

Student testimonials for Jon Rattenbury

I found Jon knowledgeable, flexible and friendly. I only had a few lessons as preparation for my grade 8 guitar exam that I passed with merit. Jon enabled me in a very short space of time to achieve that grade 8.

Fraser D., electric guitar

As a guitar teacher with mainly classical guitar experience, I wanted to expand my knowledge of jazz and rock styles. Jon has helped me to develop a better understanding of improvisation and playing styles which has been great for my teaching and my own playing interests. We have worked on playing classic rock solos and stylistic techniques. I am particularly interested in jazz and in lessons we have explored jazz improvisation and harmony. Currently, Jon is helping me with a project to record a demo of jazz standards.

Des S., electric & jazz guitar

My two sons learned classical guitar with the East Sussex Music Service, receiving lessons in school. They began lessons with Jon when they were doing Grades 5 & 8 respectively. Jon has a relaxed, friendly style of teaching, but is determined to get the most out of his students. We don't live close to Brighton, so I sat in on the lessons and it was fascinating to see the music examined in detail and then reconstructed to create the finished product. One thing I can guarantee is that if you have lessons with Jon you will be glad to have taken them.

Mike R., father of classical guitar students

I recently passed my grade 7 acoustic guitar exam with distinction. Jon helped me prepare really well for all the sections of the exam and I'm now working on grade 8 to prepare for applying to music college. We have also studied music theory which has helped me with my A-level music course.

George B., acoustic guitar & music theory

I started learning the guitar at the age of six on a half-sized classical guitar and soon started having lessons with Jon. He very quickly taught me the basics and got me started on my introductory grade for classical guitar. After this I decided I wanted to play rock guitar which Jon was very encouraging about and took me through the first four grades. Throughout my years being taught by Jon he also taught me bass guitar, steel string acoustic guitar and various other technical techniques. From an early age I was very interested in composing my own music and Jon helped me to learn how to articulate my ideas and encouraged me to pursue this interest which has led to my ability to write music for my band today.

Guy C., electric, acoustic & bass guitar, songwriting

After 12 years away from the guitar, I tried 2 or 3 teachers and then found Jon and felt that he understood both what I wanted to learn and how I wanted to learn it. Almost straight away we started from where I had left off 12 years ago and with his teaching it felt a bit like I had never had a break. Jon worked me through my Grade 4 pieces in a very methodical

but enjoyable way. His approach to the other exam requirements (sight reading, singing, rhythm etc) was great and he put up with my tone deaf singing voice! I'm pleased to say I passed with what I would class flying colours and I'm keen to carry on and do more. But one of the key differences with Jon was that lessons are never strictly about classical music or the exam syllabus. At times we played blues, jazz and even some Andy McKee (Drifting). Jon is willing to be led by your own tastes and somehow always seems to know at least a little bit about everything you ask!

Shaun B., classical & acoustic guitar

I had a series of lessons with Jon and he really helped me focus on my technique and my knowledge of theory. He also really helped build my confidence with sight reading. As well as improving my overall playing, we worked on the RGT Grade 5 bass exam which I passed with distinction. On top of that, we explored Latin, funk and jazz bass grooves which, having played in several bands, I'm definitely going to be bringing to my next venture.

Jon W., bass guitar

I started learning guitar with Jon two years ago and recently I passed my grade 2 Rockschoool with distinction! We have played a lot of famous songs by Queen, Coldplay, Bruno Mars, Oasis and other really good bands. Sometimes we also play classical guitar music and I have written my own music in lessons.

Stephen G., electric & classical guitar

Jon is a marvellous teacher. His lessons (always enjoyable) combine a wide musical knowledge and a profound understanding of technique, with an imaginative and stimulating approach. He has helped me to get to a playing standard which I had certainly never expected to achieve.

Sean R., classical guitar

Jon is a patient and knowledgeable tutor. While attending his ensemble class I became more confident in the skills necessary for ensemble playing that can seem so elusive at first; sight-reading at the same time as keeping an eye on the conductor; maintaining a part while listening to the other players yet not faltering if they do and, above all, developing the habit of continually counting and keeping in time. In particular I feel my sense of rhythm is stronger than when I started - semi-quavers, dotted rhythms or an entry on an off-beat are now no problem.

Sally J., guitar group

I took part in the regular classical guitar group at the studio to play ensemble pieces with other guitarists. This was very useful to help with my sight reading as well as being fun. I found Jon to be an energetic and highly professional teacher who engendered a lovely atmosphere. I also had private lessons with Jon looking at jazz guitar chords so that I could accompany a saxophonist. This has opened a whole new world allowing me to appreciate jazz as well as to try playing it in front of audiences.

Richard F., guitar group and jazz guitar

I have much enjoyed Jon's Saturday afternoon ensemble sessions. Jon is incredibly patient and helpful, provides interesting music suitable for the different levels of players, and is always willing to help those who are struggling or nervous.

Pam F., guitar group

Friendly & supportive with lots of useful hints and suggestions that helped me through my Grade 5 after a long break from my last tutor. Jon has helped not only with technique & how to make the difficult easy but also introduced me to new music that helped me to keep up the interest without noticing. Jon teaches in a relaxed style but kept the focus on where I needed to go (& he makes a good warming cup of tea!) & now I am looking forward to sitting my Grade 6 in two weeks time.

Marten M., classical guitar

Jon is the guitar teacher recommended by guitar teachers! He's strong on teaching technique, conveying it in a fun and engaging way. He's led by the musical interests of his student, gently encouraging the musicality out of them. Friendly lessons, good learning tips.

Louis T., electric guitar

Classical guitar lessons have been inspirational. Jon plays his guitar, interactively, throughout the lesson. I find this method of tuition has helped me, as a nervous student, to find confidence. It's good to work with music I've chosen myself and therefore really enjoy playing.

Alison P., classical guitar & music theory

I played guitar for a number of years with Jon and he did contribute positively to my learning curve quite a bit. He was very patient and offered his own insight, new pieces I could learn and things to do to improve my learning experience. It was all totally easy going, with the entire process focusing around what I wanted to do with the guitar. Jon proved to be an inspiring and patient tutor to work with. I definitely recommend his tutelage to anyone who is seeking musical direction.

Chris F., electric guitar & music theory