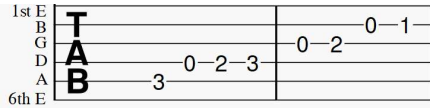
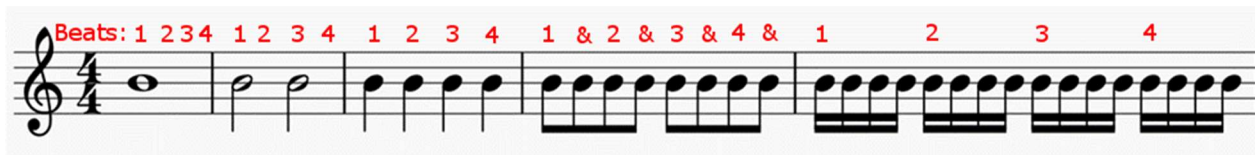


Tablature, or **guitar tabs**, is the most common form of written music for guitar. The horizontal lines represent strings and the numbers represent the fret that is played on that string. I have written the name of the string on the left, of the example below. The first note is on the A or 5th string and is played on the third fret. The next note is on the D or 4th string and is played open. The open string is represented by 0. The next note is on the D string and is played on the second fret. The open string is represented by 0. The next note is on the D string and is played on the second fret.



Music notation on the staff is used by all instruments, not just guitar.



The **staff** (or **stave**) is the series of five horizontal lines and four spaces that music is written on.

The **G clef** (or **treble clef**) is placed at the beginning of the staff.

The space between vertical bars is called a **measure**. In this example there are five measures.

A **time signature** tells the musician the meter of the song. The number at the top tells the musician the number of beats per measure. In this example, there are 4 beats per measure.

The number at the bottom tells the musician the note value of each beat. In this example, a quarter note is the value of each beat. There are four quarter notes in each measure.

The first measure shows a **whole note**. Since it has a hole in it, the **notehead** is said to be clear or open. Its length is equal to four beats. When played, the whole note would be on the first beat. Afterwards, beats two, three and four would be silent.

The second measure shows two **half notes**. The **noteheads** are filled or closed. Each half note is equal to two beats. When played, the notes would be on one and three. Beats two and four would be silent.

The third measure shows four **quarter notes**. Each quarter note is equal to one beat. A note is played on beats one, two, three and four.

The fourth measure shows eight **eighth notes**. Each eighth note is half a quarter note, or two eighth notes per quarter. When played, it would sound like, one and, two and, three and, four and. Notice the eighth note has **one flag**.

The fifth measure show sixteen **sixteenth notes**. Each sixteenth note is half an eighth note, or four sixteenth notes per quarter. Notice the sixteenth note has **two flags**.

Some people find it useful to memorize the names of the notes by using memory tricks. The most common are spelling **FACE** upside down, for the notes in between the staff lines, and **Every Good Boy Deserves Fudge**, for the notes on the lines.



Below are **time signatures** and their meaning. Remember: The number at the top tells the musician the number of beats per measure. The number at the bottom tells the musician the note value of each beat.

- 4** = This means there are four beats in each measure and each quarter note gets one beat. This is the most commonly used time signature in music and is therefore referred to as **common time**. Sometimes written (C)
- 4**
- 2** = This means there are two beats in each measure and each quarter note gets one beat. This is usually referred to as **cut time**, because it's common time cut in half. Sometimes written (Φ)
- 2**
- 4** = This means there are two beats in each measure and each quarter note gets one beat.
- 3** = This means there are three beats in each measure and each quarter note gets one beat.
- 4**
- 6** = This means there are six beats in each measure and each eighth note gets one beat.
- 8**
- 9** = This means there are nine beats in each measure and each eighth note gets one beat.
- 8**
- 12** = This means there are twelve beats in each measure and each eighth note gets one beat.
- 8**

A **rest** is a symbol that represents silence. Just as each note played has a value, likewise the rest also has a value. Below is a chart of the notes and their equivalent rests.

