



JoniMitchell.com Transcription for Guitar:

California

Author: Howard Wright

Dulcimer Tablature

Tuning: E B G#, 'Joni' Tuning: E 7 -3

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In this file, I've written out the actual dulcimer part played by Joni. Guitar players will be glad to know that it's very easy to play this dulcimer part on the guitar as well, using just the top three guitar strings.

Dulcimer Tuning

(Guitarists who just want to copy the dulcimer part on the guitar can skip this section)

Dulcimer tuning: E B G#

This means tune the lowest string (bass) to E, the middle string to B and the double string to G#. Note that the middle string is the string tuned to the highest note.

Joni actually uses an unconventional stringing method for her dulcimer, and puts the lowest pitch string (bass string) in the middle of the other strings. This doesn't really affect the sound of the chords, so I've followed the usual conventions (bass string at the top of the dulcimer tablature) as this will be easier to follow for most dulcimer players.

In "Joni tuning notation", the tuning for this song would be written as: E 7 -3

OK, you're thinking what is a "-3" in Joni notation?!

The "Joni notation" system of writing down tunings looks slightly odd for this song, because the pitch of the last string is *lower* than the middle string.

The Joni notation system assumes that each string is tuned higher than the last one, which always gives positive numbers. Because in this song, the middle dulcimer string is actually the highest pitch, the next string is 3 semitones *lower*, hence the -3.

Copying the dulcimer part on a guitar

If you want to play the exact Joni dulcimer part on the guitar, you use just the top three strings (because the dulcimer has only three strings).

These three strings are tuned to the same notes: E B and G#.

On the dulcimer, the note used for each string is important because one of the dulcimer "strings" is actually a pair of strings, and has quite a different sound (like a drone). For this song, the double string on the dulcimer must be tuned to G#.

On the guitar things are simpler because all the strings are singles, so the order of the notes is not so important. The easiest way to do the tuning is:

- * tune the 3rd string (usually the G) down to the E,
- * tune the 2nd string (usually the B) down to G#,
- * tune the 1st string (usually E) down to B.

Check you have the correct tuning by playing a note on the 4th fret of the 3rd string (tuned to E). This note is G#, the pitch of the open 2nd string. Playing a note at the 7th fret of the 3rd string gives you B, the pitch of the top string.

Tuning this way on the guitar means the strings are in increasing order of pitch, as is usually the case.

Phew! Now, on to the tablature!

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Dulc frets: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Gtr frets: 0 2 4 5 7 9 10 12 14 16 17  
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Dulcimer and Guitar tablature

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Make sure you read the correct tablature for the your instrument! Because of the different ways the instruments are fretted, the fret numbers needed on the two instruments are not the same.

The dulcimer tablature is at the top, and the guitar tablature is written underneath the corresponding section of dulcimer tablature. The words are written underneath the two lines of tablature.

I've written out the details of the strumming for the first verse and chorus - use the same strumming pattern for the rest of the song. Note that there are rhythmic "slaps" of the strings mixed with the strums. For these, just tap the strings lightly with the strumming hand to get a dry, muted sound. These rhythmic slaps are written in the tablature

with x characters, e.g:

---x--
---x--
---x--

The basic strumming pattern used throughout is shown below, with the quarter notes indicated as 1 2 3 4, and the "&" characters indicating the eighth notes between each quarter note.

1	&	2	&	3	&	4	&
Strum		slap	strum	strum		slap	*

* sometimes an extra strum is played on the final eighth note.

As always, listen to the original recording and it should all become clear.

NB this song was transcribed in the "Hits" songbook, but there were quite a few mistakes with the chords and the strumming patterns.

h - hammer on
p - pull off
/ - slide

INTRO :

Dulc:

E-----0----3---x--3-3---x--3-----0---4---4-0-0---x--
B---2h3p2-0---0--3---x--3-3---x--3---3---0---4---0-0---x--
G#-----0----3---x--3-3---x--3-----0---4---4-0-0---x--

Gtr:

B---4h5p4-0---0--5---x--5-5---x--5---5---0---7---0-0---x--
G#-----0----5---x--5-5---x--5-----0---7---7-0-0---x--
E-----0----5---x--5-5---x--5-----0---7---7-0-0---x--

Dulc:

G#--0-0---x--0-0---x--0-0---x-----
B---0-0---x--0-0---x--0-0---x-----
E---0-0---x--0-0---x--0-0---x-----

Gtr:

B---0-0---x--0-0---x--0-0---x-----
G#--0-0---x--0-0---x--0-0---x-----
E---0-0---x--0-0---x--0-0---x-----

VERSE 1:

Dulc:

E--7-----x--7--7-----x-----
B--7-----x--7--7-----x-----
G#-7-----x--7--7-----x-----

Gtr:

B--12-----x--12--12-----x-----
G#-12-----x--12--12-----x-----
E--12-----x--12--12-----x-----

