

# Teach Your Kids Guitar First Lesson Guide



# TEACH YOUR Kids GUITAR



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Printed in the United States of America, First Printing: 2018.

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# Introduction

Welcome to the **TYKG First Lesson Guide!** This guide can be used by any parents, even those with no prior musical experience, to teach their kids guitar fundamentals and even their very first song. Don't be intimidated by the size of this guide; it's lengthy only because it's thorough and detailed. It's easy to understand, and it works.

Although we've entitled this document the "First Lesson Guide," you do not have to complete it in just one lesson. For older kids, one lesson may certainly be enough, but for younger children, two or more guitar sessions may be required. Our TYKG Method has been designed to be flexible to allow all kids to succeed.

Please note that rushing through a lesson and teaching information too quickly is the most common mistake guitar teacher's make. Every child is unique, so you should move at a pace that suits your student. Ultimately, it doesn't matter if it takes one, two, or even three sessions to complete the First Lesson Guide – the musical journey is what's important!



## NOTE

We strongly recommend that you read through this entire First Lesson Guide before you begin teaching so that you can deliver a more effective first lesson.

# About this Guide

## Part I: Teacher Preparation

**Part I** describes the guitar concepts you will be teaching during the first lesson. If you already play guitar, many of these concepts will be familiar. If you are new to guitar, they'll be easy to learn and, if you carefully follow this First Lesson Guide, easy to teach.



## Part II: Giving the First Lesson

**Part II** provides a step-by-step approach showing how to teach these guitar concepts during the first lesson. You can follow along with Part II at the same time you are giving the first lesson. It's structured in a way that's easy to follow while allowing you to give plenty of attention to your student.

## Appendix: Tablature Examples

At the end of this guide, you'll find the **Tablature (TAB) Examples** sheet that is used to teach guitar concepts. We've included it here as a permanent reference; however, we suggest having your student use a printed copy of this sheet during the lesson so you can have easy access to the First Lesson Guide booklet. You can download and print extra copies from the **Teaching Tools** section at [TeachYourKidsGuitar.com](http://TeachYourKidsGuitar.com)

### Appendix: Tablature Examples

*TAB Example 1*

*TAB Example 2*

*TAB Example 3*

*TAB Example 4*

*TAB Example 5*

*TAB Example 6*

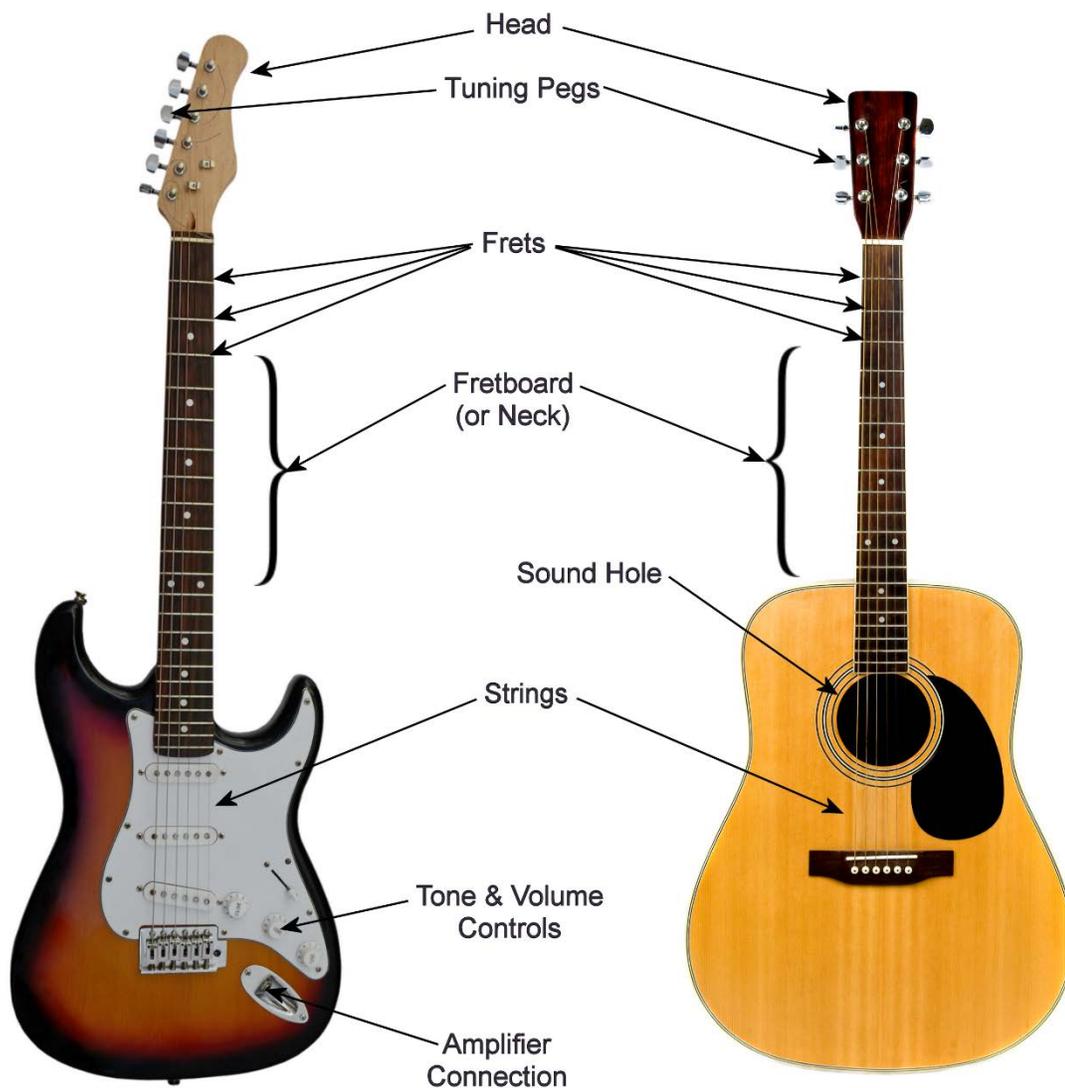
**NOTE** If your student is unable to play the 4's with the pinky finger, that is OKAY. The pinky is the weakest finger and can be difficult for some children. Just skip all the 4's for now, your student can learn to use the pinky later!

# Part I – Teacher Preparation

## Section 1: Basic Guitar Info

### Guitar Parts

Some important parts of an electric and acoustic guitar are identified below. The **fretboard**, **frets**, and **strings** are mentioned frequently throughout this guide.



# Holding the Guitar

Holding the guitar is obviously a concern for young children, and the size of the guitar is the most important factor. Older students may be able to use full-sized guitars; however, younger students will require smaller “short-scale” guitars.



Yet even with the right size guitar, many children have difficulty maintaining good posture. In fact, holding the guitar is usually quite awkward at first, but this is nothing to worry about. It may take several weeks (or longer) until your child is actually able to hold the instrument in a stable, comfortable position.

To encourage good posture, have your student sit up straight with the guitar over the leg while holding the instrument close to the body with the strumming arm. You might even consider using a small back pillow to help your student sit up straight.

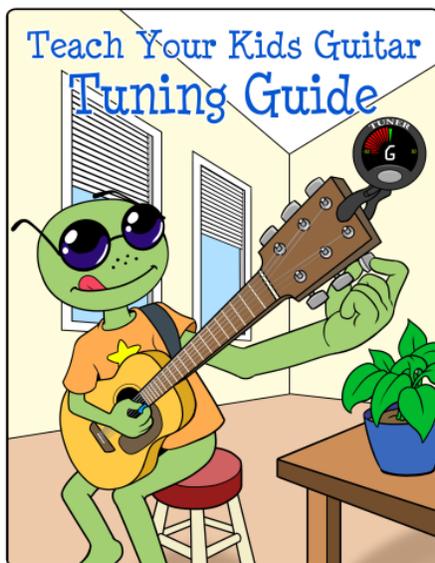
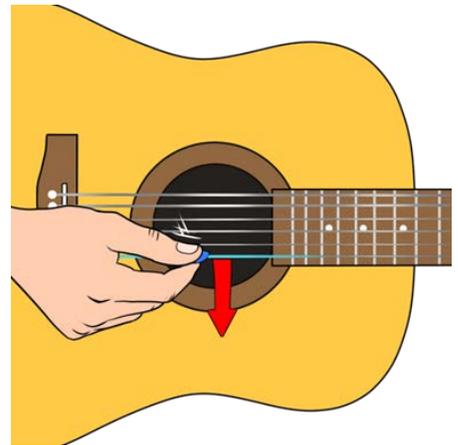
Having both feet on the floor will also help in holding the guitar properly, but often a child's legs are too short to reach the ground. In this case, you could purchase a guitar foot stool to rest one or both feet on, depending upon its size. Or for a free alternative, consider using objects found around the house, such as a sturdy cardboard box or a stack of books.

