Guitar Basics



Welcome to the YMCA's Guitar Basics Program!

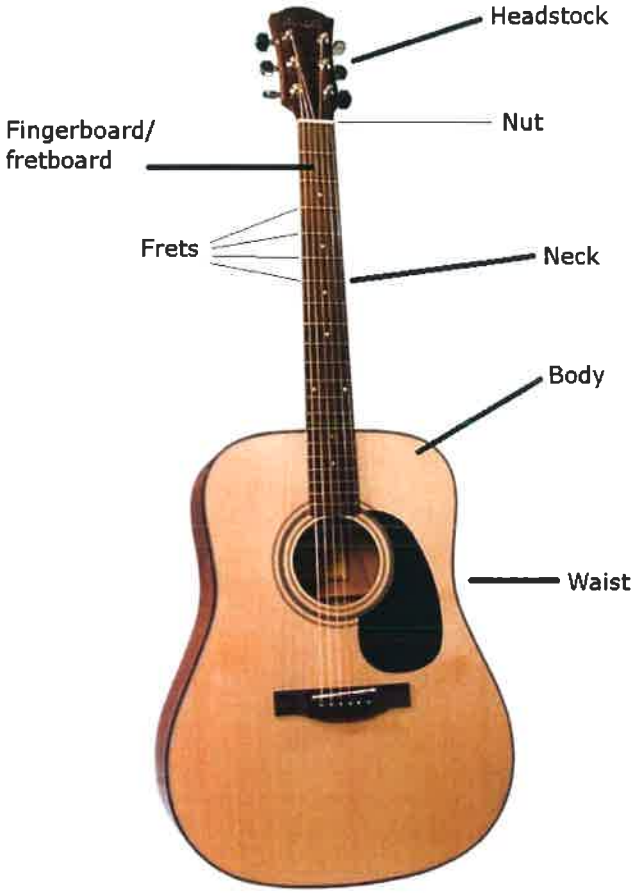
This program is designed to teach you all about the guitar and how to get started on playing. Some of the things we will cover are:

- Parts of the guitar
- Proper hand and body position
- Standard tuning
- Reading tablature
- Playing notes
- Playing chords

One of the major points of emphasis is we will be teaching using tablature. This is a simpler method to introduce finger placement and strumming.

Practice is the key to success. Just playing once a week at our program is not enough. Encourage yourself to play a little bit each day, as not only will you learn the material faster, but it will also build finger strength as you advance in guitar.

Parts of the Guitar



Standard Tuning

Always tune from the 6th string (thick one) to the 1st string (thin one) using the following key:

E A D G B E

If using an electronic tuner, ensure the frequency is set to 440hz.

Proper Positioning and Fret Playing



Rest the guitar on your right knee and hold the guitar neck in your left hand. The pick should be held firmly between the thumb and index finger. Your left hand thumb should be placed behind the neck, and your fingers behind the frets, not on top of.

Now that your position is right, trying playing a fret. When putting your fingers on the fret board, try to push down on the middle of the fret with the tip of your finger.

Reading Tablature

Tablature illustrates the location of notes on the neck of the guitar. It uses numbers and lines to tell you what fret and string you need to play. The 6th string is the bottom line, and the 1st string is the top line, as seen below.

E (1st string) |---------- (thin one)
B (2nd) |----------
G (3rd) |----------
D (4th) |----------
A (5th) |----------
E (6th string) |----------(fat one)

The number on the lines represents which fret needs to be pressed. The example below is ***Twinkle Twinkle Little Star***. A "0" represents playing the string without pressing frets. The 1, 2, and 3's mean you press your finger on that fret on that string.

```
e----------0-0-------------------------------------------------------0-0----------------
B------3-3-----3--1-1-0-0--------3-3-1-1-0-0----3-3-1-1-0-0--------3----3-1-1-0-0--------
G--0-0--------------------2-2-0-------------2-------------2-0-0---------------2-2-0--
D-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------
A-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------
E-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

Now you're ready to learn guitar!

Exercise 1

```
E|--1-----2-----3-----4-----4-----3-----2-----1-------------------------------------------------
B|-----------------------------------------------1-----2-----3-----4-----4-----3-----2-----1--
G|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
D|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
A|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
E|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

```
E|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
B|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
G|--1-----2-----3-----4-----4-----3-----2-----1-------------------------------------------------
D|-----------------------------------------------1-----2-----3-----4-----4-----3-----2-----1--
A|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
E|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

```
E|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
B|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
G|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
D|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
A|--1-----2-----3-----4-----4-----3-----2-----1-------------------------------------------------
E|-----------------------------------------------1-----2-----3-----4-----4-----3-----2-----1--
```

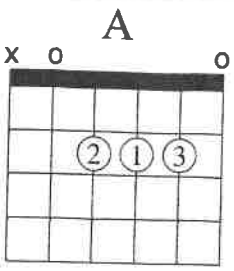
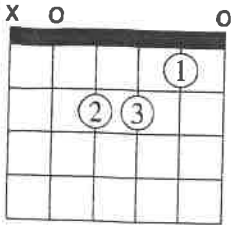
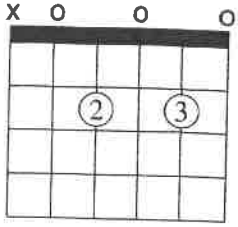
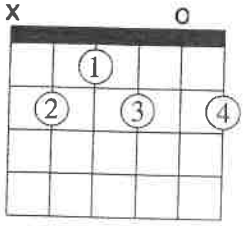
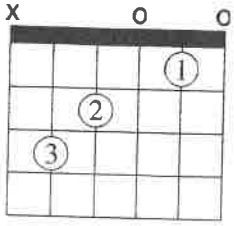
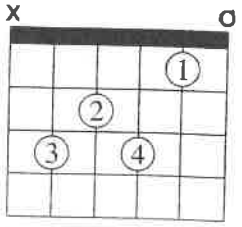
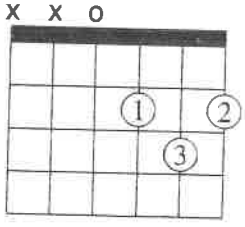
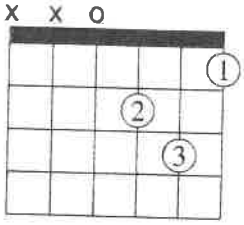
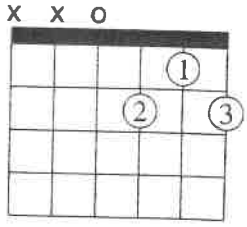
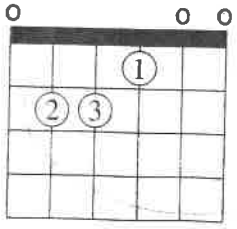
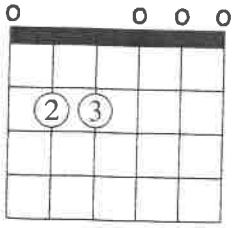
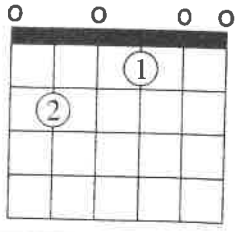
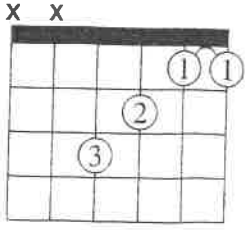
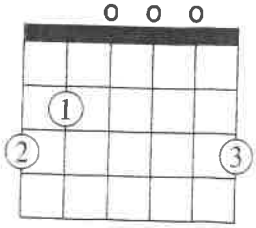
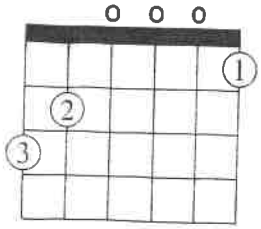
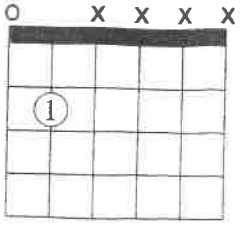
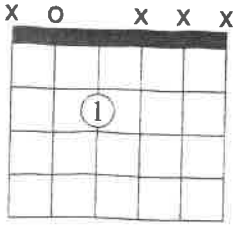
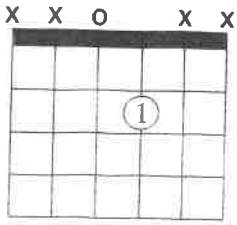
Exercise 2

