

TABLATURE TUTORIAL

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For those that are not familiar with Tablature, I thought I would write a tutorial to help readers get to grips with the material presented here.

Although they look slightly similar, TABLATURE and music staves are quite different. Tablature uses numbers to indicate the fret where the note is located rather than standard note names such as Bb or F# (B flat and F sharp) but it's worthwhile learning all the notes on the fretboard anyway, as well as any other music theory knowledge that you can. I'm going to assume that the reader has some basic knowledge of chords and scales.

Turn the guitar face up on your lap (figure one) the 6th string - the thickest - is nearest to your body and the 1st string - the thinnest - is furthest away. That's what the TABLATURE dotted lines represent. The names of the notes on the open strings are shown to illustrate this, the capital 'E' is the 6th string, lower-case 'e' is the 1st string.

Tuning: EADGBe - standard concert pitch. Alternative tunings are sometimes used.

Figure one:

```
e|-----first string-----|-----|
B|-----2nd-----|-----|
G|-----3rd-----|-----|
D|-----4th-----|-----|
A|-----5th-----|-----|
E|-----sixth string-----|-----|
```

Although most tablature doesn't show rhythm, I like to place time markers every now and then - beneath two bars of music at a time - always using the same template so that the timing is as clear as possible.

```
e|-----|-----|
B|-----|-----|
G|-----|-----|
D|-----|-----|
A|-----|-----|
E|-----|-----|
| 1 - & - 2 - & - 3 - & - 4 - & - | 1 - & - 2 - & - 3 - & - 4 - & - |
```

Here's a series of notes on the 2nd (B) string, 11th, 12th and 5th fret.

Read the tab from left to right, Hold each string down at the fret number indicated, using the time marker as a guide.

11th fret first, then 12th, etc. Hold and slide the last note down from 12th to 5th fret.

```
e|-----|-----|
B|-11-----12-----11-----12-----\5-----|
G|-----|-----|
D|-----|-----|
A|-----|-----|
E|-----|-----|
| 1 - & - 2 - & - 3 - & - 4 - & - | 1 - & - 2 - & - 3 - & - 4 - & - |
```

Another passage that may sound familiar. '0' represents an open string.

```

e|-----|-----|
B|-----1-----0-----|-----1-----0-----|
G|-----0-----0-----|-----0-----0-----|
D|-----2-----0-----|-----2-----0-----|
A|-----3-----2-----|-----0-----|
E|-----|-----3-----|

| 1 - & - 2 - & - 3 - & - 4 - & - | 1 - & - 2 - & - 3 - & - 4 - & - |

```

C major scale, two octaves ascending. Actual note names added just this once.

```

      C   D   E   F   G   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   A   B   C
e|-----|-----7---8-----|
B|-----|-----6---8---10-----|
G|-----|-----5---7---9-----|
D|-----|-----5---7---9-----|
A|-----5---7---8-----|
E|-----8-----|

```

Let's show a few basic "cowboy" chords.

Strings that have no symbols added are silent. Notes stacked vertically should be played simultaneously, thus:

```

Here's a D chord...           a C chord and an E chord
e|-----2-----|-----0-----0-----|
B|-----3-----|-----1-----0-----|
G|-----2-----|-----0-----1-----|
D|-----0-----|-----2-----2-----|
A|-----|-----3-----2-----|
E|-----|-----0-----|

```

It's assumed that 'D', 'C' and 'E' are a major chords. Now some minor chords, with the added 'm'

```

This is Dm (D minor)           and Am (A minor)
e|-----1-----|-----0-----|
B|-----3-----|-----1-----|
G|-----2-----|-----2-----|
D|-----0-----|-----2-----|
A|-----|-----0-----|
E|-----|-----|

```

Chords may also be written horizontally in text. This is A minor (x02210) 'x' means mute or don't play note.

Here are a few more common chord types, with chord names and a little theory to explain them.

