Jixis ™ *Graphical Music Systems*

Applying Fret Space Numbers and/or the Label Set to a Fretted Fingerboard

The Jixis system was designed so that you would not need to apply the Jixis labels directly to your instrument. If you have not yet reviewed either the fretted instrument Instruction Manual or the Quick Start Guide, please do so before continuing here. If you later decide that directly applying any numbers or labels to your instrument might make it easier for you to utilize the system, please be sure you understand the cautionary statements made below.

<u>Cautions</u>

When the full Jixis label set for the fingerboard of a stringed instrument is utilized directly on the fingerboard, the strings of your instrument and the fingers you are using to play out note sequences may tend to obscure the color-coded symbols. And when the strings are depressed and the strings slid against the labels, friction, and possibly fingertip oils and perspiration, may eventually cause smudges and wear marks that will distort the printed symbols. This can happen even when clear removable tape coverings are used. Finger sliding actions may also cause the labels to move or curl upwards at the ends. Using standard or even removable clear tape or adhesives when placing the labels directly on your fingerboard may later cause residue adhesive removal issues. Also, placing removable numbers or the full label set directly on your fretted fingerboard may require loosening or removing the string set.

If you leave your instrument in direct sunlight, the adhesive may change its composition and become loose, or worse, gooey and difficult to remove. Also be aware that the suggested methods of application *may not work on the surface of your fingerboard*. Different materials, textures, and contaminants may keep the removable adhesive from staying in place.

Having said that, you can fully apply the fret space numbers and/or the Jixis labels to your own instrument fingerboard using one of the various methods considered below. Also included below are suggestions for utilizing your label set on a mock (simulated) fingerboard.

There are several advantages to having the fret space numbers and/or the label set applied on your fingerboard. Having the fret spaces clearly numbered will make it easier to follow the guidelines in the Manual or Quick Start Guide. And having the fret spaces clearly numbered along with the label set applied to your fingerboard will also speed up the graphical correlation process.

With the labels applied, rather than using the staff guide and labels directly on the Label Set sheet, you can then utilize the staff guide by cutting it away from the Label Set sheet and setting it next to your music. Or, you may choose to use the PDF download tool titled *The Note/Symbol Correlator*, and place it next to any music you want to play. Either method may speed up the color/symbol coding recognition process, and so the realization of which string and fret space to finger to play out the notes.

When you have learned to easily recognize the color/symbol codings for your instrument's line/space tonal range in the written music, it will become a near automatic process to view a note position in the music and immediately locate its color/symbol coding on your fingerboard without having to use more than the red position markers to guide your actions.

Hopefully, you will be saying the note names for the codings to yourself as you graphically correlate your notes to fingering positions so that when you need to switch octave ranges, you can do so by using the alternate codings with the same note letter names for the other octave ranges on your instrument.

Factors to Consider When Deciding What to Do Next

Please review the information here before you make any fret space number or Jixis label applications to your fretted fingerboard. There are various alternate choices in the application procedures that you may wish to consider before you decide on how you want to proceed.

If you are applying the labels, since your label set has left and right numbering sequences already present, you can utilize one or both sets of the numbers in a top display method as you apply the label set to your fingerboard. Or, you can eliminate both sets of numbers and later add a side numbering set if desired. Or, as discussed below, you can split the label set columns and provide a top midline numbering sequence.

If you are not applying the label set, but want to mark the fret space numbers on your fingerboard with removable fret space numbers, the numbers can be placed to either side of the neck or fingerboard, or down the middle of the fingerboard, as discussed further below.

When your fret space numbers are displayed on your instrument, they will typically be displayed in the same orientation as the label set rows. However, on certain fretted instruments that are not played in a near horizontal manner, such as a slide guitar, it may be helpful to orientate the numbering scheme to allow for a better view of the numbers relative to the player's view. The first method being discussed below will consider applying the fret space numbers as you apply the label set to the top of your fingerboard. To do this properly, please consider the information below on the sizing of the label set when it is printed.

