

The Specialists in Guitar Education

# RGT<sup>®</sup>

Registry of Guitar Tutors

# Acoustic Guitar Performance Awards

Combined Syllabus and Information Booklet

Valid from 2012 until further notice



UNIVERSITY OF  
WEST LONDON

LONDON COLLEGE OF MUSIC EXAMINATIONS

Exams are run in partnership with

**London College of Music Exams**

Qualifications are certificated by the University of West London



## About Registry of Guitar Tutors (RGT)

RGT was established in the UK in 1992 and is now the world's premier organisation of guitar educators. To find a registered guitar tutor in your area visit [www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org)

RGT exams are operated in partnership with London College of Music Exams, which was founded in 1887 and is one of the world's most respected music examination boards.

RGT organises guitar exams, from beginner to professional Diploma level, in numerous countries around the world.

RGT offers exams in rock guitar, electric guitar, acoustic guitar, bass guitar, jazz guitar and popular music theory.

RGT qualifications are awarded and certificated by the University of West London.



For more information about RGT visit  
[www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org)

### RGT Board of Honorary Patrons:

Sir Paul McCartney, David Gilmour, Hank Marvin, Ronnie Wood, John Etheridge, Gordon Giltrap,  
Suzi Quatro, Carlos Bonell, Dave Kelly, John Illsley, Neil Murray, Glenn Tilbrook.  
Director: Tony Skinner

The logo for the Registry of Guitar Tutors (RGT) features the text "The Specialists in Guitar Education" at the top, the large letters "RGT" in the center, and "Registry of Guitar Tutors" at the bottom, all enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.	<p>Registry of Guitar Tutors Registry Mews, 11-13 Wilton Road Bexhill, Sussex, TN40 1HY Tel: 01424 222222 Email: <a href="mailto:office@RGT.org">office@RGT.org</a> Web site: <a href="http://www.RGT.org">www.RGT.org</a></p>
---	--

# Acoustic Guitar Performance Awards

*Performance Awards* are alternatives to the RGT Grade exams. Performance Awards focus entirely on the performance of prepared pieces.

There are ten levels of Performance Award. The table below shows their titles and the grade standard they are equivalent to.

Performance Award	Equivalent Grade	Performance Award	Equivalent Grade
Initial Level	Initial Stage	Level 4	Grade 4
Preliminary Level	Preliminary Grade	Level 5	Grade 5
Level 1	Grade 1	Level 6	Grade 6
Level 2	Grade 2	Level 7	Grade 7
Level 3	Grade 3	Level 8	Grade 8

Up to and including Performance Award Level 5, candidates will be assessed solely on the performance of THREE prepared pieces, FOUR pieces for Levels 6 to 8. Further details are provided overleaf for each Performance Award level. There are no other components in Performance Awards.

Performance Awards provide an ideal opportunity for developing musicians, who prefer to focus on performing pieces and who do not wish to take the more comprehensive grade exam, to have their playing professionally assessed and to receive independent feedback on their playing from an experienced examiner. The Filmed and Recorded Performance Awards are also particularly suitable for those who find it hard to travel to an exam venue, or for those who get overly nervous in an exam situation, as performances can be submitted by disc or uploaded online. As well as being qualifications in their own right, Performance Awards also offer candidates the opportunity to have their Prepared Performances assessed prior to entering for a full grade exam. Performance Awards are accredited by London College of Music Exams and successful candidates will receive a Performance Award certificate from the University of West London.

There are three types of Performance Award:

- **Live Performance Award:** Candidates attend an exam venue and perform their chosen set of pieces, as described overleaf.
- **Filmed Performance Award:** This follows exactly the same format as a Live Performance Award, except that candidates submit a video recording of their performance rather than attending an exam venue. The video may be submitted on DVD or uploaded via the RGT website. A slightly higher standard of performance will be expected than for a Live Performance Award.
- **Recorded Performance Award:** This follows exactly the same format as a Live Performance Award, except that candidates submit an audio recording of their performance rather than attending an exam venue. The recording may be submitted on CD or uploaded via the RGT website. A significantly higher standard of performance will be expected than for a Live Performance Award.

