

THE ULTIMATE BEGINNERS GUITAR *Guide*



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The Ultimate Beginner Guitarist Guide

If you're interested in learning how to play guitar, the internet can be a very vast and honestly overwhelming place to get started. But in this free ebook you're going to learn everything YOU need to get started!

Part 1: What you need to learn before you can start playing

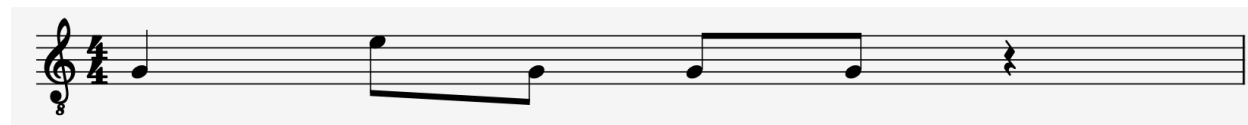
We are going to assume that you already have a guitar, if not click [here](#) to see which guitar is right for you. Also that you have tuned your guitar, if not click [here](#).

The very FIRST thing you need to learn is how to read music. There are other ways of learning to play guitar such as using your ears, or watching what someone else's fingers are doing, but there are easier ways to get started.

There are two forms of learning to read music:

TABS VS. SIGHT READING

Sight reading is the formal way of learning to read music, and for many instruments it's the ONLY way to read music, and often looks something like this:



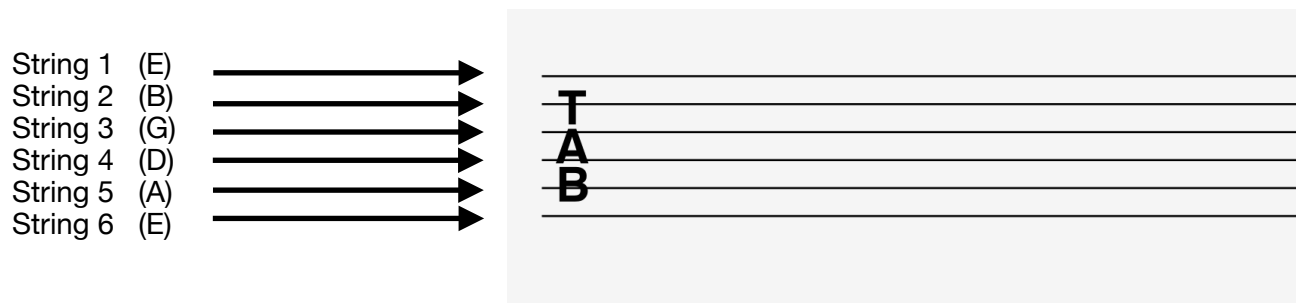
The problem with this form of reading music is that there is a BIG learning curve, and many beginner guitarists go with this method, find it very tedious and boring, put down the guitar and call it a day, and believe they CAN'T play guitar. While this form of reading music can be great and necessary, especially if you plan to go to college and major in music, it's not necessary to learn in the beginning stages of guitar playing, especially if your goals are more modest and you want to play more as a hobby.

The GOOD news is that there is ANOTHER form of music reading, and it is called TABS! Tabs are far easier to learn and read.

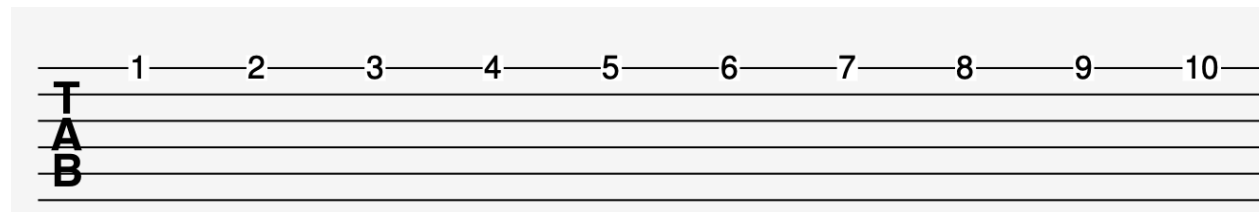
With tabs there are 6 lines of music, just like there are 6 strings of a guitar. Each line corresponds with a string on the guitar



And with tabs it follows as this:



