

KaraJam(TM) Jammer's Handbook

Introduction

Welcome to the **Jammer's Handbook**! This guide is designed to help musicians—especially beginners—develop their skills, understand music structure, and gain confidence in playing with a band. Whether you're a guitarist, bassist, drummer, or any other musician, this book will provide essential tools to ensure you don't sound like an amateur.

1. Key Signature Charts

Understanding key signatures is essential for playing music fluently. Below is a **Key Signature Chart** listing all major and minor keys:

| Key | Sharps/Flats | Relative Minor |
|----------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| C Major | No sharps/flats | A minor |
| G Major | 1 Sharp (F#) | E minor |
| D Major | 2 Sharps (F#, C#) | B minor |
| A Major | 3 Sharps (F#, C#, G#) | F# minor |
| E Major | 4 Sharps (F#, C#, G#, D#) | C# minor |
| B Major | 5 Sharps (F#, C#, G#, D#, A#) | G# minor |
| F# Major | 6 Sharps (F#, C#, G#, D#, A#, E#) | D# minor |
| C# Major | 7 Sharps (F#, C#, G#, D#, A#, E#, B#) | A# minor |
| F Major | 1 Flat (Bb) | D minor |
| Bb Major | 2 Flats (Bb, Eb) | G minor |
| Eb Major | 3 Flats (Bb, Eb, Ab) | C minor |
| Ab Major | 4 Flats (Bb, Eb, Ab, Db) | F minor |

2. Guitar and Bass Scales

Common Guitar and Bass Scales in TAB

Below are three of the most commonly used scales in guitar and bass playing, each shown in **multiple positions** on the fretboard with intervals labeled.

Pentatonic Scale (Minor) - A Minor Pentatonic (5th Fret Position)

```
E | -----5--8-- |
B | -----5--8-- |
G | -----5--7-- |
D | -----5--7-- |
A | -----5--7-- |
E | --5--8-- |
```

Intervals: 1 - b3 - 4 - 5 - b7 - 1

Pentatonic Scale (Minor) - A Minor Pentatonic (12th Fret Position)

```
E | -----12--15-- |
B | -----12--15----- |
G | -----12--14----- |
D | -----12--14----- |
A | -----12--14----- |
E | --12--15----- |
```

Intervals: 1 - b3 - 4 - 5 - b7 - 1

Diatonic Scale (Major) - C Major Scale (Open Position)

```
E | -----0--1--3-- |
B | -----0--1--3----- |
G | -----0--2----- |
D | -----0--2----- |
A | --0--2--3----- |
E | ----- |
```

Intervals: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 1

Diatonic Scale (Major) - C Major Scale (8th Fret Position)

```
E | -----8--10--12-- |
B | -----8--10--12----- |
G | -----9--10----- |
D | -----9--10----- |
A | --8--10--12----- |
E | ----- |
```

Intervals: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 1

Chromatic Scale (Every Note) - Starting on E

```
E | ----- |
B | ----- |
G | ----- |
D | -----1--2--3--4----- |
A | -----1--2--3--4----- |
E | --1--2--3--4----- |
```

Intervals: 1 - b2 - 2 - b3 - 3 - 4 - #4 - 5 - b6 - 6 - b7 - 7 - 1

By practicing these scales in **different positions** on the neck, guitarists and bassists can expand their **improvisational skills** and play fluidly across the fretboard.

Common Guitar and Bass Scales in TAB

Below are three of the most commonly used scales in guitar playing, each shown in **multiple positions** on the fretboard with intervals labeled.

Pentatonic Scale (Minor) - A Minor Pentatonic (5th Fret Position)

```
E | -----5--8-- |
B | -----5--8----- |
G | -----5--7----- |
D | -----5--7----- |
A | -----5--7----- |
E | --5--8----- |
```

Intervals: 1 - $\flat 3$ - 4 - 5 - $\flat 7$ - 1

Pentatonic Scale (Minor) - A Minor Pentatonic (12th Fret Position)

```
E | -----12--15-- |
B | -----12--15----- |
G | -----12--14----- |
D | -----12--14----- |
A | -----12--14----- |
E | --12--15----- |
```

Intervals: 1 - $\flat 3$ - 4 - 5 - $\flat 7$ - 1

Diatonic Scale (Major) - C Major Scale (Open Position)

```
E | -----0--1--3-- |
B | -----0--1--3----- |
G | -----0--2----- |
D | -----0--2----- |
A | --0--2--3----- |
E | ----- |
```

Intervals: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 1

Diatonic Scale (Major) - C Major Scale (8th Fret Position)

```
E | -----8--10--12-- |
B | -----8--10--12----- |
G | -----9--10----- |
D | -----9--10----- |
A | --8--10--12----- |
E | ----- |
```

Intervals: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 1

Chromatic Scale (Every Note) - Starting on E

```
E |-----|
B |-----|
G |-----|
D |-----1--2--3--4-----|
A |-----1--2--3--4-----|
E |--1--2--3--4-----|
```

Intervals: 1 - b2 - 2 - b3 - 3 - 4 - #4 - 5 - b6 - 6 - b7 - 7 - 1

By practicing these scales in **different positions** on the neck, guitarists and bassists can expand their **improvisational skills** and play fluidly across the fretboard.

