

How To Read TAB For Guitar

This video will demonstrate how to hold your guitar, and how to play single notes. In the video you will also learn how to read TAB, the easiest and fastest way for me to tell you what notes to play. It is a simple “play this fret on this string” approach that is very popular around the world.

Things to notice and watch out for in the video:

1. Notice how important it is to hold the guitar up and close to your body. This makes it so much easier to play.
2. Always strive to hold your pick between your thumb and index finger only. Do not use your middle finger to hold on to the pick.
3. Try to keep your thumb on your left hand pointed towards the ceiling. Don't let it drift to your left or towards a wall. Holding your guitar up higher will make this a bit easier.
4. Play a fretted note with your finger close to the fret, but not on it. The closer you are to the fret, the less pressure it will take to get the notes to ring. But being right on the fret will sound kind of like a “thud.”

As I mentioned, TAB is very simple to read. The number is always the fret you play. The line that the number is written on is the string.

Remember that the top line = the top string... but the top string is the one closest to the floor! This is a bit counter-intuitive for some folks, so I want to emphasize it here.

Directions on any musical instrument always refer to pitch, not how it appears. If that were the case, piano players would only have notes to the left and the right, and we would have a hard time talking about music with other instrumentalists.

Here's the TAB for the first example you should practice on. Don't worry, we will get bluesy very soon!

Example 1

BEFORE YOU MOVE ON: Be able to play this at about 1 note every second or two. Don't worry if it feels a little clumsy right now.