## NOTE

A very small child may have a difficult time holding the guitar upright and may be happier holding it on the lap. Although this is certainly not the ideal way, it can allow your child to see the fretboard more easily and may be more comfortable. After some time (perhaps a few weeks to a few months), you can help your child learn to consistently hold the guitar in the correct position.

## Holding a Pick

A guitar pick is a small plastic object used to “pluck” (or play) the strings. Your student will hold the pick between the thumb and index finger of the dominant hand and use a downward stroke to play a note. Early on, your student will accidentally pluck wrong strings – and this may happen often. However, with practice, accuracy will improve. It's also normal to drop the pick frequently, but over time, this will also occur less often.



## Tuning the Guitar

Putting the guitar in tune is critical, and it's the first thing you should do before each lesson. We recommend using an electronic guitar tuner. If you don't know how to use one, read our **Tuning Guide** and watch our video tutorial, **Learning to Tune Your Guitar**, both available at [TeachYourKidsGuitar.com](http://TeachYourKidsGuitar.com)

You (the teacher) should tune your student's guitar for the first lesson. In fact, tuning the guitar should remain your responsibility for a while, especially for younger students. For many children, learning to tune can be confusing and in some cases physically difficult.

Eventually, you can teach your student how to tune, but it's not something you should worry about right now.

# Section 2: Guitar Concepts

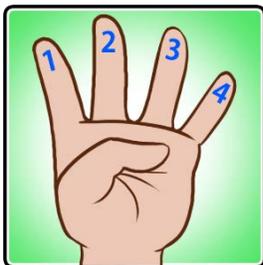
This section will show you (the teacher) the guitar concepts that you'll be teaching during the first lesson(s). To prepare for teaching, be sure to read this section carefully. Once you have a grasp of these concepts, you'll be ready to teach.

Here's an overview of the guitar concepts found in this section:



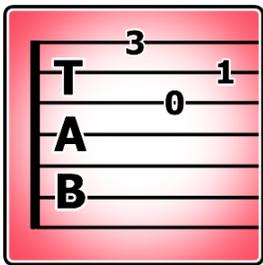
## Guitar Concept 1: Identifying Strings

You'll need to identify and name the guitar strings by number. Most important are the thinnest three guitar strings, which is what your student will initially learn about.



## Guitar Concept 2: Using Correct Fingering

You'll need to understand how to play notes using the correct fingering technique. This fingering approach is simple and effective, and it's used throughout the TYKG method.



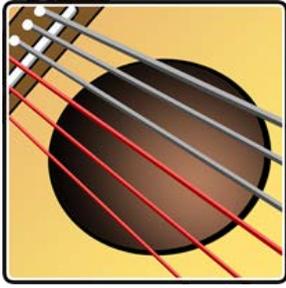
## Guitar Concept 3: Reading Guitar Tablature

Guitar Tablature is a popular notation system for reading guitar music. It's relatively easy for kids to learn, and it's used throughout the TYKG method.



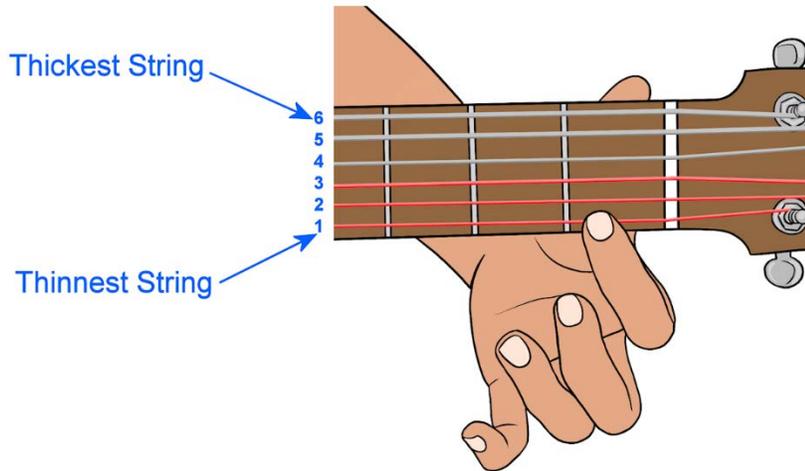
## Guitar Concept 4: Learning a Melody

When your student has a basic understanding of the first three guitar concepts, you'll begin teaching the first song melody. We've chosen "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" as a first song since it's simple and familiar to most kids.

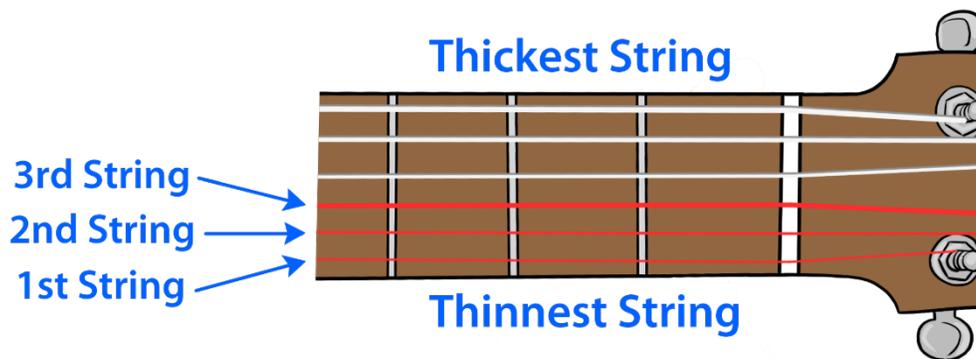


## Guitar Concept 1: Identifying Strings

A standard guitar has six strings. Each string is assigned a number 1 through 6, starting with the thinnest string. Therefore the 1<sup>st</sup> string is the thinnest, and the 6<sup>th</sup> string is the thickest.



However, you won't need to introduce all six strings to your child. In fact, it will be advantageous to focus, at this point, on just the three thinnest strings. These are called the 1<sup>st</sup> string, 2<sup>nd</sup> string, and 3<sup>rd</sup> string.



Focusing only on only the three thinnest strings will make learning much easier. In addition, these three strings are all that's necessary for the first lesson and most beginner songs. Eventually, your student will use the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> strings, but that will be much later on.

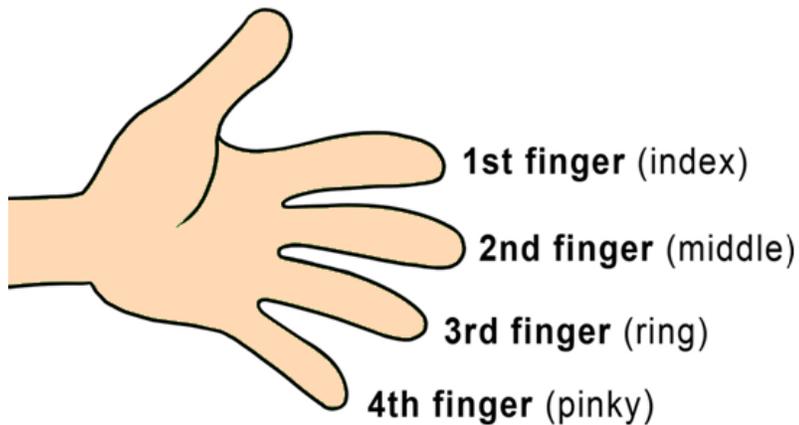
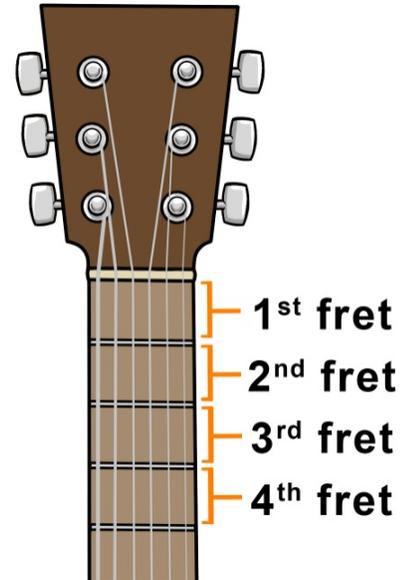


## Guitar Concept 2: Using Correct Fingering

A standard guitar has approximately 20 **frets** that divide the guitar neck into discrete segments. Each fret is assigned a number, beginning right below the guitar head and ending at the guitar body.

All songs in the TYKG method have been placed within the first four frets of the guitar; therefore, you'll teach your student how to identify these first four frets (*pictured right*). This is closely related to our next concept: **Correct Fingering**.

The image below shows the fingers used to play notes on the guitar.

