

Guitar Lesson FAQ

What materials do I need to learn the guitar?

- playable instrument - reasonable action, intonation, sound quality, etc.
- metronome (matrix mr-500, download.com)
- capo
- short fingernails - left hand
- a place to practice - no distractions, interruptions, etc.
- time to practice - 30 minutes/day minimum
- heavy picks (dunlop tortex 1.0 mm - the blue ones)

What should I bring to the lesson?

- guitar, pick, capo
- bound or three ring notebook to take notes
- payment (only on first lesson of month)
- blank tape/cassette recorder to record lesson (optional)

How do I hold the guitar?

- balanced using right arm only
- neck at approximately 30 degrees to horizontal
- face of guitar at approximately 20 degrees to vertical

What constitutes good right hand pick technique?

- hold pick between thumb and index finger
- index finger tip and middle joints at 90 degree angles
- about 1/4" of pick visible
- pinkie and ring finger lightly rest on face of guitar or first string (optional)
- side of hands rests lightly on bridge
- primarily wrist motion
- minimal pick movement
- slight pick angle (about 15 degrees)

What constitutes good left hand technique?

- elbow bent at about 90 degrees
- elbow floating (keep it off the leg)
- thumb centered on neck
- at least 1/2" between bottom of neck and palm
- fingers curved, play on balls/tips
- hold string down slightly to the left (toward the nut) of the frets

What are the names of the strings?

- closest to the ceiling -> closest to the ground

- thickest -> thinnest
- lowest -> highest (based on pitch, not height)
- 6,5,4,3,2,1
- E,A,D,G,B,E
- 'every american dog gets bones easily'

How are my left hand fingers designated?

- index -> first finger 1
- middle -> second finger 2
- ring -> third finger 3
- pinkie -> fourth finger 4

How do I play 'by ear'?

1. listen several times until you can hear the music in your head
2. hum/sing along with music
3. hum/sing by yourself
4. hum/sing at a slower tempo
5. mute strings with left hand, play the rhythm while you hum/sing
6. add the left hand fretted notes
7. after you become comfortable, play without singing and gradually increase speed to correct tempo

How do I practice?

- get inspired
- write objective down - should be slightly out of reach
- use metronome
- play slowly and forcefully (loud)
- break music into small overlapping phrases
- isolate right and left hand
- keep written track of progress (mainly tempo)
- tape record yourself
- use mirror

Where can I find guitar music on the net?

- www.guitarnotes.com/tabs/
- www.guitartabs.net/
- www.harmony-central.com/Guitar/tab.html
- www.tabcrawler.com

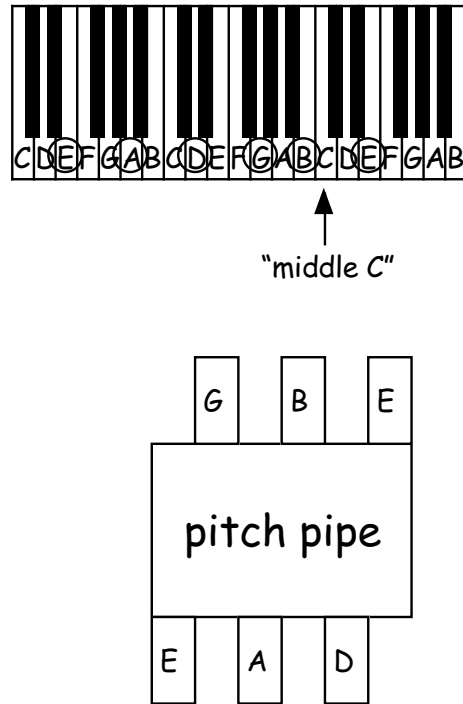
Where can I find SMI group guitar class information on the net?

