



## Rainbow Guitar Flashcards Teacher's Notes

### Introduction

This set of 42 flashcards shows all the notes in first position on the guitar (including all the sharps and flats, and the 5th fret note A on 1st string). The cards can be used in many ways to help beginner pupils learn to recognise these notes on the staff - whether or not they are using the Rainbow Guitar tutor books for their lessons.

On one side of each card, the note is shown in black as it would normally appear. On the other side, the same note is given a colour according to which guitar string it is on. The colour code is the same as in the Rainbow Guitar tutor books, and goes as follows:

string 1 = pink  
string 2 = green  
string 3 = red  
string 4 = blue  
string 5 = orange  
string 6 = purple

The cards are available in two versions 1) a physical set of cards (high resolution, matt laminated, double-sided) 2) a free downloadable print-your-own version (lower resolution, single sided, eight cards per A4 page).

### Simple suggestions for activities

The list of possible uses is endless, so the table on the next page just gives a few starting points.

The teacher can always control the focus and the difficulty of the activity by choosing the particular set of cards to be used, and by deciding whether to use the coloured sides, the black and white sides, or a mixture.

Depending on the pupils and the activity the teacher may decide to

- hold the cards up one by one and ask pupils to call out responses
- lay the cards out on a table top (either jumbled or in some sort of order or formation)
- give the cards to pupil(s) and ask them to lay them out or order them

Focus	Teacher holds up series of cards and asks pupils to ...	Pupils lay out a group of cards on the floor or a table top ...	Pupils are shown a larger group of cards and asked to pick out ...
<b>Higher or lower?</b>	... say whether each card is higher or lower than the previous one	... in pitch order	... the next highest or next lowest note to the one the teacher is pointing to
<b>Which string?</b>	... say the number or the colour of the string	... grouped according to which string they are on	... all the notes which are on a given string
<b>Which note?</b>	... say the note name	... grouped according to note name (all the As, all the Bs etc)	... all the As, all the Bs etc
<b>Open or fretted?</b>	... say "open" or "fretted"	... separating the open string notes into a group	... quickly pick out all the open strings
<b>Which finger?</b>	... say "open" or "1", "2", "3", or "4" according to the fret or finger number	... lay them out in "fingerboard formation" (see note above)	... pick out all notes at the 1st fret, 2nd fret etc
<b>Awareness of scales and keys</b>	... say whether the note belongs to a given key, Yes or No	... lay them out in "fingerboard formation" (see note above)	... pick out all the notes belonging to e.g. A harmonic minor
<b>Awareness of sharps and flats</b>	... say the name of the note including "sharp" or "flat"	... lay them out in pitch order or in "fingerboard formation" (see note above)	... pick out the note which is one semitone higher/lower than the note the teacher points at, or is a "matching note" (e.g. F sharp/G flat)

## “Fingerboard layout”

This can be extremely useful in helping the pupil to visualise the link between the staff and the fingerboard. You need some space on a table top. The cards are laid out in a row for each string, with a gap wherever a fret is not played. Here is an example with the natural notes on the top 3 strings:



## Using the cards in creative activities

A set of pitch cards can be very useful in setting the framework for any kind of composition task (for example, making up a melody or ostinato pattern). The teacher can select a set of cards (ie pitches) to be used and give the set to the pupil (or, in a group lesson, give the pupils one card each or ask them to draw a cards from the pack).

The teacher can then help pupils experiment with various rhythm patterns and orderings of the notes until they have produced a result that everyone is happy with. The cards can be laid out in the agreed order and used to perform the tune and to help pupils record their work by notating the tune.

## Using the cards for other sorts of musical training

Pitch cards can also be used to help with aural training - e.g. creating simple melodic patterns which the pupil has to try to sing. And they are useful for all kinds of theory explanation too - for example you can lay out all the notes of a scale and then pick out the chord or arpeggio tones.

*Hugh Boyde, Ringing Strings Publications, December 2013*