



# **Desktop Guitarist**

**Version 1.0**

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# Main Screen

Quick help is available for any control by moving the cursor over it and checking the status line on the bottom of the screen.

**Text Editor**

**Guitar Neck**

**Play Controls**

**Edit Controls**

# Text Editor

## Current Filename

The current filename is displayed at the top of the screen in bold font.

## Comments

Comment lines begin with an asterisk ( \* ). They are ignored by the program and are used to document chord files.

Comments can only be entered with the text editor and can't be changed by clicking on the guitar neck.

Note: To temporarily keep a line from being played put an asterisk in front of it.

## Blank Lines

Blank lines are used to indicate where bars lines will appear in tabulature. Include blank lines at least every 16 chords, otherwise you will not see all the chords in the tabulature. The 'New Chord' button can be used to create a blank line after the current line.

## Manually Entering Chords

When entering chords into the editor, the status line on the bottom of the screen displays any errors for the current line. Errors must be fixed since the Play button won't function until all lines are error-free. The shareware version of Desktop Guitarist will not allow you to enter a fret number greater than 5 (18 for the registered version.)

See [Chord Definition](#) for more information on entering chords.

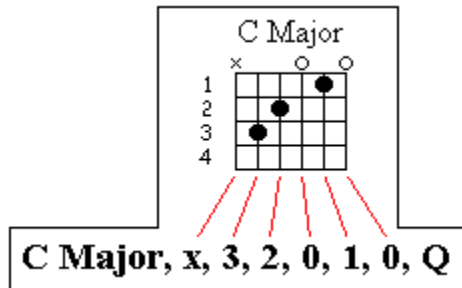
## Cut, Copy, Paste

The text editor supports the standard Windows clipboard controls from the Edit menu.

# Chord Definition

A chord definition is a line defining a chord's name, strings and duration.

## Chord Definitions



A chord definition is composed of eight comma-separated items.

In this example:

The first item, 'C Major', is the chord name.

The next 6 items contain the fret numbers needed to make a C Major. Fret numbers can range from 0 through 5 (18 in the registered version). 'x' means that the string will not be played.

The last item, 'Q', indicates the note duration, a quarter note, for all notes in the chord. See: [Note Durations](#)

## Rests

A rest contains all x's for the all 6 strings, indicating that no strings are to be played. The note duration indicates the length of the rest.

You can also click the 'Rest' button to create a rest.

# What is Desktop Guitarist?

Desktop Guitarist is a versatile guitar program for players of all levels. It's a tabulature generator, chord dictionary, guitar tuner, accompaniment player, MIDI sequencer and more. Desktop Guitarist allows you to see and hear chords, scales, exercises and songs on an animated guitar neck with complete control over playback. You can use the sample files to start learning new material right away or you can easily create songs and lessons for yourself and others to use.



Desktop Guitarist requires no musical knowledge to enter chords. Chords are entered by just clicking on the guitar neck.



Desktop Guitarist can produce graphic or ASCII tabulature, as well as MIDI files.



Desktop Guitarist contains four common guitar tunings and can be configured for any other tuning.



With Desktop Guitarist, you can enter music from guitar books and magazines and hear how the piece is supposed to sound.



Desktop Guitarist can play background chords to assist you in learning scales and modes.



For practicing, you can loop sections, change the playback speed, or step through sections one chord at a time.



Desktop Guitarist files are plain text, which means they can be edited using any text editor. The format of the files is very easy for any guitar player to understand.

# Purchasing Desktop Guitarist

**\$29.95**

**The registered version includes:**

- An eighteen-fret guitar neck.
- Sample DTG files.
- Technical support.
- Prompt shipping.



## **Credit Card Orders**

**Product #1746**

I have contracted NorthStar Solutions to process Visa, MasterCard and Discover orders. Please mention product #1746 when placing your order:

### INTERNET ORDERS

Visit NorthStar Solutions at  
<http://www.nstarsolutions.com>  
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### PHONED ORDERS

Calls are taken 10 am - 8 pm, EST, Monday thru Saturday.

1-800-699-6395 (From the U.S. only.)  
1-803-699-6395

### FAXED ORDERS

Available 24 hours.  
1-803-699-5465

### E-MAILED ORDERS

CompuServe: starmail  
America Online: starmail  
Internet: [starmail@compuserve.com](mailto:starmail@compuserve.com)

Please provide (or be prepared to provide) the following information:

- \* The program you are registering Product # 1746.
- \* Your mailing address.
- \* Your Visa, MasterCard, or Discover # and its expiration date (if using credit card).
- \* Your E-Mail address (optional).

## **Mailed Orders**

You can register with a check or money order made out for \$29.95. Make it payable to "Marty Balash" and send to:

Desktop Guitarist  
Marty Balash  
PO Box 622  
Bethlehem, CT 06751

# Tabulature

Tabulature can be generated from error-free chord definitions at any time. Two bars of tabulature appear on each line. Blank lines determine which chords will be grouped between bars. The maximum number of notes per bar is 16.