- www.smiguitar.bizland.com
- www.guitarshowcase.com->free lessons->group guitar

tuning

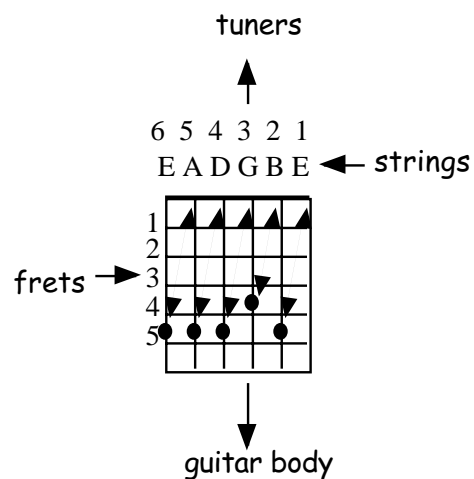
method 1

- compare each string to a reference pitch (strings are E, A, D, G, B, and E from 6 to 1 respectively)
- reference can be provided by a keyboard, pitch pipe, another guitar, electronic tuner, etc.
- if the string sounds lower than the reference, turn the tuner counter clockwise until it matches
- if the string sounds higher than the reference, turn the tuner clockwise until the string is beneath the pitch, then bring it back up with a counter clockwise turn

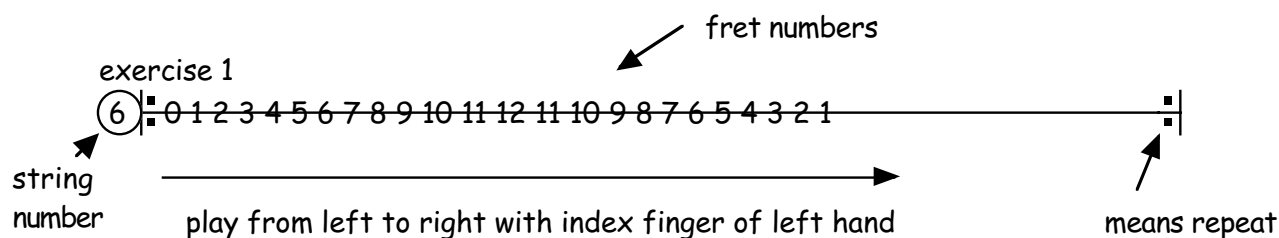


method 2

- compare the low E (6th) string to a reference pitch, or tune it to where you would like it to sound
- hold the E string down at the 5th fret and compare its pitch to that of the the A (5th) string played open - tune the A string until the pitches match
- repeat this procedure for each pair of adjacent strings, but use the 4th fret on the G (3rd) string instead of the 5th



single string playing



exercise 2

⑥ | 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 10 8 6 4 2 0 |

exercise 3 - brain stew

⑥ | 5 5 3 3 2 2 1 1 0 0 |

exercise 4 - last resort

⑤ | 7 7 5 5 3 3 2 2 5 5 |

exercise 5 - hitchin' a ride

⑥ | 7 7 5 5 4 4 3 3 |

exercise 6 - james bond

⑥ | 0 2 2 2 2 0 0 0 0 3 3 3 2 2 2 |

exercise 7 - peter gunn

⑥ | 0 0 2 0 3 0 5 4 |

exercise 8 - mission impossible

⑥ | 2 2 5 7 2 2 0 1 |

exercise 9 - sunshine of your love

④ | 12 12 10 12 7 6 5 0 3 0 |

exercise 10 - you really got me

⑥ | 3 5 5 3 5 |

exercise 11 - smoke on the water

⑥ | 3 6 8 3 6 9 8 3 6 8 6 3 |

exercise 12 - all day, all of the night

⑥ | 1 3 3 1 1 6 6 6 3 |

notes:

- synchronize left hand and pick - use downstrokes
- minimize the sound of your left hand sliding between notes
- stay on the tip of your index finger
- keep your right hand on or to the right of the bridge

single string power chords

how do I play a power chord?

