

**H**owdy, I'm Ritchie Mintz and I've been a musician since I was 8. I can play five different instruments and I know my way around many others. Throughout all of my life, through ups and downs in many endeavors, and through all the joys and dramas that life could throw at me, throughout it all, the one constant in my life has been the music. I've written songs and played with award winning musicians in award winning bands. I've won a contest or two.

So you might think that I'm a pretty talented guy. Well, maybe I am and maybe I'm not. I'm here to tell you that talent had nothing to do with it. Truth is, I'm not a particularly great singer and I don't read music. But I never let that stop me from finding a way to play whatever I have wanted to play for all of my life.

How did I do that? How do I continue to do it? Here's how:

Early on, about age 15, I was taught a simple way of understanding basic music theory. It was a tremendous gift. There's an old expression,

*Give someone a fish and they can eat for a day.  
Teach 'em to fish and they can eat every day.*

Before I knew how music works, I had to go to experienced musicians to teach me how to play each chord and every song I wanted to play. It was like having to ask for a new fish every time I got hungry. To my amazement, many of my teachers could play very well but even they could not explain what they did.

Then I learned music theory. All of a sudden I knew how to fish. I could listen to a song and visualize its structure. I could hear its chords and see its melody. I could transpose keys on paper and in my head. For the first time, I understood what a capo really did and, for the first time, I no longer needed one. It answered all of my questions and quite truly gave me the keys to the kingdom.

Music has a simple mathematical structure to it but you don't have to be a mathematician to get it. Once I understood the geometry of music, I could play anything I wanted to play...and so can you.

This music theory instruction method is oriented for string instruments. My first instrument was the guitar. However, if you understand how music works, you can apply the principles to any instrument. That's why I call it:

## **Universal Music Theory For Any Instrument**

*~ Ritchie*

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