

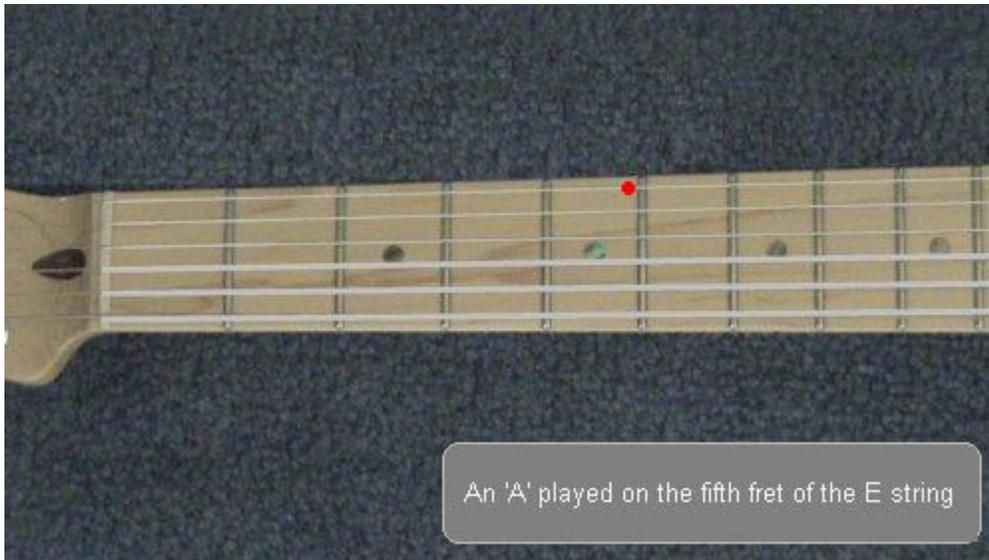
### **Lesson Four:**

It's time to learn how to finger. We've looked at chords and *some* of the theory behind them, but now, we're going to start on some work that'll lead us to playing solos.

### **How To Play A Note:**

Of course, you've probably already played many notes on your guitar. And you've already played chords, which are comprised of notes. But I want to focus on playing single notes now. If you don't get this correct now, you'll find it difficult to ever become a great player.

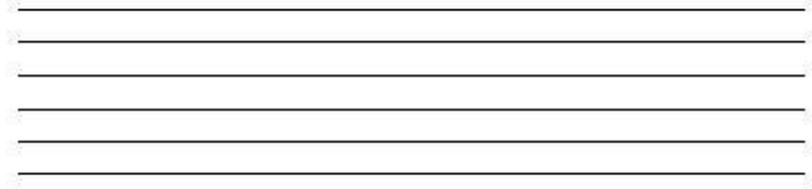
Take your guitar by the neck and do this... With your index fingering finger, play a note on the fifth fret of the high 'E' string. Apply a decent amount of pressure and get your finger close to the fret. Getting your finger close to the fret will insure good intonation. Intonation is a term to describe how well each note is actually in tune, or the correct pitched. Playing at varying distances from the fret will affect intonation. Try it out.



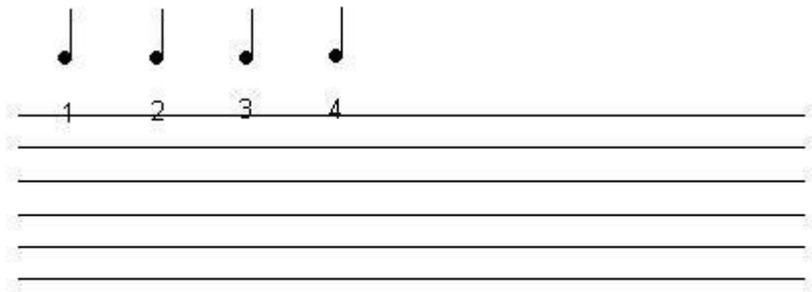
Play that note with your index finger, then cycle through the other three fingers. Try for the best sound with each finger.

