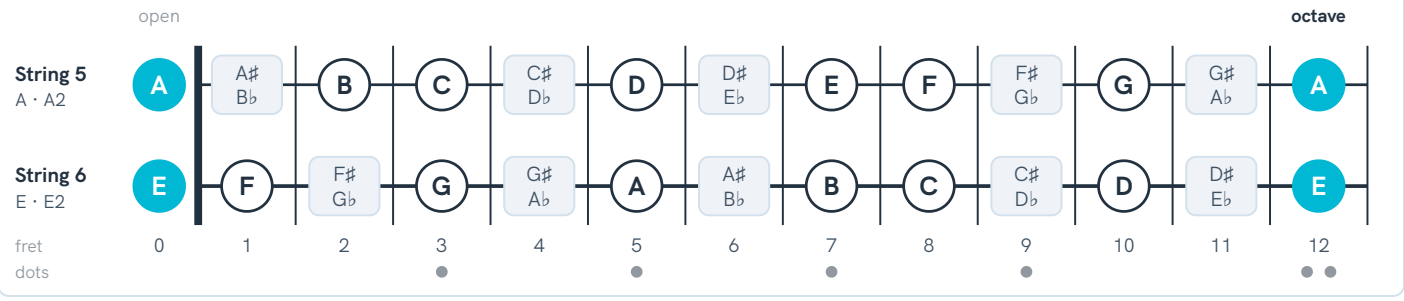
Guitar Fretboard Map: Strings 6 and 5 to Fret 12

In standard tuning, string 6 is the low **E** (it sounds E2) and string 5 is **A** (A2). Each fret raises the pitch by **one half step**, so twelve frets take a string up one octave. Learn these two strings and you can find any note on them by name.

1 · THE MAP: EVERY NOTE, FRETS 0–12

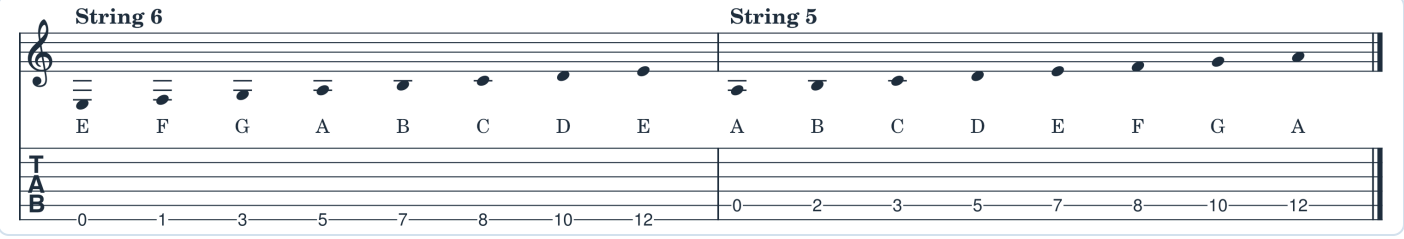
Circles are the **natural notes**. The small boxes are the notes between them, and each has **two names**: one fret above F is F♯, and one fret below G is G♭, the same note. **E–F** and **B–C** are only one fret apart; every other pair of neighboring letters is two frets apart. Fret 12 repeats the open string, one octave higher.



The dots under the fret numbers show where most guitars put their position markers: frets 3, 5, 7, 9, and two dots at 12. Some guitars mark them differently, so check your own neck.

2 · THE NATURAL NOTES ON THE STAFF

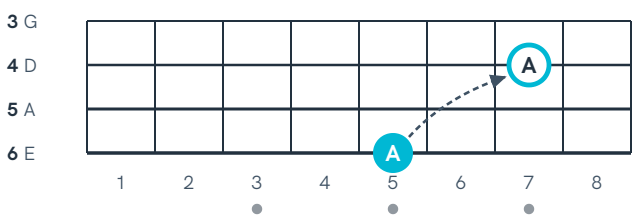
Guitar music is written one octave higher than it sounds, so open string 6 is written E3, three ledger lines below the staff. The tab under the staff gives the fret for each note. String 6: E–F at frets 0–1 and B–C at frets 7–8. String 5: B–C at frets 2–3 and E–F at frets 7–8.



3 · THE OCTAVE SHAPE: TWO STRINGS OVER, TWO FRETS UP

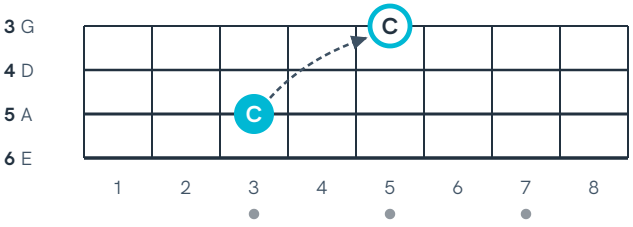
From any note on string 6 or 5, skip one string and move up two frets: you land on the **same note, one octave higher**, on string 4 or 3. Use it only from strings 6 and 5. From string 4 or 3 the jump crosses the B string, which is tuned a major third above G, so there the octave is **three** frets up.

A from string 6: string 6, fret 5 → string 4, fret 7



Sounds A2, then A3: the same letter, 12 half steps higher.

C from string 5: string 5, fret 3 → string 3, fret 5



Sounds C3, then C4: the same letter, 12 half steps higher.

Every natural note on frets 0–10 of strings 6 and 5, with the fret of its octave (fret → fret):

String 6 → string 4	**E** 0→2	**F** 1→3	**G** 3→5	**A** 5→7	**B** 7→9	**C** 8→10	**D** 10→12
String 5 → string 3	**A** 0→2	**B** 2→4	**C** 3→5	**D** 5→7	**E** 7→9	**F** 8→10	**G** 10→12

TRY IT

Play string 6 from the open string to fret 12 and say each natural note as you go: E F G A B C D E. Then play each one with its octave on string 4, using the table. Do the same on string 5 with string 3. To check yourself, try Exercise 215.

© 2026 Tissimo. All rights reserved.