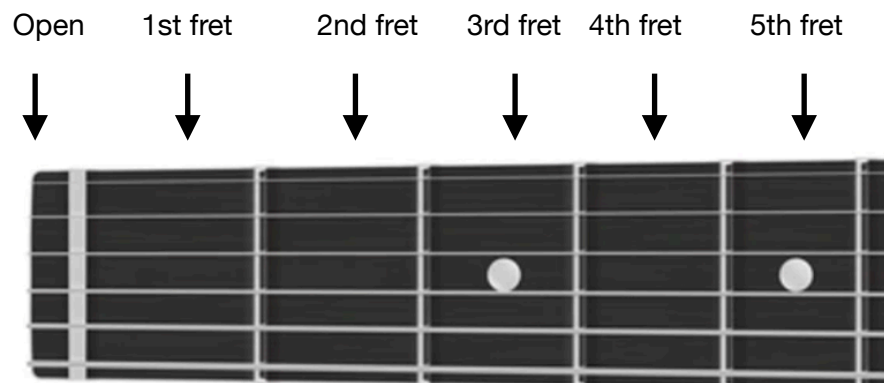
Now you know how strings line up with tabs, but how do you know where to put your fingers ON the strings. Well with tabs we use numbers to let us know what fret number we put our fingers on.



The numbers will be on a specific line that will tell you what string it's on, so in this case all the notes are on the first string.

You might also see a 0 on a string, which means to play the string open, no fingers on the fret.

Here's a simple diagram to let you know where the frets are

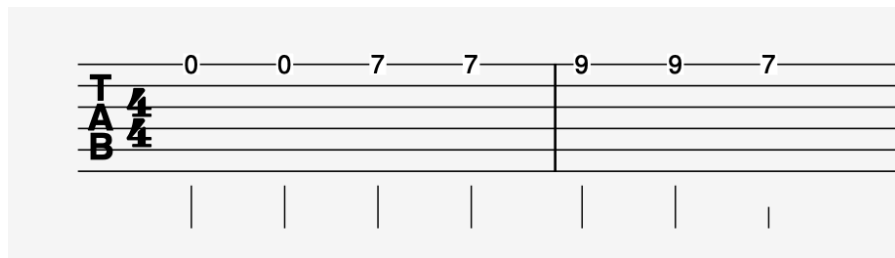


Try playing those notes now on your own guitar to get a sense for it yourself. On the next page you will try and play a song for the VERY first time! Let's go!

Part 2: Playing Your First Song

Now that you know how to read tabs now you are going to use this knowledge to play your first song. Don't be worried, we're going to keep it very simple and go one row at a time.

The song we're going to start with is Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. I know, a very kid friendly song, but the great thing about this song is that it's easy to learn, it's all on one string, and there's some open string notes as well which will make it that much easier to get started. So lets take a look at the first two measures of the song



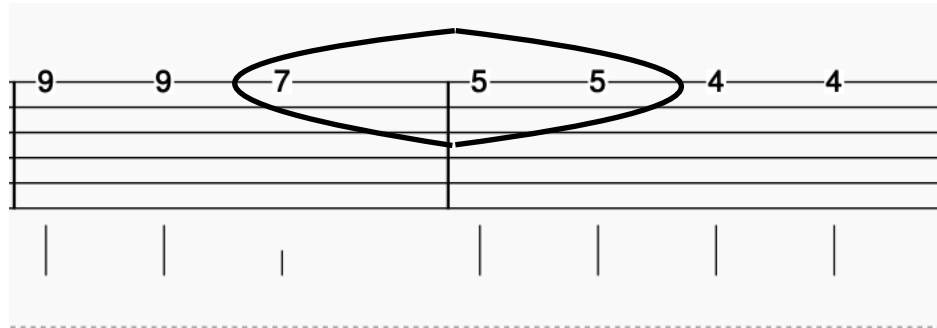
If you are having trouble with that part click [here](#) to see and hear an example of the song. Take a few minutes to practice if before you move onto the next section.

Now that you've practiced it let's try playing the whole song. Take your time learning this, if you get frustrated or stuck, feel free to take a break, chew some gum, grab a drink of water, and come back to it later. Remember, it doesn't have to be perfect. You will get better at it over time, and the more you learn and practice the easier this and future songs will become.

The image shows the full guitar tab for 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star'. The tab is written on a single staff with six lines. The notes are: 0, 0, 7, 7, 9, 9, 7, 5, 5, 4, 4, 2, 2, 0. The notes are connected by horizontal lines, indicating they are played in sequence. The staff is divided into four measures by vertical bar lines. The notes are written above the staff lines. The first measure contains 0, 0, 7, 7. The second measure contains 9, 9, 7. The third measure contains 5, 5, 4, 4. The fourth measure contains 2, 2, 0. The tab is labeled 'T A B' on the left side. There are small square icons with arrows pointing left and right at the end of the first and third measures.

