

# Tablature and Chord Diagrams

## Tablature

Tablature is a way of expressing music on paper. A page of tablature tells you what notes to play to make the song happen. Standard music notation is another way of communicating songs on paper. Classical musicians usually have to know this kind of notation. We'll stick to the basics and just describe tablature in this section. You can read an intro to standard notation in the Appendix.

Let's look at a piece of tablature:

Play one after the other.

Play at the same time.

str. 1	0	1	0	(rest)	0	1	0
str. 2							(rest...)
str. 3							
str. 4							
str. 5							
str. 6							

**Tablature One**

Standard notation

(Notice that the standard notation is included here, just in case you're interested in how it matches with the tablature.)

Look at figure Tablature One. Each of the long lines going from left to right represents a guitar string. The top line is the high E string (the thinnest string), the next line down is the B string, and so on. The numbers represent frets that you play, not the fingers you use.

The first group of notes is played one at a time. The second group of notes shows the notes stacked on top of each other, which means you play them at the same time. This group of notes played together is called a *chord*. The first group of notes is called an *arpeggio*. Think of arpeggios as a busted up chord.

The numbers tell you which frets to press. A "0" means you play the string open, or unfretted.

Some tablature, or "tab" for short, also tells you which fingers to use. Keep an eye out for finger indicators in the tabs shown in this book. Knowing which fingers to use is important to prevent confusion.