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GETTING STARTED

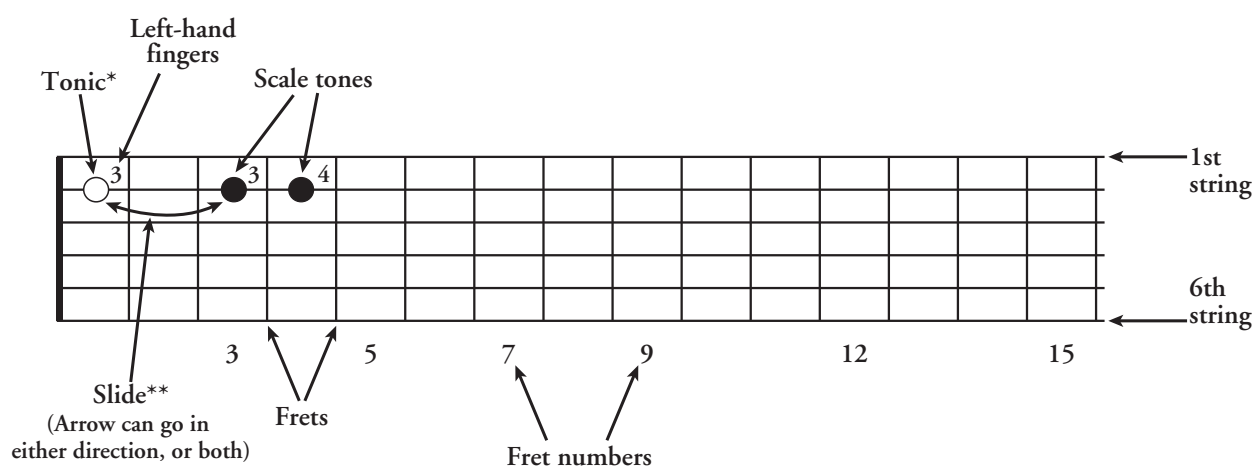
This chapter is a review of the basics for reading and playing guitar music. Sometimes, even great players have gaps in their knowledge. If you already read standard music notation and TAB, you can skip to page 11. If you already know about minor and major pentatonic scale theory, you may want to skip to page 14. Or, stick around for the review!

WHOLE STEPS, HALF STEPS AND SCALES

A *whole step* is the distance of two frets. A *half step* is the distance of one fret. A scale is a series of *pitch*s (musical sounds) arranged in a particular pattern of whole steps and half steps. Each one of these pitches is a *scale tone*.

SCALE DIAGRAMS

Scale diagrams, graphic representations of scales, are an important part of this book. The top line of the diagram represents the 1st string of the guitar and the bottom line the 6th. The vertical lines represent frets, which are numbered below the diagram. Left-hand finger numbers (1–4, starting with the index finger) are next to the dots which indicate scale tones.




* See page 11 for an explanation of this term.

** See page 9 for an explanation of this term.

STANDARD MUSIC NOTATION

Standard music notation is a symbolic way of writing music. It is used for all instruments. Learning to read standard music notation will help you to get the most out of this book. It will also make you a better musician, because you will be able to communicate more easily with other musicians.

PITCH

Pitch refers to the highness or lowness of a sound or tone. It is communicated by placing notes  on a *staff*.

THE MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE

FIVE MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE FORMS IN A

There are five basic fingerings for the A Minor Pentatonic scale, each starting on a different scale degree. They can all be easily *transposed* to any key. This means you can play the forms in another key by starting from a different position on the fretboard. For example, if we start Form 1 (below) on the 7th fret, the scale becomes a B Minor Pentatonic scale, because the tonic is a B (6th string, 7th fret).

FORM 1

5
4.1

5
4.1

T
A
B

5 8 5 7 5 7 5 8 5 8

1 4 1 3 1 3 1 3 1 4 1 4

3 5 7 9

○ = Tonic

FORM 2

6
4.2

6
4.2

T
A
B

8 10 7 10 7 10 9 8 10 8 10

2 4 1 4 1 4 1 3 2 4 2 4

7 9 12

○ = Tonic