	Note	Rest	Beats
whole	○	■	4
half	♩	■	2
quarter	♪	♪	1
eighth	♫	♫	1/2
sixteenth	♫	♫	1/4
thirty-second	♫	♫	1/8

Below is an example of notes and rests on the staff.

Beats:

TAB: 0 2 3 4 3 2 1 2 3 4

Beats: 1 2 3 4 1 2 & 3 4

TAB: 0 2 3 4 0 2 3 4

A **dot** (.) after a note increases the value by one half. In the first measure we see one half note + (.) + one quarter note. So the half note gets two beats, the (.) gets one beat, and the quarter note gets one beat. That equals four beats in the first measure.

In the second measure we see one quarter note + (.) + one eighth note + two quarter notes. So the quarter note gets one beat, the (.) gets one half beat, the eighth note gets one half beat, and the two quarter notes get two beats. That equals four beats in the second measure.

Accidentals are symbols that raise or lower the pitch of a note by one half step. To go up one half step, we use **sharps** (#). To go down one half step, we use **flats** (b). To cancel any previous sharps or flats we use a **natural** (♮).

When going up the scale we use sharps (#) Example: C-C#-D-D#-E-F-F#-G-G#-A-A#-B

When going down the scale we use flats (b) Example: C-B-Bb-A-Ab-G-Gb-F-E-Eb-D-Db

The two scales above are examples of **chromatic scales**. There are twelve half steps in the chromatic scale, and all twelve notes are played. Notice some notes have two names. The name we select depends on if we are going up or down the scale.

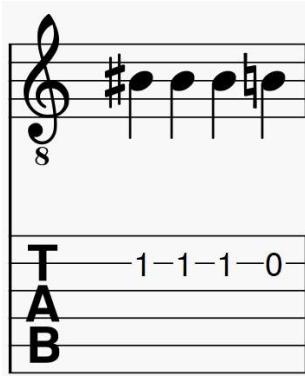
Example: C-C#/Db-D-D#/Eb-E-F-F#/Gb-G-G#/Ab-A-A#/Bb-B

An octave is eight notes (or twelve half steps) from the first note. Example: C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C

If we see a sharp or flat on a note. That applies to all similar notes in the measure.

In this example, the first note is a B# and all other B's in that measure are played sharp (#).

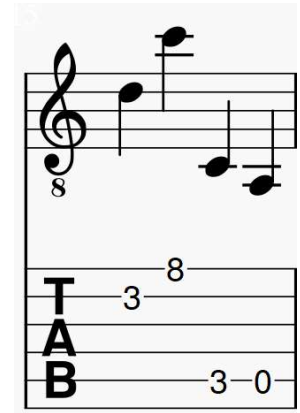
TAB: 1 1 1 1



In this example, the sharp (#) applies to the first three notes, and the natural (♮) applies to the last note, thereby canceling the sharp (#) on the last note.

Ledger Lines are horizontal and are used to write a note outside the staff. A **stem** is a vertical line attached to the note head. See example below.

On the right hand, if the note is played with the thumb (p) the **stem** points up. If the note is played by any other finger (i, m, a) the stem points down. There are many exceptions to this rule.



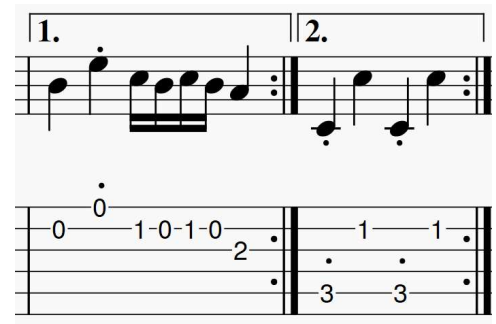
A **Legato** (or **slur**) is a curved line between two or three notes of a different pitch. These are also known as **hammer on's** and **pull off's**. The first measure shows a hammer on from G to A, and a pull off from D to C. Only the first note of the Legato is played.

