

Fretboard Note Names

If you know the names of the notes on the piano, the chart below should help you to learn the guitar note names. You may already know that the two pairs of keys on the piano without a black key between them are “B, C” and “E, F”, the notes which are one fret apart on the guitar.

Open (not fretted) Strings

string numbers

6 5 4 3 2 1

E A D G B E

middle C
in the center of the piano keyboard

Memorizing the Fretboard Note Names.

Memorize the open-string note names with this sentence: Eat A Darn Good Breakfast Early. The first letter of each word makes a list of the open-string names for the sixth through first strings.

Note names progress up each string *in alphabetical order*: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, A, etc. The distance between “B” and “C” and between “E” and “F” is one fret (not counting the fret on which you begin). All other alphabetical pairs (A to B, C to D, F to G or G to A) are two frets apart.

After memorizing the open string note names, memorize fifth, tenth and twelfth fret note names.

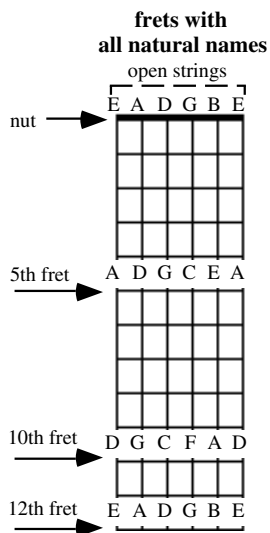
Distances in pitch between notes are called *intervals*. A *whole step* is a two-fret interval (not counting the fret on which you begin). A *half step* is a one-fret interval. One and one half steps is a three fret interval,

two steps is a four fret interval, and so on.

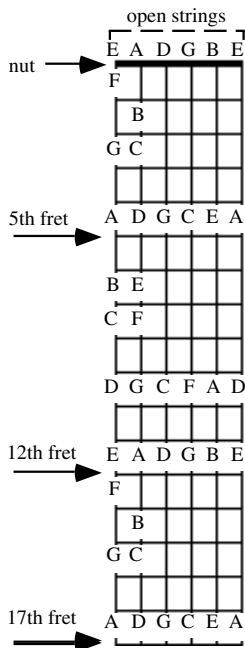
Use the sentences below to memorize the fifth and tenth fret note names (the first letter of each word lists the names on the sixth through first strings). The twelfth fret note names are identical to the open-string names.

fifth fret: All Dogs Go Crazy Eating Ants

tenth fret: Don't Go Crazy For A Dog



Next, memorize fretted notes on the sixth and fifth strings. If you have already memorized the note names on the fifth, tenth and twelfth frets, you can locate all others by moving alphabetically up or down any string from these reference points.



Chords are commonly named after notes on the fifth and sixth strings. By using the octave shapes you will learn later in this section, you can identify note names on the fourth through first strings in reference to those you have memorized on the sixth and fifth strings.

Natural notes have no sharp (#) nor flat (b). They are indicated with a plain letter “A” through “G”, or the letter followed by the “ \natural ” (natural) symbol. Notes with a sharp in their name are played one fret higher than the natural versions of the same letter-named note. Notes with a flat in their name are played one fret lower than the natural versions of the same letter-named note. *Enharmonic notes* are those which have two or more names for the same note, such as A# and Bb, Cb and B or C# and Db.

Fretboard Note Names With Naturals and Flats

letter names are shown above the fret they name

