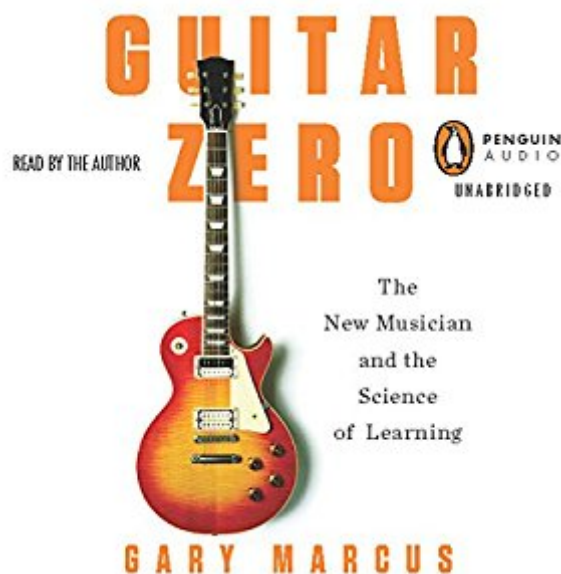


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# Guitar Zero: The New Musician And The Science Of Learning



## Synopsis

On the eve of his fortieth birthday, a professor of no discernible musical talent learns to play the guitar and investigates how anyone of any age might master a new skill. Just about every human being knows how to listen to music, but what does it take to make music? Is musicality something we are born with? Or a skill that anyone can develop at any time? If you don't start piano at the age of six, is there any hope? Is skill learning best left to children or can anyone reinvent him- or herself at any time? On the eve of his fortieth birthday, Gary Marcus, an internationally renowned scientist with no discernible musical talent, becomes his own guinea pig to look at how human beings become musical- and how anyone of any age can master something new. *Guitar Zero* traces his journey, what he learned, and how you can learn, too. In addition to being a groundbreaking look at the origins and allure of music, Marcus's journey is also an empowering tale of the mind's plasticity. In a quest that takes him from Suzuki classes to guitar gods, Marcus investigates the most effective ways to train your brain and body to learn to play an instrument. How can you make your practice more deliberate and effective? How can you find the best music teacher for you or your child? Does talent really exist? Or is hard work all you need? *Guitar Zero* stands the science of music on its head, debunking the popular theory of an innate musical instinct and many other commonly held fallacies. At the same time, it raises new questions about the science of human pleasure and brings new insight into humankind's most basic question: what counts as a life well lived? Does one have to become the next Jimi Hendrix to make a passionate pursuit worthwhile? Or can the journey itself bring the brain lasting satisfaction? For those who have ever set out to learn a musical instrument- or wishes that they could- *Guitar Zero* is an inspiring and fascinating look at music, learning, and the pursuit of a well-lived life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Fun read. I started at a similar age level to the author. Great book if you are wondering if being middle aged is a barrier to playing guitar as well as you would like to. You can play as good as any one or all of your guitar heroes, you just have to put in the time. Age has some advantages and this book goes into the science and biology of learning at any age. Fascinating and a great motivator.

Having started to learn guitar two years ago at age 54, I'm always looking around to understand what to expect in terms of progress. When I came across this book it was an obvious read. I related to the personal learning experience down to the F and Bm chord references we struggle with and really learned from the author's interviews and history lessons. I was really disappointed when the book ended. Recommended for anyone wondering about how to deal with learning things often left for the young.

I read this after "This is Your Brain on Music" and found "Guitar Zero" to be much more readable. There is still some delving into the science of learning and music but at a more readable level for me. The story is inspiring. I started learning to play guitar when I was 10 years old and I quit after high school. I have recently picked it up again and started taking lessons. I am 35 now. This book gives a perspective on my experience that is valuable. I would recommend this to anyone "older" who is considering learning a new instrument or music in general.

If the maximum number of stars is five then this book is worth at least ten. Don't be fooled by the title, you won't learn to play the guitar. You will, however, get the most honest, scientific, and positive description of teaching and learning and meet some of the most fascinating people in the world of music. If you are a teacher or educator, this is one of the most inspiring books about teaching you will ever read. Thankyou Gary Marcus.

In a review, the reader tries to create a sense of the book; the task is to boil down the essence of the work and to summarize and give opinion about the quality of the object in a very subjective

manner. I am making a project of finding that essence in the most constrained manner possible. Here, I present you with a haiku review. I hope you like the review and take under consideration a purchase of the work. Gave me confidence that I can play too. Not very heavy on theory.

Too many new terms for me. I play guitar. Nice story about his experience with kids band. Last 35 percent of book is acknowledgements, definitions, and cites.

I recommend this read to anyone interested in learning to play music - especially as an adult. This book is clearly written by a true academic because his insight into the way the human mind interacts with music is detailed. I am not versed in psychology but this book is accessible and I think it's for two reasons. For one thing the writing is down to earth. Even when I know it's weighty concepts they are delivered in a digestible way. I don't feel talked down to. The other reason I think is the big difference - the author USED HIMSELF AS A TEST SUBJECT! He tried to move from a Guitar Hero video game failure to a functional guitar player (a real guitar, not a glorified joy stick). What a fun story he tells of his journey. He is very real about his emotions, his concerns, his failures and in my estimation his ultimate victory. Really cool to experience his journey through this book. As an adult who wishes to be more musical this gives me hope. As a side note, psychology students may get inspiration from this book. Like I noted, this author speaks from the benefit of being a professor. A student who is seeking inspiration for class required experiments, or perhaps a person seeking test their own skill boundaries, and of course people who just want to grow in his/her own understanding should consider this book at text as much as it is entertainment. I'm hard on books normally, but this one has a thumbs up from me.

I enjoy this book very much. I can relate to what the author went through because I picked up a guitar later in life, at age 20, after always being told that I wasn't musical and that I was tone deaf. I went through many of the same things that the author went through. I really cracked up when he talked about the difficulty of learning the F chord, and being confused by the duplication of notes on the guitar neck. (I went through all of that too). Currently I get paid money to play music, and I have recorded two CDs of my own material. If "Guitar Zero" had been available when I started my journey years ago it would have saved me a lot of time and headaches. I would recommend it to any beginner who needs to find the shortcuts. One area Marcus delves into is an area that I never thought about; the part of our brain that we use when playing music, and the fact that there really is no "musical" part of the brain. It's not something we need to know to be a good guitar player, but it's

interesting.

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