

EXPLAINING TABLATURE -written by David Taub

Tablature, or tab for short, is a form of musical notation. It is a fast and easy way to graphically represent the guitar strings and fret numbers. Tablature displays what strings and corresponding fret numbers you strike to play a chord or notes. You read and then play the guitar as the symbols appear in order from left to right just like reading a book.

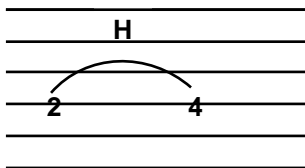
In tablature there is a six-line staff that represents the six strings of the guitar. The strings appear graphically from highest to lowest string with the order starting with the high e-string, then below that the B-string, G-string, D-string, A-string, and on the bottom the Low E-string, (see the figure below left). Just think of the six horizontal lines as the six strings in order on the guitar. A number on any given string represents the fret number that you play on that given string on the guitar. The number zero, "0", represents to play that string open.

Numbers stacked on top of one another mean to play those frets on those notated strings together at the same time like a chord. Sometimes you will see a chord name listed on top of the staff with the fret numbers stacked underneath it. Whenever fret numbers are stacked on top of each other play them at the same time, (see figure below center E chord).

Sometimes you will see the chord name at the top of the staff but the numbers below it are not stacked one on top of the other like when playing a chord but rather spread out with space between them. This means to finger the chord listed, but play the notes one at a time, not together, or rather arpeggiate the chord, (see figure below right D chord).

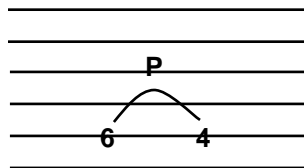
	E	D			
High e	0	2			
B	0	3			
G	1	2			
D			2		
A			2	2	
Low E			2	2	0
	Play 2 nd fret A-string	Play 2 nd fret A-string & 2 nd fret D-string together	Play E chord	Finger a D chord and play notes one at a time, 2 nd fret high E-string, then 3 rd fret B-string and then 2 nd fret G-string	

COMMON TABLATURE SYMBOLS EXPLAINED



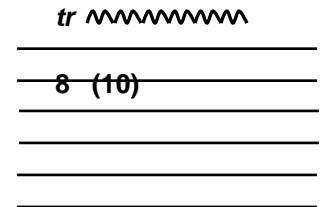
Hammer-On

Pick the 2nd fret D-string then come down hard with another finger fretting the 4th fret D-string without picking it



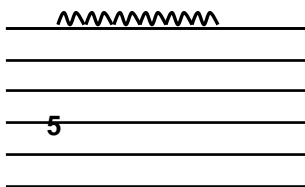
Pull-Off

Place both fingers on the notes - pick the 6th fret A-string and then without picking pull down and off to sound the 4th fret on the A string



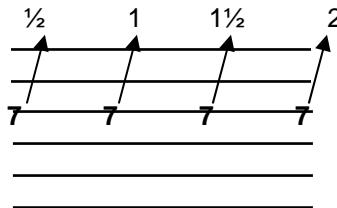
Trill

continually hammer-on and pull-off 8th fret B-string to the 10th fret B-string, only picking once



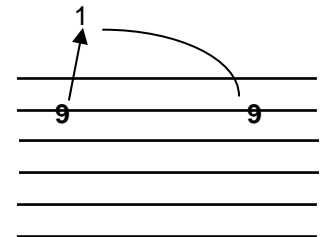
Vibrato

Pick the 5th fret D-string and massage or vibrate the note by bending it up and down to create the vibrato effect



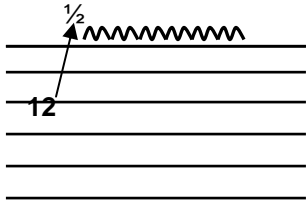
String Bending

Pick the 7th fret G-string and bend the string up to the indicated pitch - 1/2 step, 1 whole step, 1 1/2 steps, 2 steps



