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Roberts

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[54] **GUITAR INSTRUCTION SYSTEM**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **84/485,** 84/297 S

[51] **Int. Cl.** **G10b 15/00**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 84/297 S, 319, 453, 470, 84/471, 477, 478, 483, 485

[56] **References Cited**

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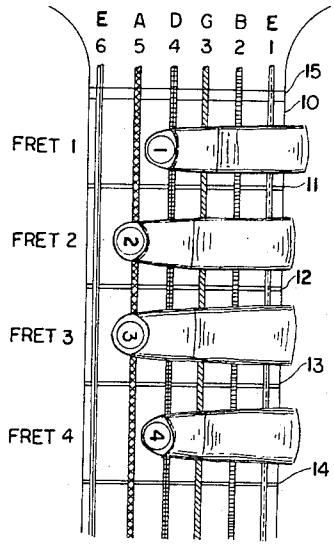
Primary Examiner—Lawrence R. Franklin

Attorney, Agent, or Firm—John E. Wagner

[57] **ABSTRACT**

Disclosed is a combination of coded guitar strings, finger marking devices and notation coordinating the two. The system includes guitar strings each having a distinctive color representative of its fundamental frequency. Disclosed also is a musical notation arrangement coordinated with the color coding of the guitar strings with pressure sensitive labels for adhering to the finger nails of the players, each carrying an indicia representative of the particular finger and coordinated with the notation system. The musical notation system is color coded corresponding to the strings with spacing directly related to musical intervals and numerical or other indicia corresponding to the fingers of the player.

