

## Music Theory Info Sheet

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Whether you want to learn how to figure out the key to a song, think your way around the fretboard or keyboard while soloing or composing, transcribe or arrange something you've heard or written, or just sight-read more quickly, music theory is learned and retained best when it is practically applied to real musical problems and situations that you actually care about. We don't learn theory for theory's sake, but because it provides a helpful framework for *thinking* musically, so that we can quickly and easily make musical choices that fit best within a particular style. As the great blues players remind us, "You gotta learn the rules first, then you can learn how to break 'em." For those seeking help with music theory, I can work with you to establish how you personally will *use* theory, so that together we can create a curriculum of lessons and exercises that will most efficiently serve your individual learning goals and needs.

### **For beginners:**

For those just starting out, we'll begin with the basics of the Western musical language, integrating both aural and visual exercises that will provide you with a solid foundation for theory that you can build on moving forward. Many people who pick up an instrument only learn how to play notes or chords, without ever learning about the underlying patterns of their finger configurations or the melodic and harmonic progressions they are playing. By learning theory, you will not only be a more well-rounded player, but you will be able to translate your knowledge to other instruments and styles more easily.

### **For intermediate musicians:**

If you have been playing music for a while, then you probably already know a ton of music theory. But you may not even know what you know! I learned music primarily by ear, and then later received my formal training in Western classical theory, so I sincerely enjoy working with intermediate to advanced players to use what they know and figure out where their gaps are. We will work together to find the most efficient way to fill in those "gaps," so that you can become a more confident and well-rounded musician.

### **What you need to get started:**

Theory is learned most easily on either the piano or the guitar, so ideally you will have access to at least one of these instruments. Beyond that, what you will need depends on your learning goals. I can provide curriculum materials and exercises for beginner students and those who want to explore specific concepts and questions, and I can also work with whatever materials a student may already have on hand. But for those who want a full deep-dive experience of music theory, you may want to invest in a textbook/workbook combo. I highly recommend Norton's *Musician's Guide to Theory and Analysis*.