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# Reading Music for Guitar

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An easy approach for beginners

Roger Humphrey

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*1st Edition*

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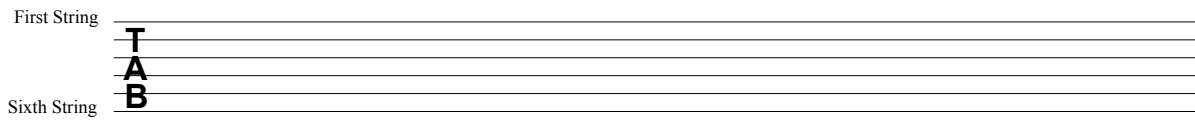
# Introduction

This book was written to be used in conjunction with a teacher and is not for self-instruction. Some principles and concepts have been eliminated so that the instructor can explain them in greater detail.

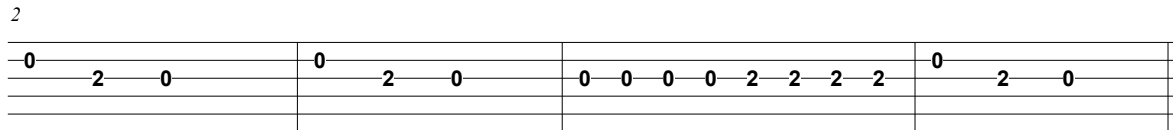
# Understanding TAB

## Understanding Tablature (TAB)

In Tablature each line represents a string on the guitar. However the lines are in reverse order. Although the first string is the bottom string of the guitar it is the top line in TAB.



The numbers on the lines indicate the frets where the string should be pushed. This example is the song "HOT CROSS BUNS".



# Chromatic Scale

6th String	5th String	4th String
<b>T</b>		
<b>A</b>		
<b>B</b>		
0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4

3rd String	2nd String	1st String
0 1 2 3	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4

1st String	2nd String	3rd String
4 3 2 1 0	4 3 2 1 0	3 2 1 0

4th String	5th String	6th String
4 3 2 1 0	4 3 2 1 0	4 3 2 1 0

# Reading Notes

## MUSIC STAFF



The basic music staff is made up of five (5) lines and four (4) spaces between the lines. In addition, the space above and the space below the staff is also used. Each line and each space represents a different tone.

## SHAPES OF NOTES

The shape of a note determines how fast or slow it is played

 **Whole Note** receives 4 beats

 **Half Note** receives 2 beats

 **Quarter Note** receives 1 beat

# Understanding Time Signatures

You will find two numbers at the beginning of each song.

4 The top number tells us how many beats in each measure. This number can change from song to song so be sure to look at it before you play.

The bottom number tells us that the Quarter Note will last for one beat.  
4 Although this too can change from song to song, it will always be a 4 in this book.



This Time Signature occurs in a lot of music and is often referred to as "COMMON TIME" and is often abbreviated as "C".

# Notes on the First String

E (mi)

Musical notation for E (mi) on the first string. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature, showing a sequence of quarter notes: E4, E4, E4, E4, E4, E4, E4, E4, E4, E4, E4, E4, E4, E4, E4, E4. The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with the number 0 above each of the 14 measures, indicating the open string.

F (fa)

Musical notation for F (fa) on the first string. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature, showing a sequence of quarter notes: F4, F4, F4, F4, F4, F4, F4, F4, F4, F4, F4, F4, F4, F4, F4, F4. The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with the number 1 above each of the 14 measures, indicating the first fret.

G (sol)

Musical notation for G (sol) on the first string. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature, showing a sequence of quarter notes: G4, G4, G4, G4, G4, G4, G4, G4, G4, G4, G4, G4, G4, G4, G4, G4. The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with the number 3 above each of the 14 measures, indicating the third fret.



Exercise 1



Exercise 2



Exercise 3



Count 1 - 2 - 3 - 4

# Notes on the Second String

B (Ti)

Musical notation for the B (Ti) note on the second string. The notation consists of a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a staff with four measures of music. Each measure contains a quarter note on the second line of the staff. Below the staff is a tablature section with three staves. The top staff is labeled 'T', the middle 'A', and the bottom 'B'. The top staff contains the number '0' in each of the four measures, indicating that the string should be played open.

C (Do)

Musical notation for the C (Do) note on the second string. The notation consists of a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a staff with four measures of music. Each measure contains a quarter note on the first line of the staff. Below the staff is a tablature section with three staves. The top staff contains the number '1' in each of the four measures, indicating that the first fret should be pressed.

D (Re)

Musical notation for the D (Re) note on the second string. The notation consists of a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a staff with four measures of music. Each measure contains a quarter note on the second space of the staff. Below the staff is a tablature section with three staves. The top staff contains the number '3' in each of the four measures, indicating that the third fret should be pressed.

