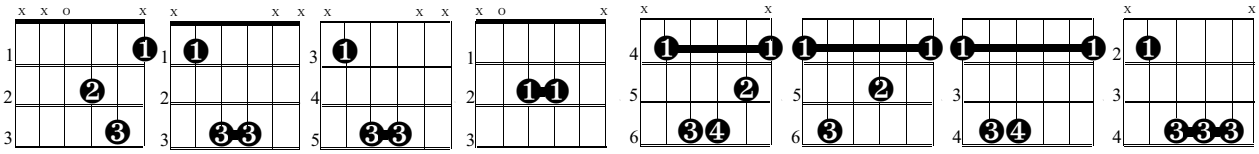
Eric Clapton - ‘Layla’ (Acoustic) - 1

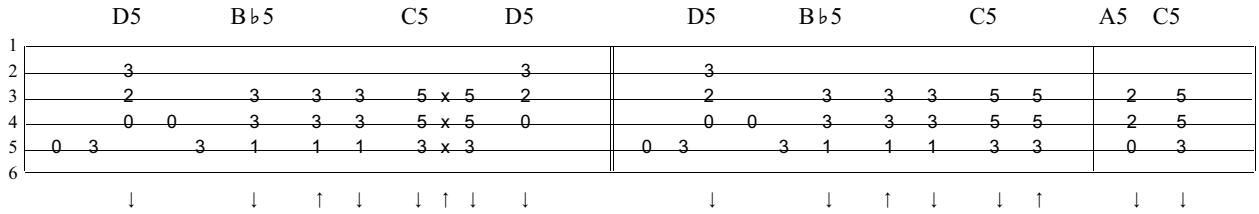
Words and Music by ***Eric Clapton*** *and* ***Jim Gordon*** *Transcribed by* ***Kevin Paluzzi***

Intro/Chorus - Key of ‘D’ Minor **Verse - Key of ‘C♯’ Minor**

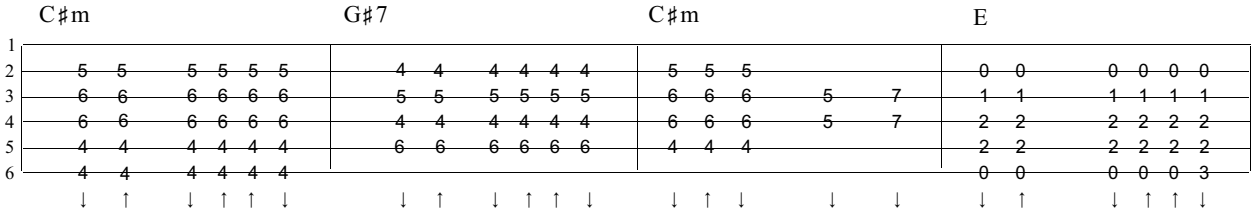


‘D5' ‘B♭5' ‘C5' ‘A5' ‘C♯m' ‘G♯7' ‘F♯m' ‘B'

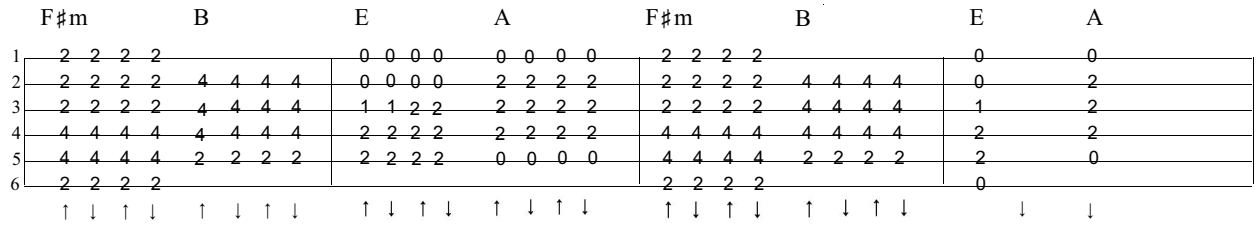
Intro **Lead-In** (0:33)