7 Claims, 5 Drawing Figures



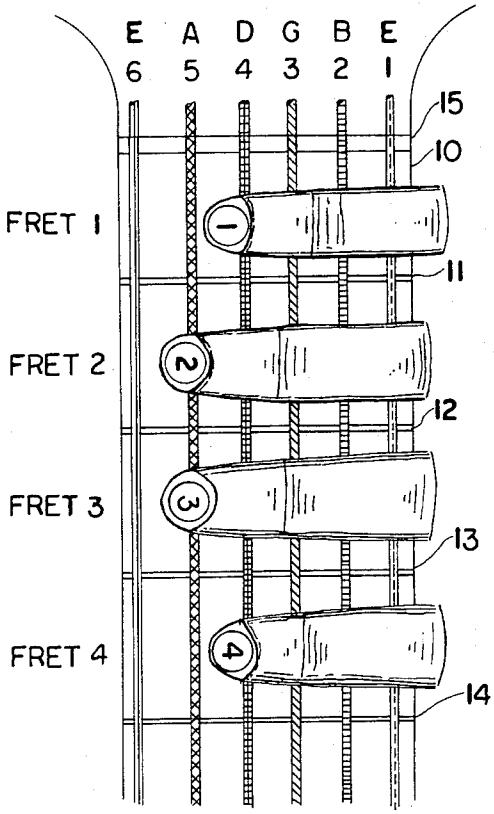


FIG. 1

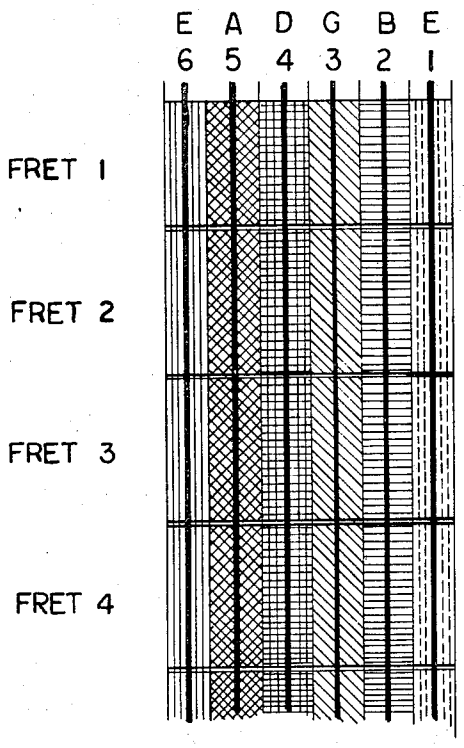


FIG. 2

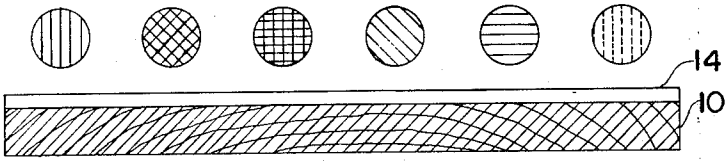


FIG. 3

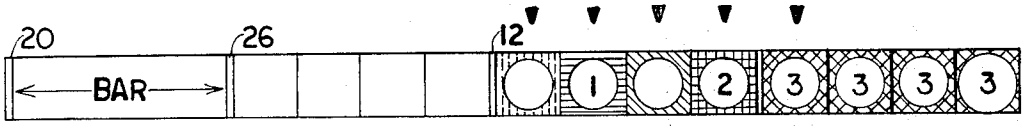


FIG. 4
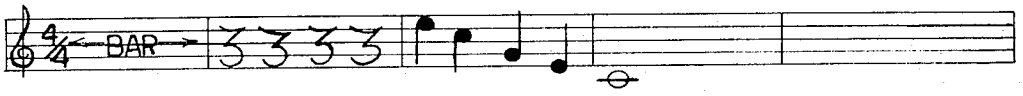


FIG. 5

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GUITAR INSTRUCTION SYSTEM

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Heretofore the teaching of the guitar has normally been limited to children of 8 years or older because of the necessity of acquainting the beginning student with the conventional bar, staff and chord notation and in general to be of sufficient age to comprehend order and timing related to conventional notation. With younger children, letter notation for the strings or notes is relatively meaningless and the numerical identification of the strings, 1 through 6, at the same time with numerical designation of the frets and the fingers creates confusion in the mind of the beginning student. The same confusion extends to beginning students of greater age as well.

The use of color in musical instruments to assist the beginning student is well known, for example, color coded organ keys, children's xylophone with color bars, and in the case of stringed instruments, certain of the strings of the harp are colored to increase visibility and identification by the player.

Heretofore the use of colored guitar strings has been known in the art; black strings, white strings, transparent strings and on occasion, strings have been given different colors for ornamental purposes. However, the use of color coded strings in combination with finger coding indicia and guitar musical notation depicting in color, a string and finger indicia is unknown.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Basically, my invention includes a set of guitar strings, each having a distinct color related visually to their particular note and each vividly marked for ease of identification, and each having a color with particular significance. Coordinated with the guitar string coding are a number of indicia, one for each of the fingers of the player's left hand. The indicia are formed of adhesive tabs of the appropriate size to secure them to the finger nail of each respective finger. Also included in the system is a series of symbols in the form of equal size boxes denoting equal time intervals with each box having a background color indicative of the string with a numerical or other designation in the space denoting which finger, if any, is impressed on the string. In an alternate embodiment, the background for each string, to wit, the longitudinal sections of the fret board are color coded. The entire system does not require the reading of either words or music, not does it require that the student be able to identify particular numbers, only to match shapes or colors.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

This invention may be more clearly understood through the following detailed description and by reference to the drawings in which:

FIG. **1** is a fragmentary view of a fingerboard of guitar showing players four fingers of his left hand in playing position above the fingerboard of a guitar;

FIG. **2** is an elevational fragmentary view of a fingerboard of a guitar having a playing alternate embodiment of this invention;

FIG. **3** is a fragmentary sectional view of the fingerboard of the guitar showing the strings in correct color designation;

FIG. **4** is a pictorial representation of a line of guitar music written in the notation of this invention; and

FIG. **5** is a pictorial representation of a line of music written in conventional bar and staff notation.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The guitar as a beginning musical instrument for children is unexcelled as an introduction to music. It is far less complex in makeup and function than the piano or other instruments and allows the beginning student to discover directly the production of musical sounds by a vibrating string and resonating chamber.

The guitar recognizes and aids in the development of dexterity and coordination as well as musical appreciation. Learning of the guitar is enhanced where the beginning student is not required to understand music notation.

In accordance with this invention, the basic elements appear in FIG. **1** in combination with FIG. **4.** Referring to FIG. **1,** a fragmentary portion of the fingerboard **10.** of a guitar not shown in the drawing.

The first four frets **11–14** and the bridge **15** appear in the drawing. Six strings are on the guitar extending over the fingerboard **10** in a conventional manner. These strings are designated E B G D A and E or **1** through **6** respectively in a manner well known in the art. However in accordance with this invention, the strings each are of a different color with the preferred color combination as follows:

STRING	NO.	COLOR
E	1	purple or violet
B	2	blue
G	3	green
D	4	yellow
A	5	orange
E	6	red

These colors are preferable in the form of dyes thoroughly impregnating the string material where it is monofiliment material such as the poly amide resin, Nylon of E. I. DuPont de Nemeur Co. of Wilmington, Delaware. Where the strings are wrapped such as the strings **4, 5** and **6,** the wrapping may be anodized, painted or otherwise colored. These colors have the principle characteristics of being clearly distinguishable from each other and identifiable using the guitar music notation system of this invention. They also have a natural frequency relationship which will later become meaningful to the musician. The string colors vary in frequency from the lowest red to the highest purple or violet in the color spectrum in the same order as the strings **6–1** increase in fundamental frequency from the lowest E String **6** to the E string **1.**

The preferred color combination of this invention is illustrated in the drawing in FIG. **3** which is a sectional view through the fingerboard of FIG. **1** along lines **3—3.** The strings are enlarged and simplified for clarity and each is cross sectioned in the appropriate color.

