



# Up the Neck

A guide to musical notation  
in higher neck positions.

## Contents

Introduction		Page 4
Fifth (V) position diagram		5
Ode to Joy		6
Tijuana Taxi		7
Fifth (V) position diagram +		8
Aura Lee		8
So Happy Together		9
Octave notes VII fret +		10
There's a kind of hush	notes	11
	manuscript	12
Key of D diagram, V position		
Whole New World (Key of D)	notes	13
	manuscript	15
Under the Sea (Key of D)	notes	13
	manuscript	16
Key of E diagrams, IV and VII positions		17
Beauty and the Beast (Key of E)	notes	18
	manuscript	19

Yesterday (double stops, full neck)	notes	page 20
	manuscript	21
Swinging Shepherd (double stops, full neck)	notes	22
	manuscript	23
What a day for a daydream (just because...)	notes	24
	manuscript	25

Notes on copyright.

All notes and diagrams are © Jim Miles and are to be considered public domain for educational use. The music is used under “fair use” application of copyright laws for educational purposes. Neither the website nor the Youtube channel are monetized. No money is accepted or required for the use of these materials.

Videos available at:

First video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-8Y6f46qQQ&list=PL5pMae81qGW3eBMdWbrR\\_iHIKB5tjEDqC](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-8Y6f46qQQ&list=PL5pMae81qGW3eBMdWbrR_iHIKB5tjEDqC)

Playlist:

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5pMae81qGW3eBMdWbrR\\_iHIKB5tjEDqC](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5pMae81qGW3eBMdWbrR_iHIKB5tjEDqC)

## **Introduction**

There are two main reasons for playing up the neck - tonality and versatility. You may already play up the neck using a variety of methods - tablature, scales, patterns, and/or simply having a good ear. This is another way to more fully understand the full possibilities of the guitar.

### **Tonality**

Tonality on an electric guitar comes mainly from manipulating the electronics. For acoustic guitars, there is a 'sweet spot' usually around the seventh to the twelfth position from which a richer sound is achieved.

Using vibrato, bends, and slurs is easier higher up the neck where the string tension is easier to manipulate. For the purposes of all these factors, the following applications use no open strings - which has other advantages for understanding note relationships.

### **Versatility**

Versatility is the big factor.

The most obvious part of that is the ability to reach higher notes - and at the same time continue playing singly or in combination notes usually associated with the first position.