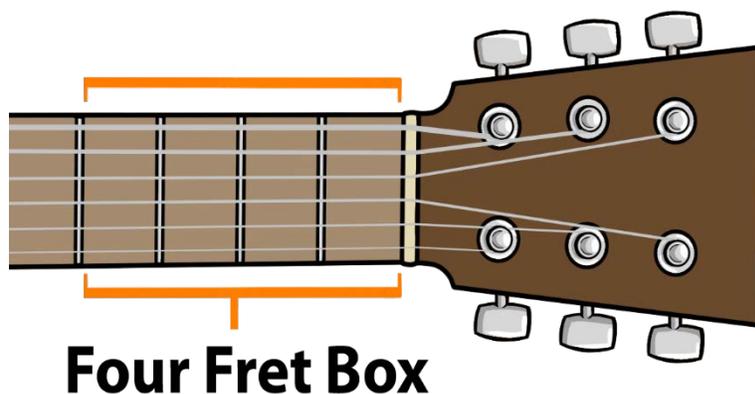


Since there are four fingers and there are four frets to play, we can simply assign one finger to each fret. This is easy if you think about it this way:

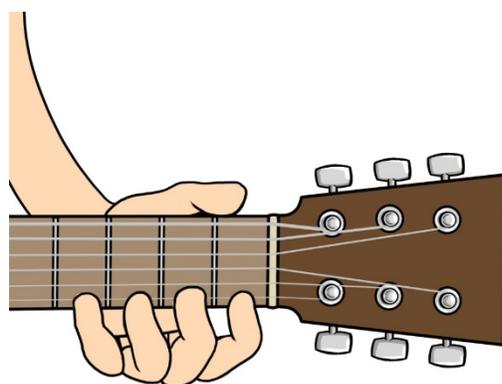
- 1<sup>st</sup> finger gets 1<sup>st</sup> fret
- 2<sup>nd</sup> finger gets 2<sup>nd</sup> fret
- 3<sup>rd</sup> finger gets 3<sup>rd</sup> fret
- 4<sup>th</sup> finger gets 4<sup>th</sup> frets

## “Four Fret Box” Visualization

It can be helpful to have your student picture a “four fret box” on the guitar.



This “four fret box” shows the exact hand position your student will use for learning melodies. You can easily form this “four fret box” with your own hand to help your student visualize the assigned fingering.



- 1<sup>st</sup> finger gets 1<sup>st</sup> fret
- 2<sup>nd</sup> finger gets 2<sup>nd</sup> fret
- 3<sup>rd</sup> finger gets 3<sup>rd</sup> fret
- 4<sup>th</sup> finger gets 4<sup>th</sup> fret

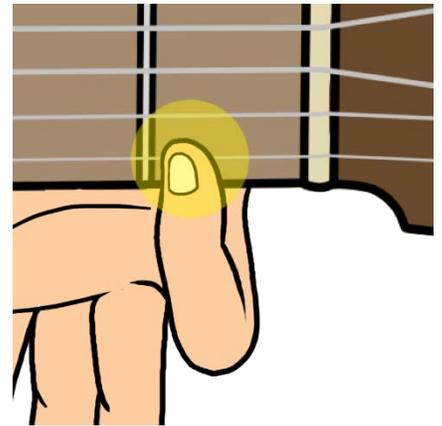
### NOTE

Your student does not actually have to physically make this “four fret box” shape with his or her hand as depicted above. It is okay to try, but many children’s hands are too small for this. The “four fret box” is mainly for visualization purposes to help assign fingers to frets.

# Playing Notes on the Fretboard

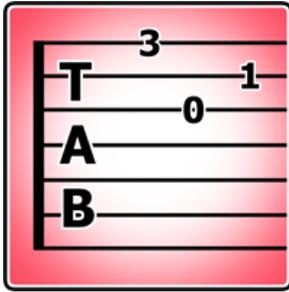
There are three steps to playing notes on the fretboard:

1. The finger should be placed on the fret just behind the metal bracket, not on top of it.
2. The finger should be arched and pressing with fingertip.
3. The finger should press hard enough to make the note "sound out."



## Ouch! -- A Word About Fingertip Pain

For new guitarists, slight fingertip pain can be common. This is something every guitar learner experiences; unfortunately, it can be a bigger issue with young children who tend to be more sensitive to pain. This is nothing to worry about and, over time, fingers do toughen up – so fingertip pain is only a temporary issue. Still, if your student does experience some finger pain, feel free to take frequent breaks.



## Guitar Concept 3: Reading Guitar Tablature

Guitar tablature (or TAB) allows you to learn songs on the guitar without the difficulty of learning traditional music notation. It's the most common guitar notation system in the world and is used throughout the TYKG method.

The example below is a visual comparison of guitar tablature and traditional musical notation.

Standard Music Notation

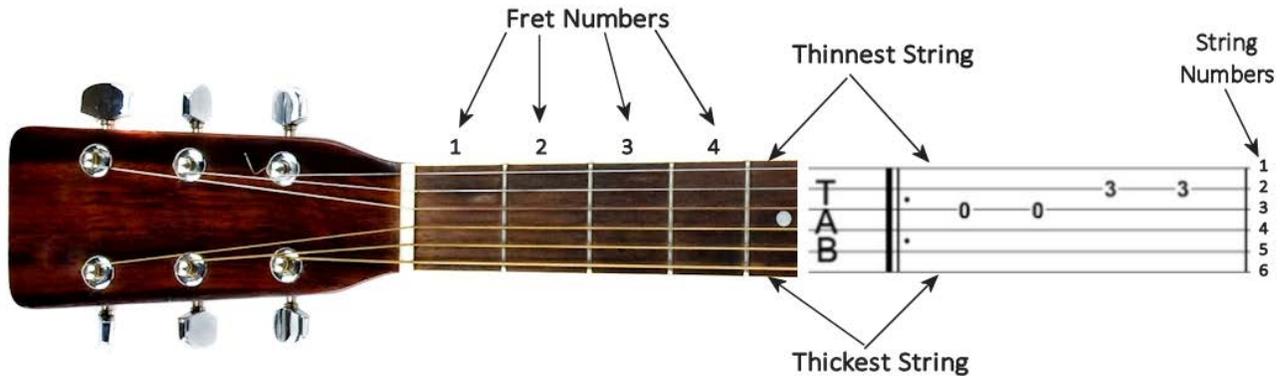
Guitar Tablature notation

You'll most likely recognize the “standard music notation” shown at the top part of the staff. If we compare these two forms of notation, we can see a striking similarity: lower-pitched notes are found on lower lines and higher-pitched notes are found on higher lines.

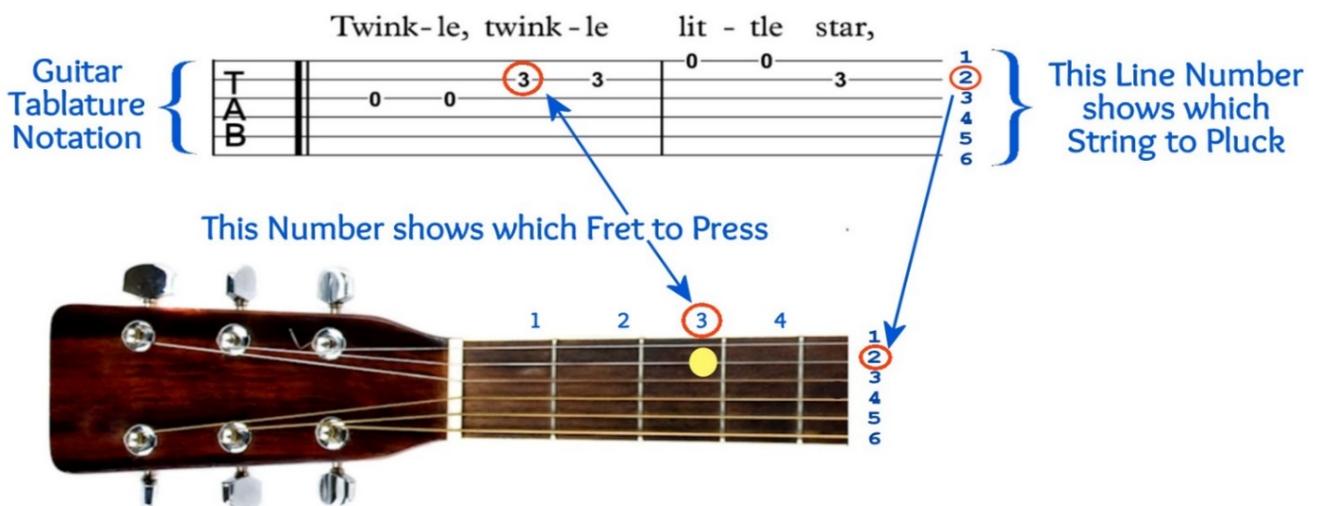
However, guitar tablature is much easier to learn because it shows a direct correlation between the numbers shown on the TAB lines and the notes played on guitar strings.