```
E|-----------------------------------------------------------------
B|-----------------------------------------------------------------
G|-----------------------------------------------------------------
D|-------------------------------------------------1-----2-----3-----4--
A|-------------------------1-----2-----3-----4-------------------------
E|--1-----2-----3-----4-----------------------------------------------
```

```
E|-------------------------------------------------1-----2-----3-----4--
B|-------------------------1-----2-----3-----4-------------------------
G|--1-----2-----3-----4-----------------------------------------------
D|-----------------------------------------------------------------
A|-----------------------------------------------------------------
E|-----------------------------------------------------------------
```

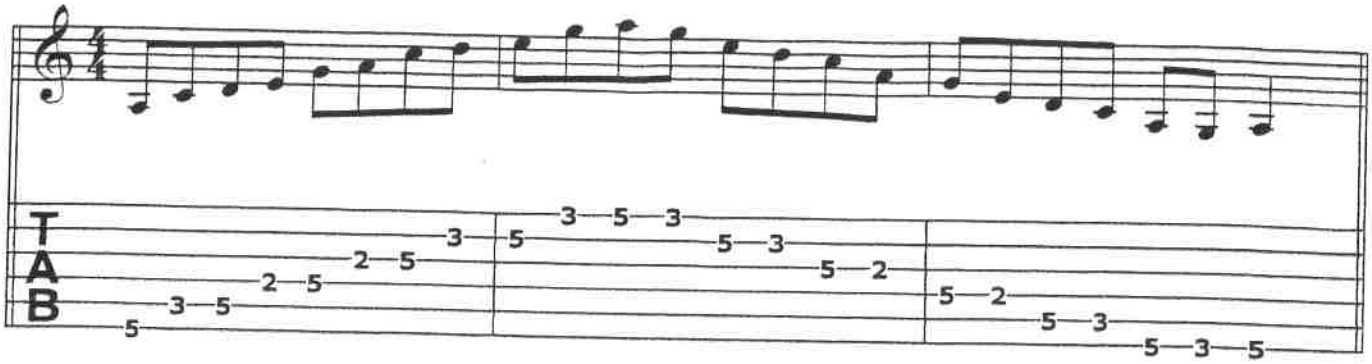
Guitar Chord Chart

The following chart shows all of the most commonly used guitar chords.
o indicates an open string. x indicates the string is not to be played.

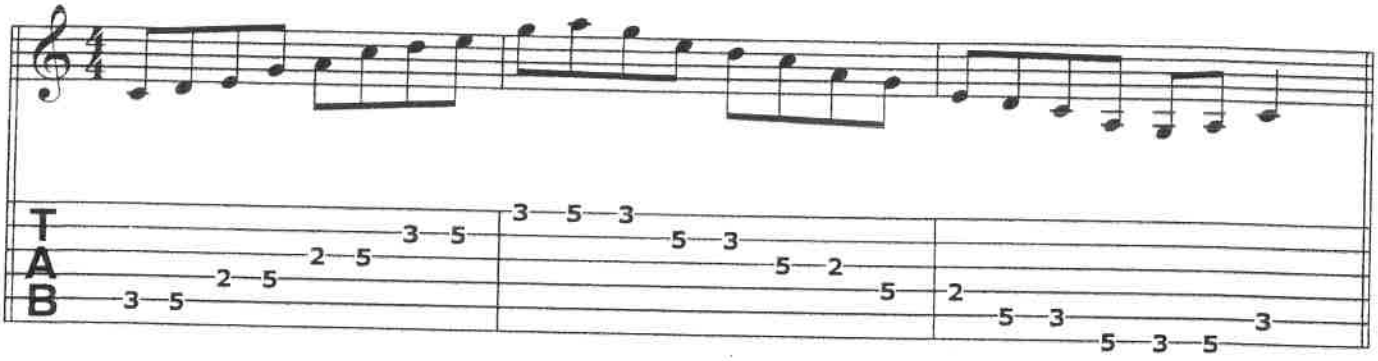
7 A 	5 Am 	A7 
B7 	2 C 	C7 
4 D 	Dm 	D7 
6 E 	1 Em 	E7 
F 	3 G 	G7 
E5 	A5 	D5 

A Minor & C Major Pentatonic

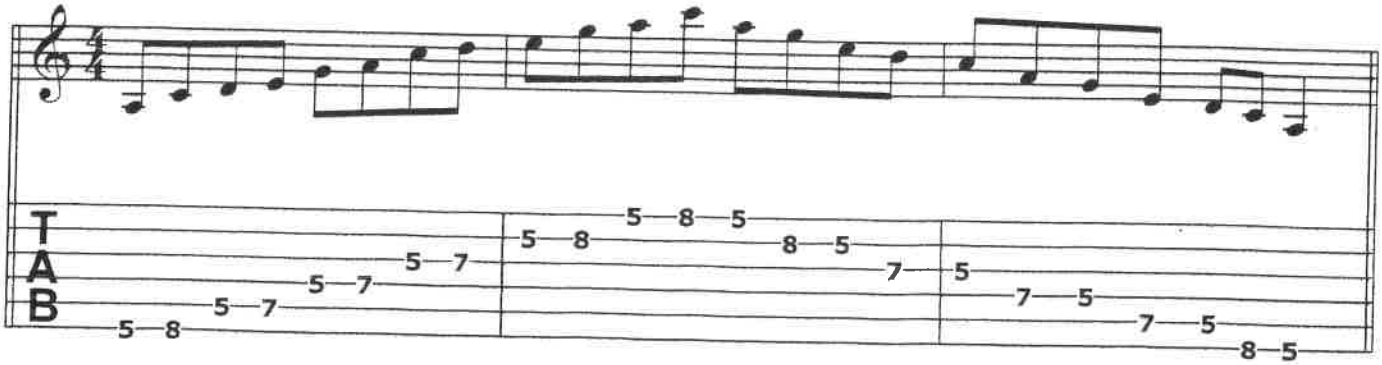
2nd Positon A Minor Pentatonic



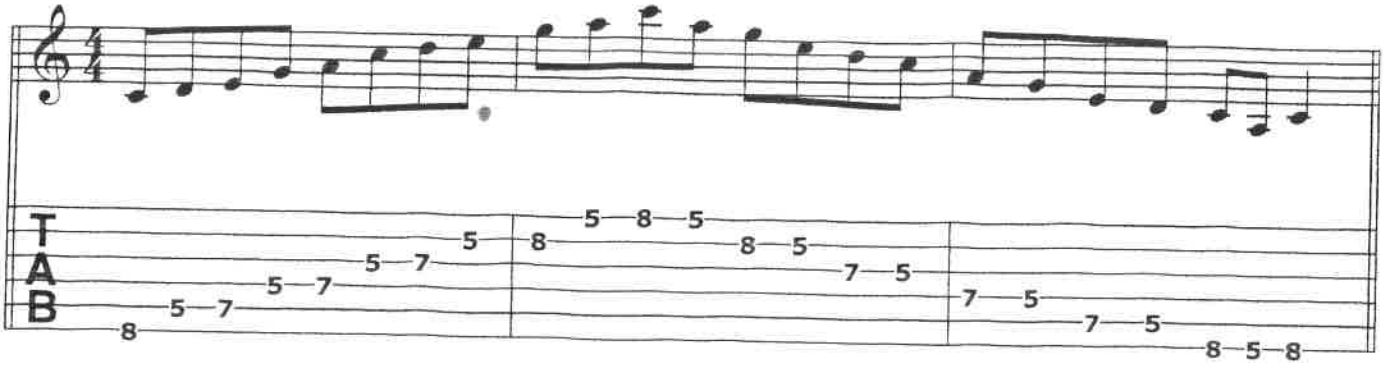