Exercise 4



Exercise 5



Exercise 6



Exercise 7



Exercise 8

Exercise 8 is written in 3/4 time. The first staff contains four measures of music: the first measure has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4; the second measure has a quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note A4; the third measure has a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note E4; the fourth measure has a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3. The second staff contains four measures: the first measure has a quarter note B3, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note D4; the second measure has a quarter note E4, a quarter note F4, and a quarter note G4; the third measure has a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5; the fourth measure has a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note G4. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Exercise 9

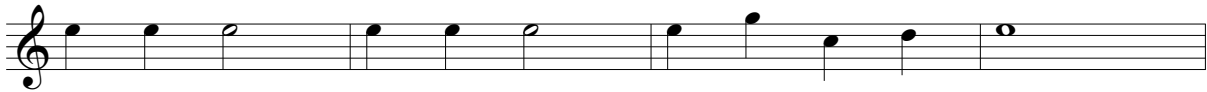
Exercise 9 is written in 4/4 time. The first staff contains four measures of music: the first measure has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5; the second measure has a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, and a quarter note F4; the third measure has a quarter note E4, a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3; the fourth measure has a quarter note A3, a quarter note G3, a quarter note F3, and a quarter note E3. The second staff contains four measures: the first measure has a quarter note D3, a quarter note C3, a quarter note B2, and a quarter note A2; the second measure has a quarter note G2, a quarter note F2, a quarter note E2, and a quarter note D2; the third measure has a quarter note C2, a quarter note B1, a quarter note A1, and a quarter note G1; the fourth measure has a half note F1 and a half note E1. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Count 1-2      3-4

Exercise 10

Exercise 10 is written in common time (C). The staff contains four measures of music: the first measure has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5; the second measure has a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, and a quarter note F4; the third measure has a quarter note E4, a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter note B3; the fourth measure has a whole note A3. The piece ends with a double bar line.

# Jingle Bells



EIGHTH NOTES are 1/2 the time value of Quarter Notes. Individual Eighth Notes look similar to Quarter Notes but have a flag attached to the stem. (see example 1) When multiple Eighth Notes are written there are usually connected by a beam instead. (see example 2)

Example 1

Count 1      and      2      and      3      and      4      and

Example 2

Count 1      and      2      and      3      and      4      and

## Skip to my Lou

# Notes on the Third String

G Sol

Musical notation for the G Sol exercise. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature, containing a sequence of 16 quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5, G4, A4, B4, C5. The bottom staff is a three-line TAB system with the letters T, A, and B on the left. It contains four measures of fret numbers: 0 0 0 0, 0 0 0 0, 0 0 0 0, and 0 0 0 0.

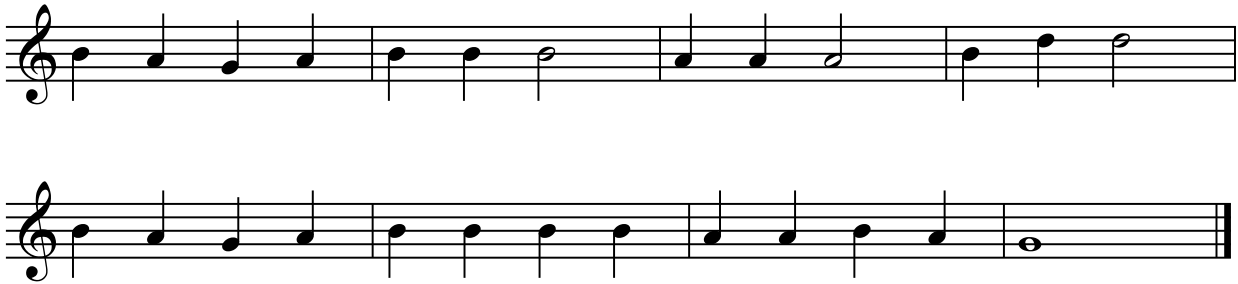
A La

Musical notation for the A La exercise. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature, containing a sequence of 16 quarter notes: A4, B4, C5, D5, A4, B4, C5, D5, A4, B4, C5, D5, A4, B4, C5, D5. The bottom staff is a three-line TAB system with the letters T, A, and B on the left. It contains four measures of fret numbers: 2 2 2 2, 2 2 2 2, 2 2 2 2, and 2 2 2 2.

## THIRD STRING MIX-UP



## MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB



## EXERCISE 11



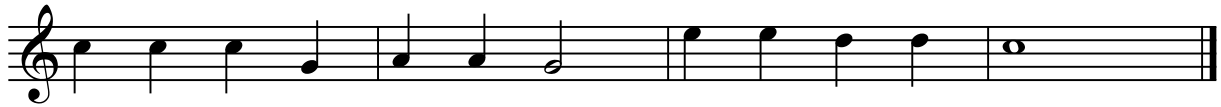


# OLD McDONALD

The dot adds 1 extra beat to the half note.