**Introduction To Tablature:**

Commonly known as 'TAB', tablature is a quick and easy way for someone to show you how to play something on a stringed instrument. For guitar TAB, there are six horizontal lines representing the six strings of your guitar. The top line is always the high E string. See below:



Upon these lines, numbers are written to describe upon which fret to place your finger. Above, there may be some information designed to guide you as to the rhythmic structure of the song.



**Rhythm And Timing Notation:**

To be able to read most TABs, you won't have to worry about the timing, because you will know how the song is supposed to go. For our purposes, this will not do. I'll be showing you exercises to play, and I'll be writing most of them in tablature format. I'll also want to describe timing and rhythmic information. So let's spend a short while studying the basics of musical notation for timing information.

Written music is broken up into bars. Bars are broken up into fractions of whole bars. Thus, a note whose length spans a whole bar bears the name, 'whole note'. Another name for this length of note would be a 'semibreve'. There's also 'half notes' of called 'minims' and quarter notes of called 'crotchets'. The actual amount of time these notes ring out for is dependant on the tempo of the song.

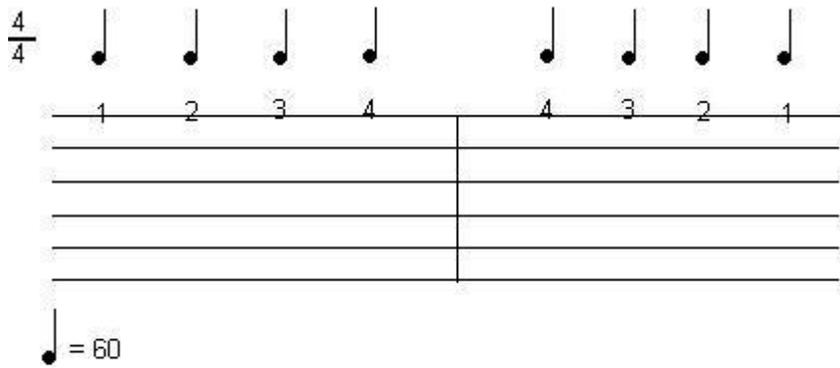
### Time Signatures:

Before looking into what tempo means, I'll quickly explain 'time signatures'. Time signatures look like fractions and they describe the relationship of note length to how many are supposed to be in each bar. A time sig looks like this: '4/4' or '3/4' etc. To use fraction parlance, the numerator is how many beats of type denominator will comprise the bar. If you see '4/4', it means that four 'quarter notes' make up a bar. There are notes that are half the length of quarter notes called quavers. Eight of these would fit in a bar if the time sig was 4/4. This will make more sense(if it doesn't yet) as we start using this stuff.

### Tempo:

Tempo is usually based on how many quarter notes occur within a minute, or, 'beats per minute'(BPM). Using quarter notes as the reference, and a tempo of 60 beats per minute, a quarter note would last for one second. Doubly the tempo would decrease the quarter notes duration to half a second. Exciting, hey???

Have a look at the figure below:



This is an exercise for us to play. All it means is, you play each note on each second. Well, unless you are playing along with a clock tick, you just need to get it roughly correct. Tap your foot and speak the beat number you're up to. You'll count, "one, two, three, four, one, two..." etc. On each tap, play the note.

I want you to use all four fingers, and they should correspond to the fret numbers as written on the TAB. And don't forget, this is a fingering exercise. The idea is to make each note sound as good as possible and fret them properly. So before trying to play to a tempo, practice playing each note without any fixed timing. Just play the first note and make sure you are nice and close to the first fret. Then with your second (ring) finger, do the same thing on the second fret. Do all four fingers this way, then, try it at one second intervals.

Once you feel comfortable with this exercise, play it on the other strings. Then, go back to the high E string and move it up two frets. Play this new version on all strings. Move this one up two and repeat. Repeat this sequence until you run out of frets. It will get harder as the frets get closer together, but it's important to maintain intonation and clarity. The note combinations you are playing are not musical, but they are important so that when you play something musical later, it will sound good.

That is all.

For this lesson. Nick, what should I do during the week??? Practice those chords and practice this exercise. Don't be tempted to speed up the tempo. Technique is all that's important at the moment.