



Complete **Beginner** and you can:

- Play and understand all the open position chords
- Recognize Diatonic Intervals by ear
- Play basic strumming patterns in time
- Improve your left and right hand co-ordination dramatically



Complete **Intermediate** and you can:

- Play and understand 3 note bar chords
- Recognize Chromatic Intervals by ear
- Recognize basic chord movement by ear
- Play and understand all positions of the minor and major pentatonic, Blues and Conspirian

scales.

- Play and understand 16th note strumming patterns
- Improve your left and right hand co-ordination dramatically.



Complete **Advanced** and you can:

- Play and understand all 7th note chords and other chords like 6's, add9's and 7sus4
- Play and understand all major and minor pentatonic modes
- Play and understand all 7th note arpeggios
- Transcribe vocal melodies



Complete **Master** and you will have:

- Mastered the guitar
- Never have to practice again

1.3 Music Is A Language



If you were to learn a new language you would have three options:

1. Move to an area where the language is spoken.

You would with this approach pick it up as you go along, this would include the area's dialect, unique sayings and often cultural and moral values

For example, if you move to Oxford, England you would get a completely different vocabulary compared to if you moved to the hood in L.A. and hung out with a gang.

At first, all this can be very hard, especially if the language is very different from that which you already speak.

It would be fair to say that it would be a lot easier for a Swedish person to pick up Norwegian than a Swedish person to pick up Chinese because of the initial similarities between the languages.

2. Take a course in the chosen language.

This will mean you perhaps have a teacher, book, CD or some form of guidance through the language. You would, in this way, learn the grammatical rules and the correct way to build sentences.

3. A combination of the first two options.

Without a doubt it is option number three that would give you the best result.



Music is like a language

To learn an instrument works in the same way as learning a language.

1. To learn how to play music just by playing with other people is like moving to a country and learning the language as you go along.

This is simply a matter of trial and error, how “good” you become will be highly dependant on the musicians you associate and surround yourself with.

Many of the greatest musicians have learnt how to play on stage. The best part of learning this way is that you avoid all unnecessary information that you as a ‘bedroom player’ might spend hours on.

In other words, by learning on the stage you quickly come to the conclusion: “if it works on stage -it works”.

2. If you find a private teacher, undertake a music course or learn from a book/video/internet you would learn the grammatical rules of music and build your playing from theoretical concepts.

Unfortunately, many musicians learning in this way tend to spend an unhealthy amount of time on things they can never use in a real playing situation.

3. Again, the best way to learn as a musician is a combination of the two options above.

The teacher gives you your safety net of keys, scales etc and the stage teaches you what you can actually use through first hand experience.

For electric and acoustic steel string guitar, the second option has been virtually nonexistent since there are seemingly no rules in popular music. More on this later...



Learning Guitar with a Tutor

As mention previously, there are seemingly no rules in popular music and, as such most books, teachers and schools teach you vocationally by showing you a few vague grammatical rules combined with a lot of musical examples (songs and licks).

Teachers who specialize in popular music are very different from teachers who specialize in Flamenco or Classical Guitar since these musical styles by tradition are based on rules and notated music.

If you want to learn how to strum acoustic guitar in order to play your favorite songs, you would just need to memorize a few chords and develop these skills by learning more and more songs. Since most songs in popular music have the same chords, this isn't very difficult.

Most artists/songwriters have learnt in this way and write songs by creatively experimenting until they feel happy with the combination of chords/rhythms/lyrics and melody that they in the end call a new song.

For soloing on the electric guitar you usually start learning the Blues by memorizing one or two positions of the minor pentatonic (a 5 note scale) to “improvise with” combined with “licks” from famous guitar players.

A lick is a small musical phrase and compared to learning a language, the lick is like a saying or slang that only works in a specific situation.

This is why a guitar player can achieve a state of “sounding as if they can play guitar” even though they know nothing about the grammatical rules.

If you build up a big enough “library of licks” and rehearse for long enough with your band were you memorize everything, you

can actually make a living playing the guitar. Many musicians actually do it this way.

It is very likely that the guitar is the most popular instrument in the world because of this phenomenon: you can make it sound like you can play it even though all you do is repeat rehearsed muscular patterns.

The phenomenon: “I don’t know how but I can show you” is deeply rooted in this tradition and is often seen as cool and mysterious.

To some extent this phenomenon exists on instruments other than the electric guitar. There are drummers, keyboard players, bass players and (especially) singers who have adopted the same approach with great success.

This book is for those who this approach has not worked.

The Guitar Conspiracy will prove that even though popular music is written and played mainly through “feel”, there are patterns and concepts that can be understood and applied back to the instrument.

By understanding these rules, The Conspiracy will teach you how to actually play the guitar as an instrument, as oppose to just memorizing songs and phrases.

By following this path you will gain the ability to express yourself through music.

Like the painter can get caught up in painting, you can be caught up in improvising and writing music, without thinking.

To learn to play the guitar as if you were speaking a language will set your playing free.

1.4 Practicing



In order to understand how to practice the guitar in the most efficient way we can look at how four other instruments are practiced and learn from them.

Drums

Being the simplest instrument to get started on, drums are usually learnt by playing along with records and picked up as you go along. You'll learn as you join a band, rehearse and gig.

Once a drummer finds himself in a situation where he wants to learn more about his instrument he usually turns to books, teachers and analyzing recordings.

Since it is more obvious to a drummer what is being played i.e. snare, bass drum etc than a guitar player who has to listen for chords and individual notes this journey is easier for a drummer to do on their own than it is for the guitarist.

Should the drummer start seeing a teacher, they usually start working on something called rudiments.

Rudiments

Rudiments are different combinations of left and right hand hits.

These are usually played on a practice pad and then applied to the drum kit.

Rudiments can be applied to all limbs and if practiced properly enables the drummer to play “anything with any limb”. This is known as independence.

After all, the drum kit is a combination of various percussion instruments put together. Independence of limbs, is for a drummer, the practical solution of doing several musicians jobs at once.

The rhythmical part of playing acoustic solo guitar is very similar to a drummer's role, but on an almost microscopic level.

The independence of the finger style player's right hands fingers often resemble the bass and drums rhythmical patterns put together.

Consequently, the solo acoustic guitar player does several musicians' jobs at once, just like a drummer playing a drum kit.

The theory is that if a drummer can play complicated patterns with any limb, he can play anything.

The practicing guitarist should always start every session with at least ten minutes of Spyder practice. As we shall learn more about in chapter 7, The Spyder is a unique exercise to Syptunes.

The Spyder exercises do for the guitarist what rudiments do for drummers.