1 - 2 - 3 4



# ODE TO JOY

composed by  
Ludwig von Beethoven



## Exercise 12

Musical notation for Exercise 12, featuring a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The exercise consists of three measures of music, each starting with a piano (p) dynamic marking. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (half). The first two notes are marked with 'i' (finger 1) and the third with 'm' (finger 3). This pattern repeats in the second and third measures. The exercise concludes with a final chord of G4, B4, and D5.

## Exercise 13

Musical notation for Exercise 13, featuring a treble clef and a common time (c) signature. The exercise consists of two lines of music. The first line contains four measures, each starting with a piano (p) dynamic marking. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter). The first two notes are marked with 'i' (finger 1) and the last two with 'm' (finger 3). This pattern repeats in the second and third measures. The fourth measure is a final chord of G4, B4, and D5. The second line contains four measures, each starting with a piano (p) dynamic marking. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter). The first two notes are marked with 'm' (finger 3) and the last two with 'i' (finger 1). This pattern repeats in the second and third measures. The fourth measure is a final chord of G4, B4, and D5.

## Exercise 14

Musical notation for Exercise 14, featuring a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The exercise consists of two lines of music. The first line contains four measures, each starting with a piano (p) dynamic marking. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter). The first two notes are marked with 'm' (finger 3) and the last two with 'i' (finger 1). This pattern repeats in the second and third measures. The fourth measure is a final chord of G4, B4, and D5. The second line contains four measures, each starting with a piano (p) dynamic marking. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter). The first two notes are marked with 'i' (finger 1) and the last two with 'm' (finger 3). This pattern repeats in the second and third measures. The fourth measure is a final chord of G4, B4, and D5.



## Exercise 15



## Exercise 16

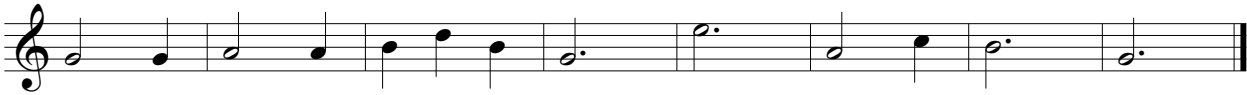


Exercise 17

The two dots next to the double bar lines indicate a REPEAT. Go to the beginning and play again.



Pop Goes the Weasel



Are You Sleeping



### Exercise 18

i m i m i m i m i m i m

p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p

### Exercise 19

i m i m a m i

p p p p

### Etude 1

REPEAT SIGN  
Play again

# Notes on the Fifth String

Additional lines called LEDGER LINES have been added below the staff in order to write the lower pitches.

A (La)

T  
A  
B

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

B (Ti)

2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2

C (Do)

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

## Exercise 20



## Exercise 21



## Exercise 22





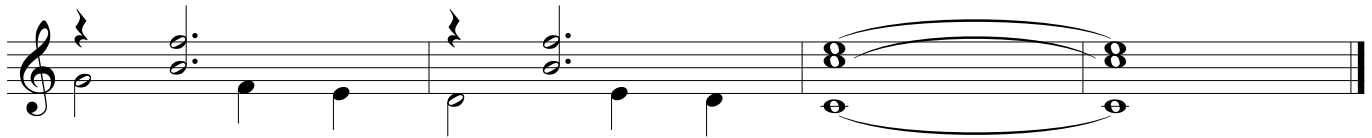
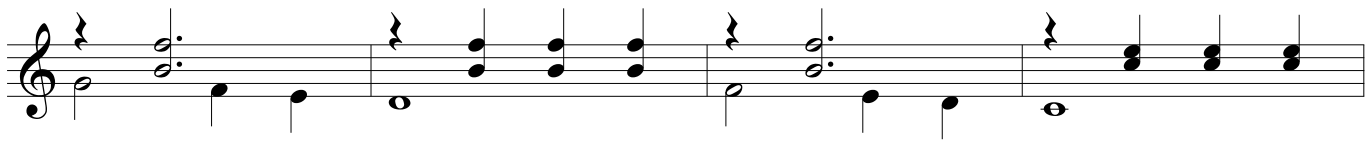
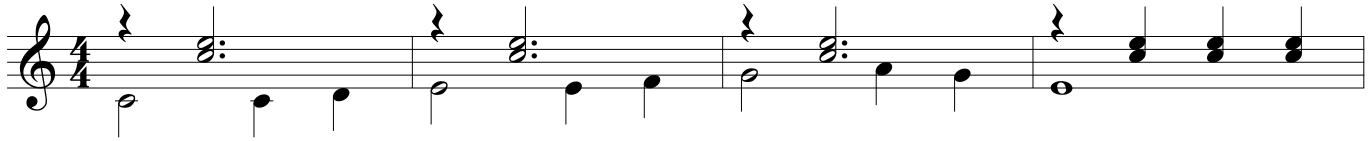
## Exercise 23

Exercise 23 is a musical exercise in 4/4 time, consisting of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of a sequence of eighth notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The second staff continues the melody with quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The third staff continues with quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The fourth staff concludes the exercise with quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, ending with a double bar line.