Verse 1 (0:34 -*strum patterns shown below Tab.*)

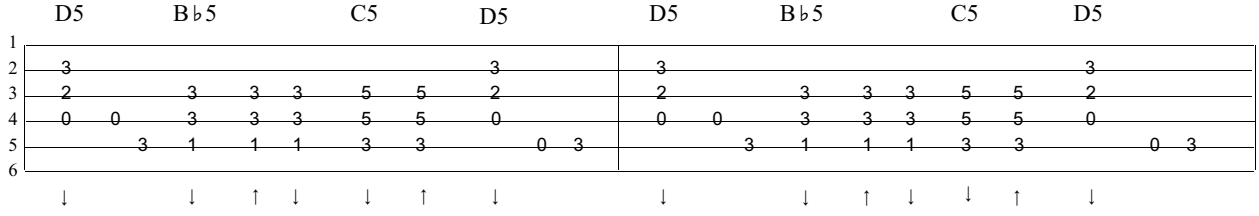


What will you do when you get lonely... ...no one waiting by your side

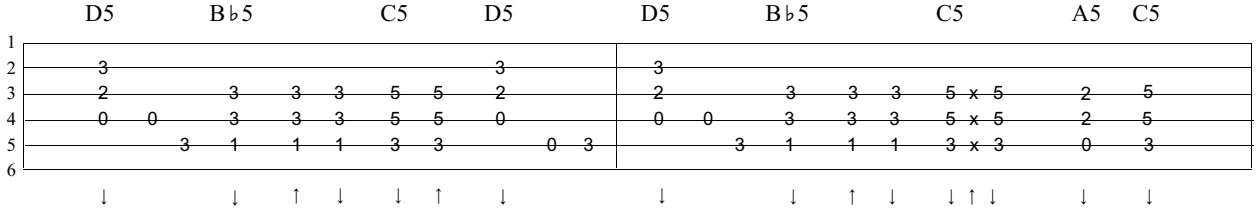


You’ve been runnin’ and hiding much too long... You know its just your foolish pride... Lay - la (to Chorus)

Chorus (0:55)



(-la...) got me on my knees Lay - la, beggin’ darlin please Lay -



(Lay)- la, darlin’ won’t you ease my worried mind

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‘Layla’ - Performance Notes (1)

The acoustic or ‘unplugged’ version of *‘Layla’* was recorded twenty years after the original ‘electric’ version. On the acoustic version, several guitars are played with a backing rhythm section. The following lesson will focus on all the essential rhythm and lead guitar parts.

Intro (0:00-0:27)

The song begins with the Intro section played five consecutive times while the opening guitar solo is played. The ‘D5' can be fretted as an open ‘Dm’ chord without strumming the first ‘top’ string. For the ‘C5' chord, the muted strum (‘x’) can be deleted, and ‘C5' can simply be strummed as two beats (*‘down-up’*) instead of three. Though the strum pattern has slight variations throughout the Intro, try following the count below to keep a steady tempo:

D5	B♭5	B♭5	B♭5	C5	x	C5	D5
one - two - three - one - two - three...		*one - two...*		*one - two - three - four*			

‘Lead-In’ (0:33)

At the end of the Intro section, the Lead-In *(0:33)* is substituted for the last ‘D5' chord. The Lead-In (‘A5-C5') follows two snare drum beats. From the Lead-in to Verse 1, focus on aligning the first finger of the fretting hand along the second (‘A5'), third (‘C5'), and fourth (‘C♯m’) fret positions for a smoother transition to start the Verse.

Arrangement

Intro (5x)
Verse 1
Chorus
Verse 2
Chorus
Verse 3
Chorus (2x)
Guitar Solo
Chorus (2x)
Coda

Verse 1 (0:34)

Strum patterns vary with each Verse. A suggested strum pattern is shown in arrows below each Tab.

Both the ‘C♯m’ and ‘G♯7' chords are barre chords played along the fourth fret position, so the first finger barre doesn’t need to be lifted too much off the strings when switching between these chords.