Guitar TAB takes advantage of the guitar's visual layout by using 6 lines that correspond to the 6 guitar strings. To help you visualize this, let's flip the guitar around so that the thickest string appears on the bottom and the thinnest string appears on the top.

Once we re-orient the guitar, you can easily see the correlation between TAB and guitar strings:



With Guitar TAB, the top line represents thinnest guitar string and the bottom line represents the thickest string. When a number appears on a line of Guitar TAB, it identifies two things: the **fret** to press and the **string** to pluck:



When a “0” appears on the line, the string is played as an “**open string**,” which means that no fret is pressed – but the string is still plucked.

Twink-le, twink-le      lit - tle star,

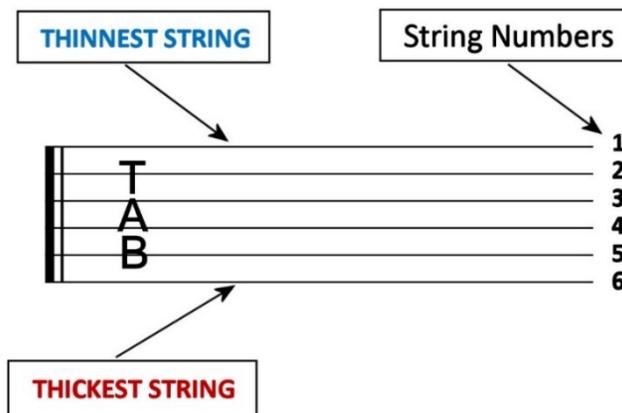
Guitar Tablature Notation {

T		0	0	3	3	0	0	3
A								
B								

} This Line Number shows which String to Pluck



**Reminder:** With Guitar Tablature, higher notes are on the top lines of the music staff and lower notes are on the bottom lines. In other words, the **thinnest string** is represented by the **TOP line** of the TAB staff, and the **thickest string** is represented by the **BOTTOM line** of the TAB staff.



If you are brand new to guitar tablature, consider watching our website video tutorial on **Learning to Read Guitar Tab** (available at [TeachYourKidsGuitar.com](http://TeachYourKidsGuitar.com)). It provides helpful visual examples and demonstrations.



## Guitar Concept 4: Learning a Melody

Once your student has a basic understand of guitar tablature, you'll be teaching the first song. For a new student, it's best to start with songs that are simple and familiar, which is why we've selected "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

To learn "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" on guitar, we'll use a Song Pack item called the **Melody Sheet**, depicting a song's melody in the form of lyrics (i.e., the words of the song) and guitar tablature. Remember that our Melody Sheets also provide traditional music notation, but this is for comparison and can be ignored.

~ Melody Sheet ~

### Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

Standard Music Notation

Twink-le, twink-le lit-tle star, how I won-der what you are?

Guitar Tablature Notation

The image shows a "Melody Sheet" for the song "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star". It features a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff with lyrics underneath. Below the staff is a guitar tablature section with six lines and fret numbers (0, 3, 0, 3, 1, 1, 0, 0, 2, 2, 0) corresponding to the notes in the melody. Brackets above and below the staff and tablature indicate the scope of the notation.

## Teaching Strategy: Breaking a Song into “Chunks”

Let's look at the TAB staff on the “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” Melody Sheet and introduce a new term: **Bar**. In musical notation, a bar (or measure) is a segment of music containing a certain number of notes. Dividing music into bars provides regular reference points to identify exact locations within a piece of music. The image below shows the first four bars as displayed on the Melody Sheet.

Twink-le, twink-le    lit - tle star,    how I won-der    what you are?

T	0	0	3	3	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	2	2	0
A														
B														

1st Bar                      2nd Bar                      3rd Bar                      4th Bar

You can use the bars as a helpful teaching strategy by dividing the music into “bite-size chunks” to make the learning process much simpler. Just draw a bracket around every two bars of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” as shown in the image below.

Twink-le, twink-le    lit - tle star,    how I won-der    what you are?

T	0	0	3	3	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	2	2	0
A														
B														

We'll show you how to use this “chunking” strategy later on in this guide as you are delivering the first lesson.

### NOTE

This strategy of breaking up songs into manageable “chunks” simplifies learning, but it may only be necessary for the first few songs. As your child becomes comfortable with reading tablature, it will become less important for you to break future songs into chunks, so using brackets will eventually become unnecessary.

# Section 3: Teaching Tips

Let's look at some key teaching concepts that you should use during the first lesson and beyond. *These will make all the difference as you teach guitar to a child!*

## Use Positive Reinforcement

Encourage your child every step of the way and use positive reinforcement so your learner feels good about his or her accomplishments. Offer congratulations for achievements so that your child is proud of his or her own efforts. This kind of feedback can mean everything to a child who is looking for approval from the person he or she looks up to the most.



## Be Patient



Patience is an important part of being a teacher. Don't get upset when your student makes mistakes or has trouble grasping a new concept. Make sure you and your student realize that mistakes are a not a bad thing — in fact, they are a necessary part of the learning process.

We all know that children learn behavior from adults. The more patient you are, the more patient your student will be. The more relaxed you are, the more relaxed your student will be. The more willing you are to work through challenges, the more willing your student will be.

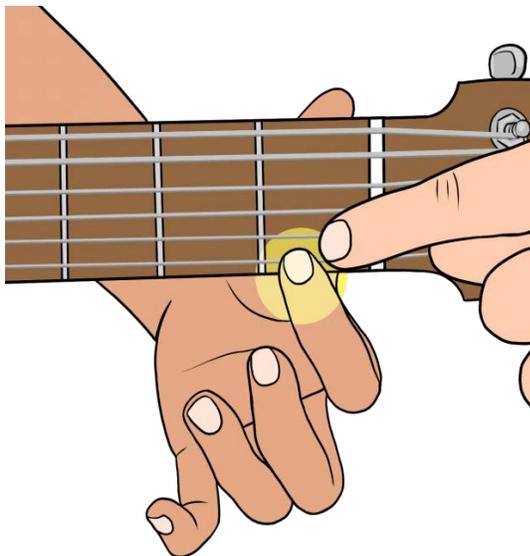
# Correct Your Student's Mistakes

Be sure to correct your student whenever a mistake is made. This is especially important when working with a beginner. The most common mistakes, early on, involve playing the wrong note, or using the wrong finger to play a note. And we guarantee that this is going to happen – a lot!



As you correct your student, please keep in mind that mistakes are NOT a bad thing. Rather, they'll provide your student with an opportunity to see what he or she is doing wrong. The fact is that everybody makes mistakes; they are a normal – and necessary – part of the learning process.

Handle mistakes this way: Immediately explain what went wrong, ask your student to correct it, and then move on. Often, a student will make the same mistakes again and again, so be patient. With gentle and consistent corrections – and more practice – these mistakes will gradually fade away.

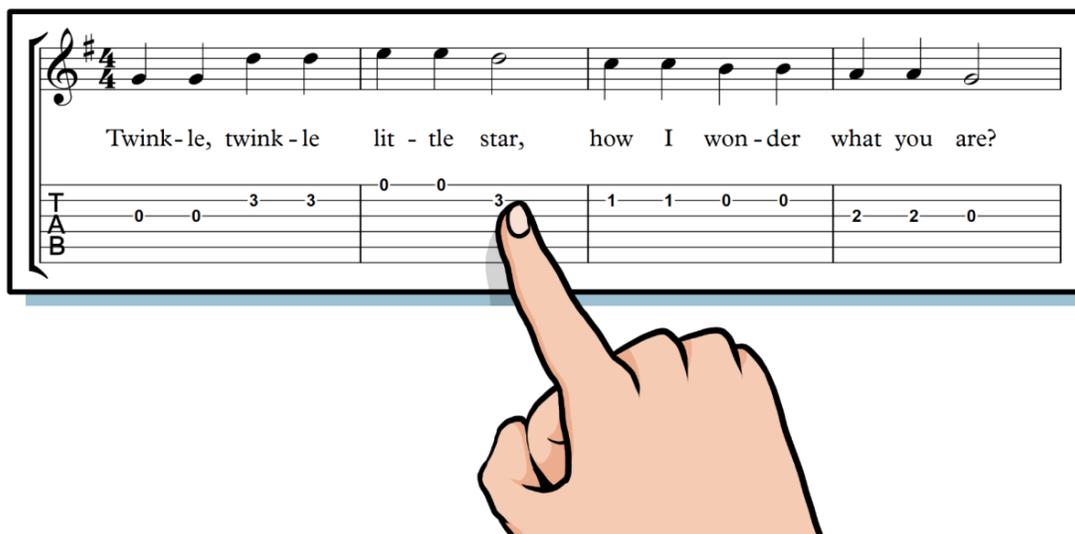


## Use Finger Guiding

It can often be confusing for a beginner to know exactly which finger to use or where on the guitar to place it. When this confusion occurs, it may be necessary to guide your student's finger to the correct location on the guitar. We call this **Finger Guiding**, and it simply involves pointing to the correct string and fret location to show your student proper finger placement. *It may sometimes be necessary to use your hands to physically guide your student's fingers into place.*

## Use Note Guiding

**Note Guiding** refers to physically pointing to notes on the music sheet, with your finger (or pen or pencil), right along as your student is practicing. It's one of the single most helpful strategies you can use early on.



