



Somerset High School

Acoustic Guitar 1



2011-2012 Course Syllabus



Mr. Andrew S. Arcello
aarcelloa@somerset.k12.ma.us
508-324-3115 x520



Acoustic Guitar 1

Overview

Acoustic Guitar 1 meets 3 times per cycle and is open to all students in grades 9-12. This course is designed for students who do not have previous playing experience on the guitar and are looking to gain the basic skills behind proper classical guitar playing. During this course, students will learn how to properly hold and tune the guitar, how to play standard notation and tablature in first position, how to strum in several different styles, and how to play many standard chord progressions. Students will also gain knowledge in basic music theory in order to enhance their guitar-playing skills. This course is designed so that each student can work at their own appropriate pace in order to promote a thorough understanding of the techniques and skills being presented in class.

Instructional Activities

1. Class Rehearsal
2. Class Lecture and Discussion
3. Use of Internet for Research
4. Performances (for peers or for the teacher)
5. Individualized Instruction with Teacher
6. Teacher Demonstration
7. Evaluation of musical performances
8. Worksheets for music theory and guitar technique
9. In-Class Ensemble Rehearsal and Performance

Instructional Materials and Resources

1. Guitar
2. Tuner or Piano
3. **First-Year Guitar, Third Edition** by Nancy Lee Masters
4. **Jerry Snyder's Guitar School, Book 1**
5. Various solo and ensemble sheet music
6. Recordings of various performances
7. Videos of various performances
8. Various textbook excerpts and teacher-created worksheets

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Grading Requirements

Grading is scored quarterly as follows:

- **20% Homework/In-Class Assignments**

Several assignments be given to reinforce lectures and lessons given during class time. While sometimes worked on during class, many times these assignments will be given as homework in order to maximize in-class rehearsal time.

- **20% Written/Playing Quizzes**

Written quizzes will be given to assess knowledge of music theory and fundamentals of guitar technique. Several playing quizzes will also be given in order to assess progress on one specific skill or concept

- **30% Playing Evaluation**

You will have at least one formal playing evaluation per term to assess your progress on the concepts discusses and practiced in class. Each evaluation will require you to play one entire song, either with chords or melody. Evaluations may also contain sight-reading activities or assessment of chord progressions & scales.

- **30% Participation/Cooperation**

It is expected that all students will actively participate in all class lectures and discussions. Much time, however, will be given to independently work on your playing activities. It is expected that you use all of this time effectively and appropriately, working towards your goal of successfully completing as many of the assigned playing activities as possible.

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Instructional Objectives

At the conclusion of the year, the successful student will have learned to:

I. Basic Technique

- Proper posture
- Holding the guitar
- Tuning the guitar
- Playing with your fingers
- Playing with a pick
- Basic Strumming
- Basic Finger-picking

II. Music Theory/Sight-Reading Skills

- Reading standard notation
- Reading tablature
- Reading chord frames
- Understanding the structure of a major scale
- Understanding the I, IV, V7 Chord Progression
- Key Signatures
- Reading basic rhythmic phrases
- Understanding how to play a diatonic melody at sight with correct rhythm

III. Melodic Playing

- Playing notes on all strings in first position
- Identifying all first position notes on the grand staff
- Playing selected major scales in first position
- Playing a melodic bass line in first position
- Playing a melodic line independently in an ensemble setting

IV. Chords

- Playing the I-IV-V7 progression in D, G, A, E, C, Am, and Em
- Strumming chord progressions rhythmically while melody is played
- Strumming variations of chord progressions in different styles
- Playing chords as arpeggios using proper finger-picking technique
- Playing selected power chords
- Playing selected barre chords

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Course Materials

Pencil

A pencil (NOT PEN) is required for each class in order to take proper notes and complete all assignments in and out of class. Please come to class prepared with a pencil, as I will not supply you with one and classmates may not have an extra pencil for you to use. Failure to come to class without a pencil will result in the loss of participation credit towards your grade.

3-Hole Binder (1 to 1 ½ inch)

All class papers, notes, and materials must be held in a 3-hole binder. Please have this binder dedicated to this class only, as you will most likely fill the binder by the end with class materials. I may also require to keep your binders overnight, which would conflict with other classes if you use the binder for multiple subjects. Failure to come to class without your binder will result in the loss of participation credit towards your grade.

1-Subject Notebook (with 3 holes)

All notes from class lectures should be taken in one notebook dedicated only to this class. This notebook should be kept in your class binder. I may require to keep this notebook overnight, so using it for multiple subjects could create a conflict. Failure to come to class without your notebook will result in the loss of participation credit towards your grade.

Agenda Book

All homework, project, quiz, test, and performance dates should be recorded in your agenda to prevent and confusion. Please get in the habit of using your agenda for these purposes in class. Failure to come to class with your agenda book will result in the loss of participation credit towards your grade.

Guitar (PROVIDED)

A nylon-string acoustic guitar is provided to each student in the class. You will be assigned a particular guitar to use every time. These guitars may not be taken home, as they are used by every guitar class during the year. It is your responsibility to take good care of your guitar while it is in your possession. I will take care of any broken string issues (this will happen from time to time). Blatant misuse of the guitars, however, is not tolerated, and any damage to a guitar due to your misuse of it will be repaired at your cost.

