



**Thespian Progression Levels**  
**Guitar**

# ABOUT THE THESPIAN PROGRESSION LEVELS APPROACH

The **aim** of the system is to ensure that the students in our Group Sessions are progressing throughout their time with us. The progression levels will almost act like a scheme of work which will help to ensure that each branch is following a similar standard ensuring quality and progression is equal across all branches. The progression levels will eventually coincide with the requirements of an official grading board for the Performing Arts Discipline.

There are 8 progression levels for each discipline which will increase in complexity:

Level One -	<b>A</b>
Level Two -	<b>C</b>
Level Three -	<b>H</b>
Level Four -	<b>I</b>
Level Five -	<b>E</b>
Level Six -	<b>V</b>
Level Seven -	<b>E</b>
Level Eight -	<b>D</b>

As per our slogan, 'You **believed** it, together we **achieved** it!', when members first join our company they **believed** - they believed they could become a performer, they could learn their chosen discipline to the best of their ability, they could meet with other people with similar interests and enjoy their learning. The idea is that by the end of their time with us they will have **achieved** what they set out to.

## LEVEL ONE - A

This Level is designed for our beginners who have only just joined the organisation. Even if members have previous experience, we have to start at this level to ensure we cover any gaps from their previous studies.

To complete Level One in Guitar, students must:

1. Be able to name and identify all parts of the Acoustic Guitar,  
*Must include: Body, Neck, Head, Tuning Pegs, Nut, Frets, Fret Board, Strings, Heel, Sound Hole, Bridge, Saddle, Strap Button, Strap, Cutaway, Scratchplate, Bridge Pins.*
2. Be able to name all strings,  
*E, A, D, G, B, E. Students must name the individual strings. For example, saying 'Elephants And Donkeys Grow Big Ears', would not pass.*
3. Be able to read and play a One String song on Tablature  
*We advise the following songs, Mary Had A Little Lamb, Twinkle Twinkle, Happy Birthday, etc.*
4. Be able to play 5 simple chords  
*To include, C, G, F, Em, Am*
5. Be able to name five different types of Guitar,  
*Include, Acoustic, Electric, Electro-Acoustic, Semi-Acoustic, Bass.*
6. Be able to tune a Guitar
7. Demonstrate professional and personal skills  
*Include; wearing the correct uniform, practising away from sessions, be punctual, demonstrate respect and kindness, be able to show teamwork*

## LEVEL TWO - AC

This Level is designed for our students who have now proven they know the very basics of Ukulele. They are now ready to dive deeper into learning. This level will work mainly on performance skills.

To complete Level Two in Guitar, students must:

1. Be able to play a song using at least three different chords,  
*This must be a song which requires more than one strum. We suggest the student plays; Riptide, Lost Boy, Someone You Loved*
2. Be able to read and play a song on Tablature requiring more than one string,  
*We advise the following songs, Stand By Me, Smoke On The Water, Seven Nation Army*
3. Be able to play 8 chords (simple/complex),  
*To include, C, A, G, E, D, F, Am, Em.*
4. Be able to identify Musical Note Symbols and name their values  
*To include, SemiQuaver, Quaver, Crotchet, Minim, Dotted Minim and Semibreve. (they do not need to identify rests at this point)*
5. Be able to identify and play Power Chords,  
*Include A5, G5, B5, C5,*
6. Understand and play Riffs
7. Perform in a Thespian Arts Showcase.

## LEVEL THREE- ACH

This Level is designed for our students who have now become very good beginner musicians. They are now ready to become an awesome Guitarist who really understands theory.

