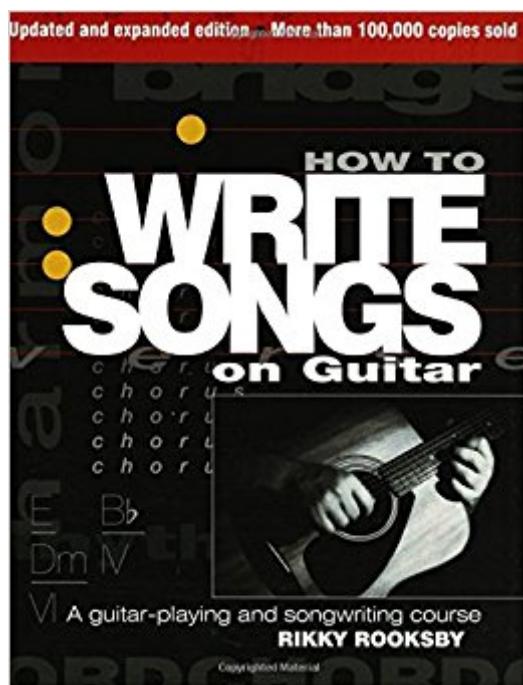


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# How To Write Songs On Guitar: 2nd Edition, Expanded And Updated



## **Synopsis**

(Book). So you want to write songs, and you want to write them on guitar. This is the book that shows you exactly how. Taking tips and tricks from classic songwriters, from Bob Dylan to the Beatles to Tori Amos, *How to Write Songs on Guitar* takes you through the four main elements of a song rhythm, melody, lyrics, and harmony and inspires you to combine them in exciting new ways. Now with updated songs and tips on writing trends, it's packed with wisdom and practical advice culled from over 1,500 songs, *How to Write Songs on Guitar* 2nd edition will soon have you producing better, more memorable songs.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

A useful source of knowledge for those just beginning with either writing or guitar. -- Dirty Linen An extremely valuable source book for wannabe songwriters as well as a highly readable journey of the popular song. --Guitarist

Rikky Rooksby is a composer, songwriter, guitar teacher and writer. He is the author of Backbeat's best-selling *How To Write Songs* series, and many other books about popular music.

Excellent book. I have the 2009 version and many of the criticisms of the earlier editions seem to be corrected. I have learned a lot from it. It will take several run throughs of the book to get everything. Well worth it. Also liked "Chord Master" by same author.

(I wrote this review eight years ago for the first edition of this book. First, some updates and comparisons, between the first edition and this one):What's new: his writing is a bit toned-down (in the first edition, he knocks on Oasis for being derivative... in this edition, he's much nicer about their music), some of the chord diagrams have been corrected, the color of the diagrams is more streamlined and "natural" (beige, easy on the eyes), full-color photos of the albums in the book of the first edition have been removed (probably to save money), and most importantly- all songs he references now have the ARTIST mentioned right in the same spot he mentions the song (that was really annoying about the first book- he kept mentioning song titles but I was like "who wrote that?!" - oftentimes I didn't feel like flipping to the index of the book), and there are other miscellaneous additions and subtractions. All in all, a very good revision. Now on to my original review from 2002:

-----This is the best (and most comprehensive/complete) songwriting book in existence. Seriously. I am a 26-year old multi-instrumentalist who has studied my fair share of songwriting books and techniques... I listen to, write, and study virtually every style of music (even oldschool country and some R+B).What Rikky Rooksby has done is create an easily understood book on modern (and not-so-modern) GOOD songwriting... how to make interesting chord progressions, how to write memorable melodies, what songs use certain chord progressions (from the popular Beatles stuff all the way to The Smiths (!!) and Sixpence None The Richer!) It's the only book I have seen that spotlights lesser-known amazing legendary alternative groups and their songwriting. Too many books these days show you how to play Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.... what the hell is that? Who wants to learn songs like that? Rikky's book focuses on why the great pop/alternative/folk songs in history ARE great, why they work, what elements make them work, etc... you wanna write good solid songs that people will remember? Catchy, full of great hooks, etc... This book is IT.In the back of the book he even lists 24 CD's you should buy (and/or study) to improve your songwriting, and he cannot be more ON when it comes to what he chooses:1. The Beatles- 1967-19702. Bob Dylan- Blonde on Blonde3. Beach Boys- Pet Sounds4. Love- Forever Changes5. Burt Bacharach- The Look Of Love6. The Band- The Band7. Motown Chartbusters Volumes I-V8. Simon and Garfunkel's Greatest Hits9. Led Zeppelin IV10. Bruce Springsteen- The Wild the Innocent and the E-Street Shuffle11. Joni Mitchell- Hejira12. Carpenters- Their Greatest Hits13. Queen II (EXCELLENT choice)14. Fleetwood Mac- Rumors (yet another excellent choice)15. ABBA Gold16. Siouxsie and the Banshees- Juju17. Bob Marley- Legend18. REM- Life's Rich Pageant19. Kate Bush- The Sensual World20. Madonna- The Immaculate Collection (quite possibly the most perfect pop record EVER)21. Nirvana- Nevermind (it's about time SOMEONE