## Volga Boatman

Volga Boatman is a musical exercise in common time (C), consisting of two staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature. The melody consists of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The second staff continues the melody with quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, ending with a double bar line.

## Long, Long Ago



The curved line connecting the notes is called a TIE. Don't play the second note, just give the second note 4 extra beats.

# Notes on the Sixth String

E (Mi)

Musical notation for E (Mi) on the sixth string. The notation is in 4/4 time and consists of four measures. The first measure contains four quarter notes (E2), the second measure contains four quarter notes (E2), the third measure contains four quarter notes (E2), and the fourth measure contains four quarter notes (E2). The tablature below shows four measures of zeros (0) on the sixth string, corresponding to the notes in the musical notation.

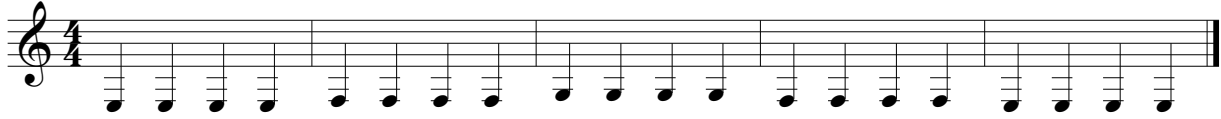
F (Fa)

Musical notation for F (Fa) on the sixth string. The notation is in 4/4 time and consists of four measures. The first measure contains four quarter notes (F2), the second measure contains four quarter notes (F2), the third measure contains four quarter notes (F2), and the fourth measure contains four quarter notes (F2). The tablature below shows four measures of the number 1 on the sixth string, corresponding to the notes in the musical notation.

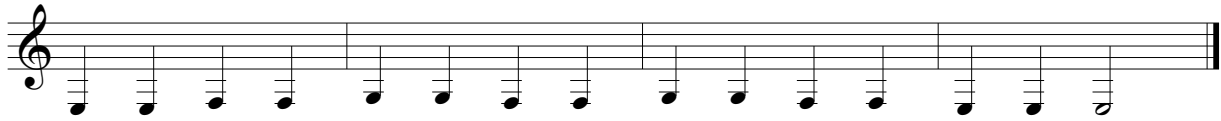
G (Sol)

Musical notation for G (Sol) on the sixth string. The notation is in 4/4 time and consists of four measures. The first measure contains four quarter notes (G2), the second measure contains four quarter notes (G2), the third measure contains four quarter notes (G2), and the fourth measure contains four quarter notes (G2). The tablature below shows four measures of the number 3 on the sixth string, corresponding to the notes in the musical notation.

Exercise 24



Exercise 25



Exercise 26



### Natural Scale

Fret 0 1 3 0 2 3 0 2 3 0 2 0 1 3 0 1 3

String 6 5 4 3 2 1

### Uptown

## Etude 2

Musical notation for Etude 2, consisting of two staves in 4/4 time. The first staff has the lyrics "p i m a" under the first four notes. The music features a sequence of eighth-note chords and a final half-note chord.

A SHARP  $\sharp$  raises the pitch of a note 1/2 step (1 fret).

## Chromatic Scale

Musical notation for a Chromatic Scale, consisting of two staves. The first staff shows a chromatic scale from G4 to G5 with fret numbers 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 0. The second staff shows a chromatic scale from G4 to G5 with fret numbers 1, 2, 3, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 0, 1, 2, 3.

### Etude 3

Musical staff 1: Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Four measures of music. Measure 1: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata. Measure 2: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata. Measure 3: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata. Measure 4: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata.

Musical staff 2: Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Four measures of music. Measure 1: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata. Measure 2: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata. Measure 3: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata. Measure 4: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata.

Musical staff 3: Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Four measures of music. Measure 1: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata. Measure 2: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata. Measure 3: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata. Measure 4: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata.

Musical staff 4: Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Four measures of music. Measure 1: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata. Measure 2: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata. Measure 3: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata. Measure 4: quarter note chord (F#, G, A, B) with a fermata.

# Etude 4

The musical score for Etude 4 is written in 4/4 time and consists of four staves. The first staff includes the lyrics "i m a i m a" above the notes. The melody is primarily composed of eighth-note patterns, often beamed in pairs. The bass line consists of half notes, with the first two notes of the first staff marked with a piano (p) dynamic. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.