If you want to hear and play along to this song click [here](#). Remember that it doesn't need to be perfect, so don't put any extra pressure on yourself.

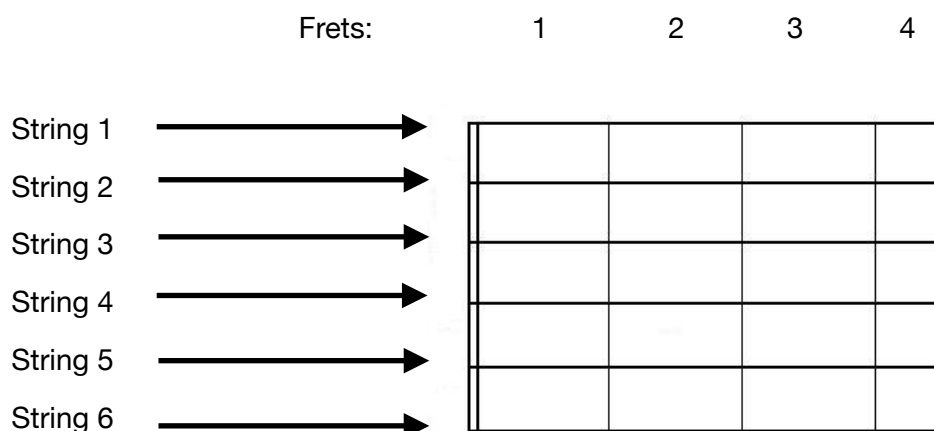
Some simple practice tips to try out would be to isolate any difficult areas of the song. For example, let's say that you're regularly making a mistake in this section:



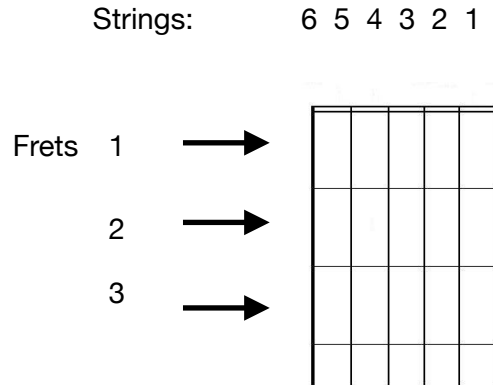
Let's say you're having trouble going from the 7 to the double 5's, focus on ONLY those 3 notes and transitioning back and forth between them. The main thing is to be consistent with your fingers. Use the fingers you normally use when playing that section, so if you use your index from 7 to 5, use that index finger. DON'T change your fingering, even if it feels easier to play because once you put it back into context of the song whatever time you put in using the different fingering won't be applicable anymore to this.

Part 3: Getting started with chords

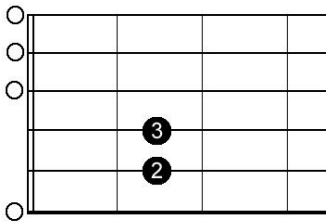
Now you are going to learn how to read and play chords. Chords CAN be tabbed out with tabs, BUT there is a different way to read chords that I highly recommend called chord diagrams. Let's take a look



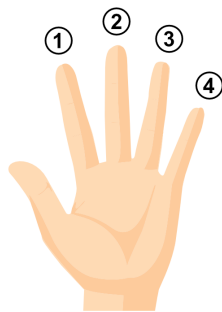
Sometimes this diagram will be on it's side like it is now, or faced up, they both read the same. Here's an example of it faced up



