

# Tablature

Tablature or TAB is a very common method for notating guitar music. It is very similar to the fretboard diagrams we have been using. The lines are the strings of the guitar, with the 1st string on top. Instead of using lines for frets, a number is placed on a string indicating the fret. Open strings are identified with an "0". If the numbers are stacked, the notes are to be played together. If not, they are played one at a time.

1st string

6th string

Rhythm notation

2nd fret, 5th string  
Open 6th string  
Stacked notes = chord

The example above is the last line of the 12 Bar Blues we learned earlier.

Here is a melodic example, one note at a time. Notice none of the notes are stacked. Also, this example does not show rhythm. This is the pentatonic scale we learned earlier.

Rhythm is not always notated in TAB. On the 12 Bar Blues example above the rhythm is indicated above the staff. The plain stems show quarter notes, 1 per beat, 4 per measure. Sometimes, TAB is paired with standard notation which shows the rhythm. Often TAB found on the internet does not show rhythm. Therefore you need to know how the rhythm of the song goes, or have a recording available.