Guitar capo notation package

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This is a set of resources for notating guitar music that uses a capo, when you want to be able to see the music in the "played" key and hear it in the key that would result from using a capo.

So it you wanted to have a capo on the 2nd fret and sound in D major, you could write the music as if it were in C major.

A simple approach, if you don't mind playing back in the played key, is just to write the music in the played key (C major in the example), and add text instructing the player to put a capo on fret 2.

If you want to see the music in the played key but hear it is the sounding key you need to make changes to both the notation and tab staves, and they are different changes.

In either case you create new instrument based on guitar staves. For notation staves, you change the transposition for where middle C sounds. For TAB staves you need to change the notes assigned to each string in Edit > Instrument > Edit Staff Type.

If you have a notation instrument transposed in this way, you will likely want to enter notes in the Transposing Scores rather than the Concert score. Tab scores with different notes will not care if you are in a transposed or concert score.

The package provides some tools to help in the process.

1. The Acoustic Guitar Capo house style includes instrument definitions for guitar notation staves capoed from fret 1 to 12, which some sharp and flat variations when there is a choice of keys at a given fret.

2. It also contains definitions for TAB staves capoed from frets 1 to 12 for these tunings:

    a. · Standard, no rhythms
    b. · Standard, with rhythms
    c. · DADGAD with rhythms
    d. · Dropped D with rhythms

3. To use the house style, import it into your score. When you add instruments you will see several groups of instrument definitions under the Acoustic Guitar group, and you can choose the notation and tab staves from these groups.

Note that a notation instrument has an associated TAB staff which lets it know the fingering to use when copying from the notation staff to the tab staff. The notation instruments are set to use the standard tuning tab with rhythm, but you can change that setting in Edit Instruments to be your desired TAB staff.

4. The Capo Notation plugin takes an initial key and guitar tuning and calculates the tunings at various capo positions. It also calculates the transposition interval, final key, and transposition change setting for notation staves. This can be useful if you have to create more of these by hand.

Here is a demonstration of using transposed instruments for capoed scores.

Capo staff set up to play in correct pitch
(view and enter notes in Transposed Score)

Copy D major scale to TAB staff and transposing staff

Normal, non-transposing Guitar

Normal tab for D major scale

Acoustic Guitar no capo

Copy D major scale to Capo notation staff. Appears to be C major in Transposing score.

Transposing guitar Capo 2 (C3 -> D3)

Copy D major scale to TAB staff. Appears to be C major

Acoustic Guitar Capo 02 std +r

If it is OK to play back capoed guitar music as written, just write the score in the played key and add text such as "Capo 2".

It is possible but much harder to get music to be written in the "played key" but sound in the capoed key. You need to adapt both the notation and tab staves. The House Style Acoustic Guitar capo contains instrument type definitions for noattion staves capoed from 1 - 12, and tab staves capoes from 1 - 12 for standard tuning with and withoug rhythms, and Drop D and DADGAD tunings with rhythms.

Noatation staves can contain transposition changes corresponding to capo positions. If you use these, enter the notes and view the score as a transposing score.

TAB staves do not support transposition changes, so you must set the staff line pitches to the capoed values. This score has a number of imported staff types for various tunings and capo positions. It includes a notation staff and a tab staff capoed on the 2nd fret.

The TAB staff will not change when Transposing Score changes, but the notation staff will.

If you copy a D major scale from a standard notation staff (bars 1 and 2) to the fransposing notation staff or TAB staff, the copied music looks like a C major scale, which is what you want. It will play back as D major.

You might want the notation staff to either look the way it sounds (as in the nontransposing view) or as it is played (useful for when you use TAB to act as fingering for standard notation).

See the results by viewing the transposing score. In Bar 2, the 3rd and 4th staves will show the same pitches, which is what is intended.

Copying from normal notation to the transposed staves effectively transposes it down a major 2nd to C major.