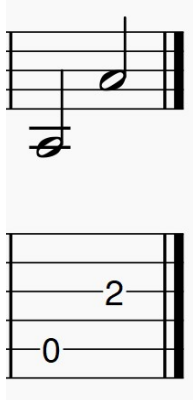
Another type of **Legato** is a **tie**. It is a curved line between two notes of the same pitch. Only the first note is played. The second note shows you how long to hold the note. Examples of this can be found in the second measure.

The dot above or below a note is called a **staccato**. It is played with shortened duration and is separated by the note that follows, with silence.

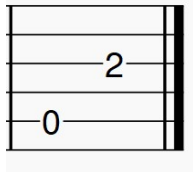
The dotted double bar is a **repeat sign** (||). When you see this sign, you start again, from the beginning, or from a previous repeat sign. ||: ||

The 1. and 2. represent **first and second endings**. When the song is played the first time, we go back to the beginning and play it again with the second ending.

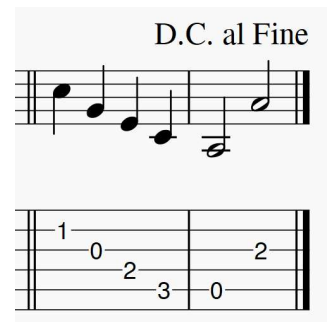




A **heavy double bar** indicates the end of the song. ||

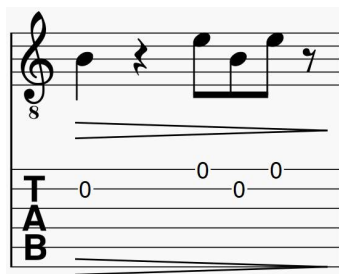
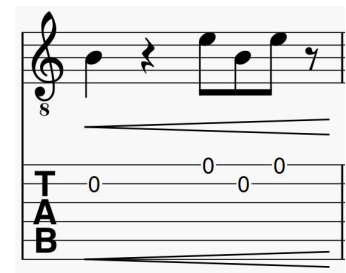


D.C. al Fine stands for Da Capo al Fine (from the capo to the end). The capo is represented by two thin lines (||) and the heavy double bar (||) indicates the end. You would play the song from the beginning to the capo, then go back to the beginning and play through the capo, to the end.



D.S. al Fine stands for Dal Segno al Fine (from the sign to the end). You would play the song from beginning to end, then go back to the sign (%) and play to the end.

A **crescendo** (<) means you gradually increase the volume of the music.



A **decrescendo** (>) means you gradually decrease the volume of the music.

A Coda is a symbol that brings a movement to an end. ⊕

Enharmonics are the same note written differently. Example: G \sharp and A \flat are the same note.

If you move up one fret on the neck of the guitar, you have moved a **half step**. If you move two frets, you have moved a **whole step**.

All western music is based on the C Major scale. A **scale degree** is a name given to a note, and its position is shown in a Roman numeral.

Scale degrees

- I. Tonic
- II. Supertonic
- III. Mediant
- IV. Subdominant
- V. Dominant
- VI. Submediant
- VII. Leading Tone – leads back to Tonic

The **major scale** contains eight pitches. This example shows the following: C to D = whole step, D to E = whole step, E to F = half step, F to G = whole step, G to A = whole step, A to B = whole step, B to C = half step. The pattern of whole and half steps is always the same, regardless of which note you start with. Some people find it easier to understand whole and half steps by playing them on the piano. Most music theory was created on the piano and is therefore easier to understand on that instrument. The C Major scale shown below, does not contain any sharps or flats.

The **sharps** (\sharp) or **flats** (\flat) after the **G clef** (G) indicate what key the song is written in. One F \sharp indicates the song is written in the key of G. All F notes will be played sharp until the end of the song, or until it changes key. The F \sharp after the G clef eliminates the need to write a sharp every time you see an F.