From the File/Settings dialog, you can make the graphical tab use a bold font for all numbers. You can also turn of the prompt for a tabulature title from this dialog.

The tabulature title and sub-title can be included in the song file using comments:

- \* Title: My Tune
- \* Sub: My Name



# Guitar Neck

The guitar neck displays the notes in songs and is also used for entering chords.

## **Editing chords**

Click over a string to define a note, click over it again to erase it.

## **Displaying a chord**

Display a chord by clicking on the appropriate editor line.

# Play Controls

The Play Controls determine how the 'Play' button will operate.

## Play range

These selections determine which chords are played:

- All                    Play all lines.
- From cursor    Play only the lines from the cursor line to the last line.
- Highlighted    Play only the lines that are highlighted.
- Current chord    Play the line that the cursor is on (currently displayed chord.)

## Loop

This will cause the chords to play continuously.

## Debug

This will cause each line to be highlighted as it is played.

**Note: This option will adversely affect playback speed.**

## Play Rate

This slider sets the tempo in beats-per-minute. Playback speed is automatically saved and loaded with Desktop Guitarist files.

# Play Button

The play button plays chords according the settings in the Play Controls.

# Edit Controls

The editing controls allow you to edit chords without using the text editor.

## Chord name edit box

This box changes the name of the current chord. Select a line in the editor, enter the name in text box and click on the editor line again.

## Rest - Insert rest button

This button inserts a rest under the current line. A rest is a chord definition with all strings muted.

## Dup - Duplicate line button

This button inserts a copy of the current line. This command does not use the Windows clipboard.

## Clear - Clear line button

This button clears all notes in the current line, making it a rest.

## Del - Delete line button

This button deletes the current line.

## New Chord button

This button is used to proceed to the next chord when entering songs. It can also be used to insert a blank line. Blank lines are used to determine where the bars are placed in tabulature.

## Left and right pointing finger buttons

These buttons will step-play the chords forward or backwards. You can use these buttons to move through the chords at your own pace.

## Left and right arrow buttons

These buttons transpose all notes in a chord up or down one fret.

## Musical note buttons

These buttons determine how long the chord will be played. After the 'dotted' box has been checked, notes entered from that point on are increased in duration by one half.

See Note Durations.

## Chord dictionary

The chord dictionary is for selecting pre-defined chords. It can be used to create custom dictionaries, as for a special tuning.

## Creating a new dictionary








From the 'Chord Dictionary' tab in the Settings dialog, click 'Replace Chord Dictionary' to copy the chords in the editor to the chord dictionary. This will be the permanent chord dictionary until you use this button again. You can open any Desktop Guitarist file and

make it a dictionary, although most song files probably won't make good very chord dictionaries. To restore the original dictionary, open the file 'DICTIONARY.DTG', and replace the chord dictionary.

# Note Durations

The length of time that each chord plays is determined by the duration, the last item on each line.

## Note duration values

	W	Whole	The longest duration.
	H	Half	1/2 of a whole note
	Q	Quarter	1/2 of a half note
	E	Eighth	1/2 of a quarter note
	S	Sixteenth	1/2 of an eighth note
	T	Thirty-second	1/2 of a sixteenth note
	F	Sixty-fourth	1/2 of a thirty-second note

## Dotted Notes

Use the 'dotted' check box to increase a note's duration by one half. In the text editor, add a period before the chord's duration letter (ex. '.W' for dotted whole.)

# Order Form

## **(Check and money orders only)**

Make payable to: Marty Balash

Send to:

Desktop Guitarist  
Marty Balash  
PO Box 622  
Bethlehem, CT 06751

**Enclosed is \$29.95 for the registered version of Desktop Guitarist.**

**Date:**

**Name:**

**Address:**

**City:**

**State:**

**Zip:**

**E-Mail Address:**

# Getting Started



Select 'New' from the 'File' menu.



Create a chord by clicking on the guitar neck for each note, then click the 'New Chord' button.  
(Or you can select a chord from the 'Chord Dictionary' list on the screen.)



Notice how the chord is being stored in the editor. The editor lets you manage chords using standard editing commands. For example, you can use Windows copy and paste commands to duplicate a group of chords.



To change the length of time that a chord plays, click on its line in the editor, then on a musical note button.



To insert a pause, click the 'Rest' button.



After entering a few chords, click the 'Play' button.



Press the F4 key to see the chords notated as tabulature. Press F6 to create a standard MIDI file.

## Or



Use the File/Open menu to try out some of the sample files.



## Questions & Answers

How do I enter more than one chord?

When defining chords you must click 'New Chord' when you are ready to go on to the next chord.

What do the lines of text on the screen mean?

Each one represents one chord in a song. The song's chords are played in the order of the lines in the text editor. You can use the Windows clipboard to manage chords, as in cutting and pasting groups of chords. See: [Chord Definition](#).

How do I erase a single dot?

Click over the dot.

How do I review what I've entered so far?

Position the cursor on the first line and click the step play (pointing finger) button.

Why am I missing chords in tabulature?