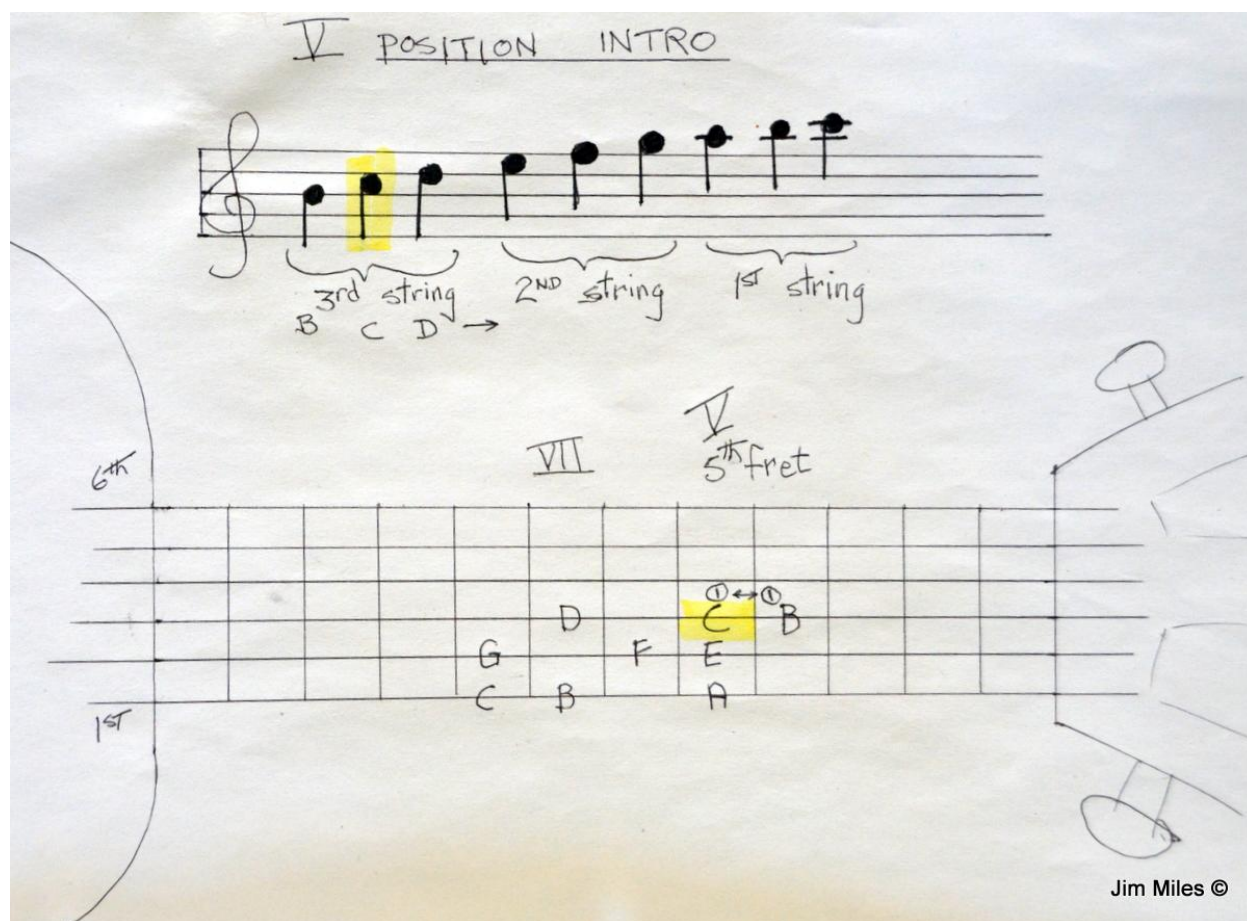
The frets are closer higher up the neck making it easier to access different combinations of tones and fingerings. Playing up the neck can minimize left hand movement, although there are many times movement up and down the neck is important (e.g. maintaining tonality on a single string melody line, or long slides and slurs, accessing the lower bass notes).

Finally (for now) try to maintain a regular finger position in order to utilize all your fingers. This allows muscle memory to help you remember where the notes are within a certain position. Every one's hand is different so ultimately do what is comfortable for you.

### **Tablature vis a vis music notation**

Simply put, tablature is a diagram of where you are to play. Musical notation leaves more choice to the player, is much more nuanced than tab, and visually shows the rise and fall of the music. Tablature applies only to guitar; music notation is available to and from other instruments.

## V position intro - notes and diagram



## Fifth position - V

This beginning idea is based on the understanding that the reader is already familiar with music notation in the first position.

In the V position, to start with, use the index finger for the V position notes, middle finger for the VI position, the ring finger for the VII, and the little finger for the VIII position.

This is not a hard and fast rule and is readily broken (as you will see in the videos) for comfort and versatility. To start with, if followed regularly, the fingers will retain the muscle memory needed to readily find the notes; it will also help establish the relative positions of the notes to one another.

20/05/2021 Ode+to+Joy.png (1600x1179)

## Ode to Joy

Be

The musical score for 'Ode to Joy' is presented in 4/4 time. It consists of four systems of music. Each system includes a melody line on a single staff with a treble clef. Above the staff, guitar chords are indicated by letters: C, C7, F, G, and D7. Some chords are marked as 'Alternate Chord' with an asterisk. The melody is a simple, ascending and then descending line. The score is credited to Jim Miles ©.

**Ode to Joy** provides a basic melody line easy to play in the V position. It is a good starter piece to maintain a strong finger to note/fret relationship.