Note Guiding works well for beginners because it helps them follow the notes on the music sheet. When a student is first learning, it's necessary to look at the music sheet to see the note and then to look down at the guitar to see how to play it. Unfortunately, when a student looks back up at the music sheet, it can often be hard to remember what note was last played and which note to play next.

Note Guiding will provide that extra little bit of help to keep track of the notes. By physically pointing to the notes, you can make it easier for your student to know where he or she is at all times. Note Guiding will have the added benefit of directing your student's focused attention on the music, instead of on other distractions.

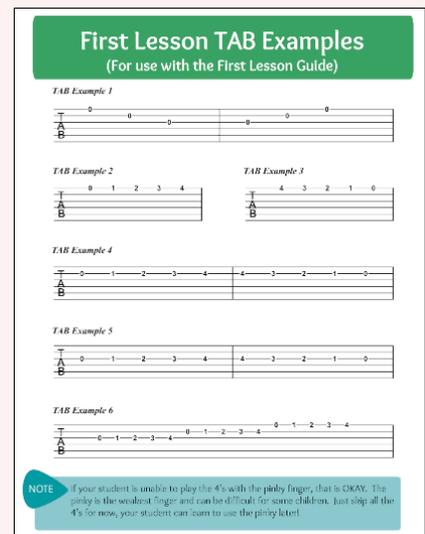
# Part II – The First Lesson

## Before you Begin Teaching

### Gather Learning Materials

#### 1. First Lesson TAB Examples Sheet

Our **First Lesson TAB Examples Sheet** includes simple examples that your student will follow during the first lesson. You'll use it as you teach basic guitar tablature concepts to prepare your student for learning the first song. You'll find a TAB Examples Sheet at the end of this guide. However, we suggest having your student look at a printed copy during the lesson so that you can have easy access to this First Lesson Guide while teaching.



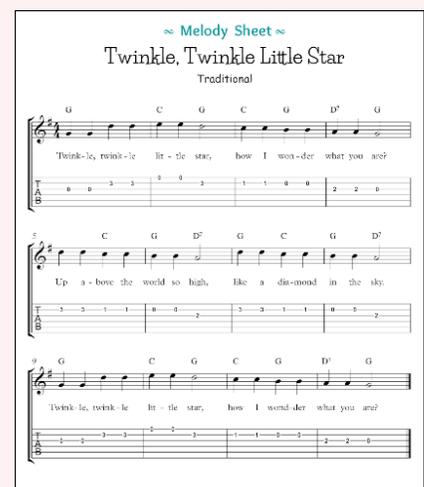
**First Lesson TAB Examples**  
(For use with the First Lesson Guide)

TAB Example 1  
TAB Example 2  
TAB Example 3  
TAB Example 4  
TAB Example 5  
TAB Example 6

**NOTE** If your student is unable to play the 4's with the pinky finger, that is OKAY. The pinky is the weakest finger and can be difficult for some children. Just skip all the 4's for now, your student can learn to use the pinky later!

#### 2. “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” Melody Sheet

During the first lesson, you'll re-enforce guitar tablature concepts by teaching your student the first song, “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.” You'll find this on the **Melody Sheet** in the “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” Song Pack, which you should use during the lesson. If you or your student is unfamiliar with the song “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star,” you can use its **Listening Track** to hear it, also included in its Song Pack.



∞ Melody Sheet ∞  
**Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star**  
Traditional

G C G C G D<sup>7</sup> G  
Twink-le, twink-le lit-tle star, how I won-der what you are?

C G D<sup>7</sup> G C G D<sup>7</sup>  
Up-a-bove the world so high, like a dia-mond in the sky.

G C G C G D<sup>7</sup> G  
Twink-le, twink-le lit-tle star, how I won-der what you are?

# How the First Lesson Works

This First Lesson Guide contains detailed guidance as you teach the first lesson(s). You can follow our step-by-step approach and refer to it as often as necessary. It shows you exactly how to teach each of the guitar concepts from Part I of this guide: Identifying Strings, Using Correct Fingering, Reading Guitar Tablature and Learning a Melody.



You'll teach guitar concepts to your student using the following steps:

- 1 Student Information** – You'll briefly explain each guitar concept to your student in preparation for an upcoming Student Exercise.

*Tip: Don't worry if your student doesn't understand everything right way. You'll continuously review the information as your student attempts the following Student Exercise.*

- 2 Student Exercise** – You'll guide your student through an exercise that will help him or her understand the guitar concept. Take your time and repeat these steps as often as necessary until your student can perform these skills.

*Tip: For each exercise, it's helpful to provide a demonstration for your child.*

- 3 Student Test** – Certain exercises are followed by a quick test to see if your student understands the concept.

*Tip: If your student has great difficulty with the test, repeat the previous Student Exercise.*

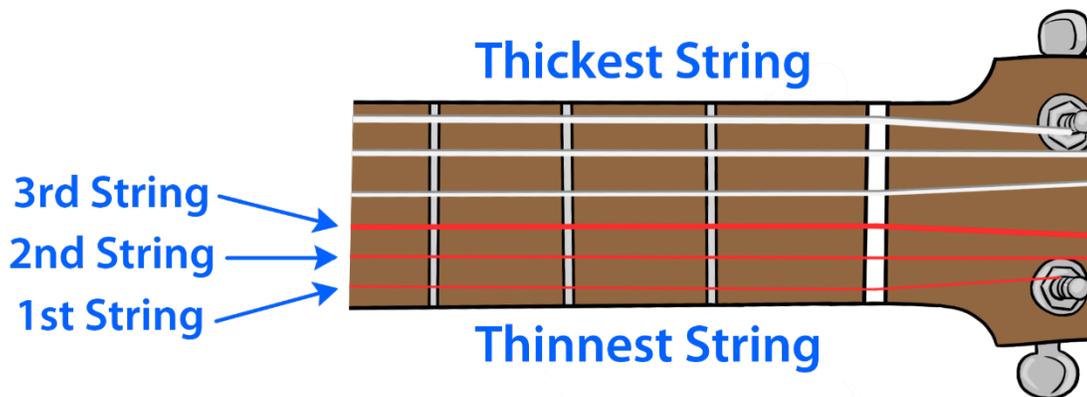
# The First Lesson



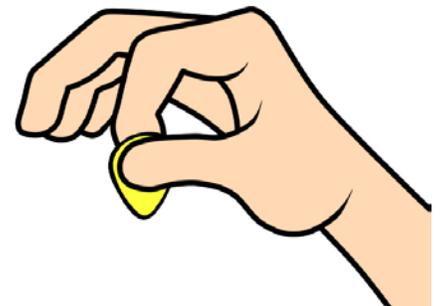
## Guitar Concept 1: String Identification

### 1 Student Information

1. Show your student there are six strings on the guitar, but that for now we only need to learn the first three.
2. Explain that the thinnest string is called the “**1<sup>st</sup> string**”; the second thinnest string is called the “**2<sup>nd</sup> string**”; and the third thinnest string is called the “**3<sup>rd</sup> string**.”

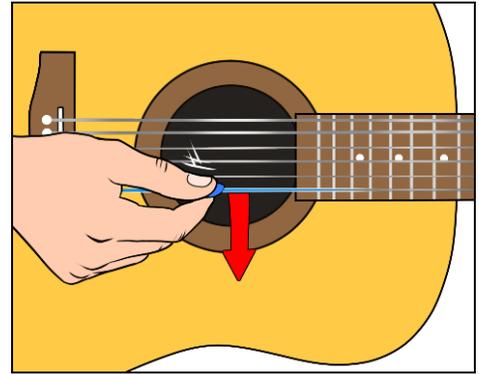


3. Give your student a guitar pick, explaining that it's used to pluck the strings.
  - o Your student should ideally hold the pick between with the thumb and index finger.

