

Swift Guitar Lessons



10 Reasons Why You Suck at Guitar!

Hello friends,

In today's session I would like to look back at my 10+ years of teaching, and address some of the common issues that keep aspiring musicians from reaching their full potential. Let's get started!

- 1) **Lack of Practice** - This is the most common reason aspiring musicians don't improve, but it's also the easiest to correct. Finding the time and motivation to practice requires better time-management, prioritizing your practice, and integrating the instrument into your social life; Guitar meet-ups, open-mics, campfire jam sessions, group lessons.
- 2) **Scratching the Surface** - With the amount of information available online today, many aspiring players find themselves bouncing from one thing to the next. I am a strong believer that it is better to master one technique, rather than scratching the surface on several.
- 3) **Practicing Sloppy** - Over my teaching career, I've seen many students unintentionally stunt their progress by practicing too fast, while not focusing on the quality of their technique. The secret to improving on the guitar is slow, methodical practice. For every bad repetition, you're taking three steps backward.
- 4) **Misguided Focus** - Many guitar players tackle projects that they've been told, or assume will be good for their progress. The next time you consider what styles, or tunes to learn, ask yourself if that's what you listen to, and enjoy. If you've never willingly listened to classical guitar music in your life, and don't particularly enjoy the genre, then I strongly suggest that you invest your time practicing what truly moves you.
- 5) **Bad Equipment** - No matter how good of a guitarist you may be, if your instrument has high-action, or bad intonation, you're not going to sound your best. Learning on a lack-luster instrument takes the fun out of practicing the guitar, so I recommend upgrading to something that you can work with.
- 6) **You're stressed out!** - Trouble at work, screaming kids, and the 24hr "news-cycle-insanity-fest" are just a few sources of daily stress and anxiety... Unfortunately it's not possible to learn under these conditions, so I suggest you find an ultra-Zen place to practice. I've converted my basement into my guitar dojo, stocked with craft beer, records, and complete privacy; it's my happy place.

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- 7) **You Don't Learn So Good** - We are victims of a cookie cutter education system that leaves us unfamiliar with our own learning needs. I made very little progress before I took the time to map out a personalized learning strategy.
- 8) **Missing Learning Opportunities** - Some of the best information I've received has come from impromptu lessons with musicians I've met on the street, at parties or sitting in a music store. The next time you hear someone play something that catches your ear, take the time to pick his or her brain, and see if you can walk away with something of value.
- 9) **Resistance to Fundamentals** - Nearly every student I've ever taught has found music theory to be intimidating. Let me be the first to tell you that an understanding of [basic music theory](#) makes learning infinitely easier. Take time to learn the [notes on the fretboard](#), [the essential scales](#), and [the origins of common chords](#) and watch as the mystery surrounding the guitar begins to vanish before your eyes!
- 10) **Lack of Confidence** - the process of setting a goal, and seeing it to fruition is almost impossible without a belief in your abilities. Build your confidence by setting small, manageable goals and treat yourself to learning simple, but recognizable riffs.