# Performance Pieces List

## Initial Level & Preliminary Level

Candidates should perform a total of THREE pieces:

- 1) Select and play ONE Rhythm Playing Study, chosen from the three Rhythm Playing Studies contained in the equivalent grade exam handbook.
- 2 & 3) Select and play TWO melodies. At least one must be chosen from the four traditional melodies listed below and contained in the equivalent grade exam handbook. If preferred, one melody can be a 'free choice' by the candidate of any well-known melody from 1960 onwards.

**Initial Level melodies:** *Kumbaya; When The Saints Go Marching In; On Top Of Old Smokey; Michael Row The Boat Ashore.*

**Preliminary Level melodies:** *Morning Has Broken; Aura Lea; Early One Morning; For He's A Jolly Good Fellow.*

## Levels 1 & 2

Candidates should perform a total of THREE pieces:

- 1) Select and play ONE Rhythm Playing Study, chosen from the three Rhythm Playing Studies contained in the equivalent grade exam handbook.
- 2) Select and play ONE Fingerstyle Study, chosen from the two Fingerstyle Studies contained in the equivalent grade exam handbook.
- 3) Select and play ONE melody, chosen from the four traditional melodies listed below and contained in the equivalent grade exam handbook. If preferred, the melody can be a 'free choice' by the candidate of any well-known melody from 1960 onwards.

**Level 1 melodies:** *Auld Lang Syne; The Bear Dance; Mairi's Wedding; Swing Low Sweet Chariot.*

**Level 2 melodies:** *Scarborough Fair; The Skye Boat Song; House Of The Rising Sun; Londonderry Air.*

## Levels 3, 4 & 5

Candidates should perform a total of THREE pieces:

- 1) Select and play ONE Rhythm Playing Study, chosen from the three Rhythm Playing Studies contained in the equivalent grade exam handbook.
- 2 & 3) Select and play TWO pieces. At least one must be chosen from the four pieces listed below and contained in the equivalent grade exam handbook. If preferred, one piece can be a 'free choice' piece.

**Level 3 pieces:** *Double Thumb Special; Red Haired Boy; Get Sussed; Athol Highlanders.*

**Level 4 pieces:** *Freight Train Blues; Down By The Sally Gardens; Let Love Add Up; The Rakes of Mallow.*

**Level 5 pieces:** *Mourning Air; Everglade; Country Mood; The Ten Penny Bit.*

## Levels 6, 7 & 8

Candidates should perform a total of FOUR pieces:

The pieces should demonstrate some variety in musical style and a range of technical ability. At these levels, candidates are allowed to interpret the pieces in their own style, rather than sticking rigidly to the arrangement shown in the notation, providing the technical level is not simplified.

At least two pieces must be chosen from the four pieces listed below and contained in the equivalent grade exam handbook. If preferred, a maximum of two pieces can be chosen from the 'List of Alternative Pieces' (see under 'Further Information' on the following page) or may be 'free choice' pieces.

**Level 6 pieces:** *Amazing Grace; Hometown Blues; On The Road; The Rake's of Kildare and The Blackthorn Stick.*

**Level 7 pieces:** *Song for Eric; Auburn; Invocation; Off To California and Harvest Home.*

**Level 8 pieces:** *I Dare You; The Coast Road; Acoustic Fuel; The Derry Hornpipe.*

Alternatively, any one of the four pieces can be replaced by the performance of an accompaniment taken from the appropriate equivalent grade exam handbook. If this accompaniment option is selected, the candidate should play the chords from any one of the accompaniment charts in the equivalent grade exam handbook, whilst the melody is performed either by another musician or on a recording. It is the candidate's responsibility to supply the melody player (the examiner will not play the melody in a Live Performance Award) or to supply a recording of the melody on a backing track. (If a recording of the melody is intended to be used in a Live Performance Award, then the candidate needs to bring along to the exam venue a suitable audio playback system to play their backing track on.) The melody can be played on any instrument. Only the candidate's accompaniment of the melody will be assessed. The assessment will focus on the accuracy, fluency and inventiveness of the accompaniment playing, and the ability to gel and interact with the melody playing to produce an effective musical result. The playing of the melody will not be assessed, but should be of sufficient fluency and accuracy so as not to detract from the accompaniment performance.