- Dmaj7 = D major 7th
- Dmin7 = D minor 7th
- D7 = D major chord with added flattened seventh note (or dominant 7th)
- Dsus4 = D major where the 3rd note is 'suspended' and replaced with the 4th.
- C5 = C with no 3rd, only root & 5th - known as 'power chords'
- C9 = C dom7 with added 9th note.
- D/A = D major chord with bass note A - known as a 'slash chord'
- F#m = F minor chord moved up one fret - in other words, sharp (#) - F sharp minor
- Dbm = D minor chord moved down one fret, in other words, flat (b) - D flat minor

```

___D7___   Dmaj7___  Dmin7___  Dsus4___  C5___   C9___   D/A___  F#m___  Dbm___
e|-2-----2-----1-----3-----|-----3-----2-----|
B|-1-----2-----1-----3-----|-----3-----3-----2-----5--|
G|-2-----2-----2-----2-----|-5-----3-----2-----2-----6--|
D|-0-----0-----0-----0-----|-5-----2-----4-----4-----6--|
A|-----|-----|-----|-----|-3-----3-----0-----4-----4--|
E|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----2-----|

```

F#m is a 'barre chord' where the first finger goes across all strings at the second fret. Dbm, partial barre at fourth fret.

Now we're getting the hang of it, here's an arpeggiated chord sequence, played one note at a time. Full chord is in text above the TAB.

```

___Em_ (022000)___   ___C_ (x32010)___
e|-----0-----|-----0-----|
B|-----0-----|-----1-----1-----|
G|-----0-----0-----|-----0-----0-----|
D|-----2-----2--|-----2-----2--|
A|-----|-----|-3-----|
E|-0-----|-----|

| 1 - & - 2 - & - 3 - & - 4 - & - | 1 - & - 2 - & - 3 - & - 4 - & - |

```

```

___D_ (xx0232)___   ___C_ (x32033)___   ___G_ (320033)___
e|-----2-----|-----|
B|-----3-----3-----|-----3-----3-----3--|
G|-----2-----2-----|-----0-----0-----0--|
D|-0-----0-----|-----2-----2-----0--|
A|-----|-----|-3-----2-----|
E|-----|-----|

```

What about single notes?

```

___B___   ___G7___
e|-----|-----|
B|-----|-----|
G|-----|-----|
D|-----|-----3---3--|
A|-2---2-----2---2-----|-----2---2---5---5-----|
E|-----4---2-----4---2--|-3---3-----|

```

Guitar solos usually make use of all kinds of slides, hammer-ons and pull-offs

- / = slide up to a higher note
- \ = slide down to a lower note
- h = hammer-on; tap fretting finger onto string, don't pluck
- p = pull-off; opposite of hammer-on
- ~ = vibrato or sustain

Here's a part based on the F major pentatonic scale, two octaves

```
e|-----|-----|
B|-----|-----6-----|
G|-----|-----5---7-----|
D|-----3-----|5--p3--5--/7-----|
A|-----3--h5-----|-----|
E|-1-----3--/5-----|-----|
```

Sometimes I might add fretting hand position info beneath the TAB.

```
e|-----|-----|
B|-----|-----6p5-----|
G|-----|-----5--h7-----7--h9-p7--p5~|
D|-----3~~~~5---3---5--h7-----|
A|-----3--h5-----|-----|
E|-1---3---/5-----|-----|
  t  r /r  i  m  i  r  i  m  p  i  r  m  i  m  p  m  i~
```

t = thumb
i = index
m = middle finger
r = ring finger
p = little finger.

TABLATURE symbols:

```
|/  slide up
|\  slide down
| s  slur - very rapid slide, sounds like one note
| h  hammer-on
| p  pull-off
| ~  vibrato or sustain
| +  natural harmonic
| *  pinch harmonic
| x  Mute note
| PM palm mute
| (13) ghost note
| <  pick scrape
| b  bend
| r  relax bend
| pb pre-bend
| ^  quarter tone bend
| (x7678x) chord shape
| (02:10) time marker
| t = thumb (fretting hand)
| i = index finger (fretting hand)
| m = middle finger (fretting hand)
| r = ring finger (fretting hand)
| p = pinky (fretting hand)
```