

Octave Identification System for the Guitar

Octave Identification
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Test Yourself

Octave Identification

- An octave is the distance between two notes that share the same letter name. Start on any letter of the musical alphabet and count the number of notes until you reach the same letter. They are eight notes apart (8 = “oct”).
- The note range of the guitar is nearly four octaves. To minimize confusion, an octave identification system was introduced in *Guitar 101*.

Octave 1

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notes are E1, F1, G1, A1, B1, C1, and D1, each represented by a whole note with a flat symbol. The notes are positioned on the staff as follows: E1 (first space), F1 (first line), G1 (second space), A1 (second line), B1 (third space), C1 (third line), and D1 (third space).

Octave 2

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notes are E2, F2, G2, A2, B2, C2, and D2, each represented by a whole note with a flat symbol. The notes are positioned on the staff as follows: E2 (first space), F2 (first line), G2 (second space), A2 (second line), B2 (third space), C2 (third line), and D2 (third space).

Octave 3

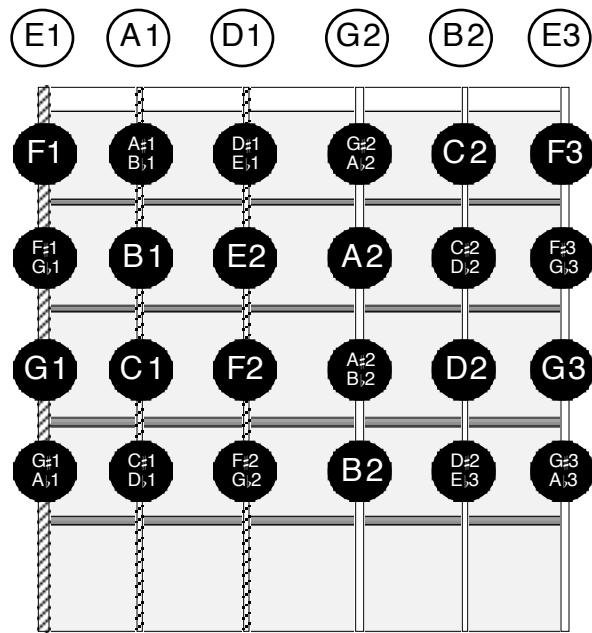
A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notes are E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C3, and D3, each represented by a whole note with a flat symbol. The notes are positioned on the staff as follows: E3 (first space), F3 (first line), G3 (second space), A3 (second line), B3 (third space), C3 (third line), and D3 (third space).

Octave 4

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notes are E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C4, and D4, each represented by a whole note with a flat symbol. The notes are positioned on the staff as follows: E4 (first space), F4 (first line), G4 (second space), A4 (second line), B4 (third space), C4 (third line), and D4 (third space).

Note Range in Position 1

- A **Position** is a - four finger to four fret relationship - that is named after the fret that the first finger is on.
- * **Enharmonic Equivalent**s are two notes with the same pitch but different names. For example: F# and Gb



