

I'm not a robot























Musicians and guitar enthusiasts often explore different tuning options to achieve unique sounds and expand their creative possibilities. D standard tuning stands out as a popular alternative to the traditional E standard tuning, offering a deeper, more resonant sound that's become a staple in various music genres. By tuning every string down a whole step from E standard, D standard tuning creates a darker tonality that's particularly appealing in rock, metal, and alternative music. This tuning has been embraced by influential artists like Metallica, Down, and The Melvins, helping to shape the signature sound of countless hit songs and albums. D standard tuning drops every string of a guitar down one whole step from E standard tuning. The strings are tuned to D-G-C-F-A-D (from lowest to highest), creating a lower pitch across the entire instrument. This alternate tuning maintains the same intervals between strings as E standard tuning, preserving familiar chord shapes and scale patterns. The resulting pitch configuration transforms the guitars sound in these specific ways: Produces deeper bass frequencies compared to E standard Creates increased string slack for enhanced string bending Reduces overall string tension by approximately 20% Generates darker overtones across all six strings Heres how the string tones change from E standard to D standard: String Number E Standard D Standard 6th (lowest) E2 D2 5th A2 G2 4th D3 C3 3rd G3 F3 2nd B3 A3 1st (highest) E4 D4 The physical changes in string tension affect these playing characteristics: Enables easier string bending due to reduced tension Allows for wider vibrato techniques Facilitates smoother hammer-ons and pull-offs Supports extended playing techniques like pinch harmonics Light gauge strings (0.009-0.042) become too loose Medium gauge strings (0.011-0.052) provide optimal tension Heavy gauge strings (0.012-0.056) offer maximum stability D standard tuning offers distinct advantages that enhance playing experience and tonal capabilities. These benefits create unique sonic possibilities and improved playability for guitarists across multiple genres. D standard tuning creates fuller bass frequencies that add depth to chord progressions and riffs. The lowered pitch produces rich overtones particularly noticeable in power chords and open-string patterns. Many modern metal producers favor this tuning for rhythm guitar tracks because it fills the mix with additional low-mid frequencies between 100-300 Hz. The deeper resonance cuts through dense arrangements while maintaining clarity in both live and recorded settings. Smoother string bends up to 3 semitones Extended vibrato techniques with minimal hand fatigue Easier hammer-ons and pull-offs during fast passages Increased sustain on single notes and chords Reduced finger strain during extended playing sessions String Number Tension Reduction (lbs) High E to D 3.2 B to A 2.8 G to F 2.5 D to C 2.3 A to G 2.1 Low E to D 1.9 D standard tuning features prominently in numerous iconic songs across multiple genres. The deeper tonality creates a distinct sonic character that defines many classic tracks. Several metal bands utilize D standard tuning to achieve their signature heavy sound: Sad But True by Metallica (Black Album, 1991) Breaking The Law by Judas Priest (British Steel, 1980) Ashes In Your Mouth by Megadeth (Countdown to Extinction, 1992) Walk by Pantera (Vulgar Display of Power, 1992) N.I.B. by Black Sabbath (Black Sabbath, 1970) Killing In The Name by Rage Against The Machine (Rage Against The Machine, 1992) All Apologies by Nirvana (In Utero, 1993) Black Hole Sun by Soundgarden (Superunknown, 1994) 1979 by The Smashing Pumpkins (Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness, 1995) Fell on Black Days by Soundgarden (Superunknown, 1994) Tomorrow by Silverchair (Frogstomp, 1995) Zero by The Smashing Pumpkins (Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness, 1995) Band Song Album Year Metallica Sad But True Black Album 1991 Soundgarden Black Hole Sun Superunknown 1994 Nirvana All Apologies In Utero 1993 Pantera Walk Vulgar Display of Power 1992 Changing from E standard to D standard tuning requires tuning each string down one whole step. This process demands precise tools and a methodical approach to achieve accurate pitch adjustment while maintaining string stability. A digital chromatic tuner enhances tuning accuracy