recognized Kurt Cobain's genius)22. Jeff Buckley- Grace (yet another AMAZING artist who tragically lost his life way before he got a chance to impact the music world)23. Bjork- Post (absolute brilliance)24. Radiohead- OK ComputerIt's such a diverse list, from stuff you might hate that your parents or older sister love (Beach Boys/The Band), to stuff that my generation fully appreciates (Nirvana, Siouxsie, Radiohead, Kate Bush)... even though I love the oldschool stuff, too... the best songwriters draw from ALL decades of music.Rikky also has a section where well-known alternative and pop songwriters talk about the songwriting process (Morrissey, Tori Amos, Elvis Costello, Clapton, Peter Buck, etc.)... and he has a section that highlights random pop and alternative songs and why they WORK.... why they're great... I cannot say enough about how brilliantly-written this book is... I would love to contact Mr. Rooksby and let him know how much this book has helped me.The book is VERY inexpensive (for how much stuff it covers!!!) and I highly suggest it to anyone and EVERYONE, especially an alternative rocker. One band I wished he would have featured in his book is Jets To Brazil... now that is a band which knows about hooks, great lyrics/chord changes... songs that will be remembered for a thousand years. But still.... Rikky pretty much covered EVERYTHING... seriously.I have been playing guitar off and on for about four years. I've learned a LOT from this book)..... you won't be disappointed if you pick this book up, seriously.I hope everyone out there reads this review and buys it... it's just without a doubt, something you cannot do without, if you're serious about songwriting (on guitar or ANY other instrument).

I'm extremely pleased with the book. For me, it hit the spot in terms of expectations vs content. My primary expectation was that I was looking for a book that could give me some direction in terms of song writing. To clarify a bit more as to what I mean. If you have ever attempted to write a song or are (as I am) new to the process getting started can be overwhelming. The beauty (and curse) of song writing are the vast number of options. Even if you have a type of song in mind, sorting through which key, chord progressions, how the melody fits in etc can seem extremely challenging. While the book didn't eliminate or minimize the number of options, it did teach me how to organize them and to systematically sort through which ones directionally would be good additions to the song I wanted to write.Some things that helped me and may help you:- Read through the book completely the first time. My first time through I just wanted to absorb the information and understand how the information was presented.- Come up with an elementary song to use as a template as you go through the book the second time. Don't worry so much about writing the next greatest hit. Just have a simple idea for a song in mind - preferably in the key of C major.- Apply the concepts and information presented in the book to your new song to understand how the various

points impact your emerging song.- The book does require, or at least it is helpful to have some understanding of basic music theory. Take the time to grab some additional resource books or go on-line and look up any points you may not understand. However the author does a good job of explaining most of the points.- Another valuable exercise for me was I took a couple of my favorite songs and tore them apart to see how the information in the book applies to them. For me this has been a great learning experience and, in a positive way, I'll never look at a song in the same way again - hope this review helps.

I wouldn't say this book is for beginning guitar players. I'm intermediate and a lot of it is above my head. I guess I need to study more theory. Very high quality book with laminated pages and a thick cover.

I've been unsuccessfully songwriting for twenty years off and on. I never really understood how to put the entire song together until I was introduced to Rikky Rooksby. This is a how to book on the mechanics of writing a popular song. The author's background is actually in classical music which gives him a firm grasp of music theory. Music theory is the one area of music that many of us do not like to study at all. I know I didn't when I was learning to be a musician. He translates it into useful information that will help anybody without delving real deep into the theory behind it. He shows us a lot of different chords, but even more useful are the alternate fingerings for them. He also introduces us to some less familiar chords. The chord progressions most commonly used are the information I found most useful. I never really understood what people were talking about when they said, "It's a I IV III I progression...don't you get it?" "No, I didn't get it. Now I understand much more clearly what they were talking about. Rikky Rooksby's book will help anyone become a better songwriter. He also gives some tips on lyrics and the final product. I think lyrics are more the creative side, and this isn't really about that. It's the nuts and bolts. The creativity is up to you. I say buy this book if you want to write songs.

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