### FREE CHOICE PIECES

These can be any piece (self-composed or otherwise) providing it is of at least similar standard to the set pieces within the same Performance Award level. Candidates should be aware that if the standard of a free choice piece is significantly easier than that of those listed, this may be reflected in the marking. Free choice pieces may include pieces with altered tuning (e.g. dropped D, DADGAD, open G, etc.) or specialist styles of guitar playing, such as slide guitar.

Any free choice pieces, up to and including Level 5, should not exceed 5 minutes each. For higher levels, the total duration of all pieces combined (including any gaps between pieces to retune or change guitar) should be as follows: Level 6: between 12 and 24 minutes. Level 7: between 14 and 28 minutes. Level 8: between 15 and 30 minutes.

### List of Alternative Pieces

This list, covering Levels 3 to 8, is designed to aid candidates in choosing free choice pieces – although there is no compulsion to select any of the pieces listed; candidates are allowed to select their own choice of material for free choice pieces. The list is published on the RGT website ([www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org)), rather than in traditional print format, in order to enable it to be updated regularly.

The level listed for each alternative piece is for general guidance only – to demonstrate the typical level of each piece when performed reasonably well – but candidates should note that level differentiation is primarily by performance standard rather than purely by the piece chosen, therefore a piece may be suitable for a lower or higher level depending upon the quality of the actual performance. For example, at Level Three a high level of stylistic interpretation and expression is not expected, but if a piece listed at this level was performed fluently and accurately with flair, character and style it could quite appropriately be entered for a higher level.

In order to make obtaining musical material easy for candidates, the list is deliberately biased towards pieces for which good quality transcriptions/arrangements are readily available usually in both standard notation and tablature, often with the inclusion of a demonstration CD. You can view the list at [www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org) and obtain the music from [www.BooksForGuitar.com](http://www.BooksForGuitar.com)

## Further Information

Performance Award entry forms can be downloaded from [www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org)

Each equivalent grade exam handbook contains the performance pieces, written in both TAB and traditional notation. A CD recording of all the pieces is included with each handbook. The handbooks are available from [www.BooksForGuitar.com](http://www.BooksForGuitar.com) or can be ordered from your local music store.

Candidates are encouraged to perform the pieces from memory – although this is not a requirement.

### **Extra Information for *Live Performance Awards*:**

Candidates using more than one tuning should ensure that they are able to re-tune their guitar promptly and unaided, or should bring to the exam room a pre-tuned separate guitar for any pieces that require an altered tuning.

### **Extra Information for *Filmed Performance Awards*:**

The equipment used to film the performance need not be of a professional quality, a standard domestic-quality camcorder or similar will normally suffice, providing it is of sufficient quality that the examiner will be able to see and hear the candidate's performance clearly enough to enable a reliable assessment to be made. The quality of the filming itself, or any visual effects, will not be part of the assessment.

Each piece should be filmed without edits.

Because videoing a performance will allow candidates the opportunity to film several attempts at performing a piece and then submitting their best take, the performance standard expected for a Filmed Performance Award is slightly higher than that expected for a Live Performance Award of the same Level.

A single disc containing all the performances, in a format that will play on a standard DVD player, should be submitted by post, together with the entry form. The candidate name should be clearly written on the disc. A list of the titles of all the pieces and their composers, in the order they are performed on the disc, should be attached to the entry form.

The entry form includes a declaration to confirm that the performer on the video is the named candidate; an adult witness needs to countersign the entry form.

If preferred, candidates can submit their entry online and upload a video of their performances via the RGT website – [www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org)

### **Extra Information for *Recorded Performance Awards*:**

The equipment used to record the performances need not be of a 'studio' quality, however it should be of sufficient quality that the examiner will be able to hear the candidate's performance clearly enough to enable a reliable assessment to be made. The fidelity of the recording itself will not be part of the assessment.

Edits, overdubs and drop-ins are all part of the armoury of techniques used by recording guitarists and so these are permitted. However, where these are used the results should be seamless; where they are poorly executed and sound obvious, the marking may be adversely affected.

Because recording the performances may allow candidates the opportunity to use edits and overdubs, and to have numerous attempts at performing a piece and then submitting their best take, the performance standard expected for a Recorded Performance Award is significantly higher than that expected for a Live Performance Award of the same Level.

A single CD disc containing all the performances should be submitted by post, together with the entry form. The candidate name should be clearly written on the disc. A list of the titles of all the pieces and their composers, in the order they are performed on the disc, should be attached to the entry form.

