

A comprehensive and thorough guitar method that will
teach you to read and play music



Guitar Literacy

Learn how to Read Music

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Learn how to Read Music

This book comes with almost 300 audio examples and play-along tracks. To download these audio tracks, please go to:

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Why Learn To Read Music?

It's a question that most students ask when starting out. As a guitarist, It's easy to avoid learning how to read. There are many tools available that make it possible to become an accomplished guitarist without ever reading a note of music. You can easily rely on tablature, software, videos etc. and convince yourself that you'll never need to know how to read.

So why learn to read music notation? Because being able to gives you a deeper understanding of music than you would otherwise have. It's not just about knowing what the dots on the page mean - it's also about getting to know the guitar and learning about fundamental musical concepts and principles, some of which are simply much easier to understand when you can read music.

Music is a language, and just like the spoken one, you do not need to be able to read or write to communicate proficiently, but learning to do so empowers you to develop your musical knowledge to however far you wish to take it. Most people know intuitively what rhythm is, for example. Even those with no musical training whatsoever are able to accurately replicate rhythms, through singing or clapping. But being able to notate and read rhythms allows you to go deeper. You can analyse, compose, reconstruct, experiment and generally understand rhythm to a much deeper level.

The aim of this book is not necessarily to make you a sight-reading expert (although it will give you the tools to do so if you wish). The aim of the book is to give you the ability to read music on the guitar confidently and be familiar with the principles.

Besides all of this, you shouldn't think of learning to read as an alternative to other approaches that you may already be using. Think of this book as an addition to any sort of program that you already have. You can still (and should) learn technical exercises, pop songs, solos written out with tablature etc. Learning to read just adds a very important string to your bow.

How This Book Is Structured

This book has been written with the beginner in mind. If you are not a beginner, you will probably move quickly through the exercises until you reach a spot that you find challenging. If you are a beginner, there is an added benefit to working through this book that goes beyond just learning to read. It is also a great way to build fundamental technique. By going through this book, you will play through well over 100 exercises/melodies. By playing through each exercise/piece, you will be improving your technique and working on progressively more difficult material as the pieces become harder.

The aim of this book is to enable you to read music confidently on the guitar, using the notes in the open position. The notes in the open position include notes on the first four frets of the guitar, as well as the open strings. While this is obviously only one position of the guitar, it covers most of the notes on the staff and allows you to learn the principles necessary for reading music notation that can be applied to other positions of the guitar.

This book is designed so that you learn the notes in the open position, one string at a time. Each time a new string is introduced, a variety of pieces/exercises is given so that you not only understand the material, but become confident in using it through repetition. Reading skills are developed through repetition. As more and more notes are introduced, important concepts are also introduced along the way.

Extra Lessons

Even though this book was written with the beginner in mind, there are some fundamentals that it is assumed that you know, such as how to hold the pick and how to tune your guitar. The following is a link to a webpage, where you can view individual lessons on these fundamental concepts. Including these lessons separately to this book allows us to focus solely on learning to read.

onlineguitarbooks.com/GuitarLiteracyExtras

The page also contains supplementary lessons relating to topics covered later on in this book, such as scales and key signatures. Although these lessons are optional, they will be of great help to you, should you need further clarification of certain topics.

How To Read - Pitch And Rhythm

If all of music could be reduced to its two most basic elements, it would be pitch and rhythm.

Pitch can be loosely defined as which note to play and rhythm can be loosely defined as how long to play it for.

There are other variables, such as dynamics and articulation, but for the most part learning to read music notation is about pitch and rhythm.

What Is Pitch?

Let's take a closer look at pitch. Pitch is simply a reference to the the note that you are playing. When you play a note on the 1st fret of the 1st string on the guitar, you are playing a certain pitch. When you play on the 2nd fret of the 1st string, the pitch (or note) changes. This is not complicated - you can hear the pitch change when you move from one note to another.

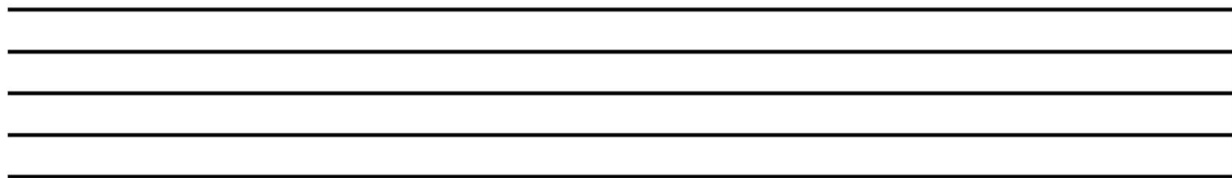
Each note has a name, such as 'A', 'B', 'C', 'F Sharp' etc, which helps us to identify and use the notes that we learn. It's important to realise that these note names are not specific to the guitar. An 'E' note on the guitar should sound the same as an 'E' note on the piano. The timbre (characteristics of the sound in general) will be different (a guitar sounds like a guitar and a piano sounds like a piano!) but the 'pitch' will be the same.

All of this means that when we learn to read sheet music, we are learning a global language. Of course, we are translating it onto the guitar, but in general we are learning to read music itself.

What Is Rhythm?

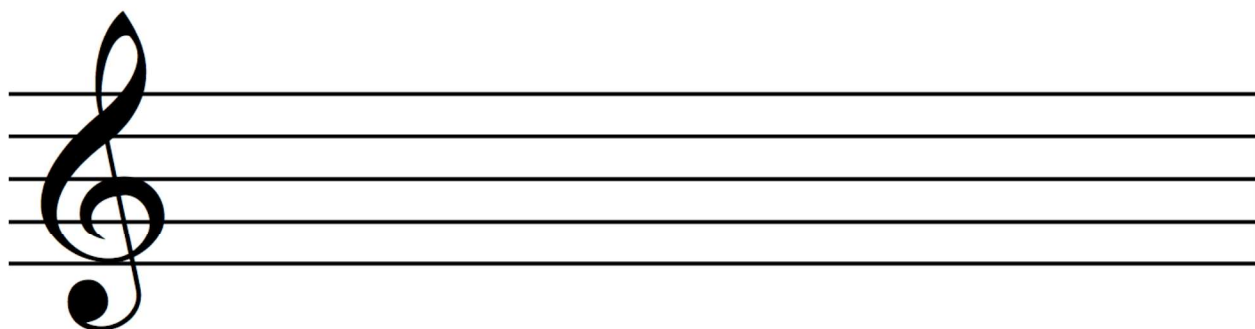
Rhythm can be loosely defined as the length of the notes that we play. This is a pretty general definition, but it will suffice for now. We will look at both pitch and rhythm in more detail later. But before we become familiar with notes and rhythms, we need to become familiar with the canvas on which they are written.