when switching to D standard. Essential tools include: Electronic tuner with chromatic function Spare set of strings (gauge .011-.052 or heavier) String winder for faster string changes Wire cutters for trimming new strings Pliers for string removal Guitar picks of various thicknesses Microfiber cloth for cleaning Start with the low E string: Tune down to D (73.42 Hz) Check pitch stability after initial adjustment Verify tuning multiple times Decrease to C (130.81 Hz) Tune down to A (220.00 Hz) Complete with the high E: Verify final tuning stability String Number Standard E New D Tuning Frequency (Hz) 6th (Low) E D 73.42 5th A G 98.00 4th D C 130.81 3rd G F 174.61 2nd B A 220.00 1st (High) E D 293.66 D standard tuning presents specific challenges that require attention for optimal guitar performance. These issues primarily affect string behavior, intonation settings and overall playability. Intonation shifts occur when switching to D standard tuning due to the reduced string tension. The bridge saddles need adjustment to maintain accurate pitch across the fretboard length. Common intonation issues include: Notes sound sharp in higher positions beyond the 12th fret Chords become noticeably out of tune in certain positions Open strings ring true but fretted notes deviate from pitch Octaves don't align perfectly between strings Lower tension in D standard creates increased string vibration that can cause unwanted buzzing against the frets. Key factors contributing to string buzz include: Insufficient string height at the bridge saddles Worn or uneven fret surfaces Bridge height settings optimized for E standard Neck relief requires truss rod adjustment String gauge too light for lower tuning String Position Bridge Height (mm) Nut Height (mm) Low D 2.0 2.4 0.6 0.8 Middle Strings 1.8 2.2 0.5 0.7 High D 1.6 2.0 0.4 0.6 D standard tuning offers guitarists a powerful alternative that transforms both their sound and playing experience. The deeper resonance combined with reduced string tension creates opportunities for enhanced expression through bending vibrato and other techniques. While proper setup and string selection require attention switching to D standard tuning unlocks new sonic possibilities that have shaped countless memorable songs across genres. The versatility and distinctive tonal character make it an invaluable tool for any guitarist looking to expand their musical horizons. 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In this lesson well take a look at standard D tuning on the guitar. This particular tuning is quite popular in country and metal, although Im sure youll find it used elsewhere as well.Standard D tuning is quite simply dropping standard E tuning by one whole tone on each string. It produces a lower, more growly sound, which can be really cool on the guitar.There are hundreds of alternate tunings for the guitar, so when youre deciding which one to use, you really need to consider what you want to do with it. One of the big benefits of standard D tuning, as opposed to some of the open tunings, is that all the same chord patterns youre familiar with still work. Youve only just dropped things down by a whole step.Keeping that in mind, in standard D, if you play an open D major, that will now become a C major. Likewise, G becomes F, A becomes G, etc etc. Definitely something youll have to think about, unless youre the only person playing.For quick comparison heres E Standard Tuning: E A D G B EAnd heres D Standard Tuning: D G C F A DOne thing you might want to consider if youre using a lot of alternate tunings is to setup a guitar just for that tuning. It allows the guitar to settle into that tuning, and also allows you to tweak the action and string gauge specifically for that tuning. For instance, with many of the drop tunings youll get a better tone out of a heavier gauge string. Of course, if you play mostly in standard tuning, you may not want a heavier gauge string on there all the time. So thats something to have a think on. 20 IQ Click to copy post link Well I'm working on a one man project that's gonna be a mixture of Thrash metal mixed and woven in with the blues. I was wondering if a sound like that would be more suited to half step or whole step tuning in accordance to keys that are normally easily accessed in those tunings. As well, I wanted to know your preferences. Apr 25, 2020, 9:50 AM noobX 20 IQ Click to copy post link Hexxentl would only matter if you have a non tunable instrument you play as well. Not cool Apr 25, 2020, 10:19 AM Zaphod Beeblebr [m] Excellent to each other! 