

# How to Create a MuseScore Chapman Stick Template

Steve Sawyer

ssawyer@stephensawyer.com

1. Create a new score
2. In the Create New Score wizard, enter, as the title, the name of your template (e.g. Chapman Stick 10-string Matched Reciprocal) and click "Next". Note that if you wish to use this file as an actual MuseScore template, do not start the file name with a number as it will be ignored.
3. In the Choose template file dialog, Double-click the "Choose Instruments" option.

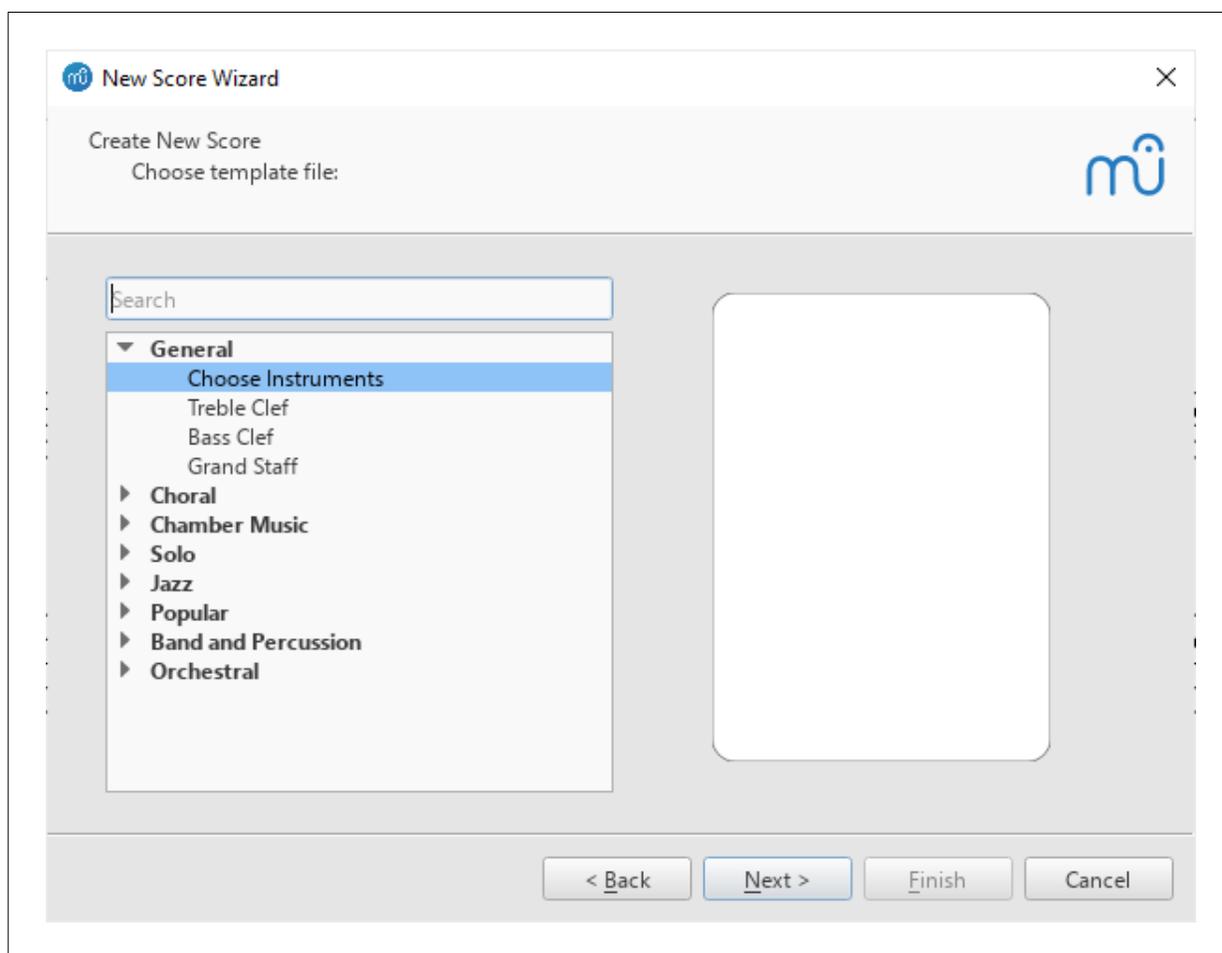


Figure 2

4. In the instrument selection dialog, expand the "Strings - Plucked" section and scroll down to "Electric Guitar" and click "Add to score"
5. Scroll down further to "5-String Electric Bass" and again click "Add to score"
6. In the right panel, you will now have two instruments selected. Each one is associated with a staff.