The Staff



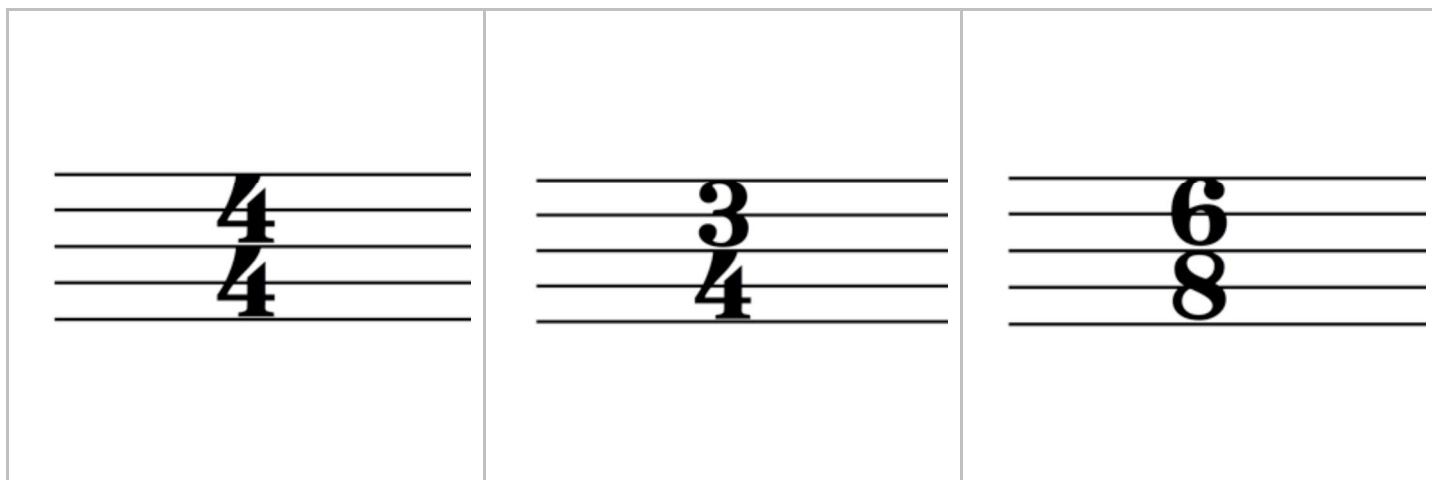
The staff is the blank canvas on which all of music notation is written. It is made up of five horizontal lines. If you're used to reading guitar tablature, keep in mind that this is a completely different system, even though a blank staff looks quite similar to a blank line of guitar tablature. The lines do not represent strings. They are simply five lines on which we can put things.

Treble Clef



The treble clef is a symbol which basically tells us about the range of notes that we will be using. It is placed at the beginning of the staff, at the start of a piece of music. We don't need to worry about specifically what it does. When we read music on the guitar, we use the treble clef, so you can think of it as a symbol that lets us know that we are reading music that can be played on the guitar (as opposed to soprano saxophone or the triangle, for example). The treble clef is also used for other instruments too.

Time signature



The time signature is an indication of how many 'beats' are in each 'bar'. We'll explore the concept of beats and bars very shortly, but the above images are three examples of different time signatures.

Rhythm

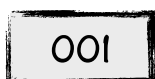
A good place to start when learning how to read is with rhythm. People often make the mistake of thinking that reading notes is 90% of reading music. This is not the case. Rhythm is arguably more important than the notes you are playing, because ‘groove’ and ‘feel’ are more closely tied with rhythm than pitch.

The most basic expression of rhythm is a ‘pulse’.

Pulse/Beat

A pulse is a recurring ‘beat’ that usually remains constant from the start of a song to the end. It is continuous and predictable. In music, we use the pulse to build rhythms upon. It is fundamental to everything that we play.

A good exercise is to clap your hands repetitively, aiming to keep the time in between each clap even. It should sound something like this:



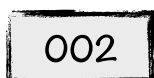
The box with the number in it (to the left) indicates that there is an audio example that you can listen to. The number inside the box is the track number to use.

What you should be able to hear (as you clap and from the audio example) is a basic pulse. The most important thing with the pulse is for it to remain even. It's the repetitive, predictable nature of the pulse that creates a sense of rhythm and momentum. The speed of the pulse is measured in ‘**Beats Per Minute**’ (BPM). This is literally a measurement of how many beats (pulses) occur in the space of one minute. The speed of a piece of music is also referred to as the **tempo**.

Experiment with different speeds. Although the speed of a pulse shouldn't change once it has been established, you can stop the exercise and start again using a different speed. This is a great way to get a feel for different tempos and familiarise yourself with the concept of a pulse/beat.

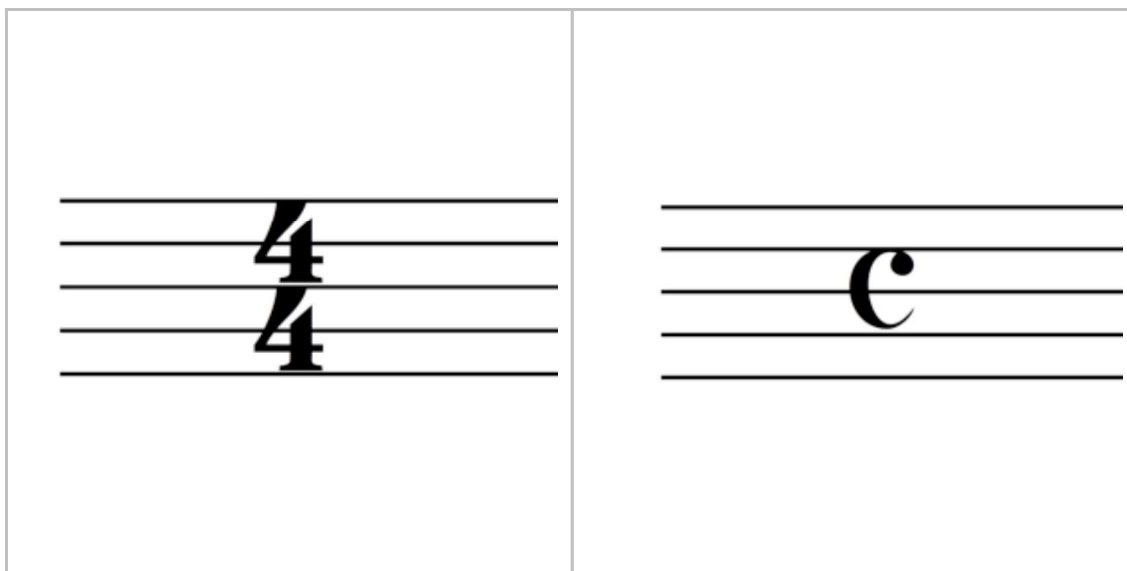
The Meter

When we play music, we organise beats into recurring groups. This produces what is known as the meter, or time signature. These groups make it easier to organise and read the music that we are playing, but they also serve a more essential purpose. The groups themselves create a sense of repetition and momentum. This is best demonstrated by another exercise. We're going to initiate a pulse, just like we did before. We will continue with the clapping, but this time we're going to count from 1 to 4, repetitively.