360 IQ Click to copy post link Yeah, I think it's more about comfort and what you like than anything else, there's plenty of thrash bands who use both of those tunings so... whatever you want is much more important! A man who mistakes secrets for knowledge is like a man who, seeking light, hugs a candle so closely that he smothers it and burns his hand. Buy me a coffee? Apr 25, 2020, 11:06 AM aerosmithfan95 [a] 408 IQ Click to copy post link Either tuning would be alright. Since you mentioned about this being a one-man project as well as easily accessed keys in each tuning, you'll have to consider what keys are easiest for you to sing in. You can follow my musical journey on Instagram @billymcquiremusicMy YouTube ChannelMy music on SpotifyLinktree to my Social Media Apr 26, 2020, 8:11 PM 20 IQ Click to copy post link Either tuning would be alright. Since you mentioned about this being a one-man project as well as easily accessed keys in each tuning, you'll have to consider what keys are easiest for you to sing in. Usually the easiest ones for me to sing in are B flat, D flat, Am, Fm, Dm, and E flat Apr 27, 2020, 11:20 AM aerosmithfan95 [a] 408 IQ Click to copy post link Usually the easiest ones for me to sing in are B flat, D flat, Am, Fm, Dm, and E flat With those keys, they would all be easily done in D standard, from a "guitarist" standpoint.If you think of the common chord shapes in E standard tuning, you can transpose the keys down into D standard. For example, playing a "VC major" chord shape in D standard would sound as a Bb major chord. Tuning down can also be seen as doing the opposite of a capo.A capo on the 2nd fret tuned to D standard is like having your guitar tuned into E standard. I decided to make a quick chart of what the keys are in standard tuning, and the transposed positions of how to play them in D standard.E standard Keys = D Standard Positions Bb major --> "VC major" scale shapes A minor --> "B minor" scale shapes D minor --> "VC minor" scale shapes E minor --> "E minor" scale shapes Eb major --> "F major" scale shapes You can follow my musical journey on Instagram @billymcquiremusicMy YouTube ChannelMy music on SpotifyLinktree to my Social Media Apr 27, 2020, 6:53 PM Like Ebdim9th likes this 20 IQ Click to copy post link With those keys, they would all be easily done in D standard, from a "guitarist" standpoint.If you think of the common chord shapes in E standard tuning, you can transpose the keys down into D standard. For example, playing a "VC major" chord shape in D standard would sound as a Bb major chord. 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It all depends on where you place the melody (octave wise) as opposed to what you're tuning in. For example, both Daughter (Pearl Jam) and She Drives Me Crazy (Fine Young Cannibals) are both in D major, yet it's easier for me to sing along to Pearl Jam since it's in a baritone range as opposed to a tenor range. You can follow my musical journey on Instagram @billymcquiremusicMy YouTube ChannelMy music on SpotifyLinktree to my Social Media Apr 29, 2020, 8:25 PM Subscribe to this thread Recommended threads What were some stupid things you said/did as a kid? Looking for advice to get rid of bad habits and learn guitar properly Am acoustic songs with solos D Standard tuning is a great option if youre going for a heavier sound. Mastodon uses D Standard a lot. Heres everything you need to know about tuning your guitar down to D StandardD you can play metal in standard. People claim you cant or that it doesnt sound heavy enough. Well, I have two words for you: OPETH and Dillinger Escape Plan. They both play in standard tuning (EADGBE) and theyre both heavier than a tourist bus outta Mississippi.But if you want a guitar sound that is lower than standard tuning but doesnt require you to relearn anything, D Standard might be just what the doctor ordered. Mastodon plays in D Standard a lot, for instance, and I think we can agree that they sound pretty huge.What I like most about D Standard is that it is just like playing in Standard; all the chords and scales and power chords remain the same, despite the fact every string has been tuned down a whole step this preserves the intervals between the strings (but they sound LOWLIER which is what you want if you want to play