

Fingerpicking Guitar Cheat Sheet



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LearnFingerpicking.com

Playing fingerpicking guitar made easy

It's amazing how quickly a few small tips can make you an effective guitar fingerpicker.

Once you use the appropriate fingers of the right (picking) hand correctly, then fingerpicking over any set of chords is easy. You just need to know which bass notes to play with your thumb.

This eBook provides an excellent cheat sheet that helps you know which bass notes and fingerpicking patterns to use over dozens of chords.

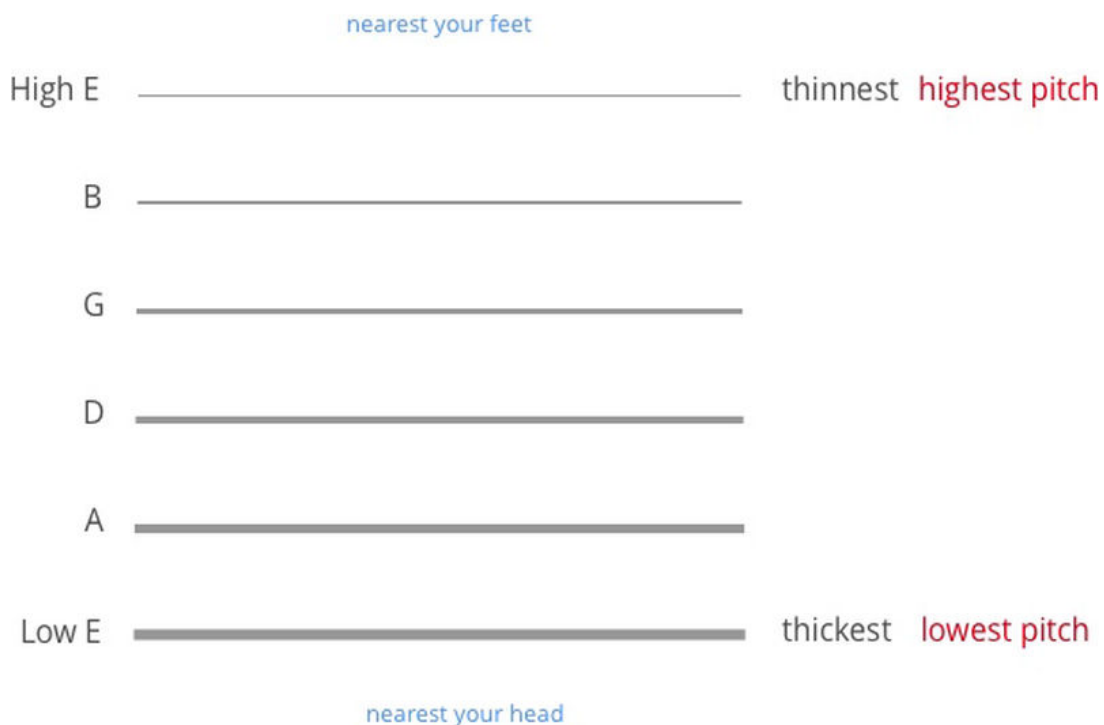


Step 1

Learn the fundamentals of fingerpicking - string names

Look down at the guitar on your lap. The string nearest your head, which you will notice is the thickest string also has the most bass sound. It is an E note. We call this the 6th string for the rest of the book.

The next string (the next thickest and next nearest your head) is the A string which we call the 5th string. Then we have the D string (which we call the 4th string), G string (3rd string), B string (2nd string) and then the thinnest string (furthest from your head) is another E note which we call the 1st string.





Step 2

Learn which fingers play which strings

When you play guitar, you use two hands - the right hand frets chords or individual notes and the left hand hits the strings.

When you play a chord, you strum all the strings at once. But when you fingerpick, each finger will hit individual strings.

The big rule of fingerpicking:

1. The thumb plays the *bottom three strings* (the bass strings which are the 6th, the 5th and the 4th) and the other three fingers play one string each!
2. The thumb must play any notes on the 6th, 5th or 4th string,
3. The index finger always plays the G string or 3rd string.
4. The middle finger always plays the B string or 2nd string.
5. The ring finger always plays the high E string or 1st string.



Step 3

Learn the T123 pattern

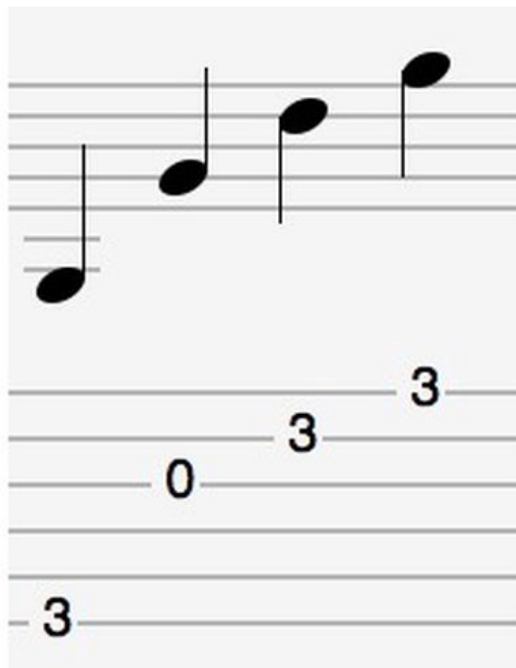
Fret a G chord with the left hand.