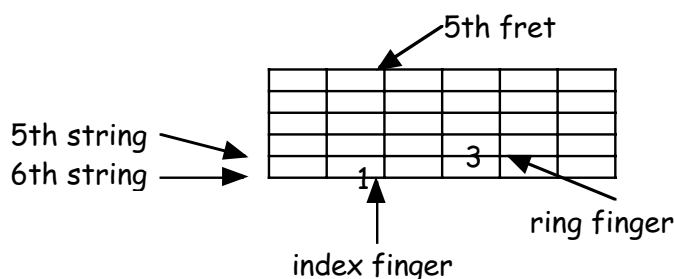
1. put your first finger on any fret on the 6th string
2. put your third finger on the 5th string, but 2 frets higher
3. strike both the 6th and 5th strings with a downstroke

right hand practice

- play strings 6 and 5 together
- play strings 5 and 4 together
- move pick as little as possible
- think 'tiny strokes'
- try and make it sound as though both strings are being struck together instead of one after the other

example

1. put your first finger on the 6th string, 5th fret
2. to make the power chord, put your third finger on the 5th string, 7th fret
3. play strings 6 and 5 together



exercise 1

string number

left hand ring finger should be on the 5th string, always 2 frets higher than the index finger

fret numbers for right hand index finger

(6) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

exercise 2

(6) 1 3 5 7 9 11 9 7 5 3 1

ex. 3 - santa monica

(6) 3 3 3 3 0 0 3 3

keep ring finger down

ex. 4 - hit me with your best shot

(5) 7 0 0 4 4 2 2 7 0 0 4 4 2 2 0 0 2 2

ex. 5 - cocaine

(5) 7 7 5 7 7 5

chorus

7 5 3 2

ex. 7 - iron man

(5) 2 5 5 7 7 10 9 10 9 10 5 5 7 7

ex. 8 - louie louie

(5) 0 0 0 5 5 7 7 7 5 5

play the following 'single string' songs using power chords:

- brain stew
- last resort
- hitchin' a ride
- you really got me

- smoke on the water
- all day
- all of the night

multi string single note playing

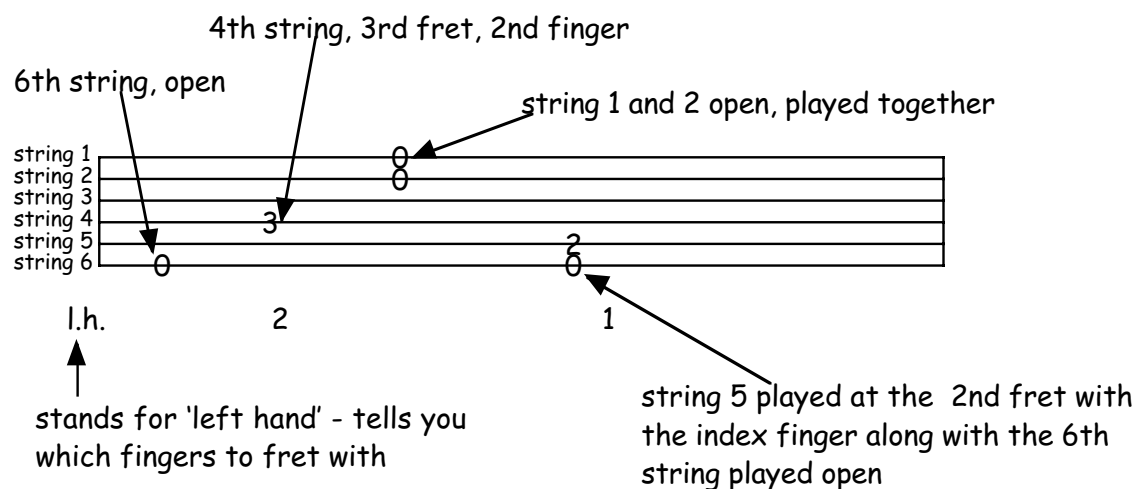
right hand practice

- play string in order, left to right
- take small downstrokes with pick
- watch your pick at first, then play without looking
- keep the side of your hand on or to the right of the bridge

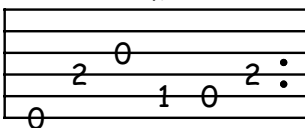
- a. 6666 5555 4444 3333 2222 1111
- b. 1111 2222 3333 4444 5555 6666
- c. 654321 123456
- d. 64534231 13243546

how do I read tablature?