Label Application Sizing Issues When Printing Out the Label Set

The Jixis label sets for fretted fingerboards have almost all been done in the same sizing format, with the exception of the *alternate label sets* for the guitar

and the electric bass. In the *alternate label sets*, the labels for the guitar and bass guitar fingerboards have been sized for a standard printout size of an approximate 1.5 inch (3.81 cm) wide top label and an approximate 2 inch (5.08 cm) wide bottom label. All other fretted fingerboard label sets have been sized with each coding within a .25 inch (.64 cm) square box. This yields a 4 string column width of 1 inch (2.54 cm) and a 6 string column of 1.5 inches (3.81 cm). The alternate label sets only number to 19 rows, not 22 as the other sets do. The alternate labels also have the note letter names provided on them.

The alternate label sets for use with the guitar and the electric bass were the first label sets done. When it proved to be too tedious to deal with a full label sizing with added-in note letter names for all stringed instruments, the more simpler present standardized sizing format was developed without a progressively widening label arrangement.

Generally, label sizing will not be an issue if the width of the label set is less than the width of the nut line at the top of the instrument neck. The respective lower label rows may not fall directly under the strings to which they apply, but it will be obvious which string is to be played out at that crosswise fret space.

What does matter is that the top transverse row is *not more wide* than the nut width. If the top label row is too wide for the fingerboard, you can try eliminating one or both of the number sequences on either side of the label rows, or you can make a reduction in the scale of the printout. For example, on various stringed instruments where the top of the fingerboard is narrow and the bottom is wide, it may be necessary to reduce the top labels, but not necessarily the bottom labels. In this instance, you would need two print copies of the label set, one reduced and one not.

One way to determine a correct fitting for your label set and fret space numbers is to print out a low quality copy of the Label Set sheet and fold the paper above the top row to match this width against your fingerboard nut line, either under or over the strings. If the width of a printout of the label set is wider than the nut line, then either eliminate one or the other or both number sequences, or use the print sizing instructions below to reduce the printout by a slight percentage.

If you wish to scale the label printout differently, that is, smaller or larger, you may either utilize a color copier that allows percentage printing, or simply print out the label set PDF at a different scaling. You may do this by successively clicking on FILE, PRINT-SETUP, PROPERTIES, ADVANCED, SCALING, and then click on the percentage numbers to make the printed image smaller or larger. In other PDF readers, the SCALING print-out percentage feature may be reached by successively clicking PROPERTIES, PAGE SETUP, PAGE LAYOUT, SCALED PRINTING, or via similar steps.

If you are printing out the label sets considerably larger, you may have to do so in a stepped process by printing out one or more selected sections of the page, and then choosing PRINT SELECTION ONLY as your printing choice.

Printing out the label sets may be done on ordinary paper, or on thicker, stiffer paper, but is best done on photo paper for better coloration and a more

glossy appearance. For the mock fingerboards discussed below, the labels may also be printed onto adhesive-backed paper or vinyl for an easier application.

Directions for Applying the Label Set with Fret space Numbers

In order to proceed with the suggested application method, you will need: a roll of clear, wide packaging tape; and, a roll of Scotch permanent or removable double-sided tape; and, a roll of clear *removable* tape, or ordinary masking tape. Other brands of double-sided tape may be used, and other *removable* taping means maybe used, such as Post-It Super Sticky note pads, or Post-It Super Sticky removable adhesive label pads. You will also need a cutting tool, e.g., scissors, swing-arm cutting board, razor blade and straight edge, etc.

If your fingerboard is dusty, dirty, oily or otherwise contaminated, it needs to be cleaned before attempting to apply the label set or the application will not adhere properly on the fingerboard.

Once you have a suitable label sheet printout for your fingerboard, cut your label set free from its sheet along the lines of its enclosing rectangular box. Next, place the cut rectangular label set onto a smooth surface and place one, or two side by side strips of the clear packing tape vertically down the entire label set. This will prevent any ink smudging as you handle the label set.

Then cut away any portions of the label rows that will not actually be applied to your fingerboard, *leaving at least one set of side numbers for reference purposes* after your label rows are cut free from the taped label set.

