

GRADING WITH THE GUITAR NINJA

Hey Guitar Ninjas,

If you want to take your progress online and earn something physical you can book in for a private grading. As an official graded guitar ninja you will earn a guitar strap, badge, plectrum and certificate for your grade shipped to you. All of these are official guitar ninja products and are not sold or made available in any other way but through our grades.

Here is everything you need to know to become an official guitar ninja strap owner!

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THE ORDER OF THE GRADES/STRAPS

The strap grades follow a similar order to the Japanese martial arts. The order is

Grey (Ungraded), White, Yellow, Orange, Green, Blue, Purple, Brown, Black. And once you reach a black strap you can continue to earn Dan grades (black belt levels).

CHECKING YOU ARE READY TO GRADE

(PRACTICE QUESTIONS, SONG CHOICE, MOCKS)

If you wish to grade, firstly complete the strap course lessons and at the end will be a quiz. This quiz will help you know if you are ready to pass the knowledge side of the grade or not. As for the practical playing side, the best practice is to check the requirements of the grade using the grading syllabus and any other supporting documents that grade may have.

We advise that you practice the song you wish to use to grade for a total of 20 hours before grading to ensure you know the song and it's structure inside out.

The biggest confusion with the grades has been to do with the song choices, Please see the notes below for each grade requiring a song and the following page for other important factors about the song requirements and pass rates.

Yellow Strap:

You may play a simplified version of a song as long as it has two different sections, the notes you play are in the song (even if they're just root notes for the chords) and it has at least two different lengths of notes. (e.g. whole and half notes)

Orange Strap:

This song must use Power chords with a minimum speed of quarter notes, or have a riff section with a minimum speed of 8th notes.

Green Strap:

The song must use at least 4 regular chord shapes that use at least 4 strings each.

Blue Strap:

The song(s) must use at least 6 regular chord shapes that use at least 4 strings each.

Purple Strap: The song has to be of Orange grade level or harder but must be performed as though you are playing to an audience. Either interacting with the Sensei directly or Interacting with the camera as though the Sensei is in the room with you.

SONG REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL GRADES

Requirements

The song for your grading must be played in a single run, from the start to the finish of the song without a break.

The song must be played along to the music as you will be graded on both timing and that you change from one section to another at the right point in the song.

The song must have at least 2 different sections and last for more than 2 minutes 30 seconds to count as a full song.

Some grades have specific requirements about the song, or the way it is to be played, please see these points on the specific grade sheet.

Gradings/Scores:

When performing a song, you will be given a mark for any mistakes you make. The amount of marks you have at the end of the song will determine if you have passed or failed. If you fail you can have a second attempt within any single grading, however if you fail twice you will need to re-book and retake the entire grading at another time.

We like to encourage creativity with our students and therefore alterations to the song are welcome as long as they sound good. 'Sound good' means the notes are in time, in key, and are explained beforehand so the changes are expected.

Clearly wrong note - 1

Single note out of time by an eighth note or more - 1

Changing section at the wrong time during the song - 5

Missed notes/sections after a mistake - 2 (per bar)

9 marks is a pass however 10 is a fail

Some grades may differ from this scoring but they will state it in the grade sheet if they do.

HOW THE GRADING WORKS

AND WHAT YOU NEED TO PREPARE

The grading is performed over a one to one video call. Once you are sure you are ready to pass you can book in your grading as mentioned in the next section.

Once you are booked in for your grading, you will be given the information needed for the video call.

Things you are expected to have prepared and ready for your grading on the day:

- 1) A guitar that is in tune
- 2) A plectrum
- 3) A form of amplification if possible to help the software pick up the sound of your guitar
- 4) Another device that can play the tracks you will be performing along to. This should have the tracks ready and loaded. If the device has small speakers like a phone, please have it connected if possible to an external loudspeaker.
- 5) A camera angle/distance where we can see your face and the entire guitar neck in the same shot. For those using a phone for the call you will want a stable stand/holder set up for your phone before the session starts.

Once the call starts we will ask you if you wish to perform the song first or last. (we advise you take the part you are least comfortable with and get it done and out of the way so you can relax for the rest of the grading)

We will guide every part of the grading so you can relax and just think about answering the questions and performing/demonstrating with your guitar. If we feel you have mis-understood a question we will reword it and ask the question, or part of the question again to help guide you towards the answer without giving away any important information or answering the question for you.

The Non-performing side of the grade will start with us asking you a few questions from some previous grades to ensure you haven't lost any previous knowledge and only focussed on this new grade alone.

Any performance based sections of the grade may have a second attempt, time permitting, in the same grading if you are unhappy and feel you can do better a second time around.

BOOKING YOUR GRADING AND PRICES

Gradings need to be completed on a live one to one basis, therefore to grade you will need to book a private grading slot.

To book a grade you should send an e-mail to lessons@theguitarninja.co.uk with the following information.

Your name:

Username:

Country of residence:

Grade you are wanting to go for:

Grade you currently hold:

Availability: (Do you go to school/work during the day, do you work evenings, weekends, shift pattern etc)

Contact number:

We will then respond with some available time slots and payment options. The grading will only be confirmed once the payment has been received.

Once payment is received, your booking will be confirmed and you will be sent the details for the video call.

To book a mock/practice grade, please send the same information as you would for the grading and just mention in the subject or in the e-mail itself that it is a mock. A mock booking will again only be confirmed upon receipt of payment.

Prices 2020

Mock Grade: £40

Grading: £65

Prices include pass materials and delivery to a UK address. If you live outside of the UK then We can look into the shipping costs while we arrange the booking.

AFTER THE GRADING

You will know at the grading itself if you have passed or if you need to retake the grade.

Once you pass the grade you will be told how awesome you are. we will then confirm the address with you again and get your grading pass pack sent off for delivery. The grading pack includes:

- An official Guitar Ninja guitar strap in your new grade colour
- An official Guitar Ninja guitar plectrum in your new grade colour
- A Guitar Ninja badge to say you are rocking your new grade
- A signed certificate announcing your grade

All of these are only available to those who grade. They are not, and never will be, for sale anywhere.

It may take upto a week to dispatch the grade packs, depending on the number of gradings booked around the same time. This should however, only take a few days to deliver if you are a UK resident. If you haven't received your pack within 2 weeks of grading, please contact us and we will look into it for you.

Once you receive your pack we would really appreciate a picture of you with your new strap to post on The Guitar Ninja social media pages to celebrate your grading with the rest of the guitar ninjas around the world.

If you don't pass you can book a second attempt within 3 weeks of the first attempt for the same as a mock price. If you need more time to prepare or don't pass a second time, then you will need to book the grading again in the same way as the first attempt.