

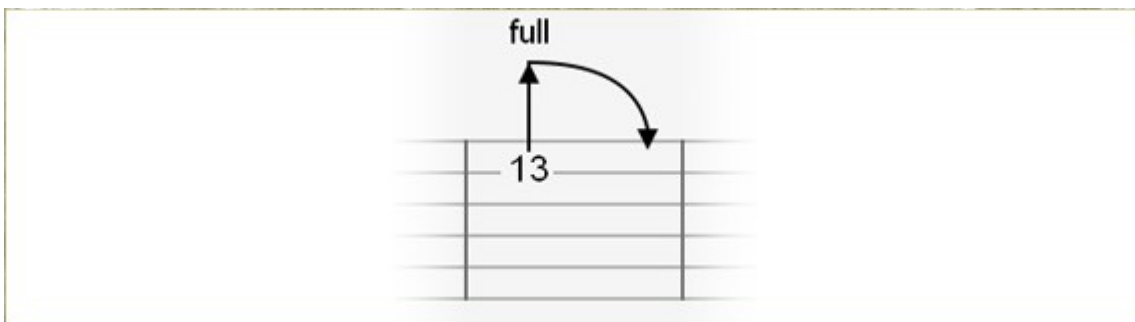


Advanced Tablature with My Guitar Lessons

Hopefully you have read the beginners guide to reading tablature that appeared on our website last Month. If not go to www.MyGuitarLessons.co.uk to download it for free.

So you have the hang of the basics...so now we're going make it more difficult! A lot of these techniques will feature mainly in electric guitar soloing, but you may find them cropping up here and there with acoustic too so it's best to be prepared! Here's a few slightly trickier things you may find lurking in your tablature

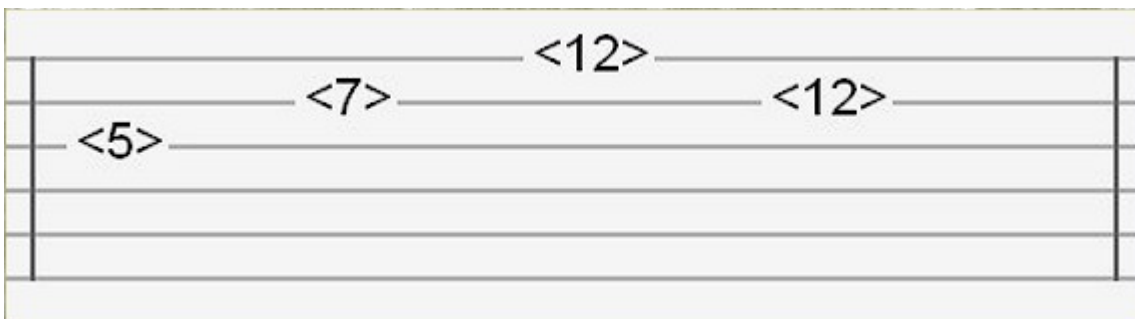
Pre-bend and Release



This is pretty much the opposite of a bend - in that you need to bend the string up without picking it, then pick it once it's bent fully upwards. Keeping the note held down, release the pressure on the string and bring it back to its normal position.

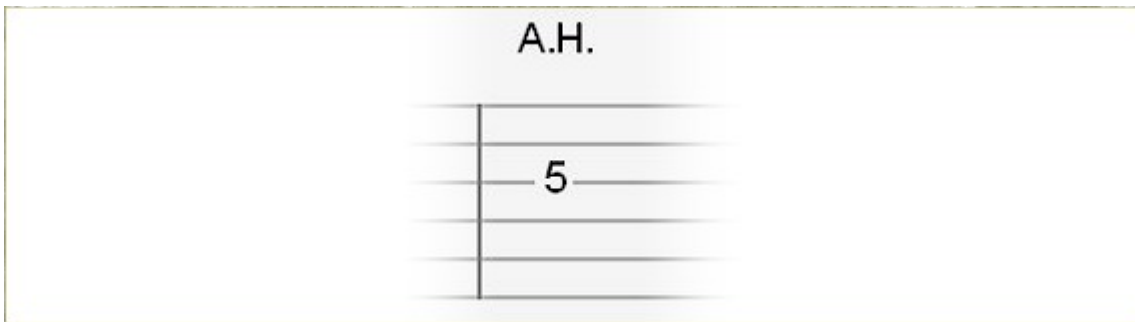
NOTE: Make sure you only pre-bend the note to the degree marked on the tablature - 'FULL', 'ONE' or 'WHOLE' written above the note means to bend it up a full tone (i.e. so that it sounds like the note two frets above it). 'HALF' or '1/2' is a semitone (one fret) pre-bend.

Natural Harmonics



To produce a natural harmonic on the guitar, you want to place your finger so it's JUST touching the string (not fretting a note...just touching the string lightly) DIRECTLY above the fret number indicated - NOT in front of the fret like it would be if you were fretting the note. Pluck the string as normal, and you should hear the harmonic.