To complete Level Three in Guitar, students must:

1. Be able to play a chord song with a complex strumming pattern  
*Either DDU UDU, DDD DU, DUDUDUDU, DD UU DD or a pattern of similar complexity*
2. Be able to play the following chords (complex only),  
*To include, C, A, G, E, D, F, Am, Em, Dm, A5, G5, B5, C5,*
3. Be able to identify sheet symbols,  
*Include Hammer On, Pull-Off, Bending, Strum Up, Strum Down, Slide Up, Slide Down, Vibrato, Repeat*
4. Be able to play a Tab Song using complex techniques,  
*We would advise; Wonderful Tonight, Apache, Do I Wanna Know, Hey There Delilah*
5. Identify Rest Beats and name their values.
6. Understand Barre Chords and their shapes  
*Include, Bm, G, C,*
7. Understand Lead and Rhythm Guitar. Play a song with another guitarist. You can play the rhythm or lead.  
*We advise you to choose a song like You're Beautiful, Apache, My Girl.*
8. Be able to identify the Flat Notes,  
*To include, E, F, F#, G, G#, A, A#, B, C, C#, D, D#*

## LEVEL FOUR- ACH

Now Level three was tough, but this level really takes you to an intermediate guitarist who should seriously be considering looking at official Guitar grading.

To complete Level Four in Guitar, students must:

1. Accompany a singer and perform in a show
2. Be able to play a simple solo piece.
3. Be able to play Major Scales (Play 4 examples)
4. Be able to play A minor pentatonic scale
5. Be able to identify Treble Clef, Bass Clef,
6. Be able to identify and explain Time Signatures  
*Include 3/4, 4/4, 2/4, 2/2, 4/8, 12/16*

## LEVEL FIVE- ACHIE

Level Five aims to really strengthen your theoretical understanding. This learning will help you with not only Guitar, but Music in general.

To complete Level Five in Guitar, students must:

1. Understand how chords are created using Triads and how we make a chord into a major or minor seventh.
2. Be able to understand the construction of Major Scales and Major Keys  
*Tone, Tone, Semitone, Tone, Tone, Tone, Semitone*  
*Major, Minor, Minor, Major, Major, Minor, Diminished.*
3. Be able to construct Minor Scales and understand Minor Keys  
*Tone, Semitone, Tone, Tone, Semitone, Tone, Tone*  
*Minor, Diminished, Major, Minor, Minor, Major, Major*
4. Learn and understand Musical Terminology  
*To include, Dynamic, Tempo, Pitch, Harmony*
5. Be able to play 7th chords  
*To include A7, B7, D7, E7, G7*
6. Be able to play a complex solo piece
7. Understand the difference between harmonic, pentatonic, natural scales

## LEVEL SIX- ACHIEV

By this point you are already a fantastic musician with a lot of knowledge. Remember to go over your previous learnings though to ensure you are ready to learn this next level. Level Six, Seven and Eight will require you to really have understood and remembered your previous levels.

To complete Level SIX in Guitar, students must:

1. Be able to transpose a piece of music to remove a capo or add a capo.
2. Be able to read the Staff/Stave for Treble Clef and Bass Clef.
3. Understand the CAGED system.
4. Learn and understand Circle of Fifths
5. Understand different rhythms  
*To include Triplets,*
6. Understand improvisation and how to approach it.



## LEVEL SEVEN- ACHIEVE

There are only 4 items on this level, which means one thing... IT IS TRICKY! Stick with it as you are now becoming a really good musician who is ready to look at performing more and maybe start working with other musicians.

To complete Level Seven in Guitar, students must:

1. Be able to play a piece of TAB using the Staff/Stave
2. Learn and understand Intervals
3. Be able to play a piece of music using sheet music (Not TAB)
4. Play a song with another instrument

*You have to play in perfect timing with either a Bass Guitar, Keyboard, Drums*

## LEVEL EIGHT- ACHIEVED

At this point, you really should consider doing official grading. Speak to your tutor to arrange this. You could now consider next steps, maybe you continue with grading, start tutoring others, or look to join a band.

To complete Level Eight in Guitar, students must:

1. Be able to improvise in at least three different scales
2. Be able to play a song using Barre Chords
3. Use 1,4,5 Composition and perform your own song.
4. Play in a band  
*To include Drummer, Guitarist, Keyboard as minimum*
5. Be able to learn a song by ear.

## YOU HAVE **ACHIEVED** IT

*Congratulations! You are now a Level 8 Thespian Student specialised in Guitar.*

*Thank you for working so hard during lessons. You should be really proud of your achievements. This has been incredibly challenging but your work has paid off.*

*You are an asset to not only our Guitar Group but to Thespian Arts.*