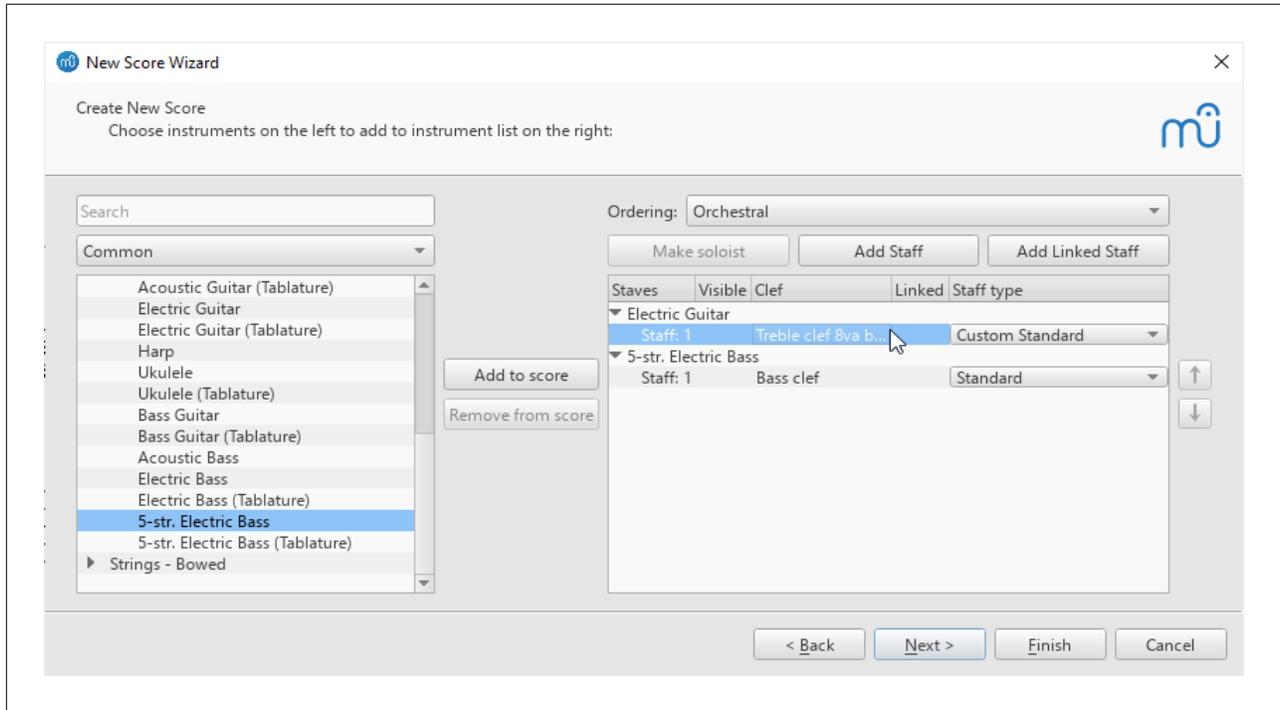


Figure 3

7. Click on the staff (not the instrument) for the Electric Guitar. Note that when clicking on either staff, the "Add Staff" and "Add Linked Staff" options become enabled.
8. Click on the "Add Linked Staff" button. This will add a new staff to the "Electric Guitar". At the right side of the newly-added staff, the "Staff type" defaults to "Standard". Click on this, and in the drop-down, select "Tab. 6-string Full". Note that you will need to modify this (explained below) if you're creating a template for a 10-string or 8-string stick.
9. Repeat this process for the "5-str. Electric Bass" (specify the standard 4-string if you're writing notation for an 8-string Stick), specifying "Tab. 5-str Full" (or "Tab. 4-str full" if doing an 8-string instrument) for the linked staff. Again, if you're creating a template for a 12-string or 8-string stick, the tablature staff will need to be modified as described below. This dialog should now look like the one shown in Figure 4.