3. The Nashville Number System

The **Nashville Number System (NNS)** is a universal way to communicate chord progressions using numbers instead of chord names. This method allows musicians to **quickly transpose** songs and understand harmonic relationships between chords, regardless of key.

How It Works

- Each scale degree is assigned a number based on the **major scale**.
- Major chords are represented by their **scale degree numbers** (1, 4, 5, etc.).
- Minor chords are shown as **lowercase numbers** with an "m" (2m, 3m, 6m).
- Diminished chords are notated with a degree symbol (7°).

Nashville Number System Chart for All Keys

| Key | 1 | 2m | 3m | 4 | 5 | 6m | 7° |
|-----|----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|-----|
| C | C | Dm | Em | F | G | Am | B° |
| G | G | Am | Bm | C | D | Em | F#° |
| D | D | Em | F#m | G | A | Bm | C#° |
| A | A | Bm | C#m | D | E | F#m | G#° |
| E | E | F#m | G#m | A | B | C#m | D#° |
| B | B | C#m | D#m | E | F# | G#m | A#° |
| F# | F# | G#m | A#m | B | C# | D#m | E#° |
| C# | C# | D#m | E#m | F# | G# | A#m | B#° |
| F | F | Gm | Am | Bb | C | Dm | E° |
| Bb | Bb | Cm | Dm | Eb | F | Gm | A° |
| Eb | Eb | Fm | Gm | Ab | Bb | Cm | D° |
| Ab | Ab | Bbm | Cm | Db | Eb | Fm | G° |

Example: 1-4-5 Progression

If someone calls for a **1-4-5** progression:

- In **C Major**, play **C - F - G**.
- In **G Major**, play **G - C - D**.
- In **D Major**, play **D - G - A**.

How It Helps With Transposition

By understanding this system, you can quickly adjust when a band leader says, "**Let's take it up a half step.**" Instead of struggling to recalculate chord names, simply shift the **Nashville Numbers** to the new key!

The Nashville Number System is an essential tool for professional musicians, helping them adapt quickly in any musical situation.

4. Understanding Tablature (TAB)

What is Tablature?

Tablature (TAB) is a simplified music notation system used primarily for **guitar and bass**. Instead of using standard sheet music, TAB provides a **visual representation** of where to place your fingers on the fretboard.

How to Read TAB

A standard six-string guitar TAB looks like this:

```
E|----0----| (1st string, high E)
B|----1----| (2nd string, B)
G|----0----| (3rd string, G)
D|----2----| (4th string, D)
A|----3----| (5th string, A)
E|----0----| (6th string, low E)
```

Each **horizontal line** represents a guitar string:

- **E** (1st string) - Thinnest string, highest pitch
- **B** (2nd string)
- **G** (3rd string)
- **D** (4th string)
- **A** (5th string)
- **E** (6th string) - Thickest string, lowest pitch

The **numbers** indicate which **fret** to press:

- **0** = Open string (play without pressing down)
- **1** = First fret
- **2** = Second fret, and so on...

Basic TAB Symbols

Symbol Meaning

h Hammer-on (e.g., 5h7 means play fret 5, then hammer-on to fret 7)

p Pull-off (e.g., 7p5 means pull-off from fret 7 to 5)

***/ or *** Slide up/down (e.g., 5/7 means slide from fret 5 to 7)

b Bend (e.g., 7b9 means bend fret 7 up to the pitch of fret 9)

x Mute (percussive hit, no pitch)

Example: Simple Riff in TAB

Here's a basic **pentatonic lick** in **A minor**:

```
E | -----5--8-- |
B | -----5--8-- |
G | -----5--7-- |
D | -----5--7-- |
A | --5--7----- |
E | ----- |
```

Writing Your Own TAB

- Always label the **tuning** at the start (e.g., **Standard Tuning: EADGBE**).
- Keep your numbers **evenly spaced** for correct timing.
- Use dashes (-) to represent **gaps between notes**.
- Add symbols like **h (hammer-on)**, **p (pull-off)**, **/ (slide)**, **b (bend)** to make your TAB more readable.

Why Learn TAB?

- **Fast and easy to read**—no need to understand traditional sheet music.
- **Great for learning by ear**—many online transcriptions use TAB.
- **Essential for guitarists and bassists** in modern music.

Learning TAB makes it easier to **quickly learn songs and communicate riffs** with other musicians!

5. Quick Transposition Chart (with Nashville Number System)

Sometimes a band may decide to **transpose a song up or down** to better fit a singer's range. If you're unfamiliar with transposing, here's a **quick reference chart** to help you shift chords effortlessly and connect it with the **Nashville Number System**.