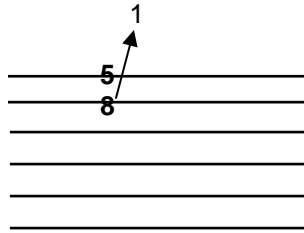
String Bend & Release

Bend the 9th fret on the B-string up one whole step, then release it back down to original pitch



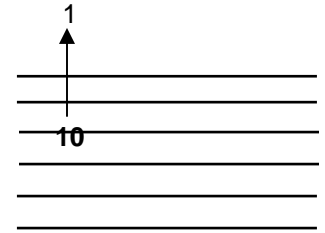
Bend & Vibrato

Bend the 12th fret G-string up a half-step and while holding the bent note vibrato back and forth



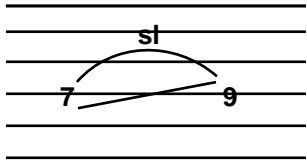
Unison Bend

Pick both notes together then bend the the lower note, 8th fret B-string up in pitch to match the higher note 5th fret high E-string



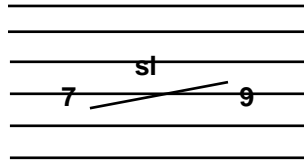
Pre-Bend

Bend the note first, 10th fret G-string up a whole step, then pick the note to sound



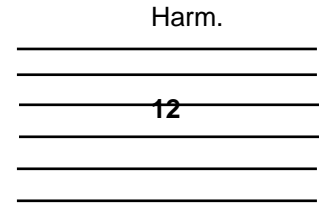
Slide – no 2nd pick

Pick the 7th fret D-string and slide with the same finger along the string to the 9th fret D string – do not pick the 2nd note



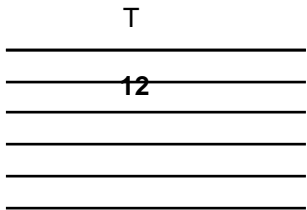
Slide

Pick the 7th fret D-string and slide with the same finger along the string to the 9th fret D string and then pick the 2nd note



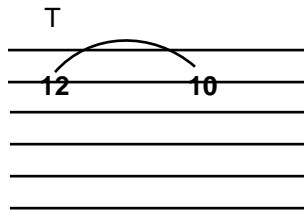
Harm.

Natural Harmonic
Pick & lightly touch 12th fret G-string directly over 12th fret to sound natural harmonic



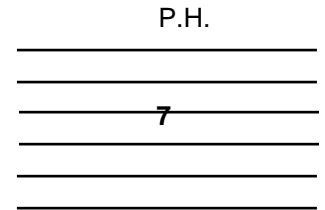
Fretboard Tapping

Hammer tap note at 12th fret B-string with a pick hand finger



Tap & Pull-Off

Tap note at 12th fret B-string with pick finger then pull-off to 10th fret B-string, pull down with tap finger



P.H.

Pinch or Artificial Harmonic
Produce artificial harmonic at 7th fret G-string by digging tip of thumb into G-string at same time of picking

TABLATURE EXAMPLE EXPLAINED

		G	D	Em	C	G			
e	8 7 5	3 3 2 2 0 0 0 0	3	3	3				
B	8 7 5	3 3 3 3 0 0 1 1	3		3				
G	7 5 4	0 0 2 2 0 0 0 0	0		0				
D	7 5 4	0 0 0 0 2 2 2 2	0		0				
A	7 5 3	2 2	2 2 3 3	2					
E	7 5 3	3 3	0 0	3					

Remember to play left to right just like reading a book. Start the above example by playing 8th, 7th, then 5th frets on the high E-string. Then 8,7,5 frets on B-string. Then 7,5,4 frets on the G-string. Then 7,5,4 frets on the D-string. Then 7,5,3 frets on the A-string and 7,5,3 frets on the Low E-string. Then finger and play two times G chord, two times D chord, two times Em chord, two times C chord, and one time G chord. Then hold fingering for G chord and arpeggiate the chord by picking the individual notes one at a time 3rd fret high E-string, open D-string, open G-string, 3rd fret B-string and lastly the 3rd fret high E-string.