The ‘n.c.’ *(no chord)* is simply a ‘one-two’ count that ***leads-in*** to playing the next ‘E’ chord. The emphasis should be more on the count to keep tempo rather than the actual sound of the notes.

The ‘B’ chord requires the third finger to lean across three strings. A less-challenging substitute would be a ‘B5’ chord, which only requires the third finger to lean across two strings instead of three.

The final two chords will be strummed to ‘land’ with corresponding lyrics, with ‘E’ landing on *‘pride’*, and ‘A’ landing on the syllable *‘Lay-’*.

Chorus (0:55)

The first two Choruses are played essentially the same as the Intro, each ending with the ‘A5-C5' ‘lead-in’ to begin the next verse. The final chorus is played twice, each time without the lead-in.

Lyrics

What will you do when you get lonely
No one waiting by your side
You’ve been runnin’ and hiding much too long
You know its just your foolish pride
Layla, got me on my knees
Layla, beggin’ darlin please
Layla, darlin’ won’t you ease my worried mind
Tried to give you consolation
When your old man let you down
Like any fool - I fell in love with you
You turned my whole world upside down
Layla, got me on my knees
Layla, beggin’ darlin please
Layla, darlin’ won’t you ease my worried mind
Make the best of the situation
Before I finally go insane
Please don’t say we’ll never find a way
And tell me all my love’s in vain
Layla got me on my knees
Layla, beggin’ darlin please
Layla, darlin’ won’t you ease my worried mind