Sitting in a park in Paris France

Dulc:

E--3---x---3--3-----x-----1----
B--3---x---3--3-----x-----1----
G#--3---x---3--3-----x-----1----

Gtr:

B--5---x---5--5-----x-----2----
G#--5---x---5--5-----x-----2----
E--5---x---5--5-----x-----2----

Reading the news and it sure looks bad

Dulc:

E---x-----1---1-----x-----
B---x-----1---1-----x-----
G#--x-----1---1-----x-----

Gtr:

B---x-----2---2-----x-----
G#--x-----2---2-----x-----
E---x-----2---2-----x-----

They won't give peace a chance

Dulc:

E---4-----x--4--4-----x-----7---x--
B---4-----x--4--4-----x-----7---x--
G#--4-----x--4--4-----x-----7---x--

Gtr:

B---7-----x--7--7-----x-----12---x--
G#--7-----x--7--7-----x-----12---x--
E---7-----x--7--7-----x-----12---x--

That was just a dream some of us had

Dulc:

E--7---7-----x---3-----x---3-3-----x---
B--7---7-----x---3-----x---3-3-----x---
G#-7---7-----x---3-----x---3-3-----x---

Gtr:

B--12--12-----x---5-----x---5-5-----x---
G#-12--12-----x---5-----x---5-5-----x---
E--12--12-----x---5-----x---5-5-----x---

Still a lot of lands to see, but I wouldn't want to

Dulc:

E----1-----x-----1--1-----x----4-----x--4--4-----x---
B----1-----x-----1--1-----x----4-----x--4--4-----x---
G#---1-----x-----1--1-----x----4-----x--4--4-----x---

Gtr:

B----2-----x-----2--2-----x----7-----x--7--7-----x---
G#---2-----x-----2--2-----x----7-----x--7--7-----x---
E----2-----x-----2--2-----x----7-----x--7--7-----x---

stay here, it's too old and cold and settled in its ways here

CHORUS:

Dulc:

E--3--x--3-3--x--3-3--x--3-3-----

B--3--x--3-3--x--3-3--x--3-3-----

G#--3--x--3-3--x--3-3--x--3-3-----

Gtr:

B--5--x--5-5--x--5-5--x--5-5-----

G#--5--x--5-5--x--5-5--x--5-5-----

E--5--x--5-5--x--5-5--x--5-5-----

Ah but California

Dulc:

E--x-0-0--x--0-0--x--5----x--5-5----x-----

B--x-0-0--x--0-0--x--5----x--5-5----x-----

G#--x-0-0--x--0-0--x--5----x--5-5----x-----

Gtr:

B--x-0-0--x--0-0--x--9----x--9-9----x-----

G#--x-0-0--x--0-0--x--9----x--9-9----x-----

E--x-0-0--x--0-0--x--9----x--9-9----x-----

Ca-li-for-nia I'm coming home

Dulc:

E---3-----x-----3--3-----x-----

B---3-----x-----3--3-----x-----

G#--3-----x-----3--3-----x-----

Gtr:

B---5-----x-----5--5-----x-----

G#--5-----x-----5--5-----x-----

E---5-----x-----5--5-----x-----

I'm gonna see the folks I dig

Dulc:

E--2-----x--2--2-----x--0--4-----

B--0-----x--0--0-----x--0--4-----

G#-0-----x--0--0-----x--0--4-----

Gtr:

B--0-----x--0--0-----x--0--7-----

G#-0-----x--0--0-----x--0--7-----

E--4-----x--4--4-----x--0--7-----

I'll even kiss a sunset pig

Dulc:

E---x--4---4---x-----0--0-----0-----
B---x--4---4---x-----0--0-----2h3p2-0---0--
G#--x--4---4---x-----0--0-----0-----

Gtr:

B---x--7---7---x-----0--0-----4h5p4-0---0--
G#--x--7---7---x-----0--0-----0-----
E---x--7---7---x-----0--0-----0-----

California I'm coming home

Dulc:

E---3---3--0---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--
B---3---3--2---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--
G#--3---3--0---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--

Gtr:

B---5---5--4---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--
G#--5---5--0---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--
E---5---5--0---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--

VERSE 2:

(Same chords as verse 1)

I met a redneck on a Grecian isle
Who did the goat dance very well
He gave me back my smile
But he kept my camera to sell
Oh the rogue, the red red rogue
He cooked good omelettes and stews
And I might have stayed on with him there
But my heart cried out for you

CHORUS:

California
Oh California I'm coming home
Oh make me feel good rock and roll band
I'm your biggest fan
California I'm coming home

Dulc:

E-----0----3---3--0---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--
B--2h3p2-0---0--3---3--2---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--
G#-----0----3---3--0---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--

Gtr:

B--4h5p4-0---0--5---5--4---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--
G#-----0---5---5--0---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--
E-----0---5---5--0---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--