The entry form includes a declaration that the performer on the disc is the named candidate; an adult witness needs to countersign the entry form to confirm this.

If preferred, candidates can submit their entry online and upload the audio files of their performances via the RGT website – **[www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org)**

## Performance Awards Marking Scheme

Up to and including Level 5	up to 40% for the performance of the Rhythm Playing Study, up to 30% for each of the other pieces performed.
Levels 6 - 8	up to 25% for each piece performed

85-100% = Distinction      75-84.5% = Merit      65-74.5% = Pass  
55-64.5% = Below Pass Upper Level      0-54.5% = Below Pass Lower Level

# How Marks Are Awarded

The guidelines below give a broad outline of the general standard expected for each mark category.

## *Live Performance Awards*

### **Full Marks:**

A fully confident and assured rendition of the pieces that displayed a clear awareness and understanding of the requirements for an effective acoustic guitar performance. Accuracy and timing were both secure throughout, with the candidate displaying mastery of the technical demands of all the pieces. At the higher levels, there should be both a clear awareness and control of dynamic and tonal contrasts.

### **Distinction:**

A highly confident and assured rendition, with a high level of accuracy and security of timing. Small and very occasional lapses in any of these detracted slightly from what was otherwise an effective acoustic guitar performance. At the higher levels, some awareness of dynamic and tonal contrast should be clearly displayed.

### **Merit:**

Accuracy, timing and control of the technical demands of the pieces should be generally secure, although there may be some lapses in these compared to Distinction. At the higher levels, the performances should display some confidence and awareness of dynamic and tonal contrast.

### **Pass:**

Accuracy and timing should be mostly secure throughout the performance but, compared to Merit, there may be some lapses in technical control and clarity. At the higher levels there should be some basic awareness of the control of dynamics and tone.

### **Below Pass – Upper Level:**

Some serious or numerous smaller lapses in accuracy or timing. Frequent lapses in technical control and clarity of tone. Nevertheless, showing some potential of attaining a Pass at this level.

### **Below Pass – Lower Level:**

Inaccuracies proportionately greater than correct playing. Overall the performance demonstrated a fundamental lack of musical awareness, technical control and fluency.

## *Filmed Performance Awards*

### **Full Marks:**

A highly engaging performance that demonstrated musical flair, as well as complete technical fluency and ability in all the pieces. The candidate sounds and appears at ease with the technical demands of the pieces being performed; both accuracy and timing are fully secure throughout. There should be sufficient variation in the pieces performed to demonstrate clear versatility in a range of acoustic guitar playing styles and techniques.

### **Distinction:**

An engaging performance with a high level of technical fluency and ability being displayed, resulting in very secure accuracy and timing. Small and very occasional lapses in any of these detracted slightly from what was otherwise an effective performance. There should be clear evidence of versatility in the techniques being presented, although slightly less developed compared to Full Marks.

### **Merit:**

Accuracy, timing and the degree of technical fluency displayed in the pieces should be generally secure, although there may be some lapses in these compared to Distinction. At higher levels in particular, evidence of versatility in the acoustic guitar playing techniques being used should be displayed.



**Pass:**

Accuracy and timing should be mostly secure throughout the performance but, compared to Merit, there may be some lapses in technical control, fluency and clarity. Some versatility in the playing techniques being used should be in evidence.

**Below Pass – Upper Level:**

Serious or numerous smaller lapses in accuracy or timing. Frequent lapses in technical control and clarity. Nevertheless, showing some potential of attaining a Pass at this level.

**Below Pass – Lower Level:**

Inaccuracies proportionately greater than correct playing. Overall the performance demonstrated a fundamental lack of musical awareness, technical control and fluency.

## ***Recorded Performance Awards***

**Full Marks:**

A seamless recording that displays a fully accurate and fluent acoustic guitar performance with no audible evidence of edits or overdubs. A clear sense of musical sensitivity that displayed an understanding of the nuances of an effective acoustic guitar performance. All elements of the performance were accurately and securely executed throughout, with a clear demonstration that the feel of the music had been captured. At higher levels, there should be an increasing display of musical individuality and creativity.

