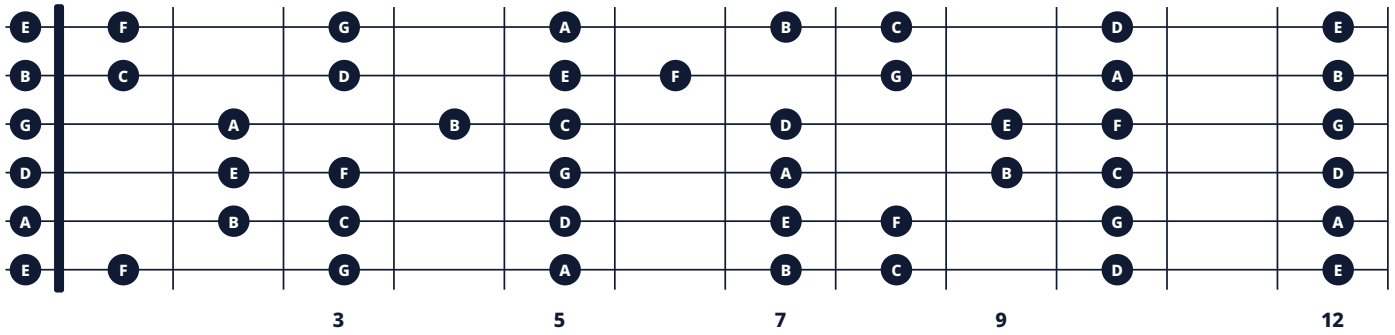
PICKFRET CHEAT SHEET

Every note on the guitar fretboard

In standard tuning the open strings are E, A, D, G, B and E, from the thickest to the thinnest. Each fret raises a note by a half step, and fret 12 brings back the open note an octave higher, so frets 0 to 12 hold every note on the neck. Natural notes sit two frets apart, except E–F and B–C, which are one fret apart.

The natural notes, open strings to fret 12

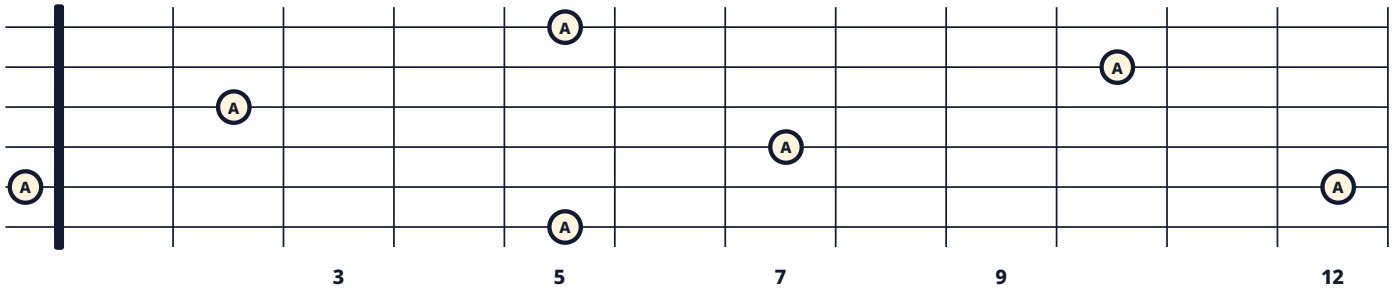


Open strings sit left of the nut. The empty frets are the sharps and flats: between F and G is F♯, also G♭.

Three shortcuts

1. **Fret 12 starts again.** Fret 12 plays the open string's note an octave higher, and the pattern repeats above it. Fret 15 is fret 3 again.
2. **Two frets, except E–F and B–C.** Going up a string, each natural note is two frets above the last. E to F and B to C are the exceptions: one fret.
3. **The octave shape.** The same note sits two strings higher and two frets up: A at fret 5 on the low E string is also A at fret 7 on the D string. Crossing from the G string to the B string, go three frets up instead.

Every A, up to fret 12



Follow the octave shape from one A to the next.

How to practise it

1. Learn the low E and A strings first. They hold the roots of most barre and power chords.
2. Say each natural note aloud as you climb one string to fret 12, then check that fret 12 matches the open string.
3. Pick a note and find it on every string with the octave shape. Two minutes a day beats an hour once a week.