⑥

E1 F1 * F#1 Gb1 G1 * G#1 Ab1

⑤

A1 * A#1 Bb1 B1 C1 * C#1 Db1

④

D1 * D#1 Eb2 E2 F2 * F#2 Gb2

③

G2 * G#2 Ab2 A2 * A#2 Bb2 B2

②

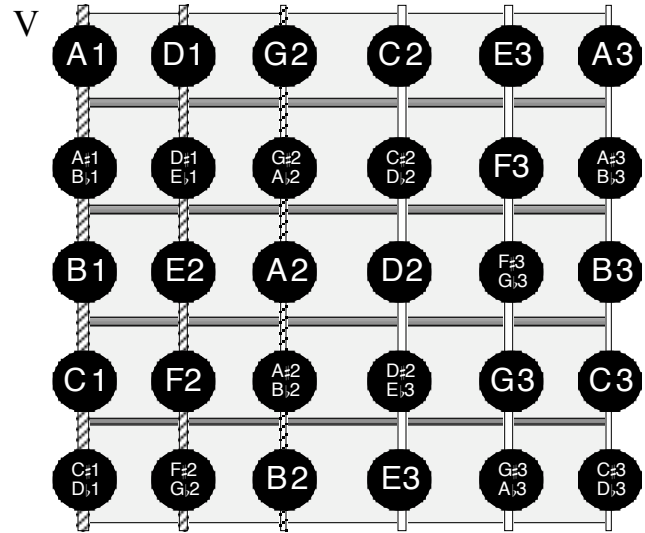
B2 C2 * C#2 Db2 D2 * D#2 Eb3

①

E3 F3 * F#3 Gb3 G3 * G#3 Ab3

Note Range in Position V

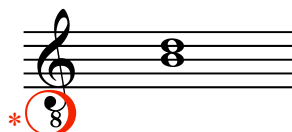
- An *Extended Position* allows for either the first or fourth finger to extend by one fret temporarily to reach a particular note.



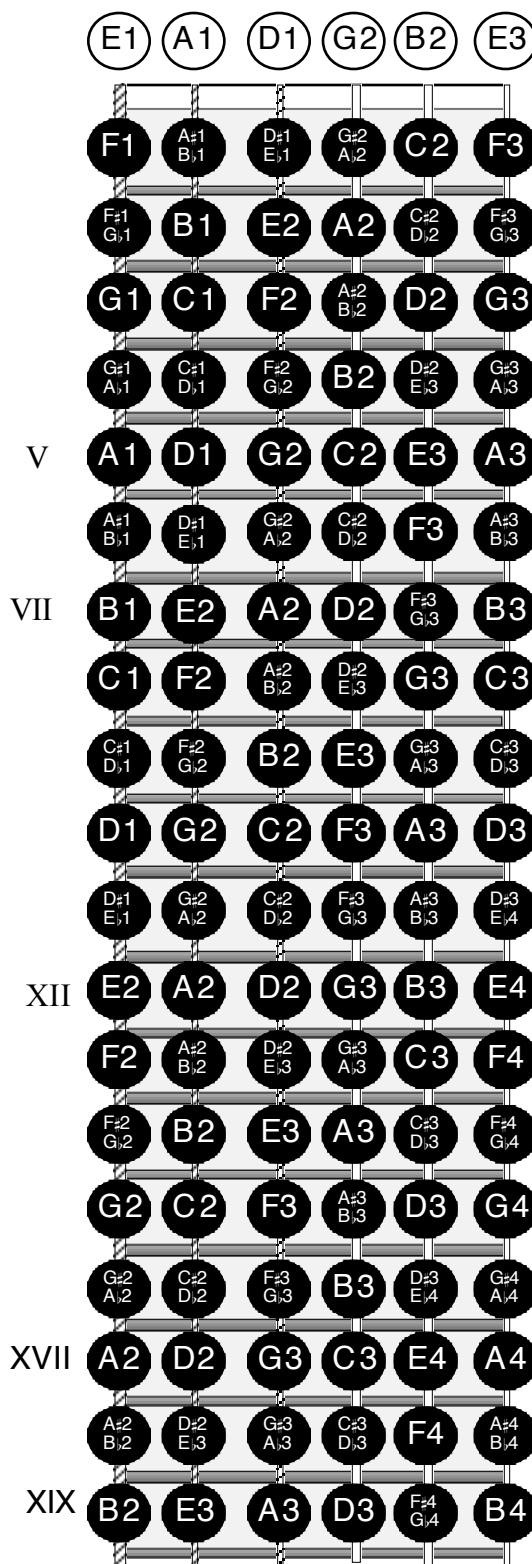
Full Range of the Guitar

Observations

- There are multiple locations for notes above G# (A \flat). For example, A1 can be played in two locations, while E3 can be played in five locations.
- *Unisons* are notes that are the exact same pitch. Notice that when you play E3 anywhere on this chart, the pitch is the same (assuming your guitar is in standard tuning).
- Knowing where to play the same pitch in more than one location is often necessary. In this example, D2 and B2 must be played on two different strings. These two notes cannot be played simultaneously on one string (②).