**Distinction:**

A highly fluent and seamless recording with a high level of accuracy and security of timing that contained no obvious evidence of edits or overdubs. Small and very occasional lapses in any of these detracted slightly from what was otherwise an effective acoustic guitar recording with a generally clear sense of musical sensitivity. At the higher levels, some awareness of musical individuality and creativity should be clearly displayed.

**Merit:**

A fluent and generally seamless recording that contained little evidence of edits or overdubs, with a generally high level of accuracy and security of timing. Lapses in any of these detract from a generally effective acoustic guitar recording with some clear sense of musical sensitivity.

At higher levels, some awareness of musical individuality and creativity should be displayed.

**Pass:**

Accuracy and timing should be mostly secure throughout the recording. There may be some small audible evidence of edits or overdubs. Compared to Merit, there may be some lapses in technical fluency, clarity and musical sensitivity. Some basic awareness of musical individuality and creativity should be in evidence at higher levels.

**Below Pass – Upper Level:**

Serious or numerous smaller lapses in accuracy or timing. Clearly audible evidence of edits or overdubs that detracted from the recorded performance. Frequent lapses in technical control and clarity. Nevertheless, showing some potential of attaining a Pass at this level.

**Below Pass – Lower Level:**

Inaccuracies proportionately greater than correct playing. Overall the recorded performance demonstrated insufficient musical awareness, technical control and fluency.

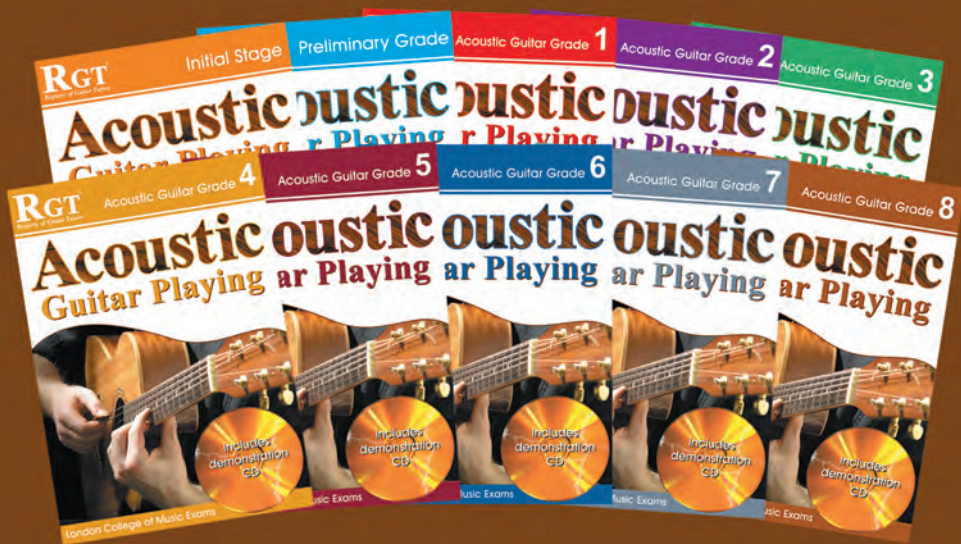
## Syllabus regulations and information

1. This syllabus is valid from 31st March 2012 until further notice. It is the candidate's responsibility to obtain, and comply with, the current syllabus. RGT has a policy of consistent improvement and development and may, without notice, update regulations, syllabuses and other publications. Where alterations, additions and/or deletions to syllabuses take place, RGT cannot accept responsibility for informing candidates and teachers of such changes except through the RGT website, the RGT magazine *Guitar Tutor* and the normal reprinting process.
2. Exam periods and entry deadlines are provided on the exam entry forms, available from [www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org) or by calling the RGT office (01424 222222).
3. The right to refuse, postpone or cancel the entry of any candidate is reserved. Entries are accepted subject to the regulations stated in this syllabus. Entry for exam constitutes an agreement on the part of the candidate to abide by the regulations.
4. A table of exam fees is provided on the entry forms and on the RGT website [www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org). Once an exam has been entered, fees cannot be refunded nor entries postponed to a later examination session.
5. Only candidates officially entered will be examined; substitution of a candidate in place of a candidate originally entered will not be allowed.
6. Live Performance Awards exam appointments: An Attendance Notice detailing the date, time and venue of the examination will be issued to each candidate via Email (where this is provided on the entry form), or via the teacher or via the correspondence address on the entry form, not later than ten days before the date of the examination. This should be retained by the candidate, and handed to the examiner on the day of the exam. RGT should be informed immediately if there are any errors on the Attendance Notice. An incorrect exam level or subject cannot be changed on the day of the exam, and spelling corrections will incur a fee if notified after the issue of the certificate. Examiners will do their best to start exams at the stated appointment times, but examiners may sometimes need to start an exam slightly earlier or later than the stated time. Candidates should ensure that they arrive at the venue no later than 10 minutes before the scheduled time of the exam.
7. Live Performance Awards are conducted in closed conditions. No-one, apart from the candidate and the examiner(s), is allowed into the exam room with the following exception: an approved person, such as a parent or teacher, or a language interpreter, where this concession has been granted prior to the exam as the result of a request for reasonable adjustments for a candidate with particular needs.
8. Fingering: Specified fingerings in RGT publications or other recommended publications should be taken as suggested guidelines only. Alternative systematic and effective fingerings will be accepted by examiners, unless they adversely affect the musical result.
9. Tuning: Candidates should tune their own instruments; the use of electronic tuners is permitted.

