

### **What is a cigar box guitar?**

Simply put, it's a stringed instrument that uses an empty cigar box as it's resonator. They are not necessarily of the same design as a normal 6-string acoustic guitar. Many do not have frets up the neck but are played fretless or with a slide.

### **Who made cigar box guitars and why?**

The origins of most cigar box guitars stem from poverty. Many times, the builder was just a child who desperately wanted to rock out but had no money to buy an instrument.

The Great Depression of the 1930s saw a resurgence of homemade musical instruments. Times were hard in the American South and sitting on the front porch singing away the blues was a popular pastime. Musical instruments were beyond the means of most people, but with an old cigar box, a piece of broom handle and a couple of wires from the screen door, a guitar was born.

The modern revival of cigar box guitars is documented in the 2008 film "Songs Inside the Box", which was shot primarily at the Cigar Box Guitar Extravaganza, an annual event held in Huntsville, Alabama.

### **Are there any rules to making and playing a cigar box guitar?**

Absolutely not! This is perhaps the most enduring trait of the instrument. This is not like a violin or piano that have snooty traditions attached. Creativity rules in cigar box guitardom.

For free, easy-to-understand lessons, go to [CigarBoxGuitar.com](http://CigarBoxGuitar.com), a great knowledge base of how-to-build and how-to-play resources. You can also find a lot of information on [www.CigarBoxNation.com](http://www.CigarBoxNation.com). There is a huge community of avid cigar box guitar builders and players around the world, and most of them hang out on Cigar Box Nation, so click on over and join the fun!

### **Tuning**

Many different tunings can be used for cigar box guitars. Common tunings are:

- Open tuning
  - three strings: for example, A – e – a or G – d – g
- Classical tuning of a six-string guitar (E – A – d – g – b – e')
  - three strings: for example, A – d – g
- Magic jazz tuning: A – e – g
- Hawaiian tuning: A – e – f#