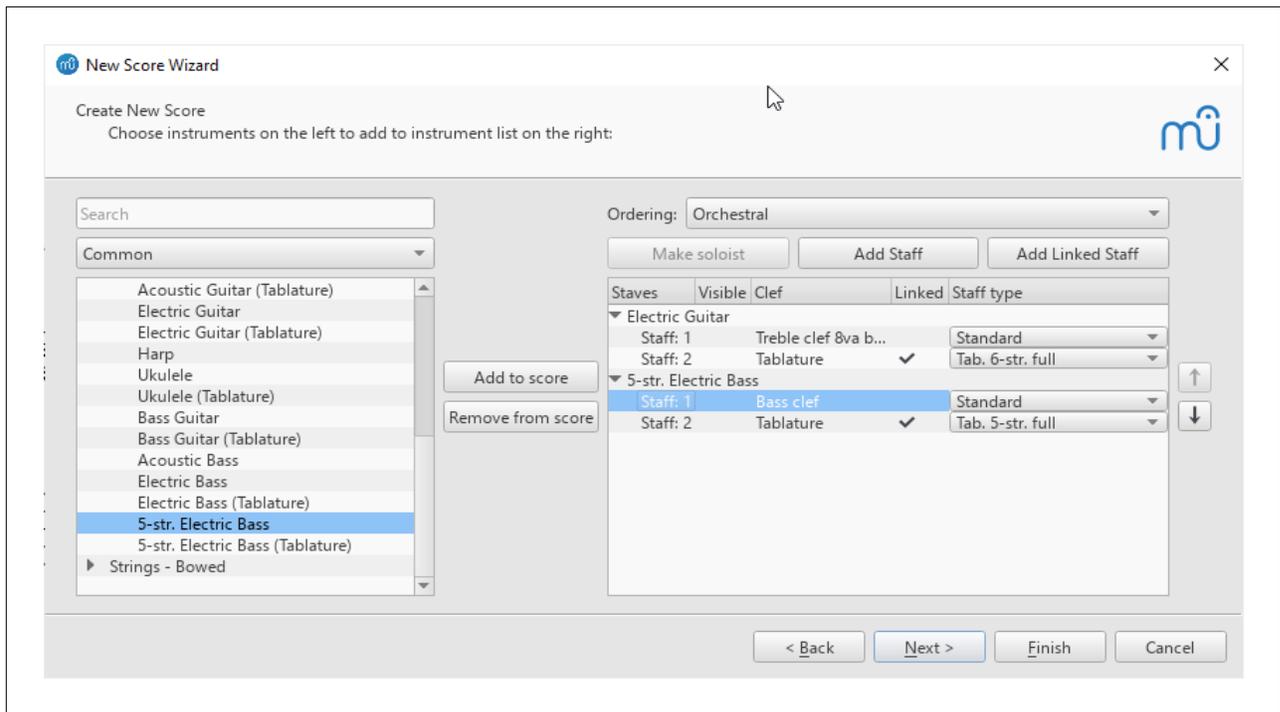


Figure 4

10. Note the vertical arrows at the right of the selected instruments and their associated staves. If you prefer to have the tablature staves together, you can use these arrows to do that. This can be done now or later. Similarly, if you prefer the standard notation to appear together, with the melody tablature above, and the bass tablature below, you can similarly accomplish this here. To do so, select a staff and click the up- or down-arrow to move it to its new position
11. Clicking "Finish" will result in the template shown. Note that I didn't specify a key signature or change the default 4/4 time signature as this will be modified when actually using the template to write a score.