You should be able to hear and feel a certain sense of momentum that is created with the counting. It is an exercise that you have probably done before, in some way. In this example, we have used groups of four, which is the meter (time signature) known as '4/4' (said like "four four"). Each group of four is called a 'bar'. Therefore in 4/4, music is made up of continuous bars of four beats. Other time signatures exist as well, such as 3/4 (bars of three beats), 6/8 and more, but for now we are going to stick with 4/4, because it is by far the most commonly used.

We know a piece of music is in 4/4 when we see one of these two symbols at the start of a piece of music.



Both images can be used to represent 4/4. The 'C' to the right stands for 'common time', which means 4/4. When you see either of these two symbols, you know that the piece of music is in 4/4.

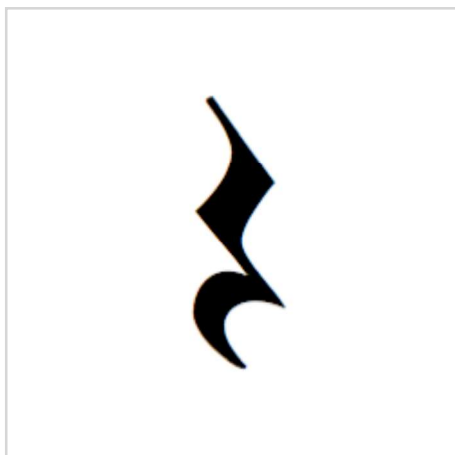
Quarter Note/Crotchet

We've looked at the peripheral elements of music. The treble clef, time signature and staff are all things that effectively set up the canvas that we can place notes upon. Let's now look at the music itself. As I said earlier, reading music is mainly about pitch and rhythm. We're going to continue to focus on rhythm. The following note is called a 'quarter note' or 'crotchet'. 'Quarter note' is the American name, while 'crotchet' is the English name. They both refer to the same thing. It looks like this:



Quarter notes/crotchets tell us to play something for 1 beat. We know a note is a quarter note because it has a solid note head (the round, black bulb-looking thing) and a stem (the stem can be pointing up or down, it makes no difference). But the most important thing is that it tells us to play something for the duration of 1 beat. We are going to do some exercises shortly, but first, let's look at one more thing:

Quarter Note Rest/Crotchet Rest



The above image is of a quarter note rest (american) or crotchet rest (english). When you see a quarter note rest, you play nothing for the duration of one beat. You effectively *rest* for one beat.

Rhythm Exercises

Now that you've learnt some fundamentals, it's time to start playing some exercises. The following ten exercises will only involve clapping. Clapping exercises are a great way to focus solely on rhythm, without the complication of playing the guitar. Let's have a look at the first exercise with annotations, but before we do, let's discuss a good approach to practising the exercises and pieces in this book.

How To Practise The Exercises/Pieces In This Book

The initial exercises in this book have an accompanying audio example. The audio examples include a metronome, which is a percussive sound on every beat (a continuous pulse). As well as the metronome, there is audible counting ("1, 2, 3, 4"), so that it is very clear where each beat is. You will also hear the exercise being played, which is what you should be trying to emulate when playing yourself.

Each audio example begins with a 'count-in'. The count in goes like this:

"1... 2... 1, 2, 3, 4"

Think of the first "1" and "2" as a signal to get ready. Then the "1, 2, 3, 4" is literally an empty bar of music so that you can come in on the next bar (which is the first bar of the actual music). The count in serves two purposes - It allows you to know exactly where to come in, and it indicates what the tempo of the music is.

For every exercise/piece in this book, you should aim for two outcomes:

1. Be able to play along with the recording, while counting out loud. Playing with the recording ensures that you are playing the right thing (because you can hear what should be happening). It also ensures that you keep in time, because the recording uses a metronome.
2. Be able to play the exercise/piece without the recording. When you play without the recording, it is still important to count out loud and try to stay perfectly in time. (using your own metronome is a great idea.) Playing exercises by yourself ensures that you understand the music internally and are not simply reacting to what the recording is doing. It is even more important to count out loud when playing solo, so that you develop a solid sense of meter. When you've done enough exercises, the counting will happen subconsciously, but you need to count deliberately and consciously many times over before that happens.

The order in which you complete these two steps in is not necessarily important. Sometimes you may feel that you need the recording to get you started, while other times you may want to test yourself without the recording. But for each exercise/piece of music in this book, you should be able to answer 'yes' to the following two questions:

Can I play it perfectly with the recording?

Can I play it perfectly by myself?

Back to the the clapping exercises. Observe the first clapping exercise, with a few added annotations (in blue).

Clapping Quarter Notes - Exercise 1

The first exercise is made up of continuous quarter notes. The critical thing is that each quarter note goes for 1 beat. The first note (clap) is played on the beat 1. It goes for a duration of one beat, so the second note is played on beat 2. It goes for one beat, so the third note is played on beat 3. It goes for one beat, so the fourth note comes in on beat 4. After the fourth beat, we have reached the end of the bar, which is signified by a bar line. We then start the second bar, so we are back at beat 1. The beat numbers are written underneath each note, to make things easier, but usually these numbers would not be included.

It's good to include this explanation for this first example, to really break down exactly what is happening. However, you will probably understand instinctively what is happening by listening to the example audio and trying to clap along. Try playing it yourself. Remember, count out loud, play with the recording and also play without the recording!

Clapping Quarter Notes - Exercise 2

004



The second clapping exercise is where the true nature of rhythm really presents itself. As you can see, there is a quarter note rest on beat 4 of every bar. What this means is that when you get to the 4th beat of every bar, you do not clap. The critical thing though, is to keep the counting going. You clap on beat 1 (because there is a quarter note on beat 1). You then clap on beats 2 and 3. When you get to beat 4, you keep counting but do not clap. This really is the essence of rhythm. The beat/pulse/meter doesn't change, it stays the same, which is why you should keep counting out loud. What changes is what we do over the top (in these examples the clapping). The beat and meter are therefor a kind of unchanging canvas for us to play music over.

Again, the audio example should help you to understand what is happening more than this explanation. Just like the previous example, be able to play with and without the recording.

If you can confidently clap the first two exercises, the remaining clapping exercises shouldn't need much explaining. Each exercise is four bars in length and is made up of quarter notes and quarter note rests. Use the recordings to guide you, and play each exercise using the process already discussed.