10. Use of photocopies: The use of photocopied music by candidates, unless authorised by the publisher or copyright holder, will not be permitted in the exam with the following exceptions:
  - (a) a photocopy of a page of a work for ease of performance due to a difficult page turn;
  - (b) a photocopy of a piece for the examiner's reference, provided the performer is using his or her own published edition;
  - (c) an enlarged or modified photocopy for candidates with particular needs, provided the original edition is also brought to the examination and presented to the examiner.

All such photocopies will be retained by the examiner, and destroyed at the end of the day's exams. Compliance with copyright law is the responsibility of the candidate and failure to comply may lead to disqualification and no marks or certificate being awarded.

11. Stopping candidates: Examiners may, at their discretion, stop a candidate at any part of a practical exam if the candidate has exceeded the time allowed for the exam.
12. Special consideration (including absence through illness): Candidates who are unable to take an exam at the scheduled time, for medical reasons, are invited to submit a signed doctor's letter indicating the reason, and accompanied by the Attendance notice, to the RGT office. The letter must be submitted within two weeks of the exam date, and must make clear that the candidate was incapacitated on the day of the scheduled exam. The candidate will then be permitted to re-enter for the same exam on payment of half the current fee. Candidates who are unwell on the day of the exam, but elect to take the exam nonetheless, will not be granted any special consideration in terms of assessment, and will not be eligible for a half-fee re-entry. Candidates who are unable to take an exam for compassionate reasons (e.g. death of a relative) are also covered under this policy.
13. When entering for a recorded or filmed Performance Award, candidates must sign a declaration confirming that the submitted performances are entirely their own work. This must be verified by an adult witness, who must supply their own name, address and contact details in case further verification is required. In addition, RGT may conduct sample checks and undertake further enquiries to confirm that the performances are candidates' own work. It may be an offence to attempt to obtain, or to help someone to obtain, a formal qualification by submitting work that has not genuinely been performed by the candidate, and RGT reserves the right to report any candidate who is discovered attempting to cheat by misrepresenting the work of another person as their own performances.
14. Exam results and certificates: A written report will be compiled for each exam. Candidates will be informed of the result of exam as soon as possible, and not normally later than eight weeks after the examination date, by post. Results cannot be issued over the telephone. Certificates for successful candidates are normally dispatched within eight weeks of the date of the exam.



# RGT Acoustic Guitar Exam Handbooks

"This series of books forms an expertly structured and comprehensive method of studying acoustic guitar."

## Get Qualified

Each book covers all the material needed for each RGT acoustic guitar exam, enabling you to study for an internationally recognised qualification.

## Improve Your Playing

Even if you do not intend to take an exam, these books will help you achieve your full potential as a guitarist by developing all aspects of your guitar playing.

## Easy To Use

- All music is written in easy-to-read TAB, as well as traditional notation.
- CD examples are provided so you can 'listen and learn'.
- The books are designed for both fingerstyle and plectrum players.

**CREDIT CARD ORDERLINE: 01424-222222 – or call to find your nearest stockist**

Order on-line at:

www.  
**BooksForGuitar**  
.com