



Excerpt

from guitar Mann method

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Charting

Guitar players are notorious for knowing very little about music principles and reading music. Guitarists should know music principles but do not need to know “how to read music” (standard notation).


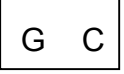
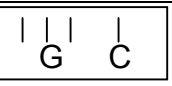
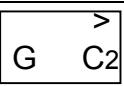
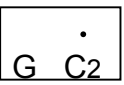





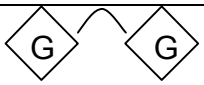
Standard music notation that pianists or violinists use is very inefficient in communicating what a rhythm guitar should play in a band. A band with guitars, drums, bass and vocalists is quite different from an orchestra. Standard music notation details every single note and beat. Charting, on the other hand, provides the over-all structure of a song via measures, not single notes. The result is a one-page diagram of the intro, verses, choruses, and other parts of the song.

The beauty of charting is that it conveys all of the musical components that are important to the song without the unnecessary detailing of notes. A chart can convey how fast the song is, how many times to repeat a section, when to abruptly stop a chord, when to get louder, etc. It is a complete road map for a song. In fact, professional studio musicians who record new songs every day use this system of reading music. Some of the symbols are borrowed from standard notation, and some of the symbols were created to represent common dynamics in contemporary songs. This charting system is called the “Nashville Number System.” Many professional musicians use numbers instead of chords (refer to the chord family chart), but the way in which the chart is laid out is most important.

This charting style allows for the whole band to have an exact layout of the song with no memorizing or guesswork necessary. Unfortunately, most worship leaders or band leaders spend hours of practice time conveying what they want and hoping that every single member of the band will remember the cue during a service or performance. In using these charts, you will likely only need to practice a song once through. The band will have more confidence about every cue when it comes time to perform.

In learning and using this system, you will not only become a better musician, but you will also be able to clearly communicate your musical opinion in musical terms. Instead of saying, “Let’s really make that rock,” you could say, “Let’s drive eighth notes on the chorus all the way to the diamond on the first measure of the turn around.”

The “Song Example” section incorporates each of these symbols in some form or fashion so that you will become comfortable with reading charts. Spend about a week on each chord family until you become familiar with all of the chords as well as the symbols in this charting system.

I	Intro (beginning of a song; usually instrumental)
Out	Outro (end of a song usually instrumental)
Vs	Verse (sections with the same music and different lyrics)
Ch	Chorus (main part of a song that is usually repeated throughout the song; has the same lyrics)
Br	Bridge (a musical and lyrical “break” from the typical vs and ch)
TA	Turn Around (instrumental part between sections)
SOLO	Instrumental Solo
PC	Pre Chorus (consistently precedes the ch; builds musically)
TAG	Repeated phrase(s), usually at the end of a song
BPM	Beats Per Minute: defines the tempo/speed of a song
Vamp	Continuously repeat a chord until another section of a song begins; used usually in an intro or a turn around
	Time Signature: “How many” beats/“type of” beats per measure
G (or any chord not in a box)	4 beats: normal strum pattern
	2 beats per chord: strum each 2 times
	Specified (with hatch marks): beats per chord: in this case, strum G 3 times and C 1 time
	Pushed 8th Chord: <i>Shared Strum</i> reference “Advanced Strum Patterns”
	Pushed 16th Chord: reference “Advanced Strum Patterns”
	Diamond: strike once, and let it ring out for the appropriate amount of beats (usually 4 beats)
	Stop/Choke: strike and mute
	Repeat whatever is in-between these symbols before moving on
	Crescendo: gradually becoming louder Decrescendo: gradually becoming softer
	Ritardando (Ritard): tempo gradually slowing down <i>(“a tempo” returns to original tempo)</i>
	Tied Note: Strum only once and let ring for both measures (usually 8 beats)