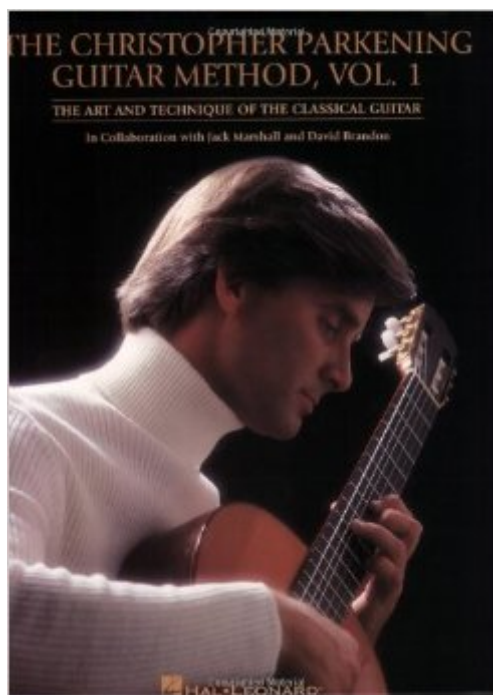


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The Christopher Parkening Guitar Method - Volume 1: Guitar Technique



Synopsis

(Guitar Method). This premier method for the beginning classical guitarist, by one of the world's pre-eminent virtuosos and the recognized heir to the legacy of Andres Segovia, is now completely revised and updated! Guitarists will learn basic classical technique by playing over 50 beautiful classical pieces, 26 exercises and 14 duets, and through numerous photos and illustrations. The method covers: rudiments of classical technique, note reading and music theory, selection and care of guitars, strategies for effective practicing, and much more!

Book Information

Paperback: 112 pages

Publisher: Hal Leonard; Revised edition (August 1, 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0793585201

ISBN-13: 978-0793585205

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.3 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

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Customer Reviews

This does the best job that I have seen of covering everything about starting the classical guitar. Parkening doesn't spend much space on choosing a guitar, but, then, I'd imagine that anybody who buys the book already has a guitar. He does spend lots of space on holding the guitar properly, sitting properly, and positioning both hands properly (I benefited from this last, even though I've been a guitarist for thirty-five years). He goes on to cover tuning and the two basic right-hand strokes. The music is arranged in a logical order, getting progressively more difficult through the book, including several duets for student and teacher. Every piece is appropriate for a beginner, and no piece involves anything that has not been taught. The book ends with Mr Parkening's own views on what a musician should try to achieve. Although I do not share his Christian faith, I found his views stimulating and inspiring. This book is so good that the only negative comment that I have is that it would be even better if spiral bound to lie open on a music stand. UPDATE: The book is now

issued with a spiral binding. Thank you to Henry for pointing this out, and to Hal Leonard for making the change.

The Christopher Parkening Guitar Method, Volume 1, revised 1998, is a comprehensive approach to teaching classical guitar. Written by an accomplished premier classical guitarist, it is not just a collection of exercises and guitar pieces, but includes historical background, basic technique, lots of textual information, photos and a useful appendix of terms. While a few of the photos in the original edition which should have had better lighting are included, this is easily overlooked since many have been added which are of far superior quality. I recommend this text for first time students of classical guitar who will not just learn the rudiments, but beautiful guitar pieces as well. Having said this, there is no substitute for a teacher... don't go it alone!

The one flaw that most classical guitar methods have is that the authors assume that a student has "prior experience". This is not the case with "The Christopher Parkening Method Vol 1" Mr. Parkening" starts the beginning student with a solid base of technic and prepares the student for a well rounded course in concert guitar. This is a well paced and consistent method, teaching a well rounded technic. This method is not boring or overly academic. There is also a brief history of the classical guitar from its Spanish origins to international prominence. I highly recommend this method for the aspiring concert guitarist as well as for the teacher.

I think this is the best of the beginner's methods for classical guitar. Parkening starts out teaching how to hold the guitar and place your hands. Other primers miss many of these points that are so important for more advanced playing. He goes from there through the strings and first notes and then starts you out playing. If you stick with the book and practice diligently you move through incrementally more difficult pieces until you are playing real classical guitar. The version of The Catalonia Song included is still one of my favorite pieces. If you want to play classical guitar this is a great place to start.

This is a terrific method book that I encourage classical guitar teachers and students to buy. The photographs and explanations of his points are clear and complete. What I like most about this book is the selection of music and how it is organized. The pieces and exercises come in perfect order. This particular volume limits all notes to within the first five frets, so more advanced players will want to also get volume two. I'm an advanced level guitarist and I went through this book very carefully,

page by page, so that I would be able to use it effectively with students, to develop sight reading ability, and also to have the feel of playing pieces that I had total control over. This book will be my main source when I teach my students. There is one minor flaw: in the beginning of the book he gives an alterante sitting position for women that should not be used. Women should sit the same as men when they play classical guitar (unless they're wearing a skirt). It's acceptable for women to sit the same as men now when they play classical guitar. Some reviewers have made negative comments about his "bible thumping" in the book. There's only one page of bible references in the book, at the very end, and even though I'm not religious, I'm fine with it. He just talks about how his religion is an inspiration to his music and he gives a few bible quotes. Big deal. You'd have to be a fool to not get this book -- the best method book I know of -- because of these few bible comments. You can really see how much this great guitarist tried to reach out to others and teach them how to play through this book.

This is a fairly slim volume, with rather less than in it than some of the reviews below would lead you to believe. It is certainly serviceable as an instruction book, but there are other classical instruction books available, and better, in my opinion, classical instruction books available. It is nice to have the photographs of hand positions, but most of the photographs here are vanity shots of the author and superfluous, in my opinion. In fact, I think this book's raison d'être is to attach a celebrity guitarist's name to a method book. Sorry if that sounds cynical, but the most famous guitarists are not necessarily the best teachers. I was disappointed in the obvious and unrewarding "supplemental pieces" and the lack of specific guidance about when to use rest stroke or free stroke, for example. No, if I had to choose one, I'd certainly recommend the venerable and time-tested Aaron Shearer method. Don't misunderstand me, however: the Parkening book will suffice.

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