**Tijuana Taxi** (next page) is more difficult rhythmically, and uses all the notes diagrammed above within the basic V position. The first part has a repeated descending scale pattern. The second part has two distinct rhythm patterns, the first based on a three note melody and the second on a two note melody.

The fingering is easy enough, the rhythms and tempo are the main difficulty.



# TIJUANA TAXI

Music by ERVAN "BUD" COLEMAN  
Words by JOHNNY FLAMINGO

Moderately

Am Dm Am

Dm G G7 C

12. G C

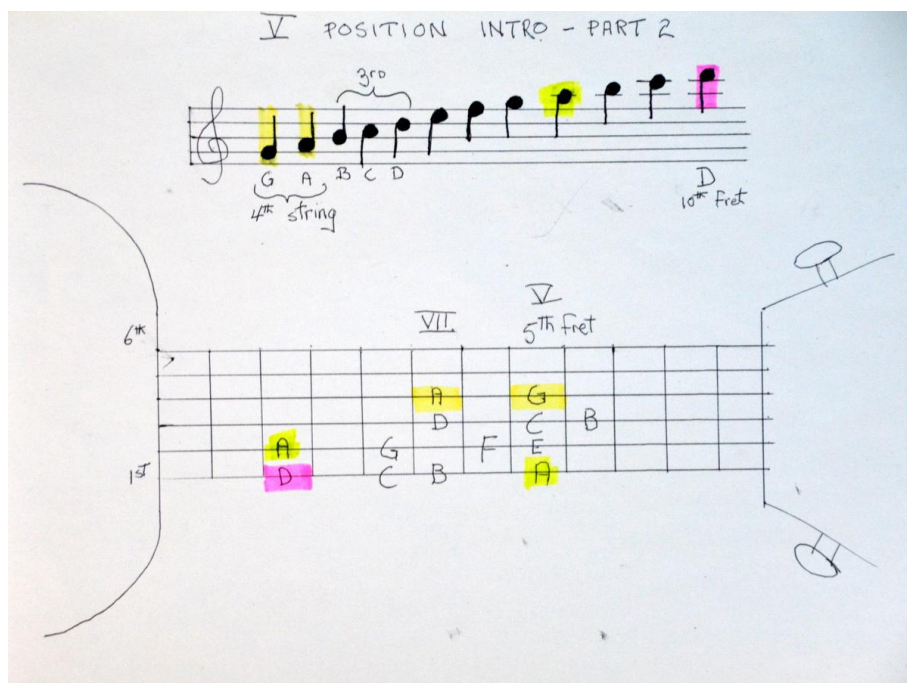
A7 Am G

F7 C G C

Am Dm Am

Dm 1. G G7 C

12. G Dm Em G7 C



Aura Lee - with 4th string G and A

C D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C

C D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C

C E<sup>7</sup> A<sup>m</sup> E<sup>7</sup>

C A<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C

Jim Miles ©





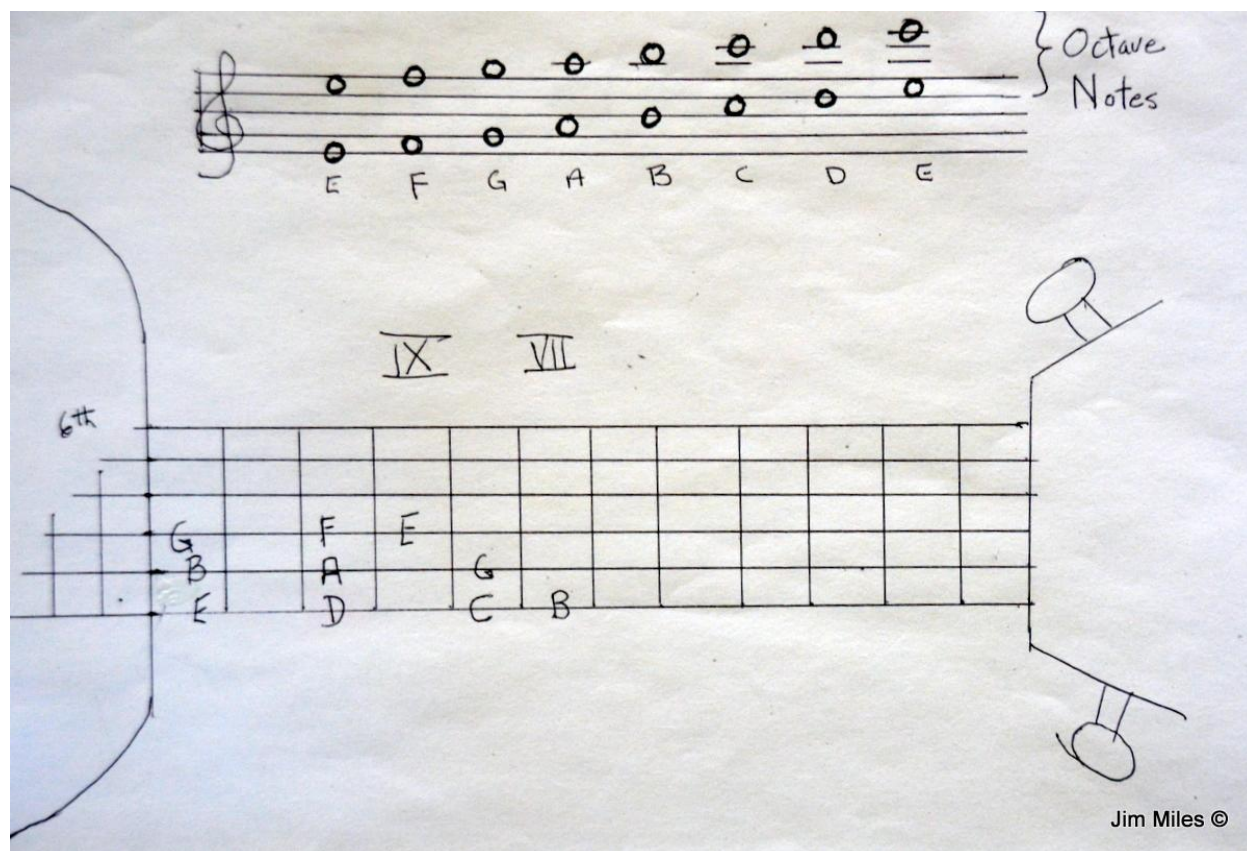
### So happy together (Turtles, 1967)

A more complex melody line. The sharp sign indicates the note you are about to play moves up one fret. The key signature, with one flat, indicates that all 'B' notes are flatted, moved back one fret. The natural sign indicates the 'B' is played in its 'natural' position.

The chorus section moves up to the 'D' on the Xth fret. (see Position V intro - Part II, above)

From there, the 'A' can be played on the second string adjacent to the high 'D', and then the hand **slides** down for the 'F sharp'.

## Octave Notes



This diagram shows the natural notes on the first three strings from the VII fret to the XII fret. The two 'G' and 'B' notes shown are identical, leaving the choice as to where to play them up to the convenience of the player.

### Reading octave notes

Reading notes in the upper register of the guitar involves a lot of ledger lines, visually hard to discern at times. If a melody is written essentially for the lower frets of the guitar - the first position - it is sometimes easier to simply raise them the octave and play them farther up the neck.

Moving them up also adds improving tonality and effects, as per the introduction - one of the main reasons for playing up the neck in the first place. It also provides some variety if repeating the melody line.

**There's a kind of hush** (Herman's Hermits, 1967)

Another golden oldie (my age is showing)!

In the Key of 'G' with one sharp - all 'F's are sharpened, moved up one fret.

The melody moves around various positions and the player can determine what is most convenient/what sounds best. In order to learn the piece thoroughly remember to use the same fingers in the same positions once the sequence is determined.

The first section (chorus) can readily be played in the V position.