Clapping Quarter Notes - Exercise 3

005

**Clapping Quarter Notes - Exercise 4**

006

**Clapping Quarter Notes - Exercise 5**

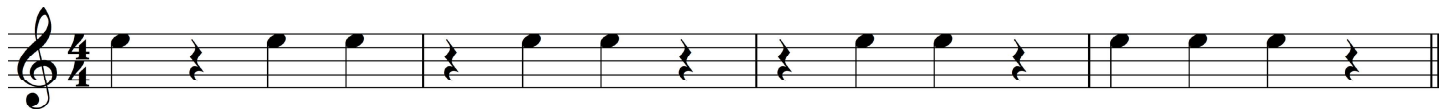
007



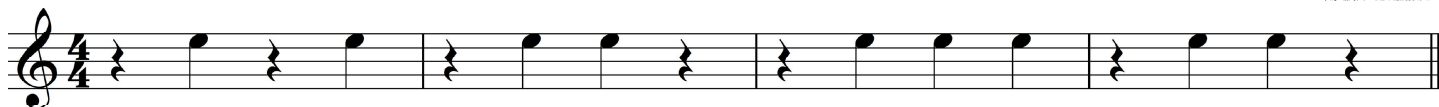
The following exercises do not contain any beat numbers underneath the staff. This just means that counting out loud is extra important. The beats are still there, they're just not annotated.

Clapping Quarter Notes - Exercise 6

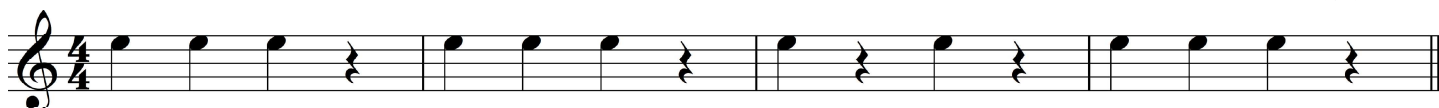
008

**Clapping Quarter Notes - Exercise 7**

009

**Clapping Quarter Notes - Exercise 8**

010

**Clapping Quarter Notes - Exercise 9**

011

**Clapping Quarter Notes - Exercise 10**

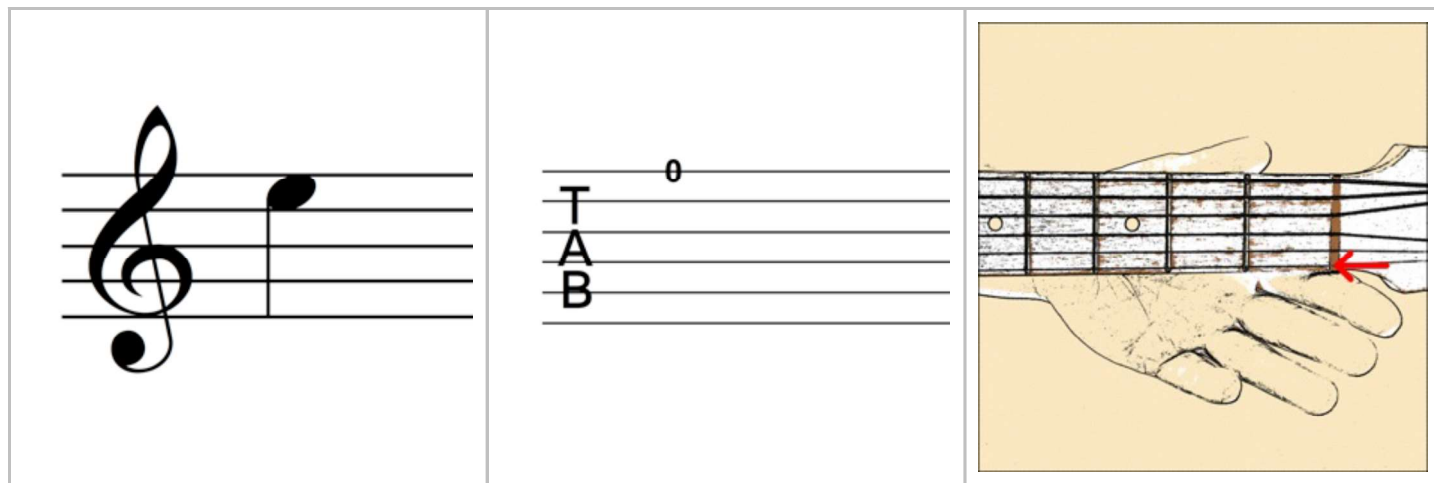
012



The E Note

By playing through the ten clapping exercises, you should develop a clear understanding of the basics of rhythm and be able to execute simple rhythms using quarter notes and rests. Of course, reading rhythm is only half the story. The other half is pitch, the 'which note to play' of reading.

The next ten exercises use only one note - E. It is played by striking the 1st string (E string), open (without using the fingers on your left hand). You should use a downstroke (with the pick) when playing the note. Observe the following images.



The image on the left is what the E note looks like on the staff. Don't worry too much about this just yet as it will be explained further when we look at other notes as well. What is important at this stage is knowing that you will be playing the E note, and knowing how to play it. The image in the middle tells you how to play the E note, using tablature (see the supplementary lessons for an explanation on how to read tablature). The image to the right is a picture of how to play the note with your left hand. In this case, because E is played as an open string, there is simply an arrow pointing to the relevant string.

Here are the next ten exercises. They are actually the same exercises as before, although now you will be playing the note E instead of clapping. You should follow the same process as before - be able to play with the recording and be able to play by yourself. Don't forget to count out loud!

Quarter Notes With E - Exercise 1

013



The only new variable now that you are playing a note on the guitar as opposed to clapping, is that you can now control how long each note sustains for. Even if you play the exercises perfectly in time, there is still the opportunity to vary the sustain of each note. A sound of a clap finishes almost as soon as it starts. There's no way to increase the length of a clap. With an open string (such as E), you can stop the string from ringing by touching the string with a left-hand finger, or by touching the string with your pick. When playing quarter notes on the guitar, you should aim to make the note ring

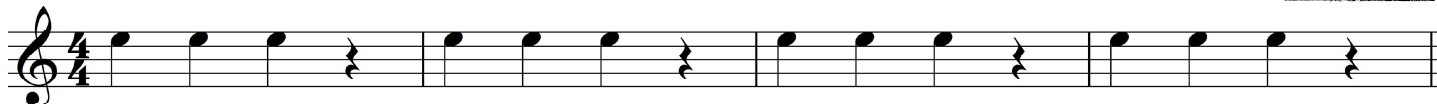
for the full duration of the beat. In the exercise above, there should be no silence in between each note. Each note should ring until the next note comes in. Listen to the previous audio example again. Then compare it to the following example of the same exercise being played badly.

014

As you can hear, it is still being played in time, but the sustain of the notes is short and inconsistent.

Quarter Notes With E - Exercise 2

015



Exercise 2 contains rests. When you see a rest, you should stop the string from ringing. The best way to do this, as just described, is to lightly touch the string with your left hand. Make sure that you don't stop the string too early. Rests are just like notes, they occur at an exact time in the music.

