

Lesson 2: Sharps and Flats

Basic Music Theory for Guitar

What you will learn: the 5 "in-between" notes, and how they complete the 12 notes of music.

The notes between the letters

In Lesson 1, you saw that most natural notes are **2 frets apart**. The fret in the middle also has a note. These middle notes are called **sharps** and **flats**.

- **Sharp (#)** means **one fret higher**. Example: **F#** is one fret above F.
- **Flat (b)** means **one fret lower**. Example: **Gb** is one fret below G.

F# and Gb are on the **same fret**, so they are the **same sound** with two names. Musicians choose the name that fits the key of the song.

The 12 notes

Here are all 12 notes, each one fret apart:

#	Note
1	C
2	C# - Db
3	D
4	D# - Eb
5	E
6	F
7	F# - Gb
8	G
9	G# - Ab
10	A
11	A# - Bb
12	B

After **B**, it starts again from **C**, one octave higher.

Remember: no sharp or flat between E-F and B-C

E to F and **B to C** are only one fret apart, so there is **no note between them**. That's why there are only **5** sharp/flat notes, not 7.

All 12 notes on string 6 (low E)

Fret	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Note	E	F	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B	C	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E

Practice

1. Play string 6 from fret 0 to fret 12, one fret at a time, and say each note name.
2. Find **F#** on string 6 (fret 2). Now say its other name: **Gb**.
3. Do the same on string 5 (open A): A, A# Bb, B, C, C# Db, D, D# Eb, E, F, F# Gb, G, G# Ab, A

Next lesson: Half Steps and Whole Steps