

# Douglas Niedt's GUITAR TECHNIQUE TIP OF THE MONTH

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## Your free classical guitar lesson



I'm Douglas Niedt and these are my very detailed, in-depth, how to play the classical guitar technique tips, many with high def classical guitar videos. Almost like free guitar lessons.

Guitar scales? How to play bar chords? Harmonics? Looking for a classical guitar practicing routine? Tips on performing onstage? How to tune a guitar? Even easy Christmas arrangements? Chances are, I've covered it, or will soon. The tips are free.



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# A Christmas Gift For You.

## Christmas Sheet Music for Guitar

### *The First Noel*

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For my November technique tip, I always enjoy giving a little Christmas gift of Christmas sheet music for guitar to my fellow guitarists. I am giving this Christmas song to you now so you have time to learn it by Christmas. It is a classical guitar arrangement of *The First Noel*. I have made the arrangement for classical guitar easy enough that it won't be too much of a struggle to learn.

## The Story Behind the Christmas Carol

### *The First Noel*

Lyrics edited by William B. Sandys and Davies Gilbert

Although no Christmas season would be complete without the melodious singing of this tuneful Christmas carol, very little is known about its origin. It is believed to have had its rise in France during the fifteenth century.

Over time many people have wondered where the word "noel" came from. Some scholars attest that "noel" is French, and means "a shout of joy" at the birth of Jesus. Others claim that it comes from the medieval Latin word "natis," meaning "birth," which would explain why some people refer to Christmas as "His natal day." There is

yet another Latin word could be the source of "noel," the word "novella," which means "news," which corresponds with the idea that the news of Jesus' birth causes great shouts of joy associated with Christmas time.

However, other scholars say that the original is of English spelling, "nowell," rather than the French "noël." The song is thought to have been brought across the channel to England before 1823 by the wandering troubadours. The Christmas carol under the English form, "Nowell," became a great favorite for Christmas Eve, especially in the west of England. This was when the entire village gathered for singing and celebrating the bringing in of the Yule log. The Yule log was a custom adopted during the middle ages from Norse tradition. A huge log was cut, hollowed out and filled with aromatic oils and spices. It was lit on Christmas Eve with the hope it would burn through the 12 days of Christmas ending on January 6.

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At this time carols were thought of as popular religious songs meant to be sung outside the church rather than within. The early church looked down on peasant songs that they felt lacked the solemnity of true hymns. Consequently, "The First Noel" was not used in church services during the first several hundred years of its existence. Finally the Christmas song was published and the Church of England began using it in Christmas services in the mid-1800s.

In 1823, William B. Sandys (1792-1874), and Davies Gilbert (1767-1839) edited and added lyrics to create the version of the Christmas song we sing today. The origin of the current melody is uncertain.

The publication of Sandy's 1823 book *Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern* has historical significance in that it was the first of its kind to include many of the songs we now consider classic Carols. Songs such as *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*, *The First Nowell*, *I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In*, and *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* had their public debut in this songbook.

*The First Noel* portrays in vivid narrative style the story of the birth of Christ. All six stanzas are needed to complete the entire event when the hymn is sung. The sixth stanza urges us to join together to sing praises to God for the marvels of His creation and for the salvation provided through Christ's shed blood. The repetition of the joyous "noel" in the refrain is equivalent to our singing out "happy birthday" to someone.

It is interesting to observe that the "King of Israel" was first announced to "certain poor shepherds" only, but in the final stanza the phrases "let us all" and "mankind hath brought" remind us that Christ came to redeem the whole world.

## **The Lyrics to the Christmas Carol**

The first noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay-in fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

They looked up and saw a star shining in the east, beyond them far; and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.

And by the light of that same star, three wise men came from country far; to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went.

This star drew nigh to the northwest, o'er Bethlehem it took its rest; and there it did both stop and stay, right over the place where Jesus lay.

Then entered in those wise men three, full rev'rently upon their knee, and offered there, in His presence, their gold and myrrh and frankincense.

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heav'nly Lord, that hath made heav'n and earth of naught, and with His blood mankind hath bought.

Chorus: Noel, noel! Noel, noel! Born is the King of Israel!

## **And Now, the Christmas Sheet Music for Guitar**

Here is the free Christmas sheet music for guitar of The First Noel. But, do yourself a favor and print it out using the link below.

[This is my classical guitar arrangement of the Christmas song The First Noel for you to print out.](#)

It is in standard notation for classical guitar and Christmas guitar tab.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS. ENJOY!**

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