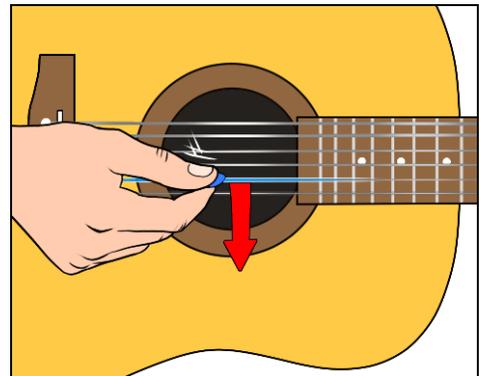


## 2 Student Exercise

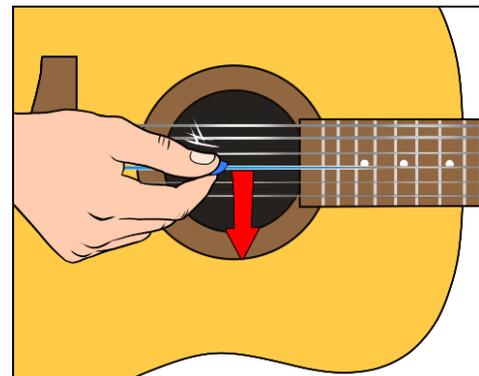
1. Have your student pluck the first string with the guitar pick using a downward motion.
  - Then have your student say “1<sup>st</sup> string.”



2. Have your student pluck the second string with the guitar pick.
  - Then have your student say “2<sup>nd</sup> string.”



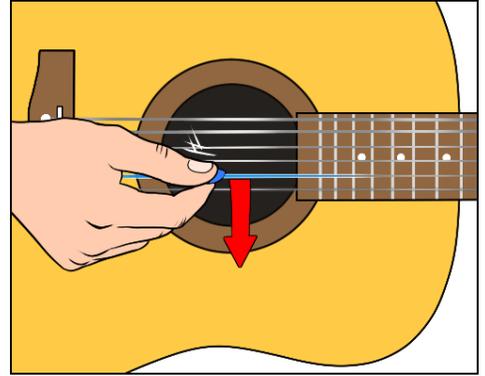
3. Have your student pluck the third string with the guitar pick.
  - Then have your student say “3<sup>rd</sup> string.”



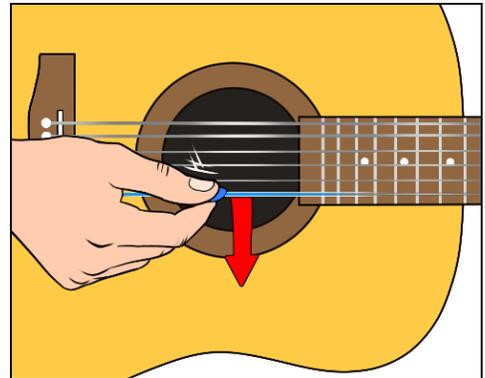
4. Next, continue this approach, but in the reverse order:
  - a. Have your student pluck the 3<sup>rd</sup> string again and then say “3<sup>rd</sup> string.”
  - b. Have your student pluck the 2<sup>nd</sup> string and then say “2<sup>nd</sup> string.”
  - c. Have your student pluck the 1<sup>st</sup> string and then say “1<sup>st</sup> string.”

## 3 Student Test

1. Randomly select one of the first three strings and ask your student to play it for you.
  - For example, say “*Play the 2<sup>nd</sup> string*” and your student will then play it.



2. Randomly select another of the first three strings and ask your student to play it for you.
  - For example, say “*Play the 1<sup>st</sup> string*” and your student will then play it.



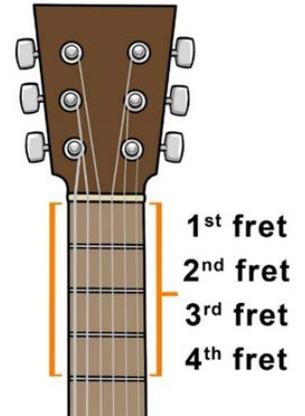
3. Continue randomly selecting one of the first three strings until your student has a solid understanding of the string numbers.



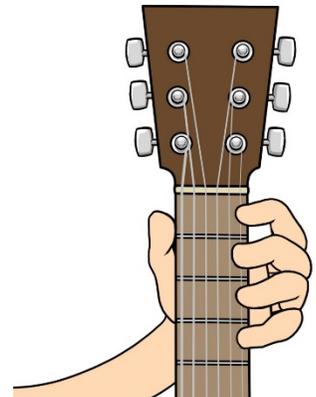
## Guitar Concept 2: Correct Fingering

### 1 Student Information

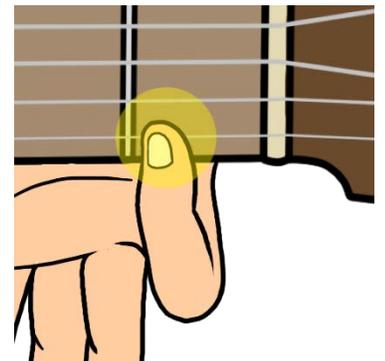
1. Show your student that “frets” are the segments of the guitar neck that lie between the short metal brackets.
  - o Identify the first four frets by location and name: “1<sup>st</sup> fret,” “2<sup>nd</sup> fret,” “3<sup>rd</sup> fret,” and “4<sup>th</sup> fret.”



2. Explain it like this: Since we have four fingers and there are four frets to play, each finger gets a fret.
  - a. 1<sup>st</sup> finger gets 1<sup>st</sup> fret
  - b. 2<sup>nd</sup> finger gets 2<sup>nd</sup> fret
  - c. 3<sup>rd</sup> finger gets 3<sup>rd</sup> fret
  - d. 4<sup>th</sup> finger gets 4<sup>th</sup> fret



3. Demonstrate to your student how to play the first four frets with correct fingering.
  - a. Show how each finger should be placed just behind the metal bracket, not on top of it.
  - b. Explain that you need to press down hard enough to hear a note “sound out.”
  - c. Demonstrate how to use the pick to play the string.



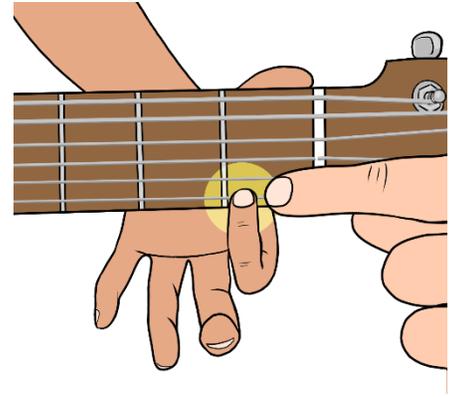
#### NOTE

Review this Student Information when necessary during the following Student Exercise and Student Test.

## 2 Student Exercise

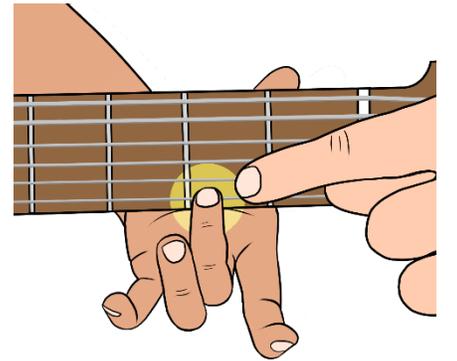
1. Have your student press down on the 1<sup>st</sup> fret using the tip of the 1<sup>st</sup> finger and then pluck the 1<sup>st</sup> string. (You can use **Finger Guiding** to show exactly where your student should place the finger).

- Then have your student say “1<sup>st</sup> fret, 1<sup>st</sup> finger.”



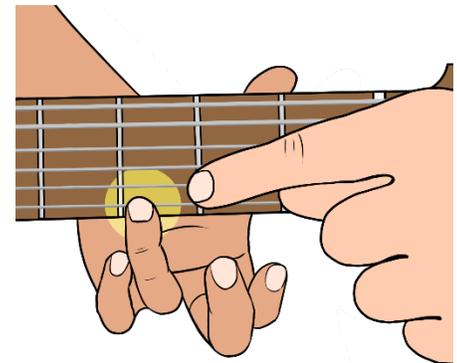
2. Have your student press down on the 2<sup>nd</sup> fret using the tip of the 2<sup>nd</sup> finger and then pluck the 1<sup>st</sup> string.

- Then have your student say “2<sup>nd</sup> fret, 2<sup>nd</sup> finger.”



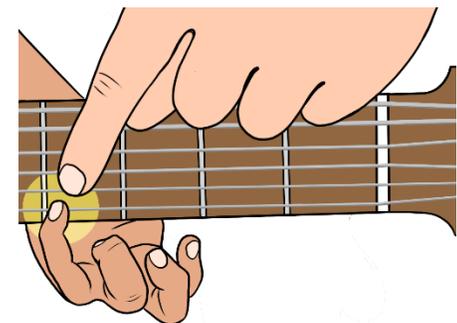
3. Have your student press down on the 3<sup>rd</sup> fret using the tip of the 3<sup>rd</sup> finger and then pluck the 1<sup>st</sup> string.