Here are the remaining E note exercises:

Quarter Notes With E - Exercise 3

016



Quarter Notes With E - Exercise 4

017



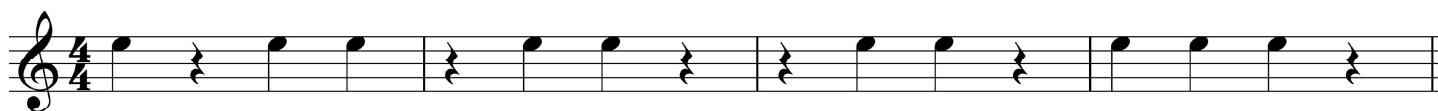
Quarter Notes With E - Exercise 5

018



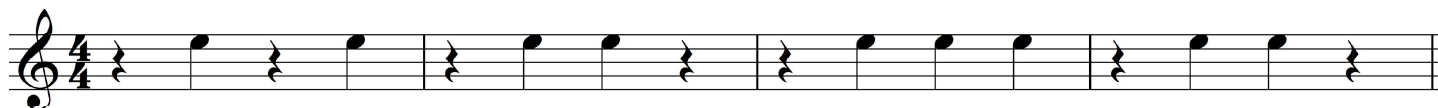
Quarter Notes With E - Exercise 6

019



Quarter Notes With E - Exercise 7

020



Quarter Notes With E - Exercise 8

021



Quarter Notes With E - Exercise 9

022



Quarter Notes With E - Exercise 10

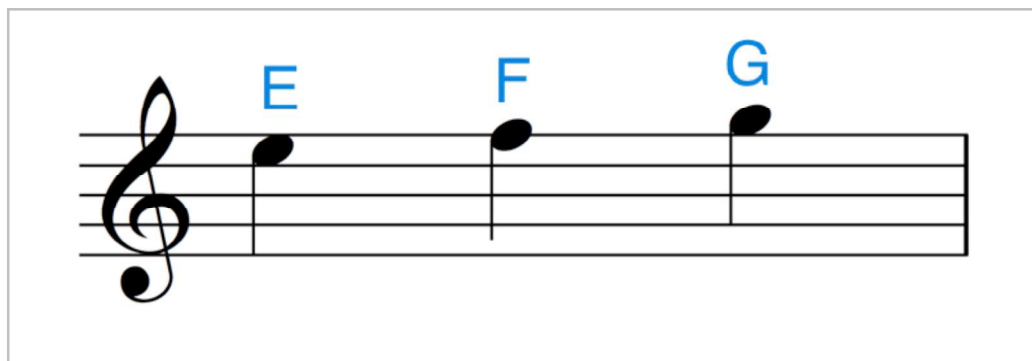
023



The 1st String (E, F, G)

Now it's time to introduce a few more notes. Having to distinguish between different notes is where the concept of reading notes really comes into effect. With the previous ten exercises, you knew which note you had to play for every exercise. They were effectively ten more rhythm exercises.

We're going to look at three notes, on the 1st string (E string). Here they are:

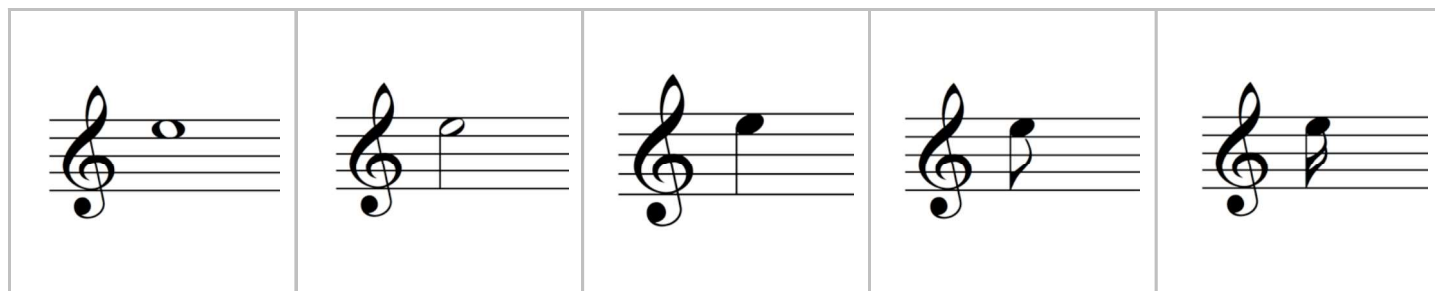


Although we looked briefly at the E note before, we didn't really go into detail about how to identify it on the staff. (It was the only note at the time so we didn't need to.) In the above image, you can see that it is the position of the note head, displaced vertically on the staff that determines which note it is. Read the following descriptions of each note. Each description relates to the position of the note head.

- The **E note** sits in between the top two lines of the staff. It effectively sits in the top 'space' of the staff.
- The **F note** is intersected by the top line of the staff. The top line actually goes through the note head itself.
- The **G note** sits above the top line of the staff.


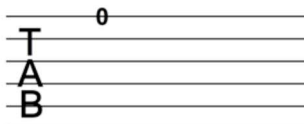
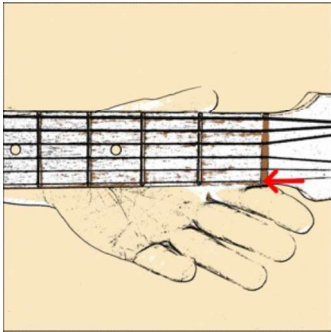
What's the point of these descriptions? You can already see the difference between the notes, but verbalising the position of each note is a very effective way of making sure that you remember each note. This is something that you should do every time you have to learn to recognise a new note.

As I mentioned, the position of the note head determines pitch. Rhythm is determined by the shape of the note. The following images are examples of the E note, written with different rhythms. Don't worry about what these different rhythms are just yet. The point of the following images is to demonstrate the difference between rhythm and pitch visually. What you should notice is that the note head stays in the exact same place, which is how we know it's an E.




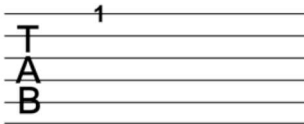
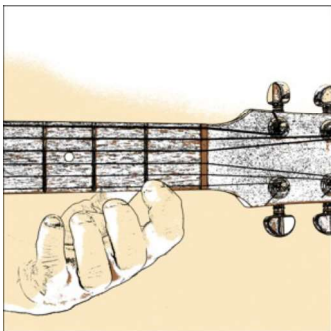
We are now going to look at how to play E, F, and G.