If you are going to use both of the number sets, or the string number set, then leave these in place. Next, cut away the *top two rows* of the label set (the Open or 0 row and the number 1 row), with the cut being aligned to the top line of the number 2 label row, but not entering into it. If you intend to keep the string numbering row, then leave it within your first cut. Then cut each of the remaining label rows away from the sheet, setting each down in its numbered order using the still-attached number set.

As shown in the side by side photos below, for the use of either removable tape or sticky notes as a removable attachment means, you begin the process by applying a strip of double-sided tape *over* the removable attachment means.

The backside of the cut label row is then applied to the top of the double-sided tape that is attached to the removable tape or sticky note, and the label row is cut free from the remainder of that tape or sticky note. If you intend to use the *row number* on your fingerboard, it will stay in place, and if not, it will be cut free from the label row.
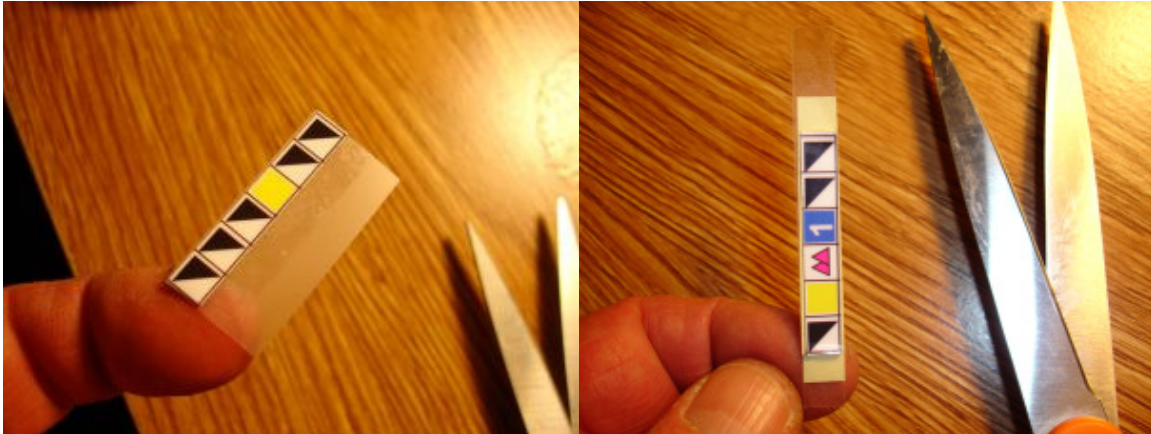
At this point, your instrument's strings should either be removed or sufficiently loosened to allow the respective labels with clear tape coverings to be inserted onto their proper positions. You will be applying the numbered or unnumbered label rows in a top down sequence snugly under each fret wire. The top double label row is placed onto the fingerboard snugly under the top nut line.

If the strings have only been loosened, rather than removed, the insertion point will be *below* the fingerboard. The bottom lip of the removable tape or sticky note is placed onto a coffee stirrer and slid upward *under* the strings up to its fret space, and then pressed firmly into place snugly against the underside of the fret wires with an pencil eraser, and the stirrer twisted out from under the label.

When the labels are properly applied they should look similar to the label row set displays in the following photos. The lower photo displays an alternate guitar label set application.

If you do not have any removable tape and choose to use permanent tape to affix the label rows, you may later have residue issues when you try to remove the label set, and may have to use a solvent, such as denatured alcohol or acetone, which may damage your instrument's finish.

If you do not care about eventual adhesive residue effects, you can use permanent tape or labels printed on an adhesive-backed paper or vinyl. The labels can then be simply inserted and pressed into place in the proper fingerboard positions. However, it is best to first cover the labels with clear tape to avoid ink smears. You may also eventually experience loosening and curling effects with adhesive-backed labels. Gluing the labels to your fingerboard, using various adhesives under the labels, can be done, but is not recommended due to the difficulty in removing the labels. Gluing will also not prevent smearing or curling of the labels during use. It is not recommended to use tape that will extend onto the neck of the instrument, but it can be done.