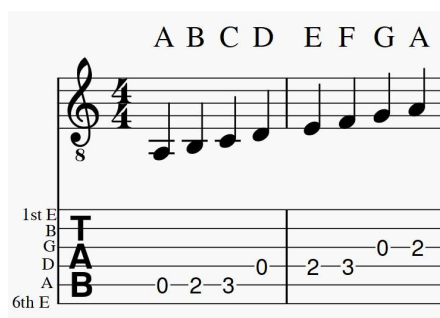
Below are all the sharp keys in the major scale.



Below are all the flat keys in the major scale.



The **natural minor scale** contains eight pitches. It contains the same key signatures as the major key but lies three half steps (a minor third) below it. The example below shows the following: A to B = whole step, B to C = half step, C to D = whole step, D to E = whole step, E to F = half step, F to G = whole step, G to A = whole step. The pattern of whole and half steps is always the same, regardless of which note you start with. The A minor scale does not contain any sharps or flats. Major and minor keys with the same key signature are called **relative**. So A minor is the relative of C Major.

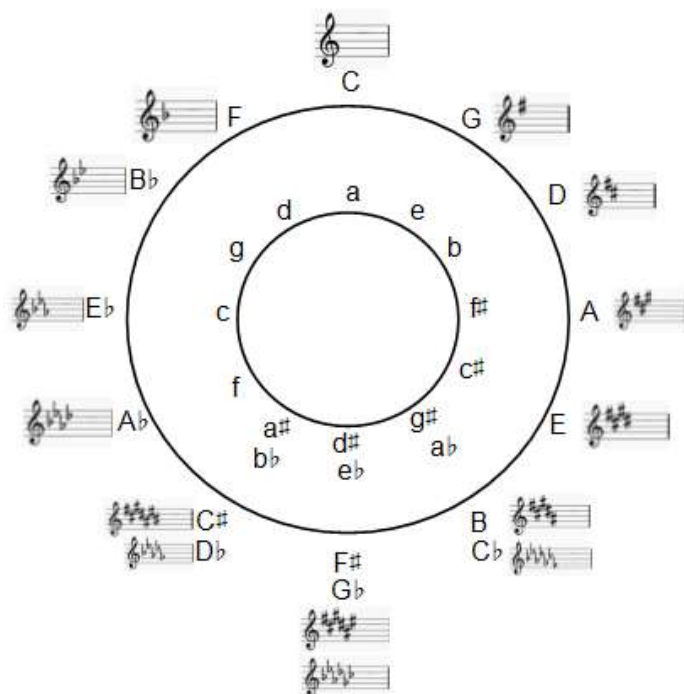


Below are a list of major sharp keys and their **relative** minor key.

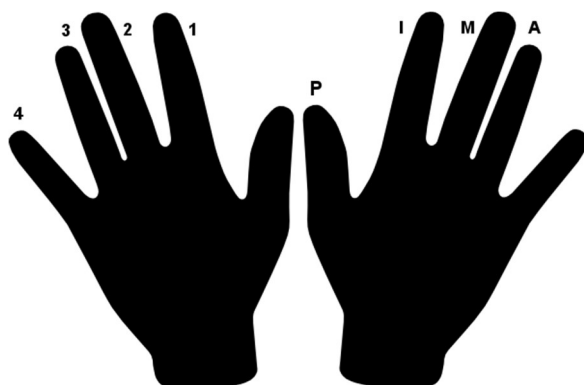
Major # key	G	D	A	E	B	F#	C#
Relative minor key	e	b	f#	c#	g#	d#	a#

Below are a list of major flat keys and their **relative** minor key.

Major b key	F	Bb	Eb	Ab	Db	Gb	Cb
Relative minor key	d	g	c	f	bb	eb	ab



Some guitarists find it easier to understand the major and minor keys by studying the **Circle of Fifths**. It contains the same information shown in the previous page but arranged differently. Sometimes, we better understand information if we look at it from a different perspective. The outer circle shows the major keys. If we start from C and go counter clockwise, we have the major flat keys. If we start from C and go to the clockwise, we have the major sharp keys. The inner circle shows the minor keys. We know that A minor is the relative of C Major. On the inner circle, if we start at A and go counter clockwise, we have the minor flat keys. If we start at A and go clockwise, we have the minor sharp keys.