You must use a blank line at least every 16 lines. Blank lines are translated into bar lines in tab. If there are more than 16 lines between blank lines, then chords will be omitted.

How do I play just some of the chords?

Highlight the lines you want to play and click the 'Highlighted' button before you click 'Play'. You can also check the 'Loop' box to play the highlighted chords over and over.

Is there any difference in the way notes and chords are entered?

No. If you are entering single notes, click the 'New Chord' button after each note you enter. For chords, click 'New Chord' after you have entered all the notes in the chord.

Why are there only 5 frets?

The shareware version of the program allows you to use all the features of the registered 18-fret version.

How do I change the length of time that a single chord plays?

Click on a musical note button to change the duration for the current line. This will be the duration for all new lines and rests. See: [Note Durations](#)

How do I get quick help for the controls on the screen?

As you pass the cursor over a control, check the status line on the bottom of the screen.

How do I make my own chord dictionary?

Define chords (using unique chord names) in the editor. Bring up the File/Settings dialog box. Under the 'Chord Dictionary' tab, click the 'Replace chord dictionary' button. The chords will now appear in the 'Chord Dictionary' box.

How do I create a MIDI file from my chords?  
Use Special/Midi File... on the menu.

How do I make my chords into tabulature?  
For graphic tab, select 'Special/Tabulature...' from the menu. For text tab, select 'Special/ASCII Tabulature...' .

How do titles for tabulature work?  
Every time you generate tabulature, a title/subtitle prompt appears. You can turn this prompt off using the 'Settings' dialog and include comment lines in your file which start with '\* Title:' and '\* Sub:'. If you turn off the prompt and don't specify a '\*Title:' in the file, then the name of the file is used.  
Example:  
\*Title: Bourree  
\*Sub: JS Bach

What are comments used for?  
They are used to place any kind of text anywhere in the file. Comments are ignored when the file is played.

What are the extra comment lines at the beginning of the file used for?  
These lines are not shown in the Desktop Guitarist editor and contain settings (instrument, tuning and tempo) for the song. Songs will use default settings if these lines are missing.

Why are there problems when I use my external MIDI device?  
Make sure that 'External MIDI' is checked in the 'MIDI' tab of the 'Settings' dialog.

Is there a key equivalent for the 'New Chord' button?  
If the cursor is at the end of a line, the 'Enter' key can be used.

Is there a quick way to enter a melody?  
Click on notes with the mouse in your right hand and press the 'Enter' key with your left hand.

Why are all the chords named 'Chord'?  
It's the default chord name if you don't specify one. Chord names are used in some of the Desktop Guitarist sample files to demonstrate how they can be used. Chord names matter the most when you are defining chords for a chord dictionary.

Why does the program sound like it's playing all wrong notes?  
Make sure the correct tuning is selected.

Why does the program operate without sound?  
Desktop Guitarist will open and close MIDI only when it needs to play sounds, so other

programs can use the MIDI device. If another device is using the MIDI device then Desktop Guitarist will operate without sound. If that is not the problem, then make sure that the proper device is selected in the 'MIDI' tab of the settings dialog box - Midi Mapper should work. Also, you can make sure that MIDI is working properly on your system by double-clicking the file 'Canyon.MID' in the Windows\Media directory.

What is the 'External MIDI' option?

The 'External MIDI' checkbox in the 'Settings' dialog box causes the program to open MIDI at startup and close it on shutdown. With 'External MIDI' checked, Desktop Guitarist will use the MIDI device the whole time it is running. This option might help on systems where the sound isn't working right with Desktop Guitarist.

Is there a way to recall the last chord when I enter a new chord?

Instead of clicking 'New Chord', click 'Dup' and then alter the duplicate chord.

Why isn't the 'Play' button playing all the chords?

Make sure 'All' is selected in the 'Play Controls' box.

Can I do operations on more than one line at a time, as changing the duration in all highlighted lines?

No, operations must be done on one line at a time.

How do I change the note duration for a group of lines?

Position the cursor on the first line to change. Click the button for the new note duration, and press the down arrow key on the keyboard with your other hand. Repeat for the rest of the lines.

Why does the file association for DTG keep getting set back to Desktop Guitarist, even after I change it?

In the 'General' tab of the File/Settings dialog box, make sure 'Associate files' is unchecked.

How do I enter a rest?

Here are a few ways:

- Click the 'Rest' button.
- Click the 'Clear' button over an existing chord.
- Click the 'New Chord' button, place a note on the guitar neck and then remove the note.
- Type in a chord definition with all 'x' s instead of numbers.

I changed a line containing a rest so that it now contains a chord. Does it matter that the chord is still called 'Rest'?

Any name can be used for any chord or rest. Chord names are required in order to define chords, but they don't affect playback.

Why are the screen colors and graphics messed up?

Make sure you are running Windows in 256 color mode. If you are, try minimizing and restoring the window to restore the color palette.

Is there a way to make the editor bigger so I can see more lines?  
Maximize the Desktop Guitarist window or resize it from the bottom right corner.