Every time a new note is introduced, you will see the position on the staff, the tablature and a picture of the note being played. You can also listen to it using the audio example. Let's look at the notes E, F, and G:

E			
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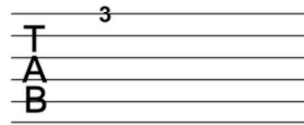
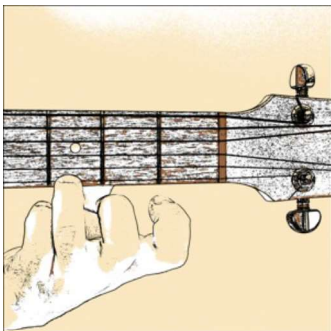
The E note is played by playing the 1st string, open.

024

F			
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The F note is played by putting your 1st finger on the 1st fret of the 1st string.

025

G			
---	---	--	---

The G note is played by putting your 3rd finger on the 3rd fret of the 1st string.

026

10 Exercises Using E, F, G

Now we're going to look at ten more exercises using the three notes that you have just learnt. This shouldn't need much explaining. Each exercise uses quarter notes and quarter note rests, just like before. The difference is that now, you have to differentiate between three notes and play the correct one as you read it.

The 1st String - Exercise 1

027



Remember that with rests, the previous note should stop ringing. As I explained before, you can stop open notes from ringing by lightly touching the string with your left hand. You can stop fingered notes from ringing simply by releasing the tension on the note that you are playing. By releasing the tension, the note will stop ringing.

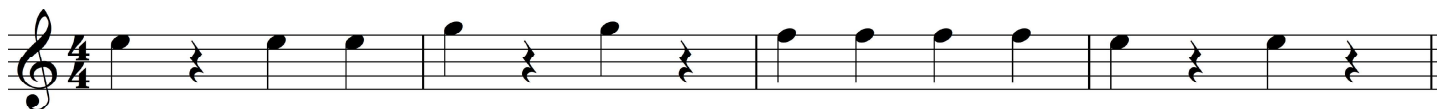
The 1st String - Exercise 2

028



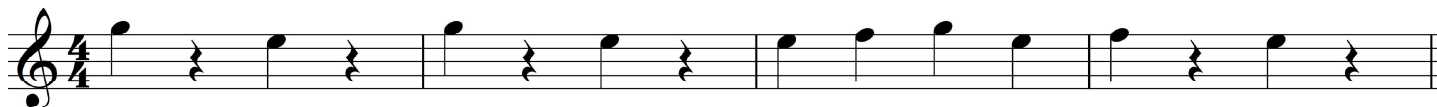
The 1st String - Exercise 3

029



The 1st String - Exercise 4

030



The 1st String - Exercise 5

031



The 1st String - Exercise 6

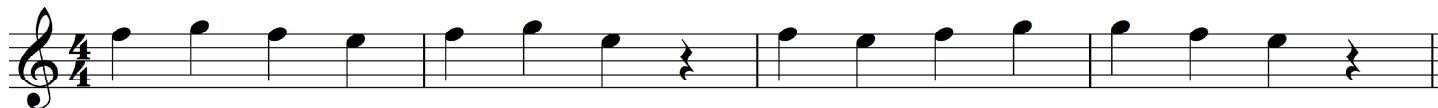
032

**The 1st String - Exercise 7**

033

**The 1st String - Exercise 8**

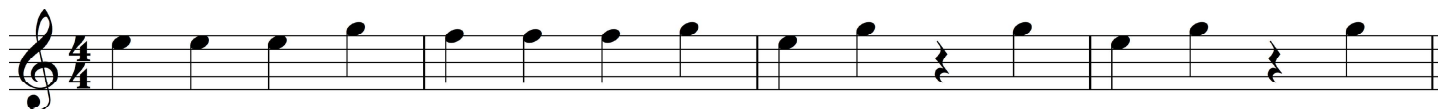
034

**The 1st String - Exercise 9**

035

**The 1st String - Exercise 10**

036

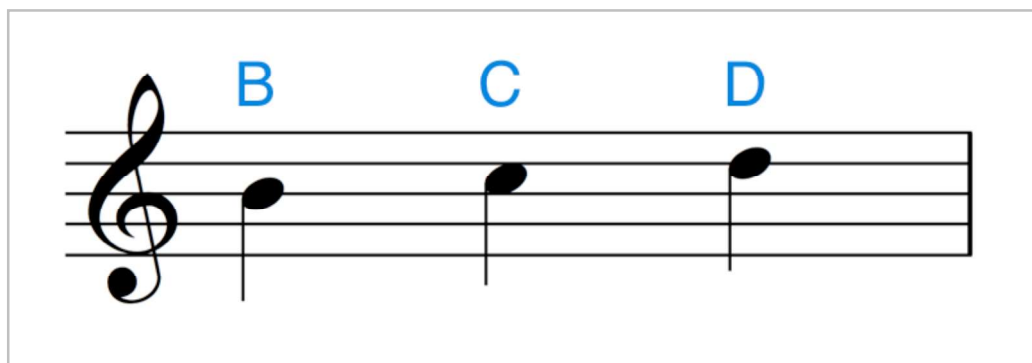


With the ten E string exercises, you are really experiencing the fundamentals of reading music - playing rhythms and changing notes. Just like before, you should play along with the recordings and play the exercises by yourself as well.

There is another very useful exercise to include when practising, now that you are reading notes. You should regularly test your knowledge of note names. To do this, simply play through a given exercise (you can do this without the recording) and say the names of the notes out loud, while playing each one. The purpose of this exercise is to make sure you know the name of each note as you are reading it and as you are playing it. This might seem like a redundant exercise. After all, if you can play the exercise correctly in the first place, why add the task of 'saying and playing' the notes? The reason is that it is easy to develop an association with what you see on the staff and what you play on the guitar, without necessarily knowing note names. I have seen this countless times with students learning to read. Often, they 'successfully' play through the exercises without knowing the names of the notes that they are reading. This inevitably leads to problems that are frustrating to fix down the track. Often, these students reach a point that they find challenging and then realise that they don't actually know what they are reading or playing, and are forced to go back and relearn things.

You don't have to do this with every exercise that you play, but don't forget to regularly 'say and play'!

The 2nd String (B, C, D)




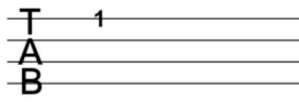
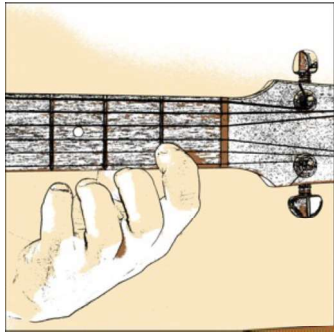
We're now going to look at the three notes on the 2nd string (B string). The process for recognising these three notes should be the same for those on the 1st string. You should verbalise what each note looks like on the staff.

Here's how to play each note.

