

# Introduction

This book is written for people who cannot read music. You don't have to read music to play music! Some great pop musicians have never read a note in their life! (The Beatles, Art Tatum, Vincent Clement, Carlos Santana, Stevie Wonder, BB King, Bob Dylan and more! ) When asked if he could read music, Vince Clement (fiddle player) remarked, "Not enough to hurt my playing...!"

**The songs in this book are written in easy *tablature*.** Some instruments like guitar, banjo and dulcimer have had "tablature" for a long time...now harp does too! You will be reading the name of the string to pluck instead of musical notation or rhythm. These songs were chosen because they are well known melodies. A CD has been provided for you to learn them also by ear, by playing the song and following the tablature.

There is a rich musical heritage given to us from playing by ear. Before notation, music was learned "orally" - what you heard, you played. In some cultures this method of learning is still used. In this way, melodies have been preserved over hundreds of years. Playing by ear also means listening more acutely. Musicians who play by ear develop a "tonal memory" of pitches, whereby they can identify the note or sound that is being played. A sensitivity to sound develops that is essential to ones musicianship. You can demonstrate this to yourself by trying to pluck the correct strings to correlate to a well known song. *When we are connected to the music we can hum the correct note. We have internalized the music.* For some musicians, playing by ear satisfies a sense of freedom from the written page and freedom to feel the music in a uninhibited display of personal expression.

*Tablature is not meant to be in the place of reading musical notation.* It is a bridge into playing and listening as you explore the nature of sound through your chosen instrument. ***Learning to read music should follow the initial training formed from tablature.*** This will give you a well rounded musical experience.

Happy harping!

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