2nd PositionC Major Pentatonic



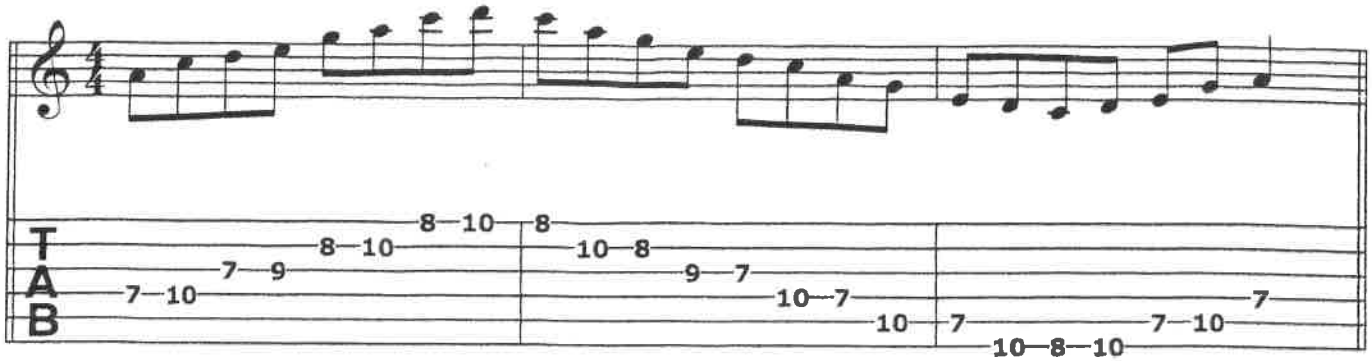
5th Positon A Minor Pentatonic



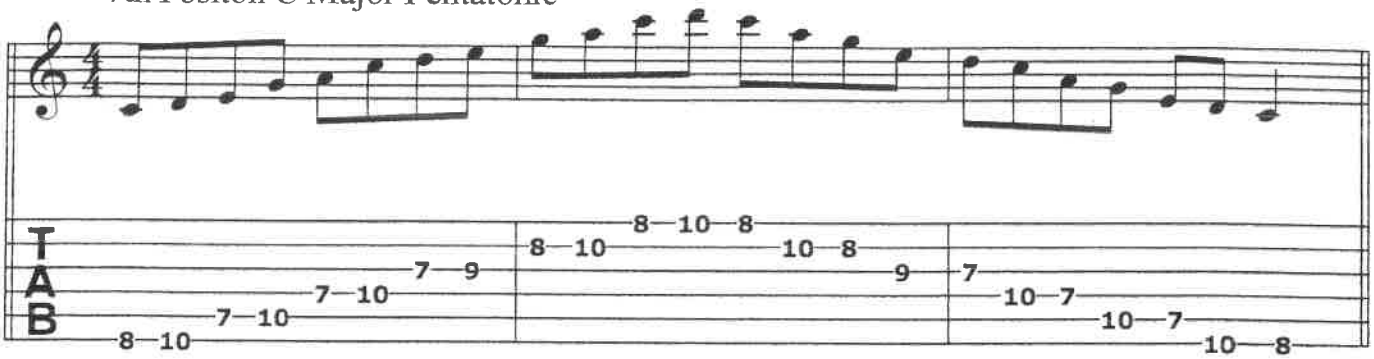
5th Positon C Major Pentatonic



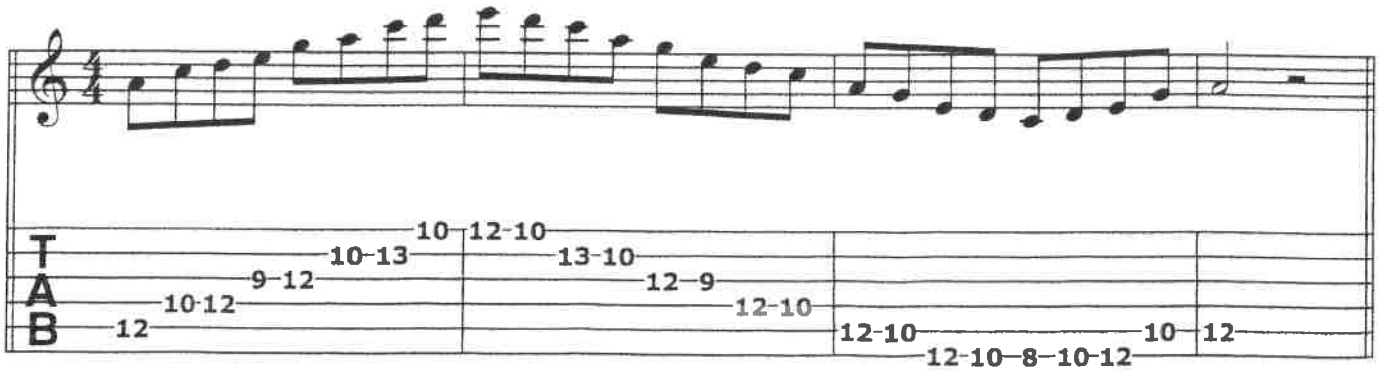
7th Positon A Minor Pentatonic



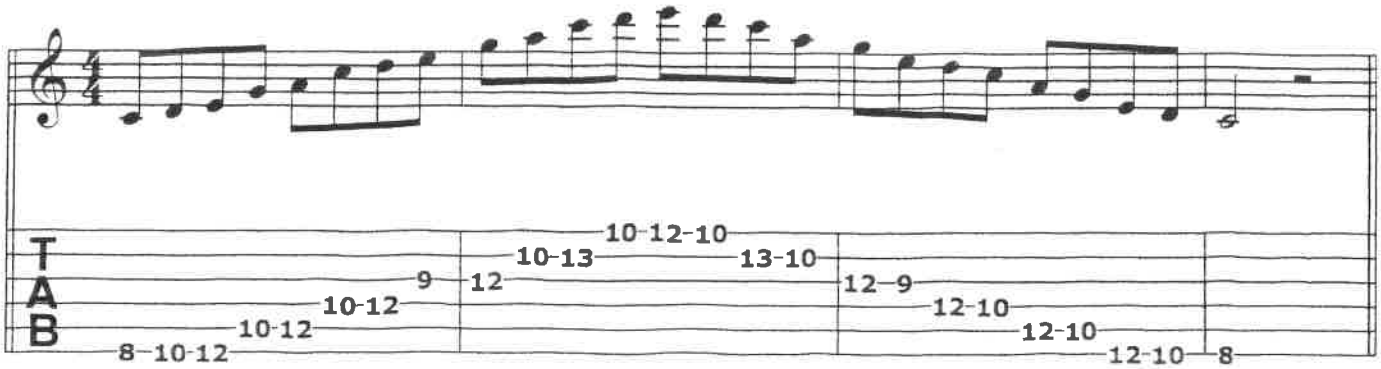
7th Positon C Major Pentatonic



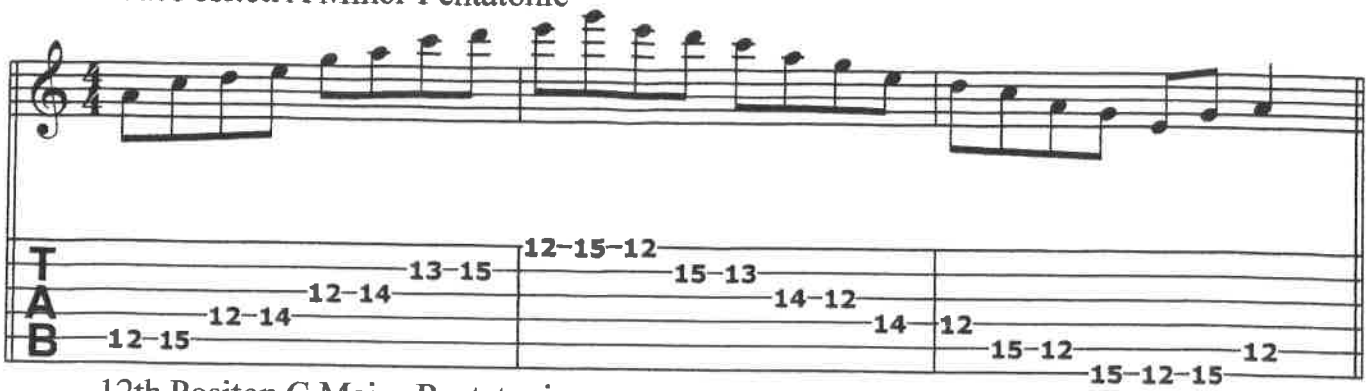
9th Positon A Minor Pentatonic



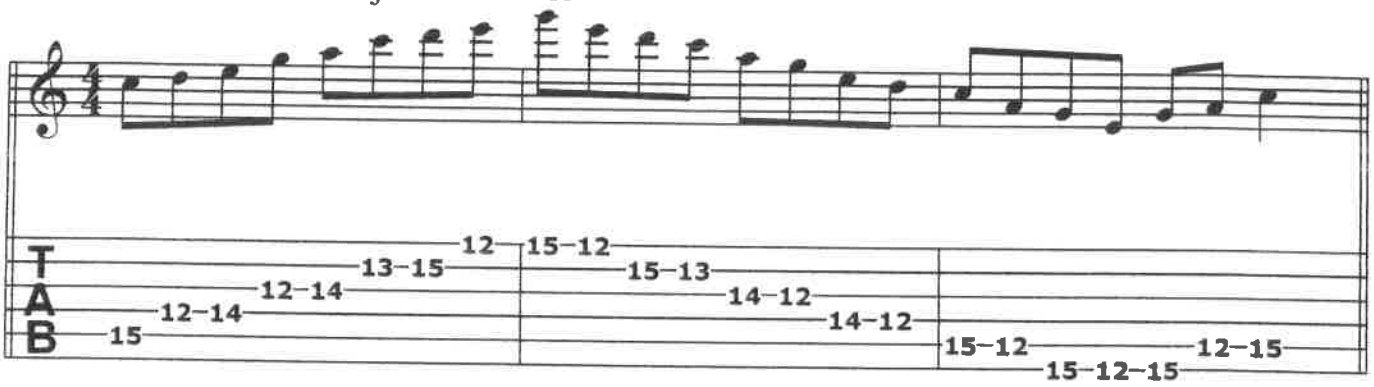
9th Positon C Major Pentatonic



12th Positon A Minor Pentatonic



12th Positon C Major Pentatonic



17 Essential Strum Pattern Cheat Sheet

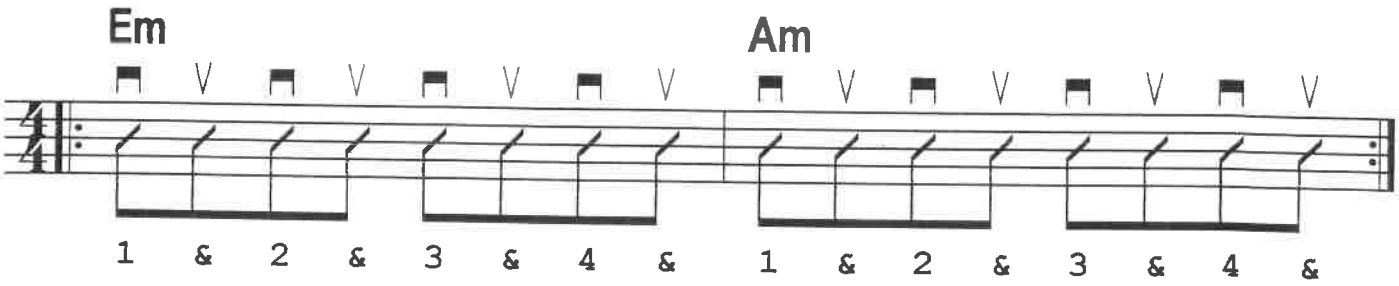