B			
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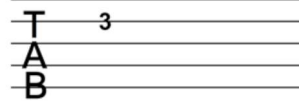
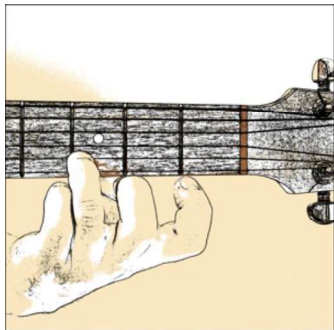
The B note is played by playing the 2nd string, open.

037

C			
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The C note is played by putting your 1st finger on the 1st fret of the 2nd string.

038

D			
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The D note is played by putting your 3rd finger on the 3rd fret of the 2nd string.

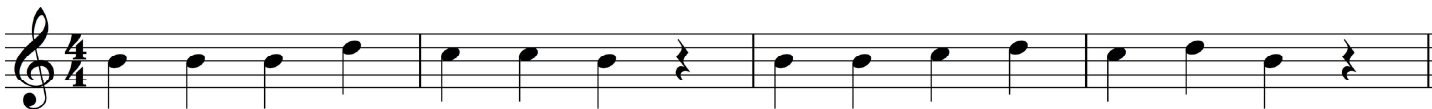
039

10 Exercises Using B, C, D

Here are ten exercises using just the notes on the 2nd string:

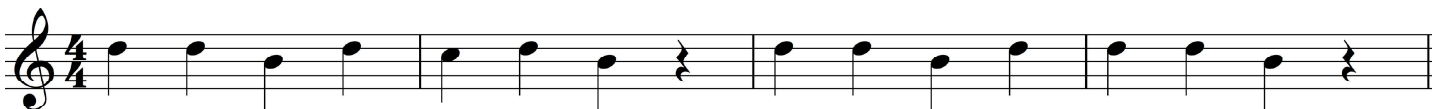
The 2nd String - Exercise 1

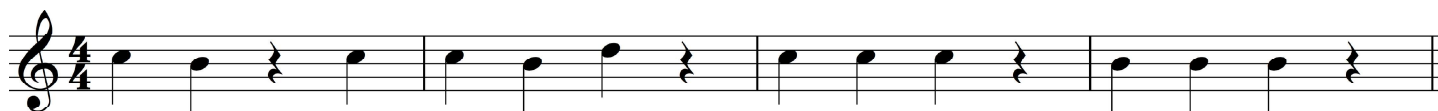
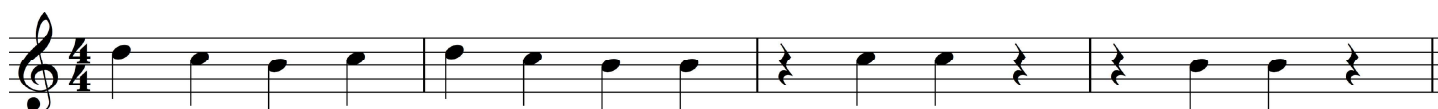
040



The 2nd String - Exercise 2

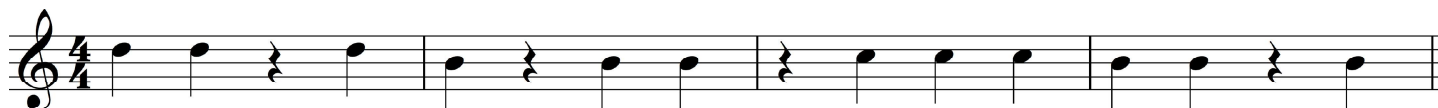
041



The 2nd String - Exercise 3**042****The 2nd String - Exercise 4****043****The 2nd String - Exercise 5****044****The 2nd String - Exercise 6****045****The 2nd String - Exercise 7****046****The 2nd String - Exercise 8****047**

The 2nd String - Exercise 9

048

**The 2nd String - Exercise 10**

049



10 Exercises Using Two Strings

By now you've played ten exercises using only the 1st string, and ten exercises using only the 2nd string. The next logical step is to do some exercises that combine both strings.

This is where it gets significantly harder. Often, students are fine with reading one string at a time, because there are only three notes to deal with, but when multiple strings are combined in the one exercise, confusion sets in. This is where it is vital that you know the names of the notes. Don't forget to say and play.

It's worth discussing a good approach to practising in general. You already know that you should practise with the recording and without the recording, while counting out loud. You know that you should test yourself by occasionally saying the notes as you read and play them. But what will become more and more important as the pieces get harder and harder, is your ability and discipline to spend time on one exercise/piece, until it is perfected.

This book is set out in a very simple way, with the initial exercises being quite easy. If you understand the concepts, it is quite likely that you will be able play the first few sets of exercises on your first attempt. The risk is that as the exercises get harder, you expect to be able to maintain this ease of playing. What you will most likely find is that at some point you will need to practise an exercise/piece over a period of time before moving on to the next one. This happens because as more and more notes and rhythms are introduced, the material just becomes more difficult. The technical requirements of the pieces are deliberately designed to get harder as you progress. You should embrace this as a natural part of learning to read music and playing guitar in general.

My point is this - when you find an exercise or piece of music too difficult to play perfectly at the beginning, keep practising it until you can play it confidently. This may take a few hours, a few days or even a few weeks. Be patient! Wax on. Wax off.

Two Strings - Exercise 1

050

**Two Strings - Exercise 2**

051

**Two Strings - Exercise 3**

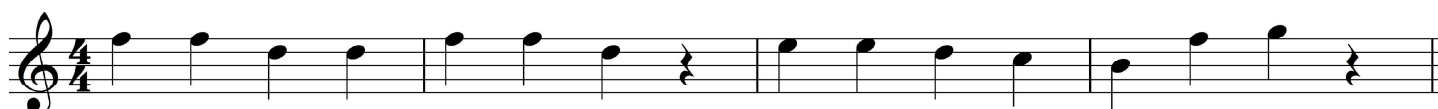
052

**Two Strings - Exercise 4**

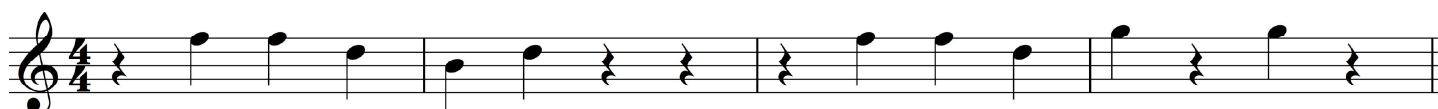
053

**Two Strings - Exercise 5**

054

**Two Strings - Exercise 6**

055



Two Strings - Exercise 7

056



Two Strings - Exercise 8

057



Two Strings - Exercise 9

058



Two Strings - Exercise 10

059

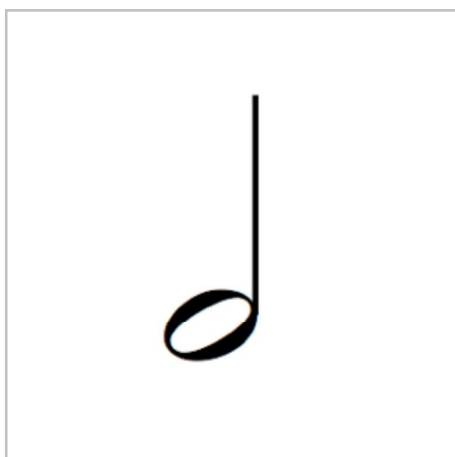


Long Notes

So far, we have only used one rhythm - the quarter note (including the quarter note rest). This has allowed us to explore the fundamentals of rhythm without complicating things too much. In a nutshell, the fundamentals of rhythm involve counting, and using each beat as an opportunity point to play a note, or rest.