The video offers one perspective and I have found students often prefer playing the 'G' to 'E' and 'A' to 'E' sequences above the VII fret.

See the octave diagram above for a reference. Ultimately - your choice.

The second part is repetitive note wise, but changes rhythm. Again, your choice if you want to change the rhythm or not, but variety is mostly good.



THERE'S A KIND OF HUSH

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the song "There's a Kind of Hush". The music is written on ten staves in G major (one sharp). The title "THERE'S A KIND OF HUSH" is written at the top, with a fermata over the word "HUSH". The score includes various chords and melodic lines. The chords are: G, B7, G7, D7, C, Am, and D7. The melody is written in a treble clef. The score is written in a simple, handwritten style. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is written in a 4/4 time signature. The score is written on ten staves. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is written in a 4/4 time signature. The score is written in a simple, handwritten style. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is written in a 4/4 time signature. The score is written on ten staves. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is written in a 4/4 time signature. The score is written in a simple, handwritten style.

Jim Miles ©



**A whole new world** (music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Tim Rice, 1992)

In the key of 'D' with two sharps - 'C' and 'F' - remember, one fret higher.

The first section fits nicely in the V position - as does the key of 'D' generally.

The second section moves up the neck and can be easily played in the VII position, or with a mixture of both.

A new rhythm element is added on the fourth and sixth lines with a triplet rhythm.

**Under the Sea** (music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Howard Ashman, 1989)

In the key of 'D' with two sharps - 'C' and 'F' - remember, one fret higher.

*Under the Sea* can be played entirely in the first position, but as this is about up the neck, it fits comfortably in the V position...

...except maybe for the first two bars of line 3 where the 'E', 'A', 'F-sharp' combination require more stretch and a bit more movement. (see diagram below).

A strong rhythmic piece - a touch of calypso.

KEY OF D

The image shows a hand-drawn musical score and a corresponding fretboard diagram for the key of D major.

**Musical Notation:** A single staff in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The notes are D, E, F#, G, A, B, C#, and D. The notes E and F# are highlighted with pink and yellow boxes, respectively.

**Fretboard Diagram:** A diagram of a guitar fretboard with 12 frets. The strings are labeled D, C#, G, B, F#, and E from left to right. The frets are numbered 1 through 12. The notes are written on the fretboard as follows:

- Fret 1: D (string 1), C# (string 2), G (string 3), B (string 4), F# (string 5), E (string 6)
- Fret 2: E (string 1), F# (string 2), G (string 3), A (string 4), B (string 5), C# (string 6)
- Fret 3: F# (string 1), G (string 2), A (string 3), B (string 4), C# (string 5), D (string 6)
- Fret 4: G (string 1), A (string 2), B (string 3), C# (string 4), D (string 5), E (string 6)
- Fret 5: A (string 1), B (string 2), C# (string 3), D (string 4), E (string 5), F# (string 6)
- Fret 6: B (string 1), C# (string 2), D (string 3), E (string 4), F# (string 5), G (string 6)
- Fret 7: C# (string 1), D (string 2), E (string 3), F# (string 4), G (string 5), A (string 6)
- Fret 8: D (string 1), E (string 2), F# (string 3), G (string 4), A (string 5), B (string 6)
- Fret 9: E (string 1), F# (string 2), G (string 3), A (string 4), B (string 5), C# (string 6)
- Fret 10: F# (string 1), G (string 2), A (string 3), B (string 4), C# (string 5), D (string 6)
- Fret 11: G (string 1), A (string 2), B (string 3), C# (string 4), D (string 5), E (string 6)
- Fret 12: A (string 1), B (string 2), C# (string 3), D (string 4), E (string 5), F# (string 6)

The notes E and F# are highlighted with pink and yellow boxes, respectively, matching the highlights in the musical notation above.

