

A WORD OF WARNING ABOUT TABLATURE

Tablature presents a risk that should be considered. Since tablature is easier to read, and beginners are able to play songs using only tab, many times they are tempted to procrastinate learning standard notation. It is important to keep in mind that doing so will represent several disadvantages for the student.

If you don't learn standard notation, you will not be able to communicate appropriately with other musicians that play other instruments. Also, since tabs do not teach you the alphabetical notes on the fretboard of the guitar, you are not learning music theory as it applies to the fretboard.

Given that tablature usually doesn't give you the details of the music, it presents some limitations. The fact that you will not find tabs in school or higher learning institutions will present limitations also. Standard notation is essential to study classical music and jazz. Tabs are more prevalent in pop and folk music.

So, knowing standard notation will make you a well-rounded musician. It will save you from awkward moments, when you sit down with other musicians, and you realize you are unable to participate. Although it is true that learning to read standard notation is more challenging than learning to read tab, it is also true that, when you learn it, you experience a greater feeling of success. I encourage you to make learning standard notation a daily regimen. Tabs are fine and fun, but don't neglect sight-reading standard notation.

A WORD OF WARNING ABOUT STANDARD NOTATION

On the other hand, some musicians become excellent sight-readers but they neglect the art of improvising. They are not comfortable unless they are sight-reading. When they are attempting to participate in folk jam sessions they struggle. So, try to create a balance between sight-reading, and improvising using your ears without sheet music.