Left hand

- 1 = index
- 2 = middle
- 3 = ring
- 4 = little finger

Right hand (Spanish)

- p = thumb (pulgar)
- i = index (índice)
- m = middle (medio)
- a = ring (anular)

On the staff, you will sometimes see dots represent the fingers on the left hand. Index = (.)
Middle = (..) ring = (...) little finger = (....)

Circle with number in it, represents which string you are on. 1st E string = ① B = ② G = ③
D = ④ A = ⑤ 6th E string = ⑥

Chord Theory

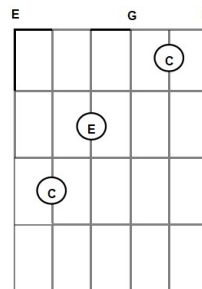
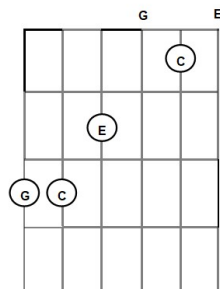
Note:	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	D
Roman numerals:	I (Root) Major	ii minor	iii minor	IV Major	V Major	vi minor	vii ^o dim	viii	ix

Major	Root	Third	Fifth	
Minor	Root	Flat Third	Fifth	
Augmented (aug)	Root	Third	Sharp Fifth	
Diminished (dim)	Root	Flat Third	Flat Fifth	
dim7	Root	Flat Third	Flat Fifth	Double Flat Seventh (aka Sixth)
sus4	Root	Fourth	Fifth	
sus2	Root	Second	Fifth	
5	Root	Fifth		
6	Root	Third	Fifth	Sixth
7	Root	Third	Fifth	Flat Seventh
9	Root	Third	Fifth	Flat Seventh Ninth
11	Root	Third	Fifth	Flat Seventh Ninth Eleventh
13	Root	Third	Fifth	Flat Seventh Ninth Eleventh Thirteenth
maj7	Root	Third	Fifth	Seventh
maj9	Root	Third	Fifth	Seventh Ninth
m6	Root	Flat Third	Fifth	Sixth
m7	Root	Flat Third	Fifth	Flat Seventh
add9	Root	Third	Fifth	Ninth
9 sus4	Root	Fourth	Fifth	Flat Seventh Ninth

Slash Chords use “**chord inversion**” meaning the root is replaced by another note as the bass.

Examples: In the slash chord **C/G** G is the lowest note.

In the slash chord **C/E** E is the lowest note



When composing a song is easier with a **Chord Leading Chart**. This will help you develop chord progressions.

<i>Chord</i>		<i>Leads to</i>
I	→	Any Chord
ii	→	IV, V, vii ⁰
iii	→	ii, IV, vi
IV	→	I, iii, V, vii ⁰
V	→	I
vi	→	I, ii, IV, V
vii ⁰	→	I, iii

The speed at which music is played is called the **tempo**. The tempo can be played with a **metronome**. Please download a metronome to your smart phone or tablet. Below is a list of tempos, their meanings, and the bpm (beats per minute).

Grave	slow and solemn	40-60 bpm
Largo	broadly	40-60 bpm
Larghetto	leisurely	60-66 bpm
Adagio	slow, at ease	66-76 bpm
Andante	moderate, gracefully	76-108 bpm
Moderato	moderately	108-120 bpm
Allegro	quick, lively	120-168 bpm
Presto	quickly, fast	168-200 bpm
Prestissimo	very fast	200-208 bpm

Recommended:

Download the **Chord Bank** app by Better Notes, LLC, to your phone or tablet.

Purchase **The Chord Wheel** by Hal Leonard. <https://www.halleonard.com/>

Ultimate Guitar Tabs <https://www.ultimate-guitar.com/>

Sheet Music Plus <https://www.sheetmusicplus.com/>

The **Complete Idiot's Guide to Music Theory** by Michael Miller

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