Handwritten musical score for the song "A Whole New World" in G major. The score is written on seven staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is primarily in 4/4 time, with some measures in 3/4. The notation includes eighth and quarter notes, often beamed together in groups, and rests. Chords are indicated by letters above the notes: D, Em, F7, Bm, G, G7M, A, A7, and E7. Some notes are marked with a dot, possibly indicating a grace note or a specific articulation. There are several triplet markings (a '3' over a group of notes) and a first ending bracket labeled '1.'. The score concludes with a double bar line on the seventh staff.

# A WHOLE NEW WORLD



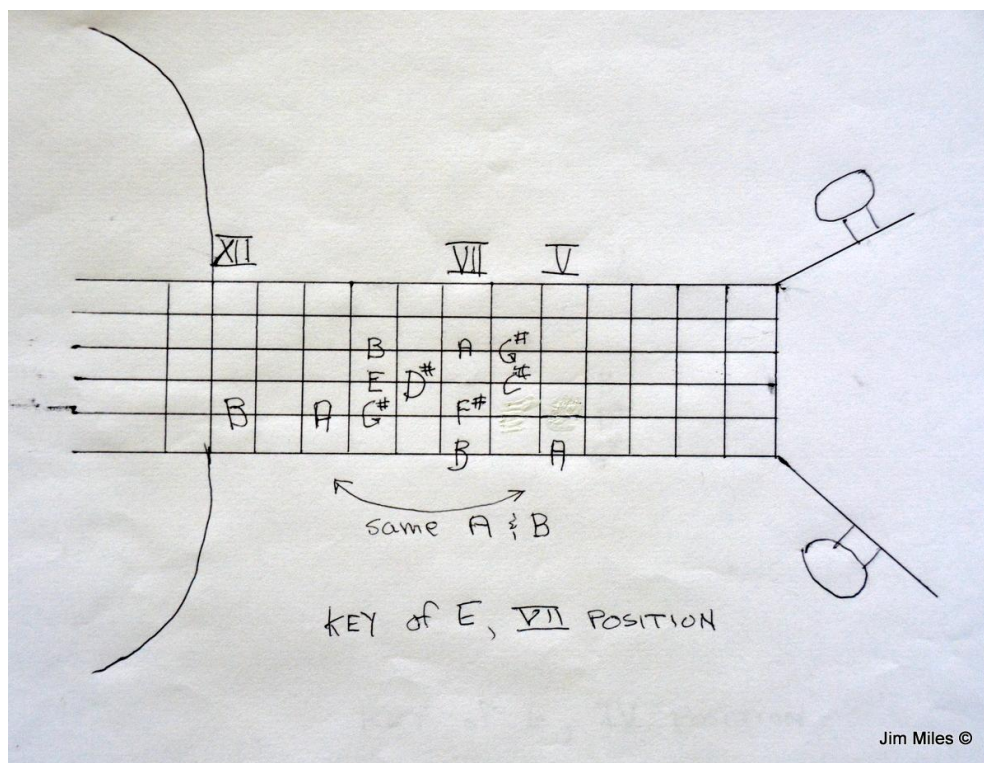
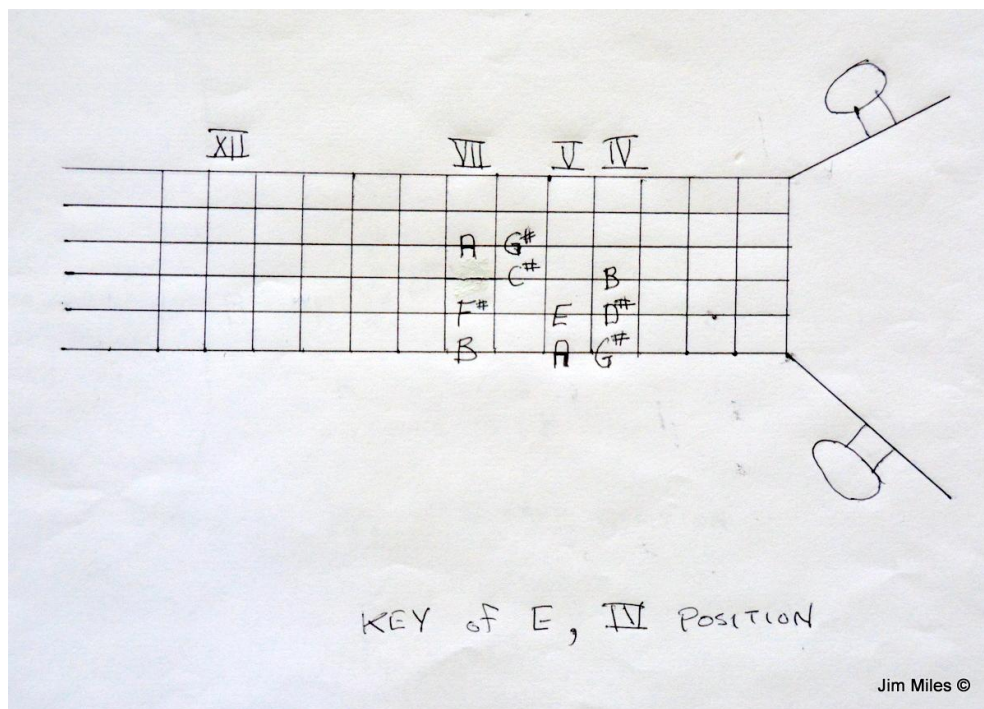
V