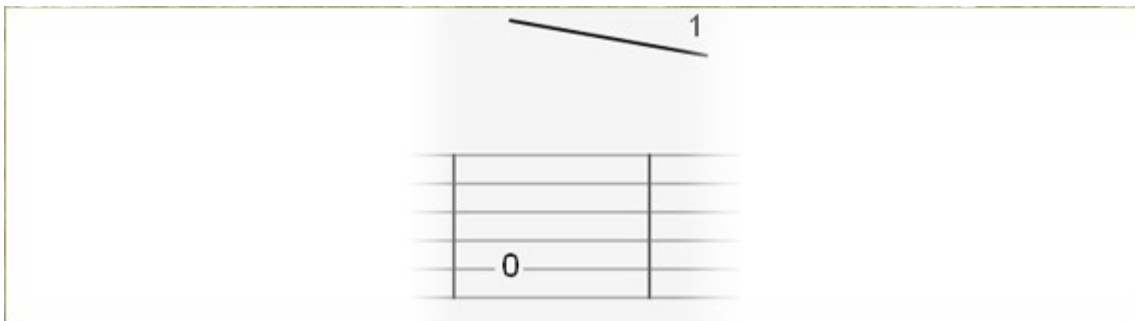
"Pinch" / Artificial Harmonics



An "artificial harmonic" - or "pinch harmonic" is something you'll hear mainly in rock playing. Zakk Wylde uses a lot of them, and they can be a nightmare to learn if you don't already know how to do them. Fret the note indicated, and strike the string with a fairly aggressive down stroke. The fiddly bit is this - as the pick cuts through the string, you need to catch it lightly with the underside of your thumb. This can be a pain to learn but is well worth the effort! If it doesn't work, try moving your picking hand up or down the string a little - it'll work better in certain places. With a bit of practice, a squealing harmonic note shall be your reward! Sticking a wide vibrato in there too is always a good idea.

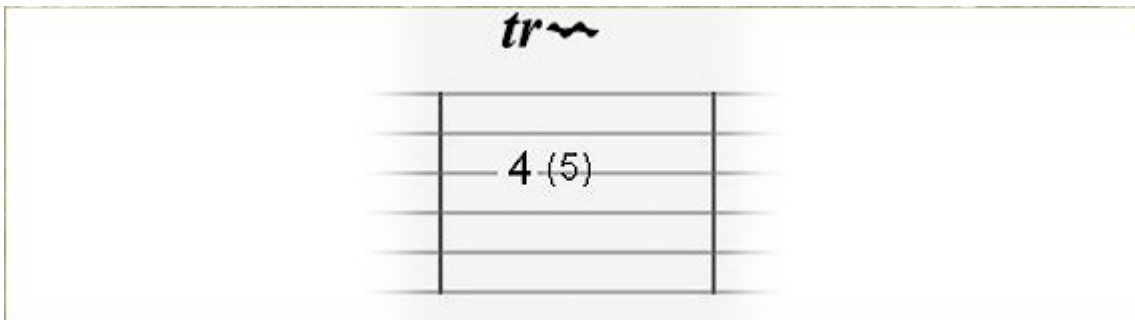
NOTE: It's just as common to see "P.H." over the tab stave as it is to see "A.H." - they're the same thing. If you see a letter under the stave at the same point, that's suggesting the note the harmonic should sound. We wouldn't worry about that too much.

Bar Dive



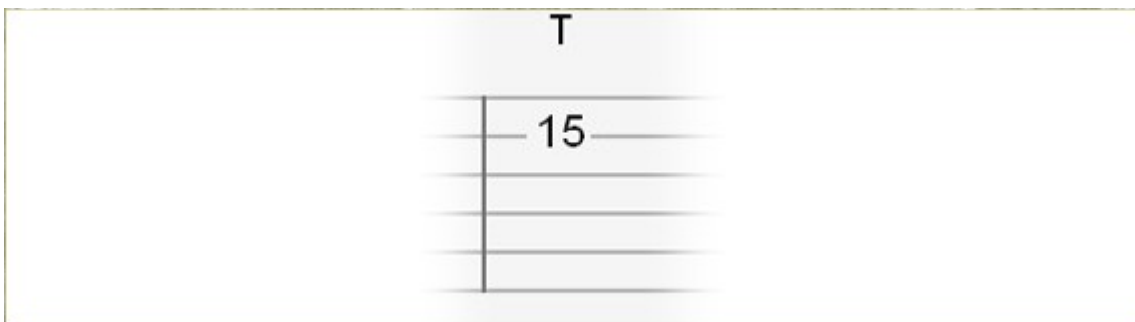
If you don't have a tremolo/whammy bar on your guitar you won't be able to do this. Hit the note indicated, and depress the bar to lower the pitch of the note. The number at the end of the line is telling you how many tones the note should go down. Occasionally you might see an instance where you hit the note and pull the bar UP - this will only be possible on a guitar with a floating bridge and increases the tension of the strings - so go easy if you see one of those and don't snap your strings! Here's another one for you - try depressing the bar first, then hit a note and bend it upwards for a crazy vibrato bend as you release the bar again. The bar should return to normal position just as you hit the vibrato at the end. It'll sound pretty wild if you get it right!

Trill



Originally more of a classical music thing, you'll also find these in modern music from time to time. Basically you're just hammering-on and pulling-off repeatedly between the notes indicated. It can take a bit of practice - it should sound like one crazy wobbly note rather than hearing the on-off-on-off between the two. Practice!

Tapping



A favourite of Eddie Van Halen and every rock guitarist since, this is often also shown as a circle around the note that is to be tapped. Some people like to tap with their first finger, but this can raise the awkward issue of where on earth to stick the plectrum, so you'll find it easier to get used to tapping with your middle finger. It's basically a hammer-on with your picking hand - strike the note where you'd normally fret it with the tip of your finger and the note should sound. Some people like to use more of a 'scoop' sort of motion with their tapping finger...give it a go and you'll soon get it.