

# HOW TO READ GUITAR TAB

Guitar TAB or Tablature is a simple way of writing out music for guitar (and other similar instruments). Think of it as a 'map' of the guitar neck. It shows what frets to play on which strings. Tablature is unique to guitar-based instruments, so don't be surprised if you give a TAB to a violinist, and they give you a strange look because they can't read it. The formal way of writing music for guitar is when a standard notation staff is connected to a TAB staff. The informal way is to show the Guitar TAB staff only in text format as shown to the right. The informal way is how you will find most TAB on the internet.

```
e | --0---3----- |
b | --1---0----- |
g | --0---0----- |
d | --2---0----- |
a | --3---2----- |
E | -----3----- |
```

The six horizontal lines represent the six guitar strings. The lowest line represents the low E string. The numbers on the six lines represent the fret numbers to be played. A zero on a line means to play the string 'open'.

## There are two basic rules to remember when playing TAB:

1. Numbers beside each other (left to right) are played one after the other
2. Numbers lined up vertically (stacked on top of each other) are played all at the same time

All other types of symbols and notation can be learned later. If you understand the two basic rules you won't have any trouble learning Guitar TAB.