Complete Transposition Chart

| Nashville Number | Key of C | Down 1 Half Step (B) | Down 1 Whole Step (Bb) | Up 1 Half Step (C#) | Up 1 Whole Step (D) |
|------------------|----------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | C | B | Bb | C# | D |
| 2m | Dm | C#m | Cm | D#m | Em |
| 3m | Em | D#m | Dm | Fm | F#m |
| 4 | F | E | Eb | F# | G |
| 5 | G | F# | F | G# | A |
| 6m | Am | G#m | Gm | A#m | Bm |
| 7° | B° | A#° | A° | C° | C#° |

How to Use This Chart

- Find the **original chord** under the Key of C column (or another key using the same pattern).
- Look at the Nashville Number for reference.
- Move **left** to transpose **down** (lower pitch).
- Move **right** to transpose **up** (higher pitch).
- This applies to both **guitar chords and piano chords**.

Example: Transposing a Song

If a song in **C Major** uses the **1-4-5** progression (**C - F - G**):

- If the band wants to **lower it by a half step**, the new chords will be **B - E - F#**.
- If the band wants to **raise it by a whole step**, the new chords will be **D - G - A**.

By using this chart and the **Nashville Number System**, you can quickly transpose a song in **any key** without memorizing new chord names, making live performance and rehearsals much smoother.

6. Tuning Your Instrument

Before you audition, it's crucial to make sure your instrument is in perfect tune. Poor tuning can instantly ruin a great performance. Here are some tips:

1. Tuning a Guitar

- Use a **digital tuner** or a **tuning app** to get precise tuning.
- Standard tuning is **E A D G B E** (from lowest to highest string).
- Check your tuning **before and after** playing to compensate for string stretching.
- If your guitar constantly goes out of tune, consider getting it **professionally set up** at a local music store.
- Changing old strings before an audition can also **improve tone and stability**.

2. Tuning a Bass

- Standard tuning for a 4-string bass is **E A D G**.
- For 5-string basses, tuning is typically **B E A D G**.
- Use a **clip-on tuner** or tune to a **reference note** from the band.

3. Tuning Drums

- Drummers should ensure their drums **are properly tuned for clarity and projection**.
- Use a **drum key** to adjust each tension rod evenly.
- **Tuning each drum to match the band's style** (tight for rock, loose for jazz) can make a big difference.
- Consider getting your drum kit **professionally tuned** before a major audition.

4. Why a Professional Setup Helps

A professional setup at a music store ensures:

- **Correct intonation**, so notes stay in tune across the fretboard.
- **Comfortable action**, making it easier to play.
- **Stable tuning**, reducing the chance of tuning problems during a performance.

Taking these steps will **make you sound more polished and professional**, improving your chances of acing an audition.

7. Band Etiquette & Communication

Playing in a band is more than just hitting the right notes—it's about professionalism, teamwork, and respect. Here are some key points to help you fit in and stand out in a **positive way**:

1. Be On Time (Or Early!)

- Arriving **at least 15-30 minutes early** shows respect for the band's time.
- Use this time to **set up, tune, and mentally prepare**.
- Being late can ruin your chances before you even play a note.

2. Look the Part

- Dress in a way that matches the **band's style and genre**.
- While you don't need to wear a costume, showing you fit their aesthetic **makes an instant good impression**.
- Keep your appearance **neat and professional**.

3. Listen Before You Play

- If you get the chance, listen to how the **band interprets the songs** before your turn.
- This helps you understand their style, dynamics, and timing.
- Pay attention to their **tempo, tone, and groove**.

4. Respect the Other Musicians

- Don't **talk over** others while they're auditioning.
- If given feedback, **listen carefully and adjust** accordingly.
- Show that you're **easy to work with**—no one wants a difficult bandmate.

5. Know the Songs and Be Flexible

- If you were given songs to learn, **have them down cold**.
- Be **ready to transpose** if the band wants to change the key.
- If they ask you to jam or improvise, **showcase your ability to adapt**.

6. Show Confidence, But Stay Humble

- Play **with energy and conviction**, but don't show off too much.
- If you make a mistake, **keep going**—don't stop and apologize.
- Engage with the band—**smile, make eye contact, and connect with their groove**.

7. Bring Your Own Gear and Have It Ready

- Don't assume the band will provide instruments, cables, or pedals.
- Bring **everything you need** and make sure it's in **working order**.
- Have a **backup plan** (extra picks, strings, drumsticks, cables, etc.).

8. Be Positive and Show Enthusiasm

- Bands want someone who **adds to the vibe**, not just someone who plays well.
- Show that you're **excited to be there** and that you'd love to be part of the group.
- A **good attitude** can make up for minor technical flaws.

9. Follow Up

- After the audition, **thank them for the opportunity**.
- A short follow-up message or email can **leave a lasting impression**.

By focusing on these aspects, young musicians can **greatly improve their chances** of landing a gig and making a strong impression at an audition.

8. Conclusion

Jamming with a band should be **fun and musical**. The key is **practice, listening, and awareness**. Whether you're a guitarist, bassist, drummer, or any other musician, applying the concepts in this handbook will help you **sound professional and fit in seamlessly with any band**.

Patrick Hobbis

KaraJam(TM)