

Reading Music

In this lesson, you will begin learning to read music one string at a time, and only on the first three frets, which is called **First Position**. We will begin with the first string, also called the *E string* since that is the note it sounds when played open (no finger held down on the string). The note on the 1st fret is F. The note on the 3rd fret is G. (See below.) We will not play the note on the second fret in this lesson.

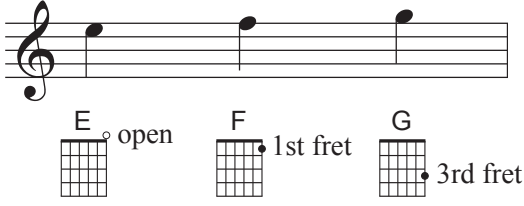
Numbers Next to Notes

Notice the numbers next to some of the notes in the exercises below. These numbers indicate the left-hand fingers you will use to play those notes. The numbers *do not* mean frets! However, while in first position, the numbers will correspond to fret numbers. Since you will be playing in first position only, numbers really aren't necessary at all. All notes on the 1st fret will always be played with the first finger and notes on 3rd fret will always be played with the third finger. Because of that, finger numbers are used sparingly throughout the book so that you are not tempted to read numbers instead of reading the notes. Keep in mind that the point of these exercises is not so much to *play* the melodies, but to *read* the melodies.

Right and Left-Hand Technique

Play the following exercises alternating between the index finger (**i**) and middle finger (**m**) and using a **rest stroke**: After striking the string, the finger *rests* against the string just above. For example, after striking the 1st string with the index finger, the finger will "rest" against the 2nd string. The middle finger will do the same. In the left hand, keep the thumb behind the neck (it should not hang over the fretboard), and always aligned with the middle finger. This will create an arch to the left hand, causing the fingers to be aligned with the frets, so that you won't have to look at your hand while reading the music.

Notes on the 1st (E) String



E open F 1st fret G 3rd fret

Reading Exercises

Play the exercises below alternating between the index (**i**) and middle (**m**) finger and using a rest stroke.

index finger in *right* hand

1st finger (index finger) in *left* hand