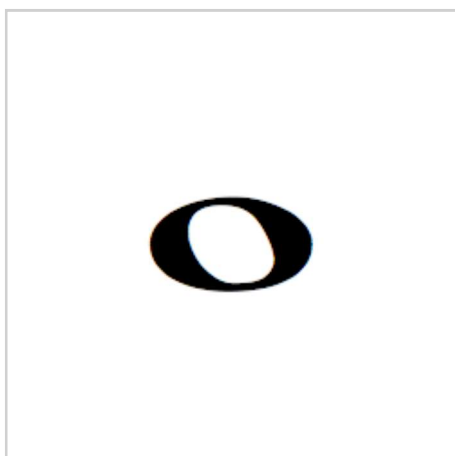
It's time to introduce long notes. Long notes simply refer to notes that have a duration of more than one beat. Let's look at the half note, also known as the minim.

Half Note/Minim (2 Beats)



We know a note is a half note/minim because the note head is hollow (as opposed to solid, like a quarter note) and there is a stem. It goes for a duration of two beats. That means that when we play a half note, we hold it for two beats, before playing the next note. This will be explained further as exercises are introduced.

Whole Note/Semibreve (4 Beats)



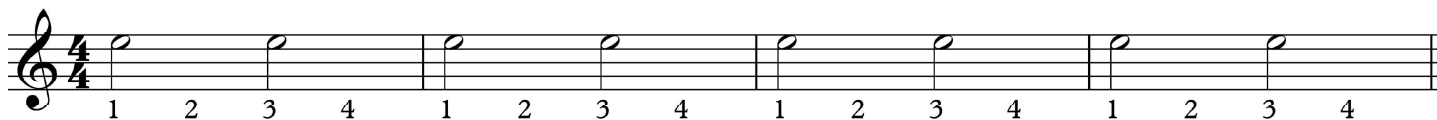
The whole note (also called semibreve) has a duration of four beats. That means that when played at the start of a 4/4 bar, it goes for the duration of the whole bar. We know a note is a whole note because the note head is hollow, and there is no stem.

Long Note Exercises

The best way to demonstrate how long notes work is to do some more exercises. The first exercise is made up of continuous half notes. The beat numbers have been included again for convenience.

Long Notes - Exercise 1

060



As you can see, the first half note occurs on beat 1. It goes for two beats, so the next half note occurs on beat 3. The most important thing to remember is that the counting from 1 to 4 does not change. Students often make the mistake of counting from 1 to 2 every time they play a half note. If the half note starts on the 3rd beat of the bar (for example), you should keep counting and play the note over the 3rd and 4th beat. This is why it's important to count out loud.

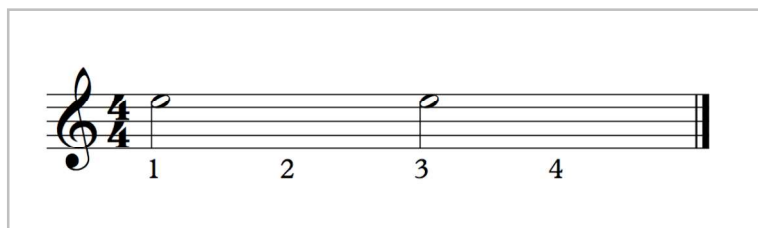
The next exercise includes quarter notes and half notes. The half notes start on different beats of the bar. Don't forget to use the audio example and also try the exercise by yourself while counting out loud.

Long Notes - Exercise 2

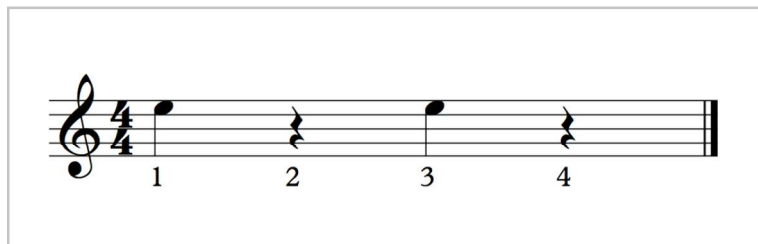
061



It's important to make a distinction between a half note and a quarter note followed by a rest. In other words, what's the difference between this:



and this:



Good question! The point at which you strike the notes is identical in both examples (beat 1 and beat 3). The difference is that when you play a half note, the note rings for the duration of the two beats, whereas with a quarter note followed by a quarter note rest, the note rings for one beat and then there is silence for the next beat.

Here is the next long note exercise. It will be followed by a variation of the same exercise that uses quarter notes followed by quarter note rests in place of half notes.

Long Notes - Exercise 3

062



Here is the variation. It's a good idea to play the original exercise and then the variation, so that you can feel and hear the difference. If you were to clap both exercises, there would be no difference between the two, but because you can control the sustain of notes on the guitar, you should hear a difference.

Long Notes - Exercise 3 (Variation)

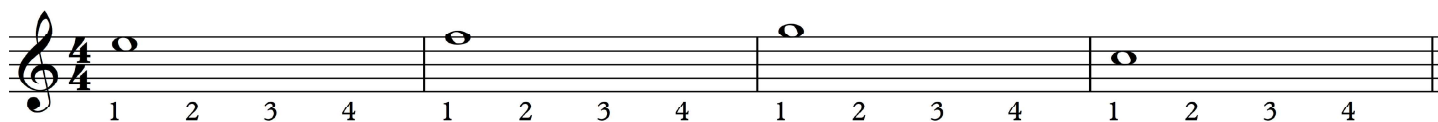
063



The next exercise uses whole notes.

Long Notes - Exercise 4

064



Long Note Rests

As you may have guessed, there are rests that go for two beats and four beats. They look similar, but are in fact different.

Half Note Rest (2 Beats)	Whole Note Rest (4 Beats)

The half note rest sits above the middle line of the staff, whereas the whole note rest appears to hang from the second-top line of the staff. It is a subtle difference but it's a distinguishable difference nonetheless.

10 Exercises With 2 Strings, 3 Rhythms

The next ten exercises use notes from the two strings that you have learnt so far, as well as the different rhythms that we have looked at.

Two Strings, Three Rhythms - Exercise 1

065