The strumming patterns below are written using standard rhythmic notation. While I can't go into detail about understanding rhythms or how to read the notation, all of the down & up hand motions for the strums are indicated using these symbols.

⊓ = the symbol used to indicate a chord should be strummed down
V = the symbol used to indicate a chord should be strummed up

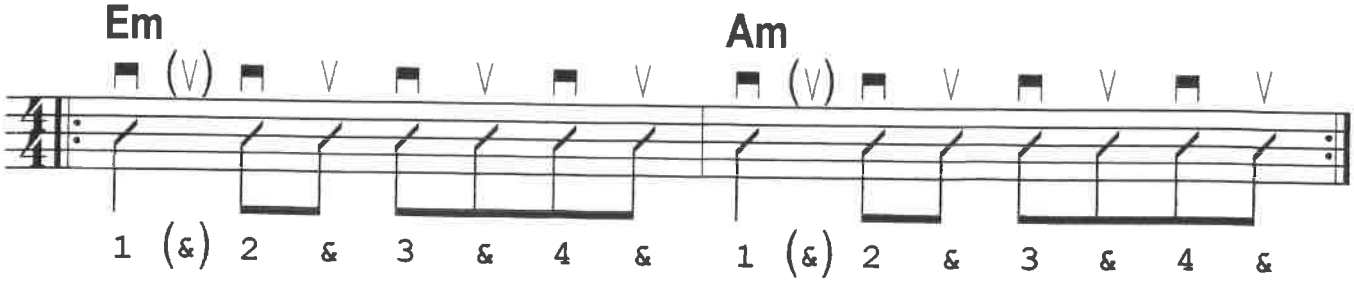
If you see a down or up indication in parentheses (V) you will miss the strings instead of strumming them.

1 Measure 4/4 Strum Patterns

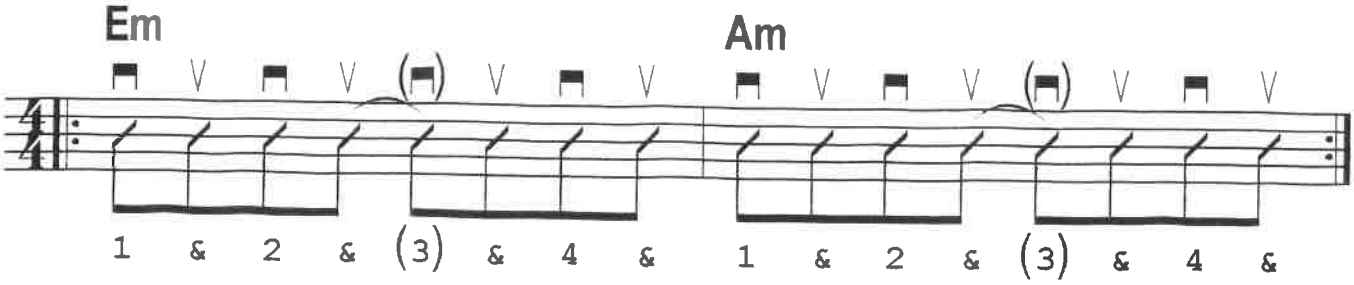
Strum Pattern #1



Strum Pattern #2



Strum Pattern #3