Using a Midline Fret space Numbering Method for the Label Set
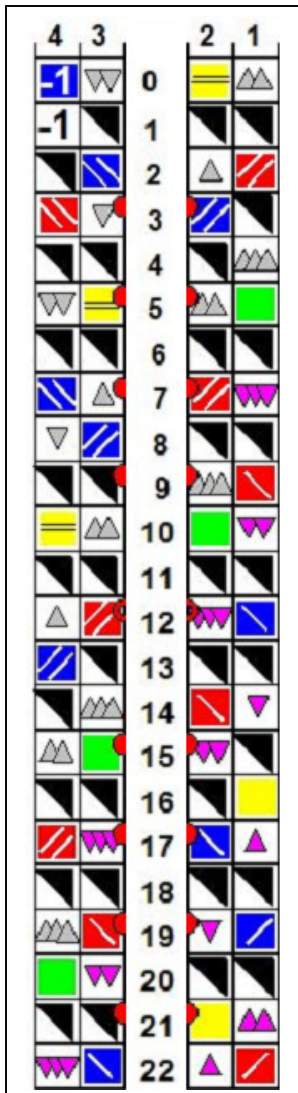
To produce a midline fret space number sequence, first cut the label set free from the sheet leaving at least an inch (2.54 cm) border above and below the top and bottom label set enclosure lines. Then cut the label set vertical string columns down the middle, or if an uneven number such as 5 strings is being used, then cut to one side or the other.

Then cut the two side numerical sequences, but cut carefully so that one of the side numerical sequences may be used to insert between the two severed halves of the label set.

Set down the three pieces side by side as closely together as possible, with the numerical sequence in the middle, and carefully tape across the top and bottom border spaces to keep the pieces from moving out of alignment.

Next secure the entire assembly with a wide strip of clear packing tape (or several pieces of less wide clear tape) running the tape from top to bottom so that the construct looks similar to the one to the left.

The tape-covered rows may then be cut and placed on your fingerboard in the manner described above.

Applying the Jixis Labels with Fret space Numbers to a Mock Fingerboard

A simulated or *mock* fingerboard may be generated on a long piece of stiff paper, cardboard, plastic, or wood, that has been shaped like your instrument's fingerboard, or by placing the cut labels from your label set onto an old fingerboard from the neck of an old instrument, as shown in the photo below.

There are two types of mock fingerboards, one being a simulated visual reference fingerboard, and the other being simulated practice board which is actually touched. Once you have decided on what form your mock fingerboard will take, start the procedure by marking in the location of your fret wire positions on your mock fingerboard with a line or dot.

Using the row cutting procedure described above, there are then several ways in which you may choose to apply each label row in the top-down order of the fret spaces onto your mock fingerboard. The individual labels may be attached to your simulated fingerboard using any type of clear tape, double-sided tape, or adhesives. Or you can print your labels onto an adhesive-backed paper or vinyl roll.

If you anticipate using a mock fingerboard *by actually touching it*, rather than as a simple visual guide, it is best to place transparent tape over the printed area and around the sides of the label outline as each is applied to your mock fingerboard. This will avoid ink smears from finger pressure and finger moisture, and help prevent the labels from slipping out of place after extended use, and will as well prevent curling at the label edges.

Another way to make a simulation of your fingerboard is to place a long sheet of clean paper slightly larger than the full width of you fingerboard over the fingerboard with one end set flush with the nut wire, and then press the paper down on both sides and crease the paper over the edges of the fingerboard. Use a pen or pencil to mark where the fret wires appear beneath the paper.

Then cut the paper at least a half inch (1.27 cm) outside of the outline formed by the creases. Fold the cut paper upward along the crease lines so that you can use the creased outline to mark cutting lines on a piece of cardboard or thin wood. Then cut out the cardboard (or wood) and place the paper over your cutout and fold the creased paper downward over the cutout. Turn the cutout over and tape the two folded creased down against the backside of the cutout.