## UNDER THE SEA

Handwritten musical score for guitar, titled "UNDER THE SEA". The score is written on ten staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked "INTRO" and the time signature is 4/4. The music features a variety of chords and melodic lines, with some measures containing rests or repeat signs. The chords are labeled with letters: D, A7, G, Bm, E7, and A. The score is written in a clear, legible hand.



# Key of E - four sharps - 'F', 'C', 'G', and 'D'



## **Beauty and the Beast - Key of E**

Howard Ashman, Alan Menken, 1990

A nice slow introduction to the Key of E.

The first section of Beauty and the Beast aligns very nicely with the IV position.

As noted in the manuscript, the second section aligns very nicely with the VII position.

Nothing tricky rhythmically other than the long pauses between phrases. Count them out, they are important for playing with others.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST. IV POSITION Page

E IV POSITION B<sup>7</sup> E

B<sup>7</sup> E G<sup>#m</sup>

A B<sup>7</sup> E

B<sup>7</sup> E B<sub>m</sub> VII Pos. E<sup>7</sup>

A F<sup>#m</sup> B E

C<sup>#m</sup> E<sup>7</sup> A F<sup>#m</sup>

E

} all F, C, G, and D are # (1 fret higher)

Jim Miles ©

## Yesterday

This arrangement will take your playing to a new level using *double stops* - two notes fretted at the same time....and a few *triple stop* chords for enrichment : )

Not a hard and fast rule: find the high pitched melody note first, then look for the easiest position to play the harmony note. It is arranged so that none of the stops are difficult, however they can be played in different positions...follow the video or choose your own path.

You will also notice the use of open bass strings to add a deeper harmony. One of the nice things about the Key of D is having the fourth ('D') and fifth ('A') strings available for easy harmony.

Remember in the Key of D all 'F's and 'C's are sharpened - one fret higher.

There is no separate Key of D diagram for the higher notes but you can use the diagram on page 14 as a partial guide, as well as the diagram on page 22 below.



YESTERDAY Paul McCartney

Page 2 of

©2000 MUSICNOTES, INC  
<http://www.musicnotes.com>

Authorized for use by: Jim Miles

musicnotes.com

## Swinging Shepherd Blues - Moe Koffman, 1957.

A great little melody with a swing rhythm. As with *Yesterday*, it has double stops and open bass string harmonies.