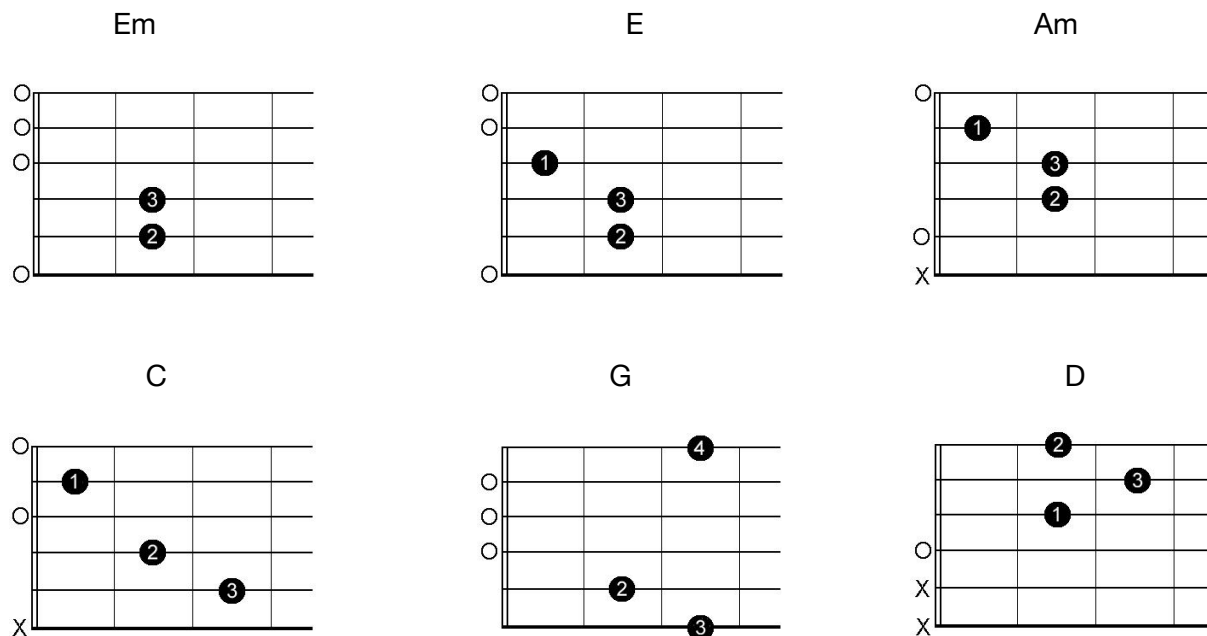
Now lets check out a very common chord, this one is called E Minor, also known as Em.



Now you probably noticed the empty circles on the left. That means that those strings are open, no fingers required. But what do the black circles with '2' and '3' in them mean? The '2' and '3' refer to your fingers. Take a look at this finger chart



From this chart you can see that fingers 2 and 3 are the middle and ring fingers respectively. So in that case you place your middle finger on fret 2 string 5 (A), and you place your ring finger on fret 2 string 4 (D). Let's take a look at some more chords now.



Here are 6 very common chords you might have heard in some of your favorite songs. If you are struggling with playing any of these chords, try following some of these tips to figure out why you might be struggling.

1. Trim your finger nails: Long finger nails can get in the way of fretting the notes correctly and cause a muffled sound.
2. Use the very tip of your finger to fret the notes: If you use the middle part of your finger to fret the notes, you run the risk of blocking the other strings you're playing, use the very tip.
3. Make sure to keep your fingers round: If your fingers aren't round, you run the risk of touching other strings and potentially muting them.
4. Play each string one at a time: Doing this will help identify which string(s) are being muffled and need to be improved, then you can make adjustments accordingly.
5. If a string is being blocked, readjust one or more fingers. If you're unsure which finger(s) is causing the strings to be blocked, try restarting from tip 2

Part 4: Chord Progressions

Now that you've learned some basic chords, let's put these chords in order to make them sound for musical. For now play each chord 4 times before switching to the next chord. Try your best to transition smoothly to each chord as well. Do each progression 4 times each as well.

E Em C G

G Am C G

G C Em D

D Am C Em

C Am Em G

Am C G E

Remember, the goal isn't to be perfect with these chord progressions. Just do your best and notice any chord transitions that are giving you some trouble. If you are facing any difficulties with any of these chords try isolating two chords instead of doing four or more, that way you can get even more results and focusing on what's more difficult. If you want you can grab a metronome, or a drum beat on YouTube, and switch chords every 4 beats.

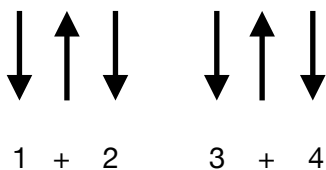
Feel free to try and come up with your own chord progressions, choose any 2-4 chords and see how they sound in succession of each other. Experiment with how fast you switch chords and how many times you strum each chords. Doing this will make learning chords just a little more interesting a less of a task you need before moving onto the next step.

Part 5: Strum Patterns

Now that we've learned some simple chords and chord progressions, it's time to learn some simple strum patterns. You can apply these to any of the previous chord progression in part 4, or to any chord progressions you made up yourself.

The Down arrow will symbolize picking down on the strings with your pick or fingers, and the Up arrow will symbolize picking up on the guitar strings with your pick or fingers. The numbers and plus (+) symbols will determine the timing, so if you see a big empty space () like that, it means hold the chord for a brief period, roughly half a second.

