

How To Read Tablature (Guitar “Tab”)

If you’re new to this whole “reading music” thing then... ‘GOOD NEWS EVERYBODY!’

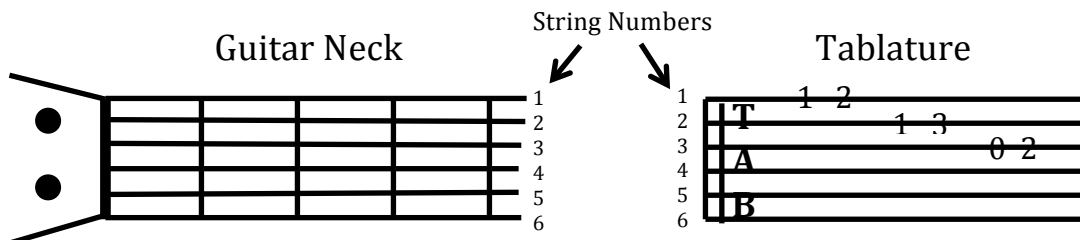
A Little History

You’ve seen it posted all over the internet if you’ve ever tried to look up guitar music before. It’s called guitar Tablature, often called “Tab” for short. Tablature was invented as a way of assisting guitarist in their learning of written music. It was intended to always accompany music and, because you can often play the same note in multiple places on the guitar neck, show you the exact location they specifically want that note to be played.

Tab has its limitations. For one, it usually has no rhythm attached to it, dynamics, there are many things missing. For that reason it is usually assumed that you, the player, will pick up on these details by ear. Also, professionals don’t usually write tab; especially tab found on the internet. **Amateur and hobbieist players are often the ones writing them and so these transcriptions should be taken with some leeway for error.** Always remember that.

How It Works

Tab is a representation of the guitar neck. There are six lines and each line represents one string, lowest **sounding** string on the bottom to the highest sounding string on top. You can visualize it like this:



The numbers in the tab chart are Fret Numbers/Positions. If it is a “1” on the top line, then you play with your finger at the 1st fret on the highest sounding string, or 1st string. If there is a “0”, then simply pluck the string without a finger present. This is called an **Open Note/String**.

More advanced techniques can and will be present in tab. Keep it simple for the time being until you’ve advanced far enough to use those techniques.

Lesson 1 - Finger Exercise

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Guitar