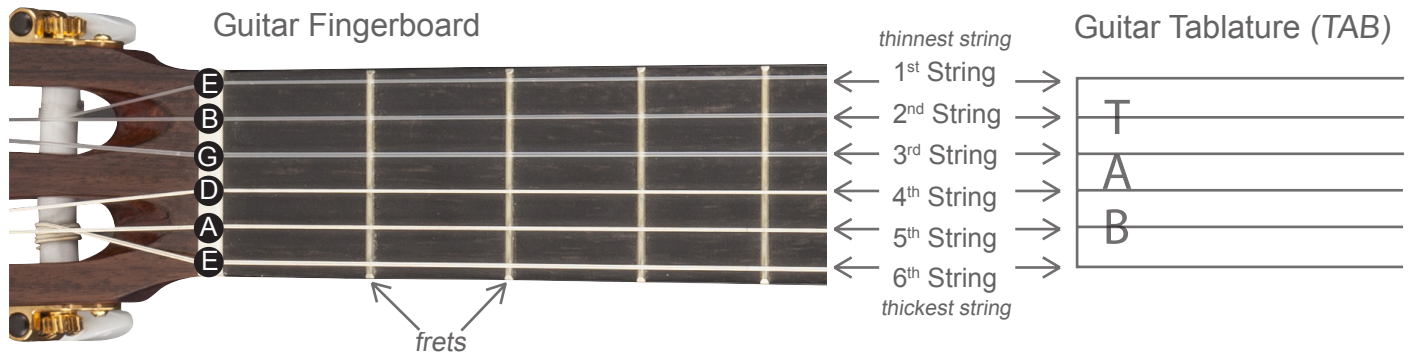
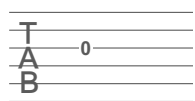


How to Read Guitar TAB

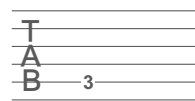
This useful Guitar tablature (TAB) guide will help you to learn how to read guitar TAB. Guitar Tablature is another way to notate guitar music. The 6 strings of a guitar are represented by the 6 horizontal lines used in guitar tablature (TAB) as seen below:



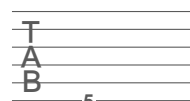
The numbers you see on the strings are the fret number. For example a number 3 on the top line would mean play the 3rd fret on the top E string. Here are some more examples on tablature:



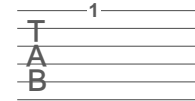
3rd string open string (G)
(no fingers)



5th string 3rd fret (C)



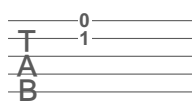
6th string 5th fret (A)



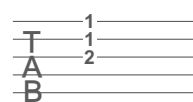
1st string 1st fret (F)

Note: When placing your finger in front of the fret, place it as close to the middle as possible as this will ensure good intonation (tuning).

If you see numbers on top of each other, this means that you play these at the same time - a good example would be to notate chords in TAB. Here are some examples:

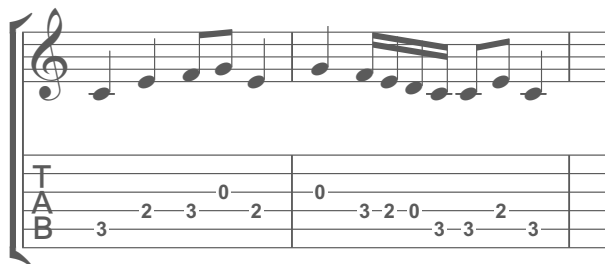


Here you would play the top string as an open string (E), and then the 2nd string 1st fret (C) at the same time



Here you would play 1st string 1st fret (F), 2nd string 1st fret (C) & 3rd string 2nd fret (A) all together

TAB does not usually show you what rhythm to play. This is why TAB is normally seen with standard music notation over the top of it to indicate the rhythm - see the example to the right:



More information about reading standard music notation rhythms can be found in our 'How to Read Music for Guitarists' guide - look at the sections on rhythms and rests.

Alternatively you will occasionally see notation stems added onto the tablature to indicate the rhythm as seen below:

This line represents a crotchet (quarter note) - 1 beat each

These represent semiquavers (sixteenth notes) - 1/4 of a beat each

These represent quavers (eighth notes) - 1/2 a beat each

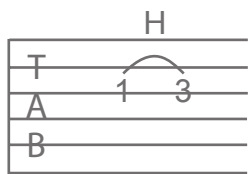
Here is a handy chart of TAB notation rhythms with their beats, alternative standard music notation and rests:

TAB Notation	Beats	Equivalent Note	Equivalent Rest	Name
n/a	4			Semibreve
n/a	2			Minim
	1			Crotchet
┌	1/2			Quaver
▬	1/4			Semiquaver
n/a	6			Dotted semibreve
n/a	3			Dotted minim
.	1 1/2			Dotted crotchet
┌.	3/4			Dotted quaver
▬.	3/8			Dotted semiquaver

Guitar TAB (tablature) Symbols

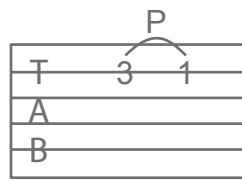
You will notice symbols when reading guitar TAB to indicate various techniques to use - here are some of the most common:

Hammer On



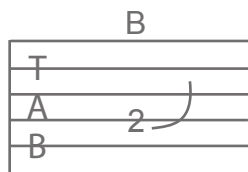
A curved line with a 'H' indicates a hammer on. Play the initial note (1st fret 3rd string) & then use another finger to hit the next note (3rd fret 3rd string).

Pull-Off



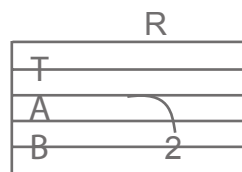
A curved line (slur) with a 'P' indicates a pull-off. Put your fingers on the 2 notes (3rd fret & 1st fret, 2nd string), pluck the string and then release the finger placed on the higher note.

Bend



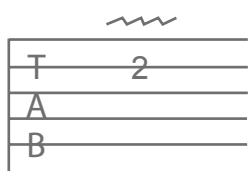
A curved line with a 'B' indicates a bend. This is where you play the written note (2nd fret D string) and then bend the string with the same finger.

Release Bend



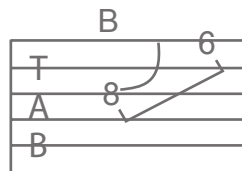
A curved line with an 'R' indicates a release bend. Put your finger on the written note (2nd fret 5th string), push the string with your finger (without making a sound) and then pluck the string and bring it back to its normal position for that note.

Vibrato



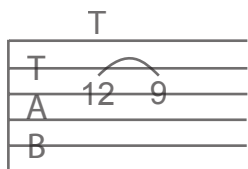
A wavy line indicates vibrato. This is where you rapidly wobble your left hand finger side to side whilst playing the written note (2nd fret 2nd string).

Double-Note Licks



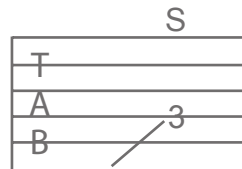
A bracket indicates a double-note lick. This is where the two notes are sustained with the one note being bent (8th fret 3rd string) and the other is just held as normal (6th fret 1st string).

Tapping



A curved line (slur) with a 'T' indicates Tapping. With the pick hand or middle finger hammer (tap) the fret (12th fret 3rd string) and pull off to the lower note (9th fret 3rd string).

Slide



A straight diagonal line with an 'S'. Start your finger further down the string than the written note and then 'slide' your finger up the string to the written note (3rd fret 4th string).