- Then have your student say “3<sup>rd</sup> fret, 3<sup>rd</sup> finger.”



4. Have your student press down on the 4<sup>th</sup> fret using the tip of the 4<sup>th</sup> finger and then pluck the 1<sup>st</sup> string.

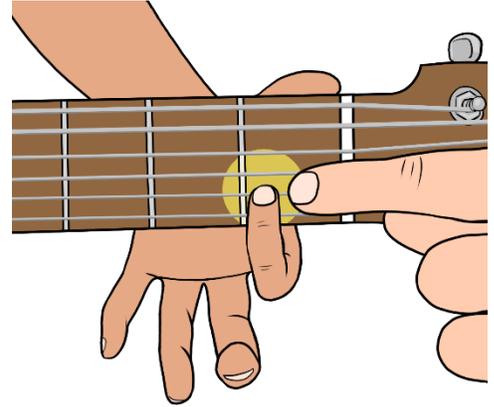
- Then have your student say “4<sup>th</sup> fret, 4<sup>th</sup> finger.”
- Don’t worry if your student is unable to play notes with the pinky finger – it will not be used in the song about to be taught.



### 3 Student Test

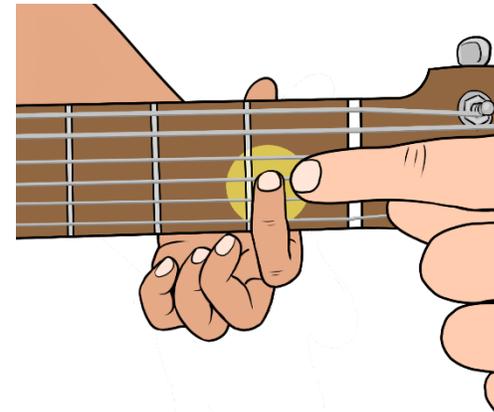
1. Ask your student to play the first four frets on the second string. Help your student to start by using the first finger.

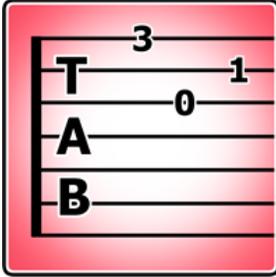
- You can have your student continue to identify the fret and finger out loud.
- Use Finger Guiding when necessary to ensure Correct Fingering is used.



2. Ask your student to do this once again on the third string. Help your student to start by using the first finger.

- You can have your student continue to identify the fret and finger out loud.
- Use Finger Guiding when necessary to ensure Correct Fingering is used.
- This third string can be more challenging for kids with small hands. Don't worry if your student has difficulty with some of these notes. Have your student give it his or her best try and then move onto the next step.

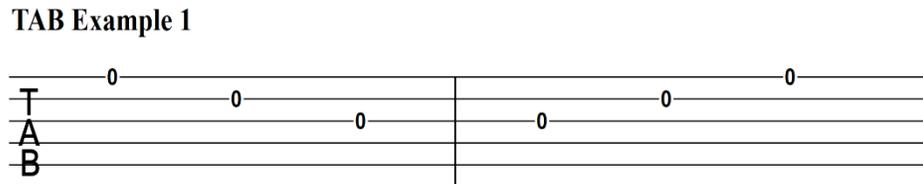




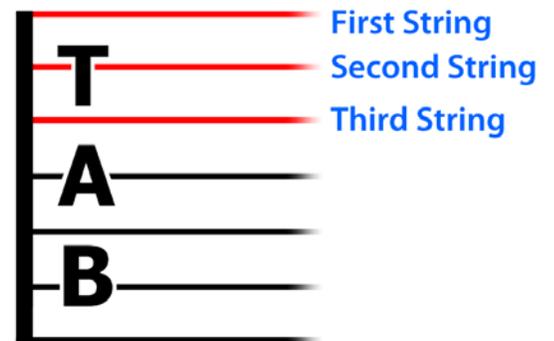
# Guitar Concept 3a: Reading Tablature - Open Strings

## 1 Student Information

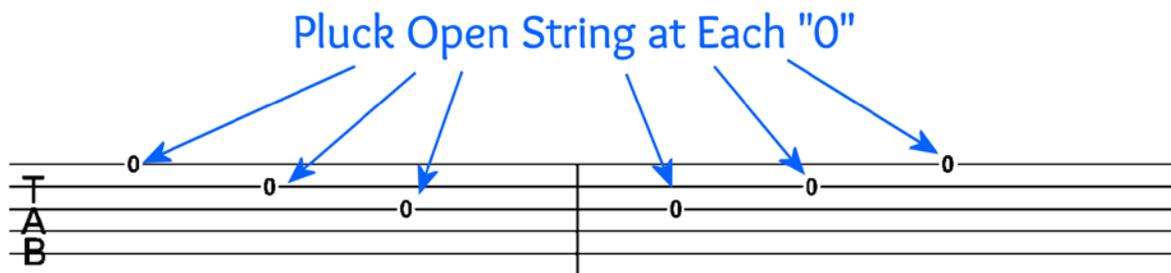
1. Have your student look at **Tab Example 1** on the First Lesson Tab Examples Sheet:



2. Explain that with Guitar Tablature each line represents a string of the guitar and that:
  - a. The top line is the first string (thinnest).
  - b. The second line (from the top) is the second string.
  - c. The third line (from the top) is the third string.



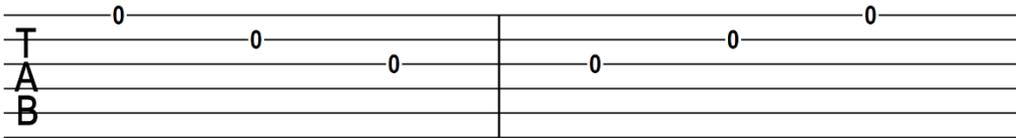
3. Explain that the zeros on the lines in the example tell you which string to pluck with the guitar pick.
  - a. This is called playing an “open string,” which means no fret is pressed.



## 2 Student Exercise

1. Have your student look at and play the notes in TAB Example 1:

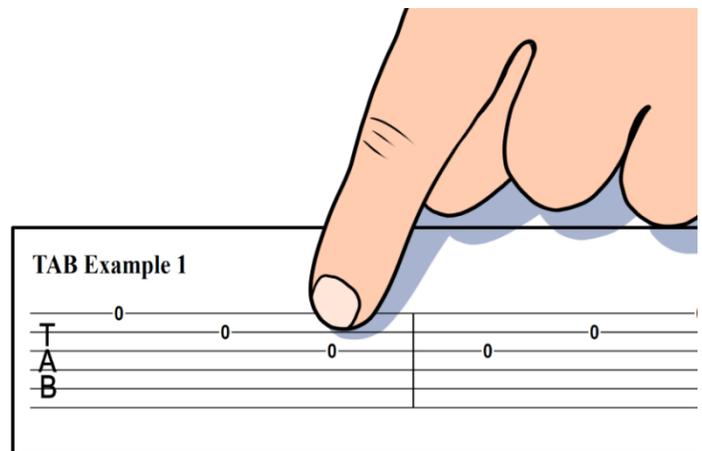
TAB Example 1

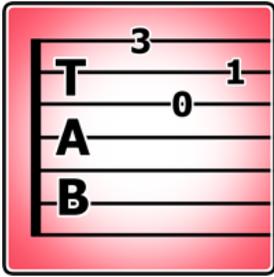


2. During this exercise, reinforce the following to your student:
  - Each line represents a guitar string.
  - The top line represents the 1<sup>st</sup> (thinnest) string.
  - With a “0”, you do not press down on any fret on the guitar neck – you only pluck the string.

## 3 Student Test

1. Again show your student **TAB Example 1**.
2. Point to any one of the zeros on the TAB and say, *"Play the string this represents."*
3. Then randomly point to a zero on a different line and say, *"Play the string this represents."*
4. Continue randomly selecting from one of the first three strings until your student has an understanding of how to read open strings.