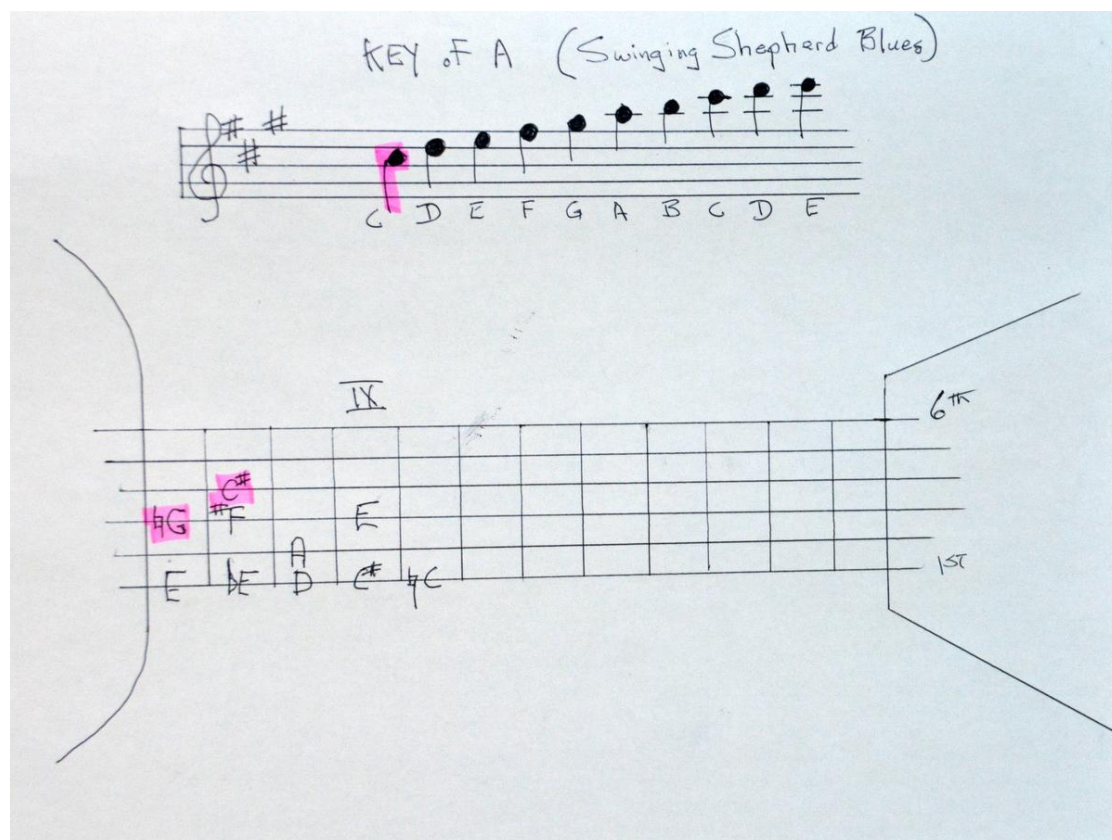
In the Key of A, with all 'F's, 'C's, and 'G's sharpened, it utilizes all three open bass strings. It also has additional flats, sharps, and naturals to watch for.

This arrangement uses the full range of the guitar neck. Line 3 starts off with an 'A' chord on the II fret rising to the 'C' natural on the VIII fret.

The last line reverses, from the 'A' chord at the X fret, carrying the melody down the 2nd string to the final 'A' chord back at the IInd fret.

### Slurs

On the first bar, the notation for the high 'C-sharp' has a magical little curved line before it. In this case it indicates a slur or slide from the 'C- natural' up to the sharp - as it does on the 3rd bar of line 3 from 'B' to 'C - natural'.





## SWINGING SHEPHERD BLUES.

[illegible][illegible]

**What a day for a daydream** - John Sebastian, 1966.

This one is all yours.

The first section can be played in the III position very comfortably, or at the VII position equally comfortably.

The 'C' chord sections can be played at either the V or VII positions as per your own comfort level.

No double/stops, a few slurs (if you wish - or more). Have fun!



Handwritten musical score for guitar, consisting of six staves. The music is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score includes various musical notations such as chords (G, E, Am, D, C), triplets, and slurs. The notation is handwritten and appears to be a personal or working draft.

"What a day for a daydream"  
Lovin' Spoonful