

Quick Notes: "Black Water" by The Doobie Brothers

Tempo: 76 bpm

I would recommend trying to play this as a fingerstyle song, but you CAN just strum the song if you want. My goal with this song was to get the feel of the overall band as a whole, so that's why I think fingerstyle is the best solution.

You'll need to tune to double drop D (D – A – D – G – B – d) to play this as the tab shows. I'll include fingerings for your picking hand in blue and fingerings for your fretting hand in red.

Everything you see below will cover the song itself.

The Main Intro/Verse Theme:

The Chorus:

The first run is G – Bb and it is played three times. I've included both the 3rd and 4th finger options for the low E string (tuned down to D). Also look at the "4" with the line. The Bb can be formed with just your 1st finger on the root (1st fret) and your 4th finger barring all the third fret notes. The open D string at the end can be avoided, but during the overall G – Bb progression you'll likely lift your finger off there anyway to form the G Major shape. The blue fingerings (picking hand) are a standard template you can use. It just depends on how much real picking you want to do here.

Next we do this:

Since this is a BIT more specific, I've now labeled the picking hand fingerings a little more clearly. This is played four times, then we move into the next group.

This is played twice. Notice that there are no “4x” or “3x” at the end of the repeat bar. That just tells us that the main D – Am7 phrase is played twice.

Finally, we have the ending of the chorus:

This doesn't need any fingerings as the A – Em7 phrase is the same from before. The only real difference here is that you end on the A. The gray “2's” are just tied notes. You would then turn around back to the main theme/riff.

*NOW – it's very difficult for a guitar instructor to explain how turnarounds work in demonstration form, but the idea is this:

You wouldn't play the 1 – 2 and THEN play the theme again with the additional 1 – 2 part. With me? The actual 1 – 2 turnaround would really mean you would begin playing the standard “Am7” shape within the main theme. Technically the tab above that says “turnaround back to main theme/riff” shouldn't HAVE that 1 – 2 in it, but I wanted to make sure you knew that after the regular A Major (last measure above) you would go back to the main theme. I want to guarantee you get through the song with the backing track, so I felt I should give you a heads up on that.

Finally – speaking of the backing track. I will give you THREE different backing tracks.

The “Standard” Backing Track: This is the super annoying tambourine that eventually goes into a bass/drum beat. It fits in the song, and you'll be able to tell when you listen to the “doubled” backing track.

The “Original” Backing Track (Song): This is the actual song. While it might be the easiest to follow, the only problem is that there is already instrumentation in it. It's rather low, but it's there. If you aren't quite sure whether or not you are getting the hang of it as you play with it, then I would use the standard backing track.

The “Doubled” Backing Track (beat and song): The third backing track is what I played over to make sure I could remember how the heck the song is arranged. It's a LITTLE hard to follow right at the beginning, but I think it's easier than the original backing track simply because that track has a slow volume swell. If you play with the original backing track, odds are you'll have to come in when you can. Since the main theme riff plays a bazillion times, it shouldn't be too hard to catch up after a brief listen.

Which do I recommend? I recommend the doubled one. I almost lost my mind with the standard backing track just because it annoyed me until the bass comes in. But, the bass is neat to listen to once it starts.