

# ACOUSTIC GUITAR SYLLABUS 2020-2023

Initial-Grade 8

Putting performance first



The new Acoustic Guitar syllabus reinvents the Plectrum Guitar exams – we've kept the most popular pieces, but added a much wider range of styles to bridge the gap between classical and electric guitar. This ensures that guitarists develop the blend of fingerstyle and plectrum technique they need to play the music they know and love.

## Current music

Our new syllabus incorporates folk, acoustic, rock and pop, jazz, blues and country music, with the flexibility to develop fingerstyle and plectrum playing. All pieces are available in both standard and TAB notation, and selected pieces include duet parts and backing tracks.



## Essential techniques

The instrument-specific technical work is relevant to a range of popular music styles as it includes chord patterns and progressions, jazz scales, blues scales and modes, in addition to standard scales and arpeggios.

## Pro-skills

The syllabus is designed to reflect real-life demands and so includes material that features the different roles an acoustic guitar can fulfil: as a self-contained solo instrument, as a solo lead-line instrument or as an accompanying instrument. Many of the pieces include fingerstyle techniques (including thumb independence), or use plectrum and modern percussive techniques, while others offer short improvised sections, or playing from chord symbols.

Find out more:  
[trinitycollege.com/acoustic-guitar](https://trinitycollege.com/acoustic-guitar)

## Online resources

Developed by professional guitarists, our support resources show you what an exam is like, explore professional technique and look at where our exams can take you. Find out more at [trinitycollege.com/acoustic-guitar-resources](https://trinitycollege.com/acoustic-guitar-resources)

### Videos available include:

#### Writer's room

Trinity invited songwriter Jamie Sellers to run a workshop at MusicStation, one of our UK exam centres. We filmed the day as Jamie tasked ambitious songwriters to compose pieces on the acoustic guitar.

#### Songwriting tips

Watch professional acoustic guitarist Leoni Jane Kennedy play her own composition and discuss the ways she's progressed.

#### Exploring styles

Trinity's guitar specialists Anders Rye and T J Walker analyse their favourite pieces from the syllabus.

## Books and backing tracks

There are three books available – for Initial to Grade 2, Grades 3-5 and Grades 6-8 – which contain a wide range of styles, allowing candidates to follow distinct stylistic pathways as they progress. Backing tracks recorded by professional session players allow guitarists to learn crucial ensemble skills by practising as part of a band.



## Recognition

Trinity exams are externally regulated in the UK and recognised by education authorities in many countries around the world. They are also aligned to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Grades 6-8 are eligible for UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) points for those applying to UK colleges and universities.

“This syllabus helps learners to develop the versatility needed by the modern-day guitarist. There are so many styles to choose from, enabling students to hone fingerstyle and plectrum playing.”

Anders Rye, acoustic guitar 2020-2023 consultant



Find these videos and even more resources at [trinitycollege.com/acoustic-guitar-resources](https://trinitycollege.com/acoustic-guitar-resources)

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