

# Community Education – Fall Quarter 2026

**Course Title:** Guitar for Beginners

**Instructor:** Doug Smith

**Email:** dsmithguitar@aol.com



---

## Course Details

Days: Wednesdays 9/30 to 12/9 (no class 11/11 & 11/25)

Time: 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Location: Beacock Music Hall, room 112

---

## Course Description

Under the guidance of a Grammy-winning guitarist, learn the basics of how to play the guitar. Focus on tuning, basic chords, picking, strumming, note reading, and chord progressions. As you progress you will add more notes and chords as well as more complex rhythms and strumming patterns. Ultimately you will play songs as a group. your guitar to class. See webpage for textbook information. Ages 16 and over.

---

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will:

- Know how to tune a guitar by ear.
  - Get a clear tone on single notes.
  - Understand (but not necessarily be fluent in) reading standard notation.
  - Know how to read guitar tablature
  - Know the location of the natural notes in the first position.
  - Know a few basic chords, such as D, G, A7, Em and C
  - Keep time with a basic strum 8. Learn the basics of Fingerpicking
- 

## Course Schedule

Week 1: Sept. 30

Introduction to class. Book pages 4 to 12, the basics: different types of guitars, how to hold the guitar, right and left-hand positions, holding a pick, and getting a clear tone on single notes. Tuning the guitar by ear. (After that, electronic and clip-on tuners are welcome.)

Week 2: Oct. 7

Book pages 16 and 17, tablature. Handout: Aura Lee and Ode to Joy in tablature. Book pages 13 to 15, G and D7 chords and basic strumming.

#### Week3:Oct.14

Handout: Natural notes in the First Position. review Aura Lee and Ode to Joy. Book pages 24 to 27, note reading and notes on the first string.

Review G and D7 chords and add C chord. Smooth Sailing from book. Handout: song using all three chords.

#### Week 4: Oct. 21

Review notes on the first string and 1st String Exercise, page 27.

Book pages 28 and 29, notes on the second string. Review G, D7 and C chord songs.

Handout: D, A7 and G chords.

#### Week 5: Oct. 28

Review notes on the second string. Book pages 30 and 31, notes on the 3rd string.

Review D, A7 and G chords. Handout: Song using these chords.

#### Week 6: Nov. 4

Review notes on the 3rd string.

Book pages 32 and 33, notes on the 4th string and eighth notes. Handout: Am, E, and Em chords

#### Week 7: Nov. 18

Review notes on the 4th string. Book pages 34 and 35, notes on the 5th string.

Book pages 20 and 21, introduction to fingerpicking.

#### Week 8: Dec. 2

Review notes on the 5th string. Book page 36 notes on the 6th string.

Handout: Strum Patterns.

Review fingerpicking on pages 20 and 21.

#### Week 9: Dec. 9

Review notes on the 6th string. Review fingerpicking on pages 20 and 21.

---

## Resources

Recommended references for further study:

- Materials used are the book “Guitar for the Absolute Beginner” by Susan Mazer, and handouts.

---

## Class Evaluation

- Class evaluations are sent by email.
- If you don't see it right away, check your **junk/spam folder**.
- Evaluations are **anonymous** and come directly from Clark College.
- If you don't receive one, contact:
  - Email: [continuingeducation@clark.edu](mailto:continuingeducation@clark.edu)
  - Phone: 360-992-2939

---

## Inclement Weather

- If the college closes due to weather, updates will appear at [www.clark.edu](http://www.clark.edu)
- Community Education may also cancel classes independently if travel is unsafe.
- If canceled, you will be notified by both phone and email.
- Please check that your contact information is correct on the class roster.

---

## More Classes

Looking for more Community Education courses? Visit: [www.clark.edu/cce/](http://www.clark.edu/cce/)