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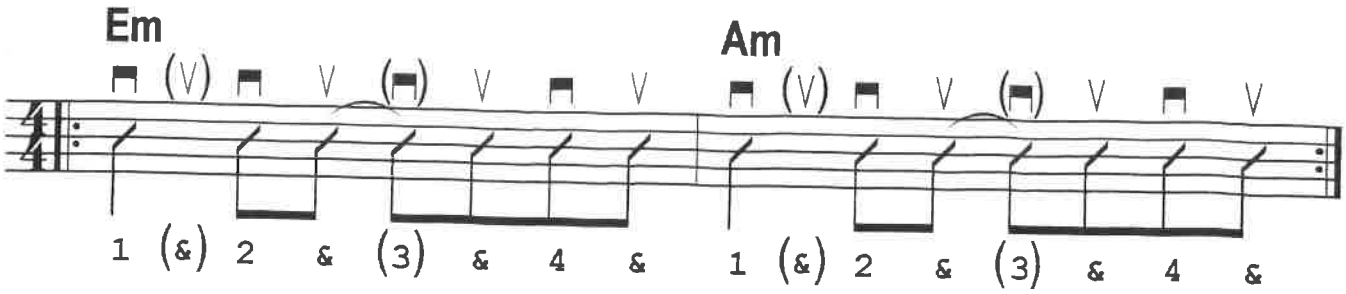
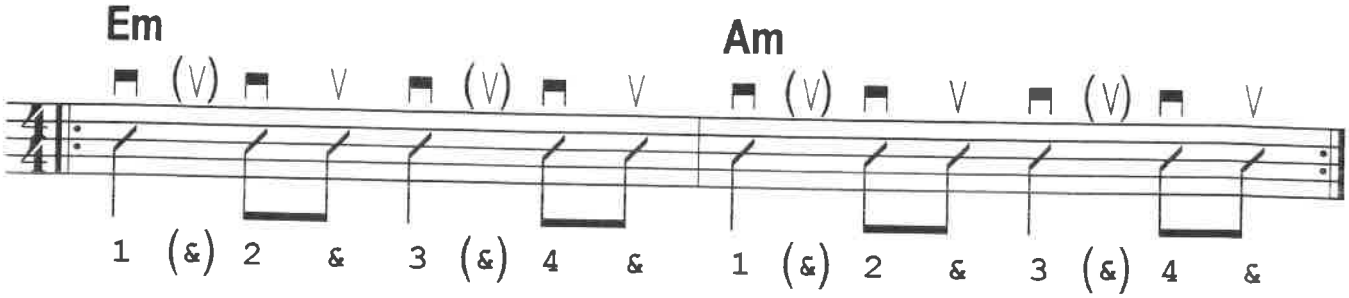
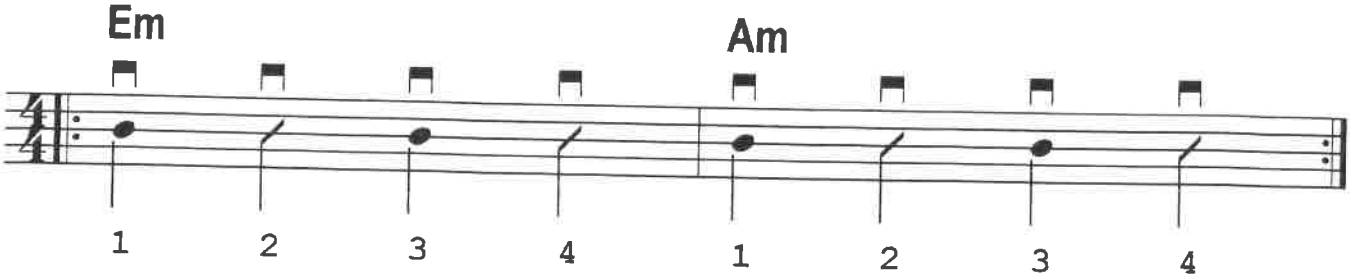
Strum Pattern #4



Strum Pattern #5

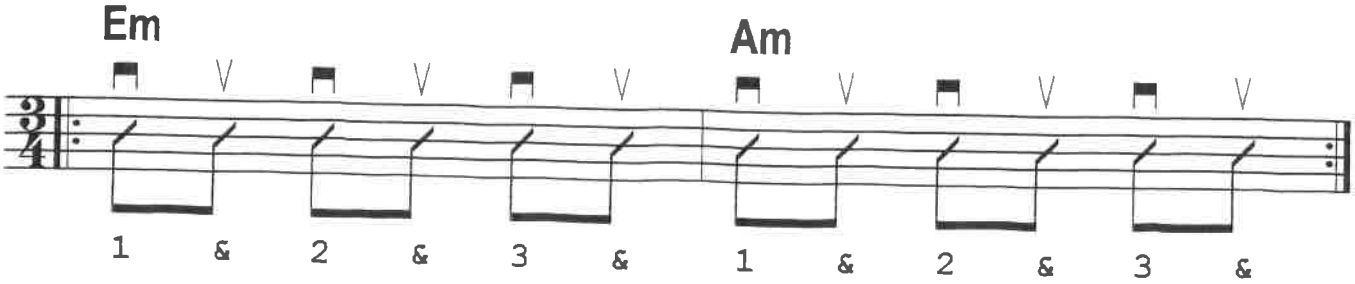


Strum Pattern #6



1 Measure $\frac{3}{4}$ Strum Patterns

Strum Pattern #7



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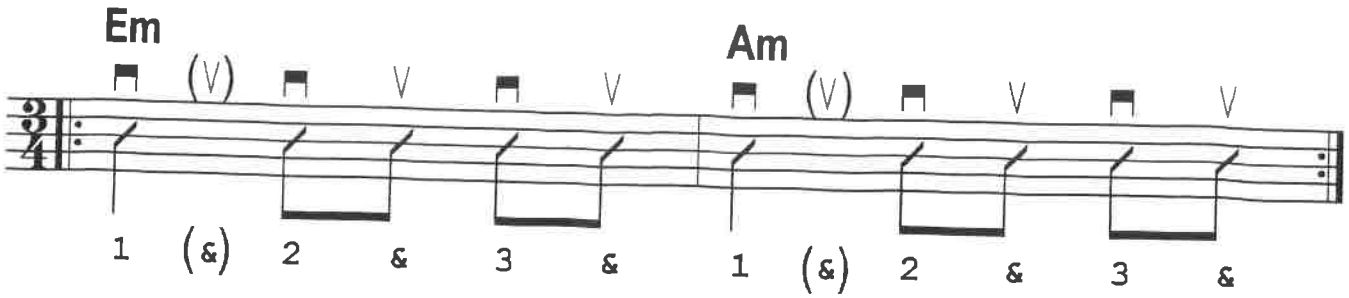
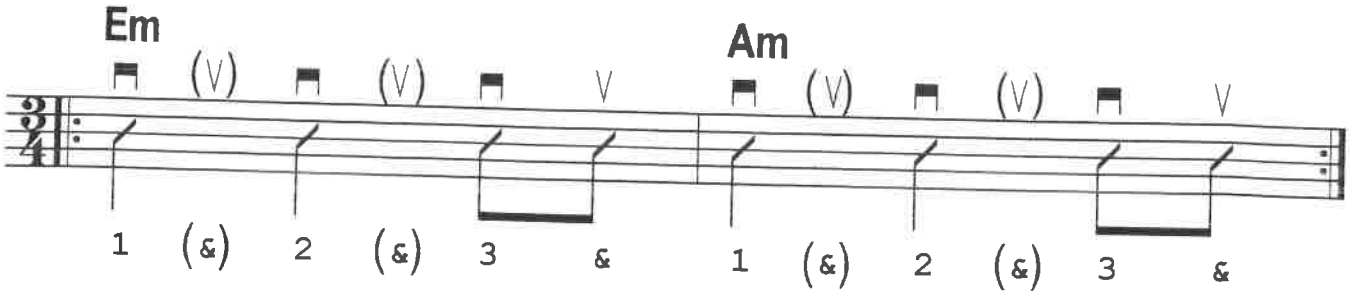
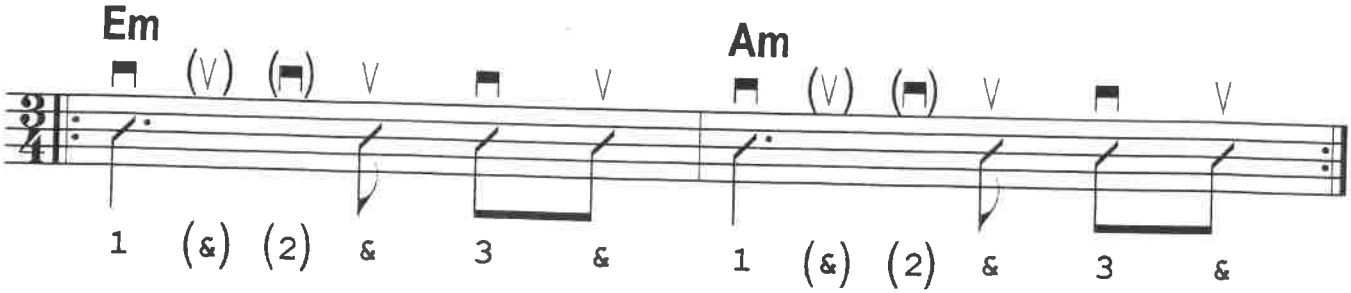
Strum Pattern #8



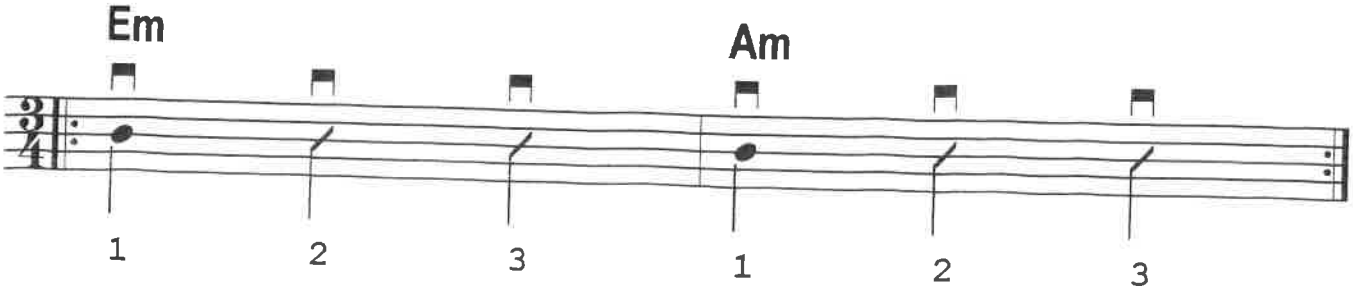
Strum Pattern #9



Strum Pattern #10



Strum Pattern #11



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1st String