1. each horizontal line corresponds to string on the guitar
2. top line is string 1, the skinniest string
3. bottom line is string 6, the thickest string
4. number on lines correspond to frets
5. read from left to right
6. multiple numbers stacked on top of one another mean to play those strings/frets simultaneously
7. a zero (0) on the line means to play the string without fretting it



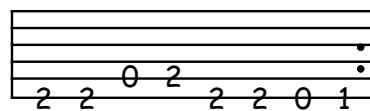
enter sandman



l.h. 2 1 2

- keep the second finger down the whole time
- let the strings ring together
- make sure second finger isn't touching 3rd string

mission impossible



l.h. 2 2 2 2 2 1

single note songs I

example 1 - come as you are

example 2 - pretty woman

0	0			2			0	4	2
2	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	2	0
2	2	2	2	1	2			4	2
					2		1		

example 3 - adam's song

4	0	4	0	4	0	4	0
2	2	0	0	3	3	0	3
1	3	1	3	3	3	3	2
				2	3		3

0	0	0	0	4	0	4	0
5	5	7	7	2	2	3	3
1	3	1	3	1	3	2	3
				1	3		

example 4 - sunshine of your love

example 5 - secret agent man (austin powers)

12	12	10	12	11	10	8	10	0	0
3	3	1	3	2	1	3	1	2	2
				3				2	2
								2	2

example 6 - one

4	0	4	0	4	0	4	0
2	2	3	3	2	2	0	0
				3	3	3	3
						0	2
						2	2

single note songs II

example 7 - day tripper

0 3 4 2 2 0 4 0 2

2 3 1 1 1 3 1 1

example 8 - come out and play

1 2 4 2 1

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

example 9 - heartbreaker

0 3 0 1 2

3 1 2 3

example 10 - my girl

0 0 0 0 3

3 1 2 3

example 11 - theme from mash

3 1 0 1 0 1 0

3 1 0 1 0 1 0

example 12 - dammit

3 3 0 0 2

3 3 2 3 3 2

example 13 - blister in the sun

2 3 2 3 2 3 2

2 1 2 2 1 2 2 1

example 14 - wipeout

3 4 5 5 5 3

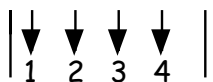
3 1 2 3 3 3 1 3

strumming

how do I read strumming diagrams?

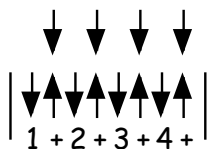
- tap your foot on the beat (with metronome)
- count evenly so that you are saying the numbers at the same time your foot taps
- arrows represent direction of stroke
- strum up or down according to which arrow lines up with the syllable you are saying
- say '+' as 'and'

example 1



strum down on every beat


say 'and' in between foot taps and strum upward





example 2


tap foot here and strum down

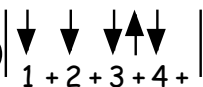
①  1 2 3 4 |

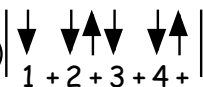
②  1 2 3 4 |

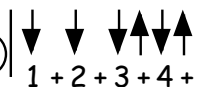
③  1 2 3 4 |

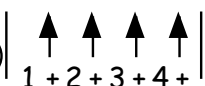
④  1 2 3 4 |

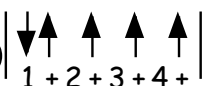
⑤  1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

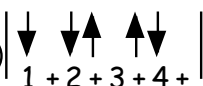
⑥  1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

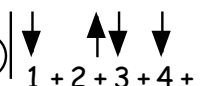
⑦  1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

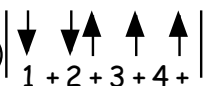
⑧  1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

⑨  1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

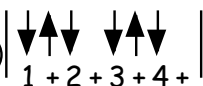
⑩  1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

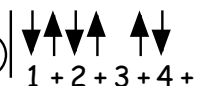
⑪  1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

⑫  1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

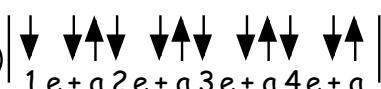
⑬  1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |


⑭  1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

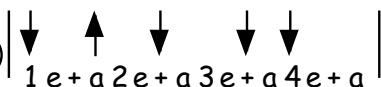
⑮  1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

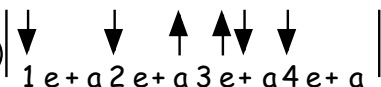
⑯  1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