Oh it gets so

MIDDLE 8:

(Chords just indicated once - use same strumming pattern as before)

Dulc:

E-----8-----3-----
B-----8-----3-----
G#-----8-----3-----

Gtr:

B-----14-----5-----
G#-----14-----5-----
E-----14-----5-----

lo - nely, when you're walking

Dulc:

E----7-----4----

B----7-----4----

G#---7-----4----

Gtr:

B----12-----7-----

G#---12-----7-----

E----12-----7-----

And the streets are full of strangers

Dulc:

E---4-----8-----3-----

B---4-----8-----3-----

G#--4-----8-----3-----

Gtr:

B---7-----14-----5-----

G#--7-----14-----5-----

E---7-----14-----5-----

All the news of home you read

Dulc:

E-----1-----6-----4---
B-----1-----6-----4---
G#-----1-----6-----4---

Gtr:

B-----2-----10-----7-----
G#-----2-----10-----7-----
E-----2-----10-----7-----

just give you the blues, just give you the blues

Dulc:

E--3---x--3---3-3---3--0---4---4-0-0--x--0-0--x--0-0--x--0-0--x-
B--3---x--3---3-3---3---0---4---0-0--x--0-0--x--0-0--x--0-0--x-
G#-3---x--3---3-3---3--0---4---4-0-0--x--0-0--x--0-0--x--0-0--x-

Gtr:

B--5---x--5---5-5---5---0---7---0-0--x--0-0--x--0-0--x--0-0--x-
G#-5---x--5---5-5---5--0---7---7-0-0--x--0-0--x--0-0--x--0-0--x-
E--5---x--5---5-5---5--0---7---7-0-0--x--0-0--x--0-0--x--0-0--x-

VERSE 3:

(Same chords as verse 1)

So I bought me a ticket I caught a plane to Spain
Went to a party down a red dirt road
There were lots of pretty people there
Reading Rolling Stone reading Vogue
They said how long can you hang around
I said a week maybe two
Just until my skin turns brown
And then I'm going home

CHORUS:

To California
California
I'm coming home
Oh, will you take me as I am
Strung out on another man
California I'm coming home

Dulc:

E-----0----3---3--0---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--
B--2h3p2-0---0--3---3--2---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--
G#-----0----3---3--0---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--

Gtr:

B--4h5p4-0---0--5---5--4---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--
G#-----0---5---5--0---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--
E-----0---5---5--0---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x---0-0---x--

Oh it gets so

Outtro:

(Use same strumming pattern as before)

Dulc:

E-----8-----3-----
B-----8-----3-----
G#-----8-----3-----

Gtr:

B-----14-----5-----
G#-----14-----5-----
E-----14-----5-----

lonely, when you're walking

Dulc:

E----7-----4----

B----7-----4----

G#---7-----4----

Gtr:

B----12-----7-----

G#---12-----7-----

E----12-----7-----

And the streets are full of strangers

Dulc:

E---4-----8-----3-----

B---4-----8-----3-----

G#--4-----8-----3-----

Gtr:

B---7-----14-----5-----

G#--7-----14-----5-----

E---7-----14-----5-----

All the news of home you read

Dulc:

E-----7-----4-----
B-----7-----4-----
G#-----7-----4-----

Gtr:

B-----12-----7-----
G#-----12-----7-----
E-----12-----7-----

More about the war and the bloody changes

Dulc:

E--8-----3-----
B--8-----3-----
G#--8-----3-----

Gtr:

B--14-----5-----
G#--14-----5-----
E--14-----5-----

Oh, will you take me as I am

Dulc:

E---3-----7-----4-----

B---3-----7-----4-----

G#--3-----7-----4-----

Gtr:

B---5-----12-----7-----

G#--5-----12-----7-----

E---5-----12-----7-----

Will you take me as I am, will ya

Dulc:

E---4-----8-----

B---4-----8-----

G#--4-----8-----

Gtr:

B---7-----14-----

G#--7-----14-----

E---7-----14-----

Will you take me as I am

Dulc:

E---3-----7-----4-----
B---3-----7-----4-----
G#--3-----7-----4-----

Gtr:

B---5-----12-----7-----
G#--5-----12-----7-----
E---5-----12-----7-----

Mmm-mmm-mmm-mmm, mmm mmm mmm mmm

Dulc:

E---4-----8-----3-----
B---4-----8-----3-----
G#--4-----8-----3-----

Gtr:

B---7-----14-----5-----
G#--7-----14-----5-----
E---7-----14-----5-----

Take me as I am

Dulc:

E----7-----4-----8-----3-----7-----4-----

B----7-----4-----8-----3-----7-----4-----

G#--7-----4-----8-----3-----7-----4-----

Gtr:

B--12-----7-----14-----5-----12-----7-----

G#--12-----7-----14-----5-----12-----7-----

E--12-----7-----14-----5-----12-----7-----