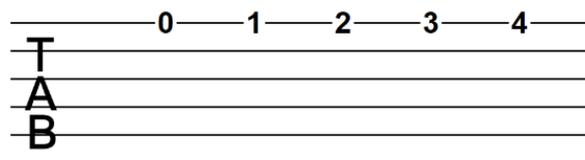


## Guitar Concept 3b: Reading Tablature - First Four Frets

### 1 Student Information

1. Have your student look at Tab Example 2.

#### TAB Example 2



2. Explain that the notes are played on the 1<sup>st</sup> (or thinnest) string because they are all on the top line.
3. Remind your student that the first note “0” represents an “open string” to be played.
4. Explain that the numbers “1 2 3 4” represent frets that will be played on the thinnest string using this fingering:
  - a. Use 1<sup>st</sup> finger to play 1<sup>st</sup> fret
  - b. Use 2<sup>nd</sup> finger to play 2<sup>nd</sup> fret
  - c. Use 3<sup>rd</sup> finger to play 3<sup>rd</sup> fret
  - d. Use 4<sup>th</sup> finger to play 4<sup>th</sup> fret

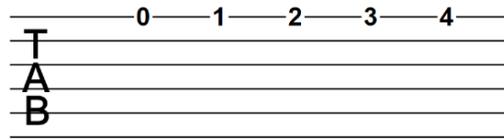
#### NOTE

Don't worry if your student has difficulty using the pinky finger – it will not be used in the song about to be taught.

## 2 Student Exercise

1. Have your student look at and play TAB Example 2.

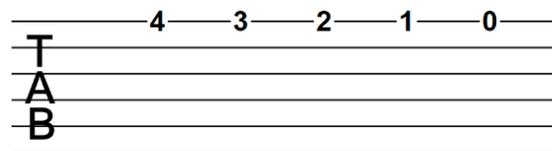
**TAB Example 2**



- Use Note Guiding and Fingering Guiding to help your student when necessary.
- Repeat as often as necessary until your student gains a basic understanding.

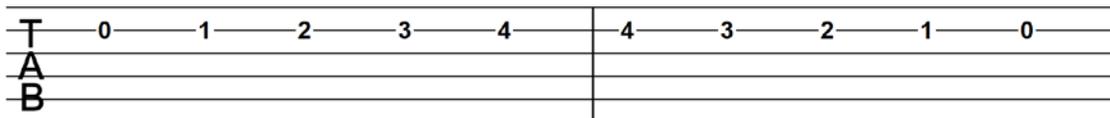
2. Have your student look at and play TAB Example 3.

**TAB Example 3**



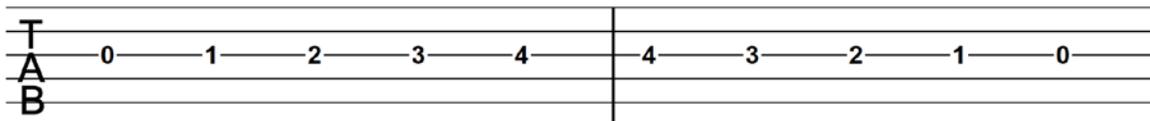
3. Have your student look at and play Tab Example 4.

**TAB Example 4**



4. Have your student look at and play TAB Example 5.

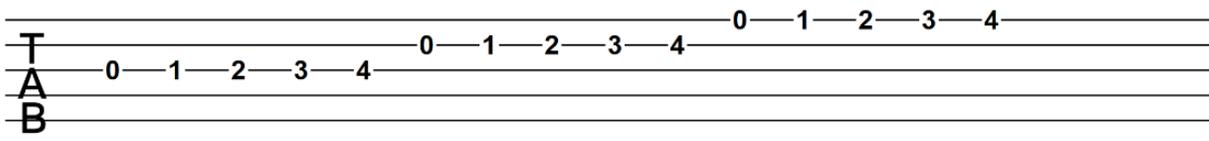
**TAB Example 5**



## 3 Student Test

1. Show your student TAB Example 6:

### TAB Example 6



2. Randomly point to different notes on Tab Example and see if your student can play it.

- For example, point to the 2 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> string and see if your student can play it.
- Then, point to the “0” on the 2<sup>nd</sup> string.
- Then point to the “2” on the 3<sup>rd</sup> string.
- Continue in this manner until you feel your student understands the concept.





# Guitar Concept 4: Learning a Melody

## 1 Student Information

1. Tell your student that it's time to learn the first song – “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.”
2. Show your student the printed Melody Sheet for “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.”
3. Tell your student to focus only on the Guitar Tablature (standard notation can be ignored).

∞ Melody Sheet ∞

### Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

Standard Music Notation

Twink-le, twink-le lit-tle star, how I won-der what you are?

Guitar Tablature Notation

The image shows a musical score for "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star". It consists of two parts: Standard Music Notation and Guitar Tablature Notation. The Standard Music Notation is written on a single staff in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half). The lyrics are: "Twink-le, twink-le lit-tle star, how I won-der what you are?". The Guitar Tablature Notation is written on a six-line staff. The fret numbers are: 0 0 3 3 | 0 0 3 | 1 1 0 0 | 2 2 0. A bracket underlines the entire tablature section.

### NOTE

It is important to understand that you are about to use “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” as a vehicle for reinforcing guitar concepts. At this point don't be too concerned if what your student actually plays doesn't sound very much like the song.



- Next, draw a bracket around the next two bars to create another chunk of music. Have your student play just this chunk over and over again to gain a basic understanding.

how I won-der what you are?

1 — 1 — 0 — 0	2 — 2 — 0

*Bar 3*                      *Bar 4*

- Before moving to another chunk, have your student play the first two chunks together, as shown below.

Twink-le, twink-le      lit - tle star,      how I won-der what you are?

	0 — 0 — 3 — 3	0 — 0 — 3	1 — 1 — 0 — 0
T A B			

- Finally, have your student continue learning “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” in this same manner – that is, chunk by chunk. You can create a chunk for every two bars of music, and your student can repeat each chunk as many times as necessary.

**NOTE** Breaking songs up into chunks is a helpful strategy for this first lesson, but it will not be necessary for long. As your student continues to learn songs, you should use it less and less.

# Congratulations

## ***You've completed the First Lesson Guide!***

By coming this far, you've already proved you can succeed with the TYKG method. You, as the teacher, have established effective strategies that you'll continue to use as you guide your student through the TYKG method. In addition, your student now has the fundamentals required to continue learning many songs.

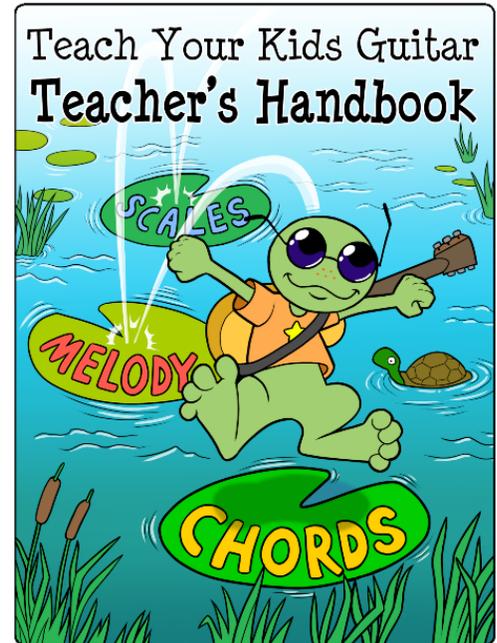
So, congrats! You're now ready to learn more about teaching songs, giving lessons, staying organized and helping your student practice. You'll learn about each of these topics in the teacher resources described on the next page.



# Part III: What's Next?

## TYKG Teachers Handbook

After completing the First Lesson Guide, your student will be ready to continue learning songs with Beginner Level Activities. You'll learn about these activities in our main TYKG instructional document – the **TYKG Teacher's Handbook**. It categorizes TYKG learning activities according to your student's skill level, making it easy to focus solely on the information that is relevant to your student, no matter where he or she is in the learning process. This also makes it easy to use because your own knowledge and skills will gradually increase as you learn right along with your student.



## Teach Your Kids Guitar



## Lesson Planning

## Lesson Planning Booklet

Alongside the Teacher's Handbook, be sure to use our **Lesson Planning Booklet** – especially during the first few weeks of teaching. It will show you exactly how to deliver effective guitar lessons that are fun for both you and your student. After just a few weeks, you'll establish a consistent approach for teaching your student – not only for the first few lessons – but also throughout your entire journey with TYKG.

# Appendix: Tablature Examples

*TAB Example 1*

0	0	0	0	0
T				
A				
B				

*TAB Example 2*

0	1	2	3	4
T				
A				
B				

*TAB Example 3*

4	3	2	1	0
T				
A				
B				

*TAB Example 4*

0	1	2	3	4	4	3	2	1	0
T									
A									
B									

*TAB Example 5*

0	1	2	3	4	4	3	2	1	0
T									
A									
B									

*TAB Example 6*

0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4
T									
A									
B									

**NOTE** If your student is unable to play the 4's with the pinky finger, that is OKAY. The pinky is the weakest finger and can be difficult for some children. Just skip all the 4's for now. Your student can learn to use the pinky later.