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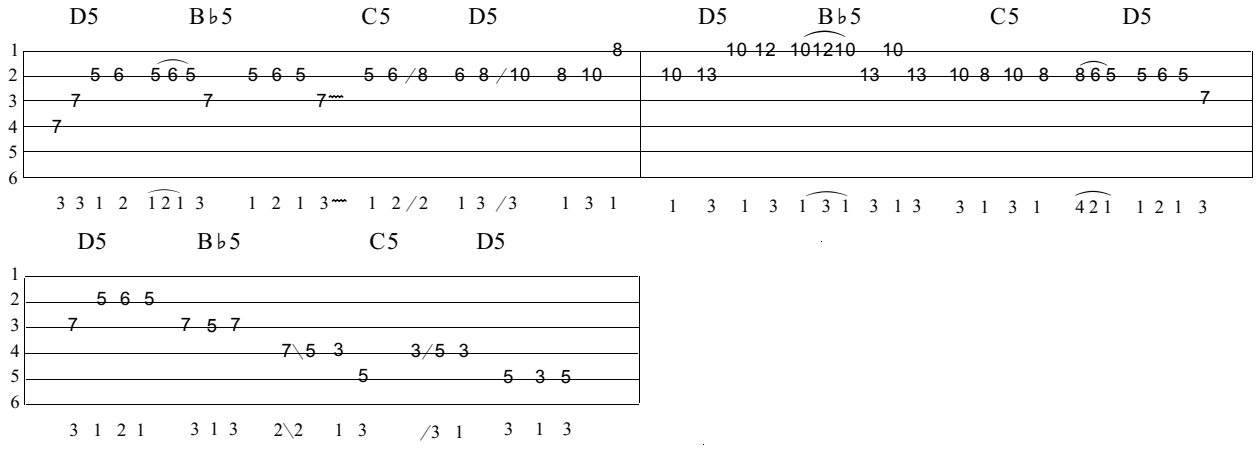
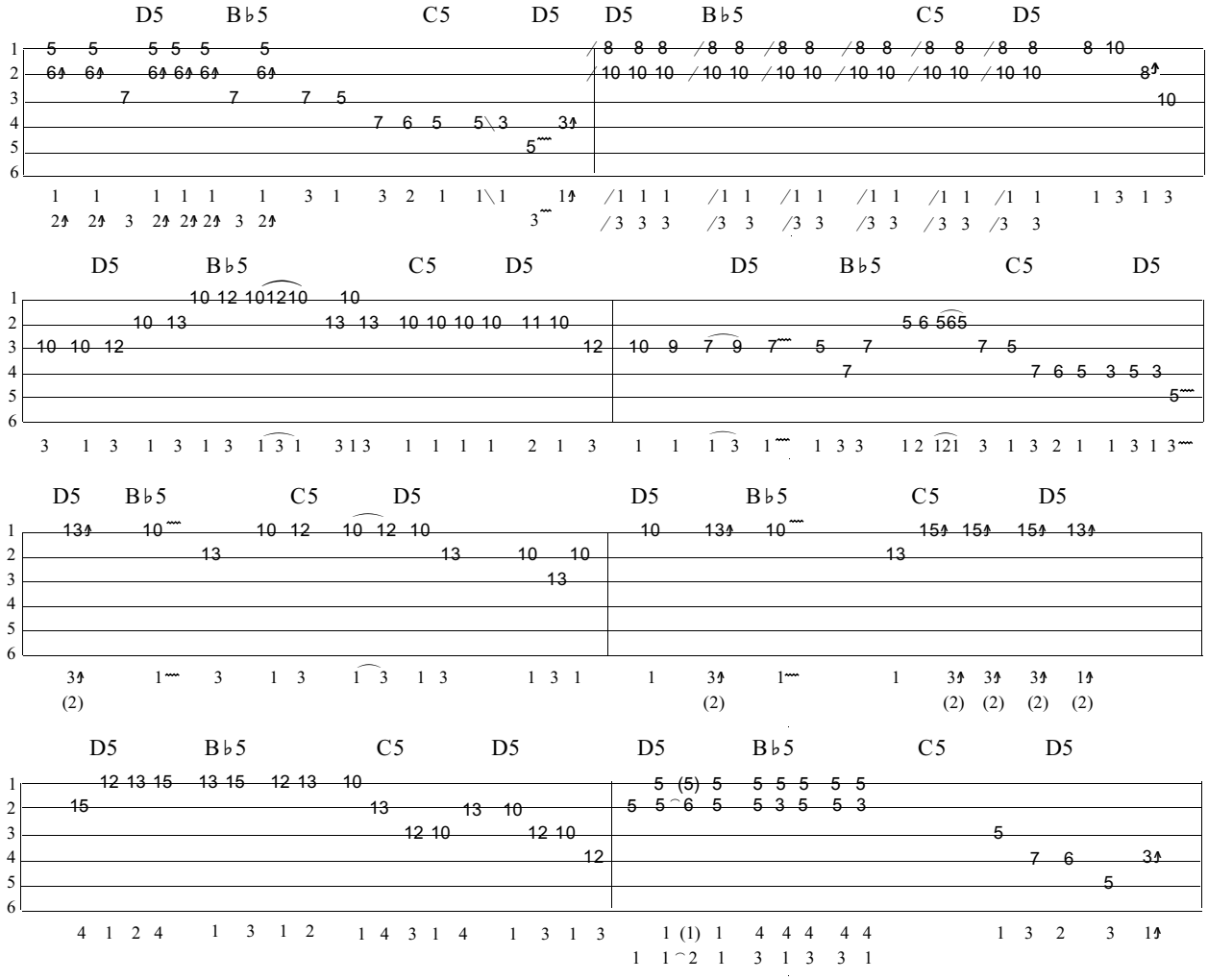
Eric Clapton - ‘Layla’ (2)

Guitar Solo - 1 (0:18-0:32)

-Finger numbers to fret with are shown below Tab. When stacked, the top line finger number frets the highest string played.