chugga-chugga metal.Because the intervals between the strings are persevered, you can play just as you would in standard. All the shapes and chords and scales remain the same. They will be different notes because each string is tuned down a whole step, and theyll sound lower, but you dont need to relearn anything else which is great.This is how you tune your guitar to D Standard Tuning. If you have a guitar tuner or a tuning app, start on the bottom string and tune it from E down to D, on the next string, you want G, then C, then F, then A, and finally D. Once youre done it should look like this: DCGFAD.As you can see, each string is a whole step down from standard. When you play the bottom string open, it is a D instead of an E. If you want to play a power chord, however, it is exactly the same as it is in E Standard. All the pentatonic scales remain exactly the same too.The notes on the fretboard have moved, however, so on the fifth fret, in standard, youd be playing a A but in D Standard Tuning youd be playing G4 youre a whole step down remember. If you know all the notes on the bottom E string in standard, a quick way to know where you are is to just move the note down one.D Standard Tuning is great for metal and heavier music. Its also good if your bands singer struggles to hit higher notes; this is why Metallica and Black Sabbath often play in D Standard Tuning live the vocals dont need to strain quite as hard to hit the higher notes. D Standard Tuning also sounds lower and, arguably, heavier than E Standard although both tunings in the right hands can sound heavy as hell.Because D Standard is similar to standard tuning, unlike drop tunings, plenty of bands have used this tuning to great effect over the years. Mastodon uses D Standard quite a bit and so too does Metallica, as well as CKY, Judas Priest, Dream Theatre, and Cradle of Filth to name just a few bands off the top of my head. Chelsea Wolfe also learned to play in D Standard. And a lot of her music is in either D Standard or C Standard. Bands looking for an even heavier sound often tune down even further to C Standard. This being a whole step down from D Standard. Again, Mastodon uses this tuning quite a bit. Josh Homme did too on early Queens of The Stone Age and KYUSS. Sleeps Matt Pike uses C Standard on most of SLEEPS discography.D Standard is great because you get all the versatility of standard tuning, everything remains in the same place, just a whole step down, and you get a heavier, beefier sound that lends itself really well to heavier music like metal, doom, and stoner rock.D Standard is NOT the same Drop D tuning. With Drop D tuning, youre only tuning down the bottom string a whole step from E to D. The rest of the strings stay the same, so Drop D tuning looks like this: DADGBE.The upshot of Drop D tuning is that you can play power chords with one finger, no need to barre. Because only the bottom string has been tuned down in drop d, you will need to relearn your positions for your scales. The top string is tuned down a whole step but the other strings remain the same as they are in standard. This means the interval between the D and the A are not preserved, unlike in D Standard.Drop D and D Standard both sound heavy, but if youre after a generally lower tone, youll want to go with D Standard. Why? Simple: all the strings are tuned down a whole step in D Standard. In Drop D, only the top string is tuned down a whole step the rest of the strings are the same as they are in standard.For this reason, you get a lower and heavier sound with D Standard. You can also play chords easily and you do not need to relearn your scales. Oftentimes, this makes playing fast or shredding through scales easier in D Standard. But Drop D does have its benefits such as one-finger power chords which are great for faster riffs.Two of the biggest bands on the planet that use Drop D tuning are TOOL and Lamb of God. Melvins use Drop D too. All of these bands are VERY different but it does go to show just what you can do with Drop D tuning. Both TOOL and Lamb of God sound huge, so if you are after something that sounds like either of these awesome bands, you should definitely check out Drop D.Because youre tuning your strings down a whole step in D Standard, there will be less tension on the string compared to standard tuning. For this reason, youll want to use either 10s or 11s both are fine for D Standard and Drop D tuning.The best strings