

Strings and Tunings

By John Tipka

I have listed below the many tunings that can be used on the steel guitar. There are others besides these but, in many cases, they are not "playable" except for one or two songs. I have included a chart of recommended string gauges for whatever pitch is needed in that tuning. The gauges should be correct for guitars with scale lengths of 22 to 24 inches.

Tuning Name	Pitches (high to low)	String Gauges
<i>6 String Guitar</i>		
A Major Low Bass	E C# A E A E	.015 .017 .022 .030 .044 .056
A Major High Bass	E C# A E C# A	.015 .017 .022 .030 .034 .042
A6th	E C# A F# E C#	.015 .017 .022 .026 .030 .036
B11th	E C# A F# D# C#	.015 .017 .022 .026 .030 .036
E Major	E B G# E B E	.015 .020 .024 .030 .038 .056
E7th	E B G# E D E or B	.015 .020 .024 .030 .036 .056 or (B=.038)
C#minor	E C# G# E B E	.015 .017 .024 .030 .036 .056
C#minor 7th	E C# G# E D B or E	.015 .017 .024 .030 .036 .038 or (E=.056)
C6th	E C A G E C	.015 .018 .022 .024 .030 .038
C6th+A7th	E C A G E C#	.015 .018 .022 .024 .030 .036
D9th	E C A F# E C#	.015 .018 .022 .026 .030 .036
<i>8 String Guitar</i>		
A6th	E C# A F# E C# A F#	.015 .017 .022 .026 .030 .036 .042 .050
B11th	E C# A F# D# B F# B	.015 .017 .022 .026 .032 .038 .050 .056
C6th+A7th	E C A G E C# C A	.015 .018 .022 .024 .030 .034 .036 .042
C13th	E C A G E C Bb G or C	.015 .018 .022 .024 .030 .036 .040 .048 or (C=.060)
C#m9th	E C# G# F# E D B G#	.015 .017 .024 .026 .030 .034 .038 .046
D9th	E C A F# E C# A G	.015 .018 .022 .026 .030 .034 .042 .048
E7th	E B G# E D B G# E	.015 .020 .024 .030 .034 .038 .046 .056
E9th	E B G# F# D B G# E	.015 .020 .024 .026 .034 .038 .046 .056

E9th	E B G# F# E D B G#	.015 .020 .024 .026 .030 .034 .038 .046
E13th	E C# B G# E D B G#	.015 .017 .020 .024 .030 .034 .038 .046
F#9th	E C# G# E A# F# C# G#	.015 .017 .024 .030 .040 .050 .062 .068

String Gauge Chart

NOTE: Odd-numbered strings are not available beyond 0.018 gauge

Plain String	Plain Gauge
A	.009, .010, .011
Ab, G#	.011 or .012
G	.012 or .013
Gb, F#	.013
F	.014 or .015
E	.015 or .016
Eb, D#	.016 or .017
D	.017
Db, C#	.017 or .018
C	.018
B	.018 or .020
Bb, A#	.020 or .022
A	.022
Ab, G#	.024
G	.024 or .026
Wound String	Wound Gauge
Gb, F#	.026 or .028
F	.028
E	.030
Eb, D#	.032
D	.036
Db, C#	.036
C	.038
B	.038
Bb, A#	.040
A	.042 or .044
Ab, G#	.046
G	.048
Gb, F#	.050
F	.052 or .054
E	.056
Eb, D#	.058 or .060
D	.060
Db, C#	.062
C	.064
B	.066
Bb, A#	.068