- *The technically correct clef for the guitar is a treble clef with the number “8” written below it. This represents that the guitar sounds an octave lower. Many guitarists who also play piano are surprised when they play a Middle C on the guitar and it sounds an octave lower. This is because most published guitar music is written without the “8” below the staff.



Octave Identification Test

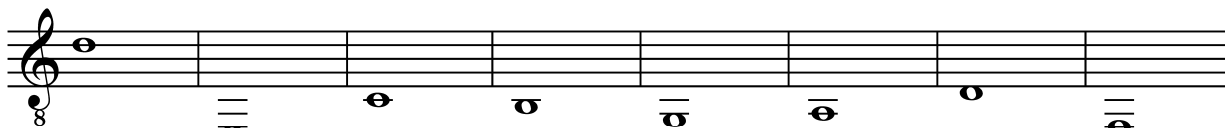
☐ test yourself

Part 1:

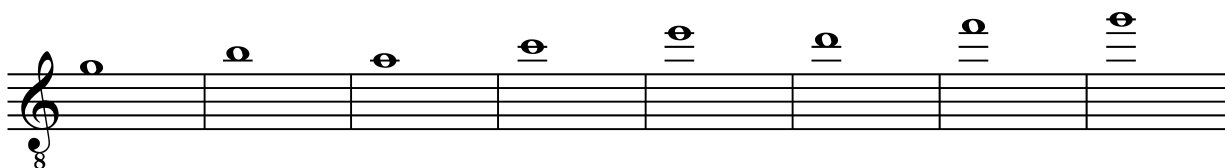
Write the note names with octave identification.



1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.



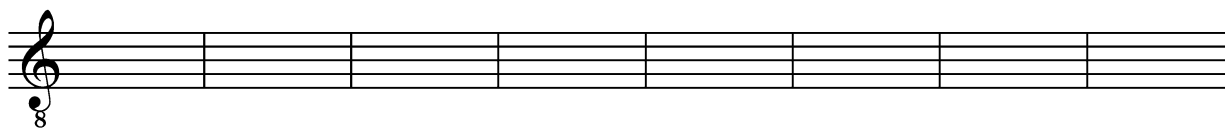
9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16.



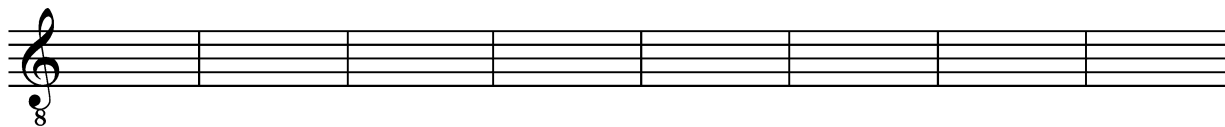
17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24.

Part 2:

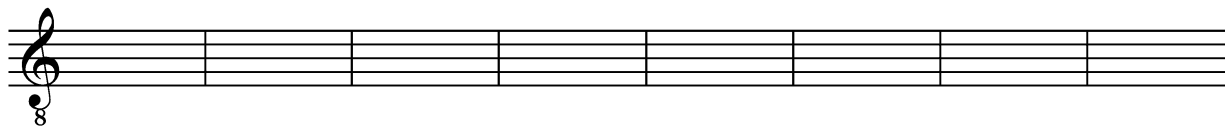
Write the requested notes on the staff.



1. E1 2. C2 3. G3 4. A3 5. E2 6. B1 7. F1 8. D3



9. G1 10. D1 11. A4 12. A1 13. F3 14. C1 15. B3 16. D2



17. E3 18. E4 19. G2 20. C3 21. F2 22. A2 23. B2 24. G4