12. If you wish to change the order of the staves as described above, from the menu, select "Edit|Instruments" or use the "I" hotkey

Chapman Stick 10-string Matched Reciprocal



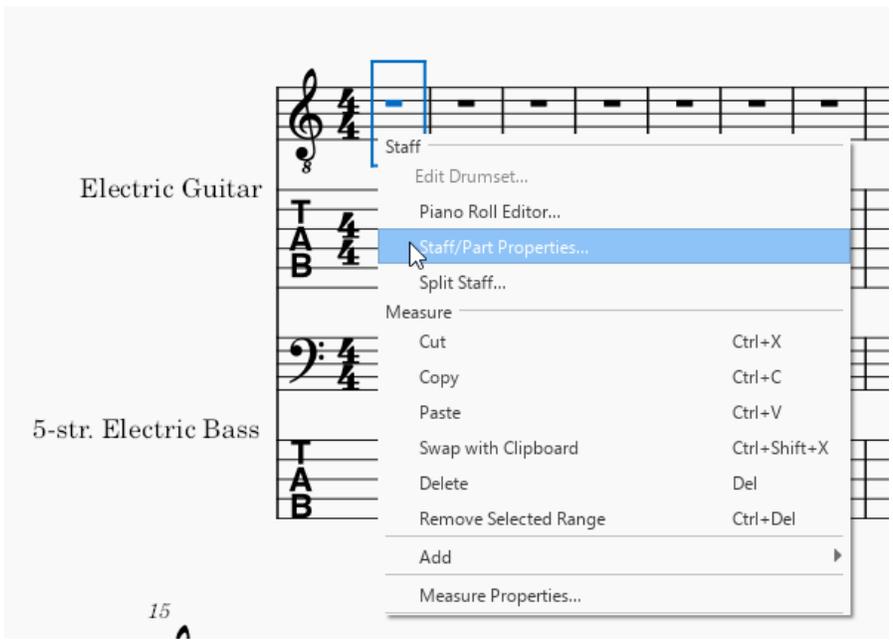
Electric Guitar

5-str. Electric Bass

*Figure 5*

13. Now that we have the basic staves established we can refine this to be Stick-specific

14. Right-click on the tablature staff for the Electric Guitar and select "Staff/Part Properties" to open the Staff/Part Properties dialog.



Electric Guitar

5-str. Electric Bass

15

*Figure 6*

**IMPORTANT NOTE!!**

The Staff/Part Properties dialog modifies both staves for the selected instrument when manipulating the items listed under Part Properties as both the standard notation staff and the tablature staff both represent the same part. However, note that which staff you click on to invoke the dialog makes a difference to the properties displayed and modifiable in the top section of this dialog - the Staff Properties. If you select the standard notation staff, this section will show and allow you to modify properties for the standard notation staff. Right-clicking on the tablature and invoking this dialog will allow you to manipulate properties for the tablature staff. Note in the illustration how to verify which staff is being modified by observing the staff identified by the Style group indicator, which will be "Standard" for the standard notation staff and "Tablature" for the tab. You can navigate directly from one staff to another using the up-and-down arrow buttons at the lower-left corner of the Staff/Part Properties dialog – HOWEVER, be sure to click the "Apply" button before moving to another staff, otherwise your changes will be lost. See Figure 7, which shows the settings for the Tablature staff of the Electric Guitar part.

15. Check the number of Lines to be displayed for the tablature – 4 for 8-string instruments, 5 for 10-string and 6 for 12-string instruments.