```
E|--0-----0-----0-----0--|--1-----1-----1-----1--|--3-----3-----3-----3--|--
B|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--
G|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--
D|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--
A|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--
E|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--
```

2nd String

```
E|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--
B|--0-----0-----0-----0--|--1-----1-----1-----1--|--3-----3-----3-----3--|--
G|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--
D|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--
A|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--
E|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--
```

Folk Song

```
E|--0--0--0--1--3r---3r|--1--0--1--3--0r---0r|--0--0--0--1--3r---3r|--1--0--1--3--0r|--
B|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|--
G|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|--
D|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|--
A|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|--
E|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|--
```

Mary Had A Little Lamb

```
E|--0----------0--0--0r|----------|--0--3--3r|--0----------0--0--0--0--------0-------|--
B|-----3--1--3----------|--3--3--3r|----------|-----3--1--3--------------3--3-----3--1r|--
G|---------------------|----------|----------|----------------------------------------|--
D|---------------------|----------|----------|----------------------------------------|--
A|---------------------|----------|----------|----------------------------------------|--
E|---------------------|----------|----------|----------------------------------------|--
```

Jingle Bells

```
E|--0--0--0r|--0--0--0r|--0--3--------0r|--1--1--1--1--1--0--0--0--0--------0----3r|--
B|----------|----------|--------1--3----|-----------------------------3--3-----3r--|--
G|----------|----------|----------------|----------------------------------------|--
D|----------|----------|----------------|----------------------------------------|--
A|----------|----------|----------------|----------------------------------------|--
E|----------|----------|----------------|----------------------------------------|--
```

```
E|--0--0--0r|--0--0--0r|--0--3--------0r|--1--1--1--1--1--0--0--0--3--3--1-------|--
B|----------|----------|--------1--3----|-----------------------------------3--1r|--
G|----------|----------|----------------|----------------------------------------|--
D|----------|----------|----------------|----------------------------------------|--
A|----------|----------|----------------|----------------------------------------|--
E|----------|----------|----------------|----------------------------------------|--
```

Ode To Joy

```
E|--0--0--1--3--3--1--0-------------0--0r-----|--0--0--1--3--3--1--0-------------0---------------|--
B|-----------------------3--1--1--3-------3--3r|-----------------------3--1--1--3-----3r---1--1r|--
G|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--
D|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--
A|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--
E|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--
```

```
E|--------0--------0--1--0--------0--1--0--------3--3--|--0--0--1--3--3--1--0-------------0------------------
B|--3--3-----1--3-----------1--3-----------3--1--------|-----------------------3--1--1--3-----3r---1--1r---
G|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------
D|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------
A|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------
E|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------
```

3rd String

```
E|-------------------------|----------------------
B|-------------------------|----------------------
G|--0-----0-----0-----0----|--2-----2-----2-----2--
D|-------------------------|----------------------
A|-------------------------|----------------------
E|-------------------------|----------------------
```

4th String

```
E|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------
B|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------
G|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------
D|--0-----0-----0-----0----|--2-----2-----2-----2----|--3-----3-----3-----3--
A|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------
E|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------
```

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

```
E|-------------0--0----|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----
B|--------3--3--------3r|--1--1--0--0---------|--3--3--1--1--0--0---|--3--3--1--1--0--0---|-----
G|--0--0----------------|-------------2--2--0r|--------------------2r|--------------------2r|-----
D|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----
A|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----
E|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----
```