You can then either use the cutout as is and apply the label set with tape, or you can set the cutout (with paper attached) to a thicker base of wood, and then tape on the label set so the cutout is affixed to the base.

Various Ways to Apply Fret Space Numbers to a Fingerboard

1. Side Number Marking Method for Fretted Fingerboards

      To use this fret space number application method you will need either low tack masking tape no more than a half inch wide (1.27 cm) or small removable labels obtained from an office supply store.

      If you are using masking tape, measure the length of your fingerboard and unwrap the tape to that length and cut the ends of the tape, preferably at a right angle to the length. Next, pick up your instrument and determine which side of the neck you are looking at, left or right. Then set your instrument down and place the tape length on that side of the neck just below that edge of the fingerboard. When the top end of the tape is nearly in line with the nut, allow the top of the tape to rest against the neck. The tape should then be made taught and running down the side length of the fingerboard edge before it is allowed to rest against the length of the neck. Then carefully firmly press the tape into place starting at the top and working down. If the tape has been applied correctly it should be laying smooth against the neck just below the edge of the fingerboard.

      For a side mounting on a fretted instrument, the number application begins with a "1" placed halfway between the nut line and the first fret wire. A "2" is then placed halfway between fret wire one and fret wire two, and so on to the bottom of the fingerboard. A dash line adjacent to each number may be added in to point toward the exact location of the middle of the fret space. You may use a fine point marker, or other writing instrument to place the numbers on the tape, or you can use small stick-on numbers.

      If you are using removable labels, pick up your instrument and determine which side of the neck you are looking at, left or right. Then set your instrument down and place the removable labels at each mid-fret space position along the length of that side of the neck just below that edge of the fingerboard. Begin with a "1" in the middle of the distance between the nut line and the first fret. A dash line adjacent to each number may be added in to point toward the exact location of the middle of the fret space. You can also place an additional marker, such as a circle or square around numbers that correspond to the positions of the inlaid fret markers on the fingerboard so as to better acclimate yourself to playing without the fret space numbers.

2. Middle Number Marking Method for Fretted Fingerboards

      To use this fret space number application method you will need low tack masking tape no more than a half inch wide (1.27 cm) or small removable labels obtained from an office supply store.

      If you are using masking tape, measure the length of your fingerboard and unwrap the tape to that length and cut the ends of the tape, preferably at a right angle to the length. Next, center the tape length along the mid-line length of the fingerboard. When the top end of the tape is nearly flush with the nut, allow it to

rest against the fingerboard. The tape should be made taught and running down the mid-line of the fingerboard before it is allowed to rest against the length of the fingerboard. Then carefully firmly press the tape into place starting at the top and working down. If the tape has been applied correctly it should be laying smooth against the fingerboard.

Apply the fret space numbers to the tape using a fine point marker, or other writing instrument to place the numbers on the tape, or you can use small stick-on numbers. The number application begins with a "1" placed halfway between the nut line and the first fret wire. A "2" is then placed halfway between fret wire one and fret wire two, and so on to the bottom of the fingerboard. A dash line adjacent to each number may be added in to point toward the exact location of the middle of the fret space.

If you are using removable labels, use a straight edge visual guide (such as a ruler) to center the labels along the mid-line length of the fingerboard. You can also place an additional marker, such as a circle or square around numbers that correspond to the positions of the inlaid fret markers on the fingerboard so as to better acclimate yourself to playing without the fret space numbers.

Applying Note Letter Names with Your Label Set

Although it is possible to add in the corresponding rows from your Label Set *Note Letter Name Chart* with your color/symbol coded label rows, the results are visually complex and confusing to quickly decipher. Also, as you reach the higher tone fret spaces there is insufficient room to add in the note letter names.

On the other hand, it is also possible to just utilize the Note Letter Name Chart as a sequence of row labels for application to a fingerboard. However, doing so will limit you to what you are able to understand about the relationship between the note letter names and their actual position on the written music.

Thus, if you are going to apply any labels to your instrument, it is recommended that you only apply the color/symbol label rows and just utilize the Note Letter Name Chart as a reference guide.