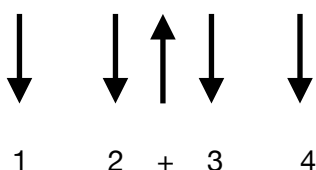
Strum Pattern 1:



This strum pattern is a very simple and common pattern to get started with. An easy way to count it is 1 and 2... 3 and 4... 1 and 2... 3 and 4... 1 and 2... 3 and 4...

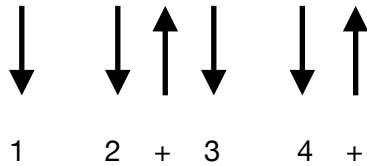
Notice how I put the dots after 2 and 4. This symbolizes a hold. During that hold you will restart your picking hand and bring it back to the top of strings so you can strum down for the next down up down that follows.

Strum Pattern 2:



This strum pattern is a simplified version of pattern 3. This one is simplified because you have a little break in between chords at the end of the strum pattern to give you some time to transition from one chord to the next. This becomes especially helpful when you're transitioning from chords like C and G.

Strum Pattern 3:



This is the full version of the previous chord progression. Notice how at the end of the progression there is an upstroke. After this upstroke you have to immediately restart the strum pattern so that it's almost seamless and doesn't end. I recommend that you first start off with one chord and get it down. Once you feel comfortable playing this, add a second chord, on the last upstroke, lift up all of your fingers and hit the strings open to allow your fingers to transition easily and smoothly.

Part 6: Ode To Joy

Now it's time for another song! This one is called Ode to Joy. This will require changing more strings than the previous song.

Ode To Joy

Beethoven

Guitar tablature for Ode To Joy by Beethoven. The tablature is written for a standard guitar (6 strings) and uses a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation is as follows:

Measure 1: 0-0-1-3 | 3-1-0-3 | 1-1-3-0 | 0-3-3

Measure 5: 0-0-1-3 | 3-1-0-3 | 1-1-3-0 | 3-1-1

Measure 9: 3-3-0-1 | 3-0-1-0-1 | 3-0-1-0-3 | 1-3-0

Measure 13: 0-0-1-3 | 3-1-0-3 | 1-1-3-0 | 3-1-1

Remember to take your time, if there's any parts of the song you're having trouble with, isolate it, repeat it a few times, identify what is making this part difficult, are your fingers and pick not synchronized, are you landing on the right notes, are you plucking the right strings, etc.

Part 7: Prelude In G Major

Now we are going to start another new song. I personally really like this song and I really enjoy teaching it to my students because it is just super simple, easy to play and sounds AWESOME.

At first glance this song might look intimidating, but the nice thing about this song is there's a lot of open strings. One thing to notice is that there is a repeating pattern. Take a second right now to check out the pattern and see if you can see it.

The tablature consists of four staves, each labeled 'TAB' on the left. The first staff starts at measure 1, the second at measure 5, the third at measure 9, and the fourth at measure 13. Each staff contains four measures of music. The notes are represented by numbers on the strings (0 for open string). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above the notes. A repeating pattern of plucking the 1st, 3rd, 2nd, and 3rd strings is shown. The fourth staff ends with a double bar line.

Did you notice the pattern? If not, the pattern is you're going to pluck the 1st string, followed by the 3rd string, the 2nd string, and back to the 3rd, and then repeat. There is a stop on the 7 where you hold the 7 on the 4th and 8th measure. But that's the basic pattern. Give it a try!

Step 8: Practice Schedule

Now the last step of this guide is having a schedule that you use regularly to help keep you on track. It's always a good idea to have a schedule of what you want to practice so you make regular progress. Here's a layout of what I recommend if you went through the guide and only know what's in here, but as you progress you should make changes to your guitar practice schedule so it remains relevant to your goals. Each day will be set for 30 minutes of practice. Make sure to print this out and put a check mark or x next to the days you finished.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Twinkle star	5		5		5
Chords	5	10		5	
Ode To Joy	5		5		5
Strumming	10	10	5	10	5
Prelude In G	5		5	5	5
Chord Prog.		10	10	10	10

Feel free to create your own schedule and keep up with the newsletter as I will be providing more free tabs for songs, further chord lessons for both beginner and intermediate guitarists, as well as sending guitar practice schedules for specific time frames, goals, and challenges some might be facing and want to overcome.

If you wish to become a student click the link here to become a student and get started on achieving your guitar playing goals now!