```
E|-------------0--0----|---------------------|--
B|--------3--3--------3r|--1--1--0--0---------|--
G|--0--0----------------|-------------2--2--0r|--
D|---------------------|---------------------|--
A|---------------------|---------------------|--
E|---------------------|---------------------|--
```

Happy Birthday

```
E|-------------------------------------------------3--0-------------1--1--0----------|--
B|--------------1--0r---------------3--1r---------------1--0----------------1--3--1r|--
G|--0--0--2--0----------0--0--2--0----------0--0--------------2r-------------------|--
D|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--
A|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--
E|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--
```

Amazing Grace

```
E|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------|--
B|----------0--0r|---------------|----------0--0r------3r|--0--3r---0----|----------------|--------0--0--------|--
G|-----0r--------|--2--0r--------|-----0r-----------2----|-------------0r|--------0-------|-----0--------2--0r|--
D|--0------------|----------2--0r|--0--------------------|---------------|--0--2-----2--0r|--0----------------|--
A|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------|--
E|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------|--
```

Yankee Doodle

```
E|-----------0-----0-----|-----------0---------|-----------0--1--0-------------------------|-----
B|--1--1--3-----1-----3--|--1--1--3-----1r---0r|--1--1--3-----------3--1--0--------0--1--1--|-----
G|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------0--2-----------|-----
D|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----
A|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----
E|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----
```

```
E|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------0-|--
B|-----0-----------0--1--------------------|-----0----------0--1--------1--0--3--1r---1-|--
G|--2-----2--0--2--------2--0--2--0--------0r|--2-----2--0--2--------2--0-----------------|--
D|-----------------------------------3--2----|-------------------------------------------|--
A|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--
E|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--
```

5th String

```
E|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
B|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
G|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
D|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
A|--0-----0-----0-----0--------2-----2-----2-----2--------3-----3-----3-----3--
E|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

6th String

```
E|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
B|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
G|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
D|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
A|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
E|--0-----0-----0-----0--------1-----1-----1-----1--------3-----3-----3-----3--
```

Spiderman

```
E|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--
B|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--
G|------------------------|------------------------|--------2r---1-------|--
D|-----------2r---1-------|--------2--3--2--1------|--0--3----------3--0r|--
A|--0--3-------------3--0r|--0--3-------------3--0r|---------------------|--
E|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--
```

```
E|------------------------|-------------------------|--
B|------------------------|-------------------------|--
G|------------------------|-------------------------|--
D|--------2--3--2--1------|--2--2r---0--0-----0-----|--
A|--0--3-------------3--0--|----------------3-----3--0r|--
E|------------------------|-------------------------|--
```

Darth Vader Theme

```
E|---------------------------|---------------------------|--
B|---------------------------|---------------------------|--
G|---------------------------|---------------------------|--
D|---------------------------|---------------------------|--
A|-------------2--------2----|--6--6--6--7--2--------2----|--
E|--4--4--4--0-----4--0-----4r|----------------3--0-----4r|--
```

Power Chord Intro

```
E|-----------------------------------------------------------------------
B|-----------------------------------------------------------------------
G|-----------------------------------------------------------------------
D|-----------------------------------------------------------------------
A|--------2-----2-----------3-----3-----------4-----4-----------5-----5--
E|--0-----------0-----1-----------1-----2-----------2-----3-----------3--
```

Smoke On The Water

```
E|-----------------------------------------------------------------------
B|-----------------------------------------------------------------------
G|-----------------------------------------------------------------------
D|-----------------------------------------------------------------------
A|--2-----5-----7----2-----5-----8-----7----2-----5-----7-----5-----2-----
E|--0-----3-----5----0-----3-----6-----5----0-----3-----5-----3-----0-----
```

Wild Thing

```
E|-----------------------------------------------------------------------
B|-----------------------------------------------------------------------
G|-----------------------------------------------------------------------
D|--------------5-----5-----7-----7-----5-----5--------------------------
A|--5-----5-----3-----3-----5-----5-----3-----3-----3-----5-----3-----5--
E|--3-----3-------------------------------------------1-----3-----1-----3--
```

Highway To Hell

```
E|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
B|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
G|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
D|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
A|--7--7--7-----x--x-----5--5--5-----x--x-----5--5--5--5--5--5-----5--7--7--7--
E|--5--5--5-----x--x-----2--2--3-----x--x-----2--2--3--2--2--3-----2--5--5--5--
```

```
E|--------------------------------
B|--------------------------------
G|--------------------------------
D|--------------------------------
A|--2-----7-----5--5--5--5--8-----
E|--0-----5-----2--2--3--3--2-----
```

House Of The Rising Sun

```
E|-----------0-------------------0-------------------2-------------------1--------
B|--------1-----1-------------1-----1-------------3-----3-------------1-----1-----
G|-----2-----------2--------0-----------0--------2-----------2--------2-----------2--
D|-----------------------------------------0-------------------3-----------------
A|--0-------------------3-------------------------------------------------------
E|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

```
E|-----------0-------------------0-------------------0-------------------0--------
B|--------1-----1-------------0-----0-------------1-----1-------------0-----0-----
G|-----2-----------2--------1-----------1--------2-----------2--------1-----------
D|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------
A|--0-----------------------------------------0-------------------------------
E|----------------------0-----------------------------------------0-------------
```

Knockin' on Heavens Door

```
E|--3--3--3--3-----2--2--2--2-----0--0--0--0--0--0--0--0--
B|--0--0--0--0-----3--3--3--3-----1--1--1--1--1--1--1--1--
G|--0--0--0--0-----2--2--2--2-----2--2--2--2--2--2--2--2--
D|--0--0--0--0-----0--0--0--0-----2--2--2--2--2--2--2--2--
A|--2--2--2--2-------------------0--0--0--0--0--0--0--0--
E|--3--3--3--3-------------------------------------------
```

```
E|--3--3--3--3-----2--2--2--2-----0--0--0--0--0--0--0--0-----
B|--0--0--0--0-----3--3--3--3-----1--1--1--1--1--1--1--1-----
G|--0--0--0--0-----2--2--2--2-----0--0--0--0--0--0--0--0-----
D|--0--0--0--0-----0--0--0--0-----2--2--2--2--2--2--2--2-----
A|--2--2--2--2-------------------3--3--3--3--3--3--3--3-----
E|--3--3--3--3-----------------------------------------------
```