Overlaying the strings are shown in the fingers of the player's left hand, with each finger carrying a number or indicia, for example the numbers **1** through **4** on pressure sensitive lables. Round labels of 3/16 inch to ¼ inch in diameter of the type produced by Avery Products Co., of Monrovia, California, have been found to be eminently satisfactory. As shown the fingers are designated by numbers but is recognized that other types of indicia can easily be used to identify the different fingers; for example, shapes such as a square,

a triangle, a circle and a rectangle. A different familiar object or animal may also be used as well, for example, a dog, a cat, a rabbit and a bear. The same indicia whatever system is selected is carried over in to the notation system.

In certain cases the coloring of strings is impractical and the same color coding of the strings may be accomplished by using uncolored strings with a fingerboard which is multicolored. This arrangement is illustrated in FIG. **2.**

The connecting link between the color coded strings and the finger designation described above is the music notation system of this invention. This is illustrated in FIG. **4.** It comprises a series of equal length areas separated by vertical lines **20, 21, 22** and **23,** each area representing equal time intervals or measure. This is in contrast with conventional notation where measures are of different length on the music paper. The beginning student using my notation can easily associate equal areas with equal time without instruction. Contained within each area are a number of sub areas, each constituting a single note. Each sub area has a background corresponding to the string which is to be picked and an indicia present to indicate which finger is to be used to depress the string against its adjacent frets. Each finger is only associated with a single fret position for the beginning student so no further fingering information is required to be displayed.

When a string is played open, no indicia appears against the background. Two other visual signals appear in the notation system. A small representation of a guitar pick is positioned above each sub area when a string is picked. When a note is held, it is represented by a bridging line similar to conventional notation. Given this notation in combination with the coded guitar strings and finger designations the entire instructional system is operative without any need of the student to read either words or music. He need only be able to compare colors and shapes or patterns. Moreover the system is self explanatory and the parent supervising the students learning can understand and teach the student in as little as ten minutes exposure to the system.

As indicated above, the selection of certain color combinations is preferred. Given this color combination the lower frequency sounds are represented by lower frequency colors in the color spectrum (not light spectrum) in which the primary colors, red, yellow and blue represent alternate strings of the guitar. These strings and colors constitute the reference points from which adjacent strings are learned by a natural process resulting from the students prior knowledge of color combinations learned from coloring books and educational television. For example, where the sixth string is red and the fourth string is yellow, then the fifth string is of an intermediate color or orange. As the student has already learned color combinations through coloring, he has already learned the relationship of the strings of a guitar employing my invention.

The above described embodiments of this invention are merely descriptive of its principles and are not to be considered limiting. The scope of this invention instead shall be determined from the scope of the following claims, including their equivalents.

I claim:

1. A guitar teaching system comprising:

a. a plurality of guitar strings secured in playing position on a guitar, each of said strings having a different color clearly distinguishable to the player;

b. a plurality of visible indicia securable to the fingers of the guitar player, the indicia for each finger being different;

c. a plurality of visible indicia securable to different successive fret positions on said guitar adjacent the frets said indicia corresponding to said finger indicia; and

d. a display of musical notation including a plurality of sequential areas, each area having a color corresponding to one of said string colors and an indicia corresponding to one of said finger and fret indicia;

whereby a player viewing said musical notation will finger a string having the color of said area with a finger and adjacent a fret corresponding to said indicia.

2. The combination in accordance with claim **1** wherein said strings have a color sequence increasing in frequency in the color spectrum as the increase in sound frequency of the string sequence substantially as follows:

STRING	NOTE	COLOR
6	E	red
5	A	orange
4	D	yellow
3	G	green
2	B	blue
1	E	violet

3. The combination in accordance with claim **1** wherein certain of said strings are monofilaments of polyamide resin impregnated with color to present a distinct clearly colored member.

4. The combination in accordance with claim **1** wherein certain of said strings are polyfiliment and wrapped with a colored winding.

5. The combination in accordance with claim **1** wherein said indicia comprise pressure sensitive labels of less than fingernail size.

6. The combination in accordance with claim **1** wherein said indicia comprise sequential numbers one through four, said indicia being secured to the corresponding fingers of the player's left hand and sequentially adjacent the first four frets of said guitar.

7. The combination in accordance with claim **1** wherein alternate strings on the guitar are colored with the primary colors in the order red, yellow and blue.

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