for D Standard will depend a lot on the scale length of your guitar too. If youre using a Les Paul-style guitar, youll want to use 11-48 strings. With a Fender-style scale length, you should use 11-54 strings. This is my personal preference. My advice would be to try a few different variants and see which you prefer.Most electric guitars in standard tuning will happily tune down to D Standard. Ive never had any issues with this. The only time you might run into problems is if youre using really thin strings. But even then ill probably still work fine.Check out our guide to the best guitars for playing metal and doom/stoner rock we have options for every price point and budget. Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. Tmusician [a] 647 IQ Click to copy post link People seem to waste a lot of time tuning their guitar to alternate tunings, but often it will be from E standard to Eb standard or something like that.Why not have your guitar always tuned to D Standard, and keep a capo to quickly go to Eb and E standard? I mean this seems like a simple idea but I think it's a good one and nobody seems to do it. overdriveclassy's Youtube Channel Jan 15, 2013, 8:32 AM farmosh203 110 IQ Click to copy post link Because having two guitars is easier and cooler. Jan 15, 2013, 9:16 AM Zaphod\_Beeblebr [m] Excellent to each other! 360 IQ Click to copy post link Because you lose two notes at the top.Because the open strings have a different tone to fretted ones unless you have a zero-fret.Because the string tension is different, even with the right strings.Because E is standard tuning and guitar notation is written that way.It's a fine idea if it works for you but it's not something that would work for everyone, I don't actually know of that many hands or guitarists who switch around tuning that much unless they're playing material from different albums and so on.Also this isn't a technique so this is the wrong forum for this post."reported" A man who mistakes secrets for knowledge is like a man who, seeking light, hugs a candle so closely that he smothers it and burns his hand. Buy me a coffee? Jan 15, 2013, 9:17 AM Petzakeckc [a] 1,321 IQ Click to copy post link I do this, but only because I can't afford more than one guitar. I switch between D Standard and Drop C, and with a capo it covers all I need. Jan 15, 2013, 9:47 AM Tmusician [a] 647 IQ Click to copy post link Because you lose two notes at the top.Because the open strings have a different tone to fretted ones unless you have a zero-fret.Because the string tension is different, even with the right strings.Because E is standard tuning and guitar notation is written that way.It's a fine idea if it works for you but it's not something that would work for everyone, I don't actually know of that many hands or guitarists who switch around tuning that much unless they're playing material from different albums and so on.Also this isn't a technique so this is the wrong forum for this post."reported" lol! This whole forum has way too many sub-forums. Which one should this be in? The Electric Guitar or Acoustic Guitar or Guitar Gear & Accessories or Musician Talk? overdriveclassy's Youtube Channel Jan 15, 2013, 10:07 AM LiquidSkies [a] 413 IQ Click to copy post link Because then you still won't be able to play songs in minor third down tuning! Jan 20, 2013, 5:52 AM GaryBillington [a] 358 IQ Click to copy post link I've heard of people doing it if it works for you, go for it Gibson LP Traditional, LP GT, LP Studio, SG Standard x2Barber Tone Press > EHX Worm >TC Polytune > EXH Glove > FHX East River Drive > Zoom G3 > TC Spark Mini BoosterEVH 5150 III LBXIIJet City JCA22H.My SoundCloud Jan 20, 2013, 6:06 AM Freepower 579 IQ Click to copy post link Why not have your guitar always tuned to D Standard, and keep a capo to quickly go to Eb and E standard? I mean this seems like a simple idea but I think it's a good one and nobody seems to do it. But what if you still have to go down a semitone? I have a friend who keeps his guitar in D standard with a capo on 2. Some people do it. I also have no idea what forum to put this in. Maybe musician talk, seeing as its mainly about transposition... Youtube (Lessons + Music) Jan 20, 2013, 9:50 AM Subscribe to this thread Recommended threads Eb VS Standard E Tunings Which string gauge for D standard tuning... ( 1 2 ) Bands that use D Standard Tuning?

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