Guitar Solo - 2 (2:56-3:35)



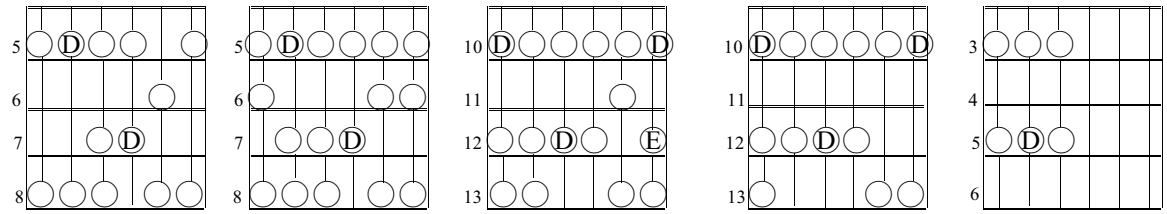
‘Layla’ - Performance Notes (2)

Mixing Scales

Both guitar solos on the acoustic version of *‘Layla’* feature a slight shift in mood or tone between the Blues/Rock-sounding ‘D’ Pentatonic Minor scale and the Spanish-like ‘D’ Minor scale. The ‘D’ Pentatonic Minor scale *(‘D’, ‘F’, ‘G’, ‘A’, ‘C’)* is essentially the ‘D’ Minor scale with two less notes *(‘B♭’ and ‘E’)*. In this progression, adding either of these notes to any ‘D’ Blues riff shifts the tone to a more-serious or flamenco-like sound. Conversely, deleting both notes from any Minor scale riff shifts the tone to Blues/Rock, and this is what Clapton essentially does throughout each solo in *‘Layla’*.

Box Patterns

The examples below show comparisons between the ‘D’ Minor and ‘D’ Pentatonic Minor box patterns along the fifth and tenth fret positions. Most of the riffs in *‘Layla’* are played within these box patterns.



Guitar Solo - 1 (0:18-0:32)

Section 1 is primarily played in ‘D’ Minor along the fifth fret position. Section 2 shifts up to ‘D’ Minor along the tenth fret position. Section 3 shifts back to the fifth fret, ending with a ‘D’ Blues riff played along the third fret. Note the addition of the ‘E’ note to each box pattern establishes a ***minor tonality***.

Guitar Solo - 2 (2:56-3:35)

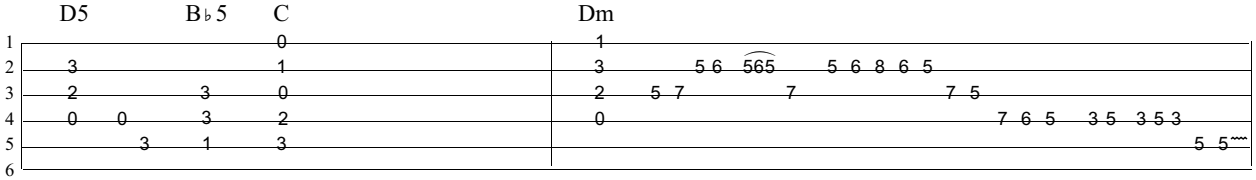
Sections 1-2 feature doublestops in ‘D’ Blues. Note the addition of the ‘A♭’ passing tone or ‘Blue note’ *(fourth string/sixth fret)* in sections 1, 4, & 6, as well as on the thirteenth fret of the third string in section 5.

In sections 5 & 6, it is suggested to used both the first and second fingers to support the third finger when bending the thirteenth fret on the first string in order to get a stronger bend with better tone.

Section 8 features a unique doublestop riff, featuring a passing tone *(third string/eighth fret)* that leads-in to the final ‘D’ Blues riff played along the third fret position.

Ending

The riff that ends the song is somewhat ‘buried in the mix’ as it is played during the applause. The tab below shows a general approach to playing this riff. Note the ‘D’ root note focus for the last note played.



Additional Notes

One of the songwriting techniques in *‘Layla’* is the use of modulation. ***Modulation*** is when sections of a song shift to another key. The Intro section is in the Key of ‘D’ Minor, while the Verse section shifts down a ***half-step*** to the Key of ‘C♯’ Minor. Note how the Verse section uses all three ***primary chords*** *(‘C♯m’, ‘F♯m’, & ‘G♯m’)* from the Key of ‘C♯’ Minor, and all three chords from its ***relative major key*** of ‘E’ *(‘E’, ‘A’, & ‘B’)*.