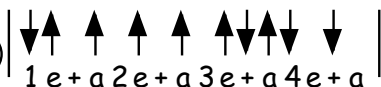
⑰  1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a |

⑱  1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a |

⑲  1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a |

⑳  1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a |

㉑  1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a |

㉒  1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a |

notes:

- each group of four beats is called a bar, or measure
- bars are separate by vertical lines, both in strumming diagrams and conventional notation

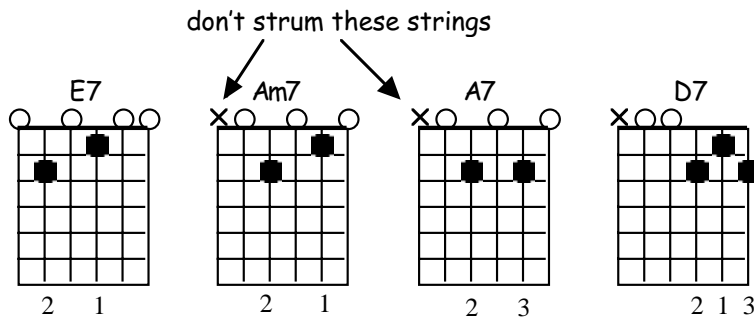
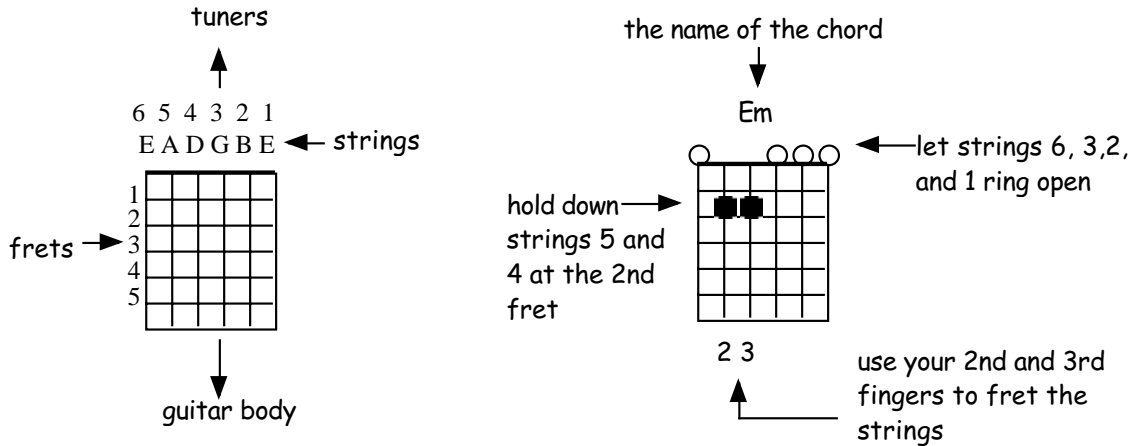
open chords intro

how do I read chord diagrams?

- strings run vertically (up and down)
- frets run horizontally (across)
- dots indicate which strings to fret
- x shows which strings should not be played

how do I get the chords to sound right?

- fret with tips of fingers
- check for accidental muting on adjacent strings
- check for playing non-included strings (the ones with x's)



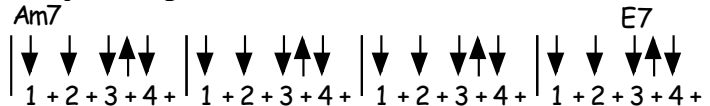
notes

- m stands for minor
- x strings can be muted with your thumb

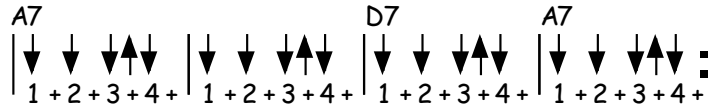
drills

1. play Am7 to E7, one bar each, using strums 1 through 4
2. play A7 and D7, one bar each, using strums 1 through 4