Now play the 6th (thickest) string with our thumb and then the 3rd, 2nd, 1st strings with the index, middle, ring fingers respectively.

You could also describe it as “thumb, first finger, second finger, third finger” of the right hand and as a shorthand, we will refer to that as “thumb 1-2-3” or T123.

T123 refers to which right hand finger you use. As the thumb covers three strings, you might also add which string the thumb is going to play. This pattern is T123 & thumb plays the 6th string.

It is important to note that if I say T123 that I mean thumb, first **finger**, second **finger** and third **finger** – not thumb, first *string*, second *string*, third *string*.





Step 4

Cheat Sheet - 6th string chords

You can apply the T123 pattern to all of these 6th string chords

Chords with their main bass note or 'root' on the 6th string:

1. E, Em, E7, Em7, Emaj7
2. F, Fm, F7
3. F#, F#m, F#m7
4. G, G7, Gm
5. D/F#
6. Dm/F
7. E/G#
8. G#

Musical notation showing four chords in 4/4 time: E, Dm/F, D/F#, and G7. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The guitar tablature below the staff shows the fingerings for each chord:

Chord	6th String	5th String	4th String	3rd String	2nd String	1st String
E	1	0	0			
Dm/F	2	3	1			
D/F#	2	3	2			
G7	0	0	1			



Step 5

Cheat Sheet - 5th string chords

You can apply the T123 pattern to all of these 5th string chords

Chords with their main bass note or 'root' on the 5th string:

1. A, A7, Amaj7, A9
2. Am, Am7
3. Bb
4. B7
5. Bm
6. C, C7, Cmaj7
7. C#, A/C# minor
8. A/C#

Musical notation showing the fretboard for the 5th string for four chords: A, Am7, Bm, and A/C#. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The chords are represented by notes on the staff and fingerings on the strings. The strings are labeled T, A, B from top to bottom.

Chord	Notes (Staff)	Fingerings (Strings T, A, B)
A	A2, C#3, E4, G#4	0, 2, 2, 0
Am7	A2, C#3, E4, G4	0, 0, 1, 0
Bm	B2, D#3, F#4, A4	2, 4, 3, 2
A/C#	A2, C#3, E4, G#4	4, 2, 2, 0



Step 6

Cheat Sheet - 4th string chords

You can apply the T123 pattern to all of these 4th string chords

Chords with their main bass note or 'root' on the 4th string:

1. D, D7, Dmaj7
2. Dm, Dm7
3. E, E7, Emaj7
4. Em, Em7
5. F, F7
6. Fm, Fm7
7. F#, F#m, F#m7

Musical notation showing the T123 pattern for four chords: Dm7, E, F, and F#7. The notation includes a treble clef and a TAB line below. The TAB line shows the fret numbers for each string: 0 2 1 1 for Dm7, 2 1 0 0 for E, 3 2 1 1 for F, and 4 3 5 2 for F#7.

Step 7

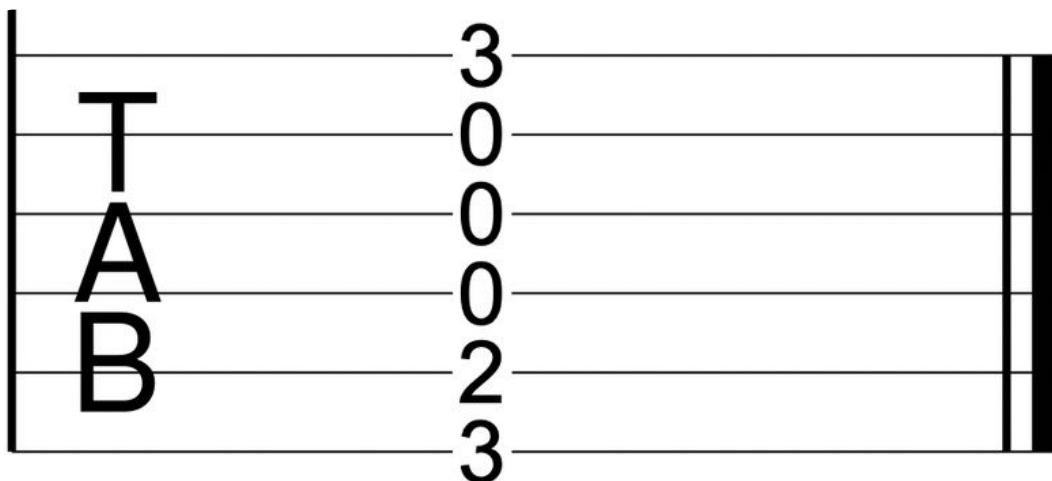
Learn to read guitar tab

The chart with numbers that you saw above is guitar tablature. It is a simpler way to notate music for guitar than full sheet music and it's very easy to learn.

You can access a full guide to learning guitar tablature at learnfingerpicking.com/guitar-tab-how-to-read/

Here's a quick explanation. Guitar tab has 6 lines - one for each string of the guitar. When we put a number on a line, that tells us where to fret each string. Therefore, a "3" on the bottom line tells us to fret the low E string (the thickest one) at the 3rd fret! That's it.

If you play a G chord, and try to write the tab for it, it would look something like this (note a zero means an open or unfretted string!)



Step 8

Learn more fingerpicking patterns

We focused on the T123 pattern in this eBook. But you can't just play one pattern for your whole guitar life!

You could play a T231 or a T321 or a T12323 pattern!

Visit bit.ly/more-patterns to see these patterns in action.





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