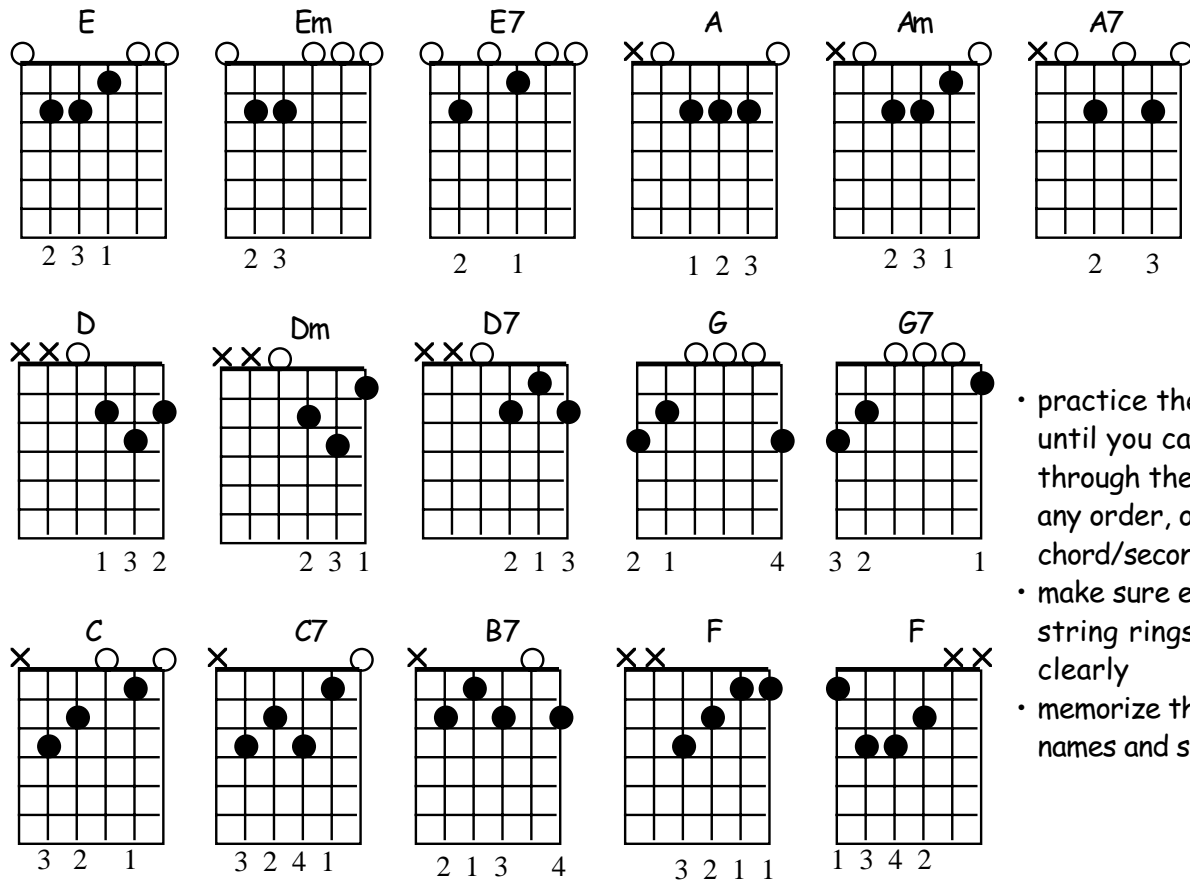
jesus is just alright



get back

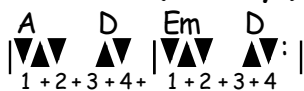


open chords

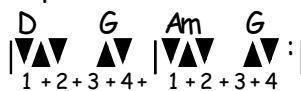


- practice these until you can play through them in any order, one chord/second
- make sure every string rings clearly
- memorize the names and shapes

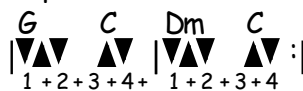
louie louie (in 4 keys)



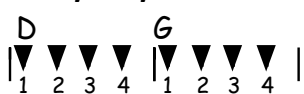
capo at 7



capo at 2



everybody hurts



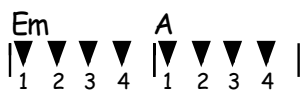
melt with you



good



chorus (everybody hurts)



knockin' on heaven's door



sweet home alabama



stand by me (capo at fret 2)