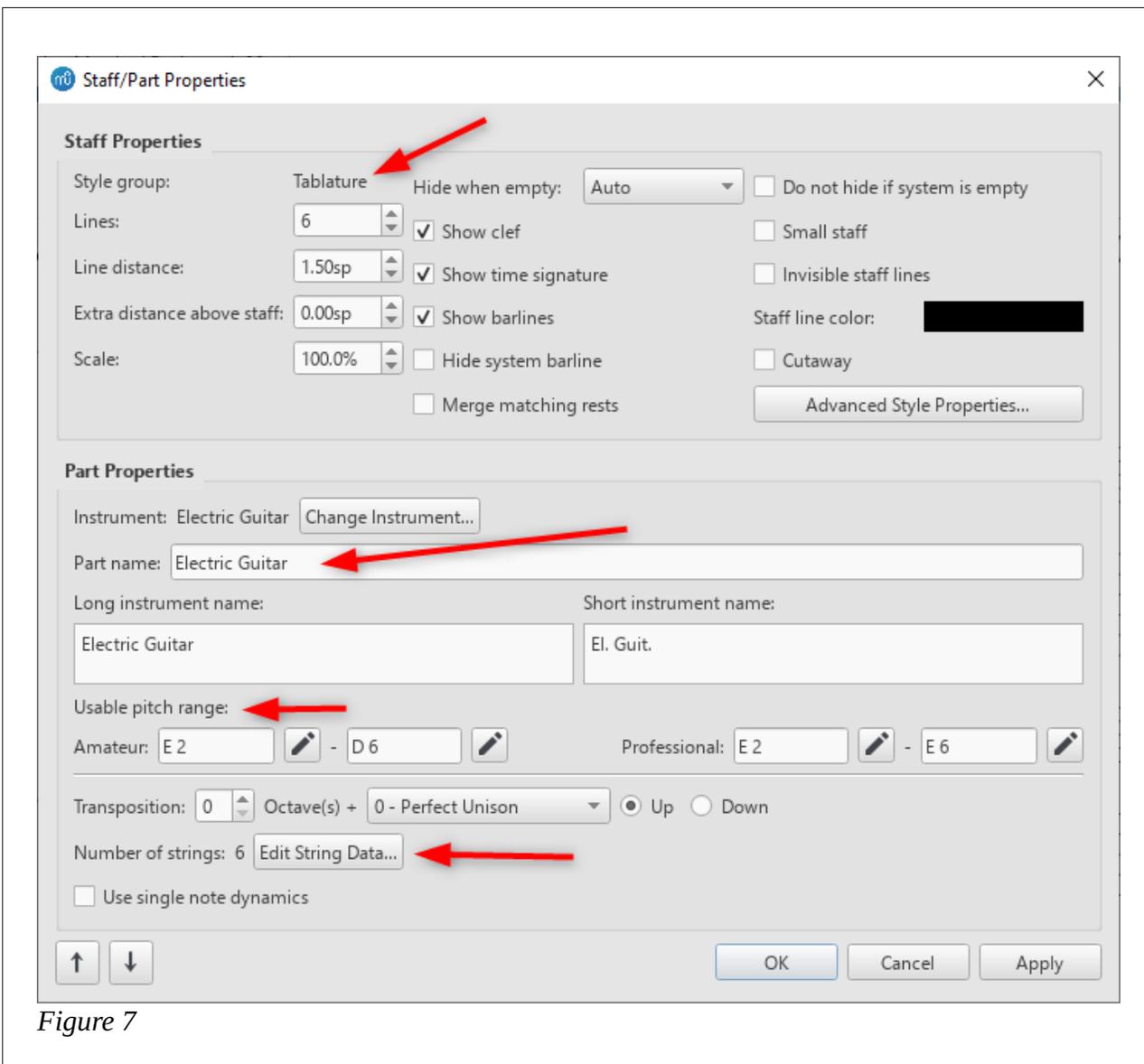


Figure 7

16. In the text boxes for "Part name", "Long instrument name" and "Short instrument name", change to "Stick Melody", "Melody" and "Mel."
17. Change the "Usable Pitch Range" to that for your particular tuning. For MR, I'm entering "E2" to "C6" for the melody strings. I entered the same values for both the "Amateur" and "Professional" ranges.

18. Click on the "Edit String Data". In the resulting dialog, enter the tuning for each "open" string (the pitch of the string when tapped at the "X-fret"). Edit the pitches for existing strings, add or delete strings as needed using the appropriate buttons. Enter the pitch values descending from highest to lowest. For MR tuning, I've entered the pitches as C4, G3, D3, A2, E2.

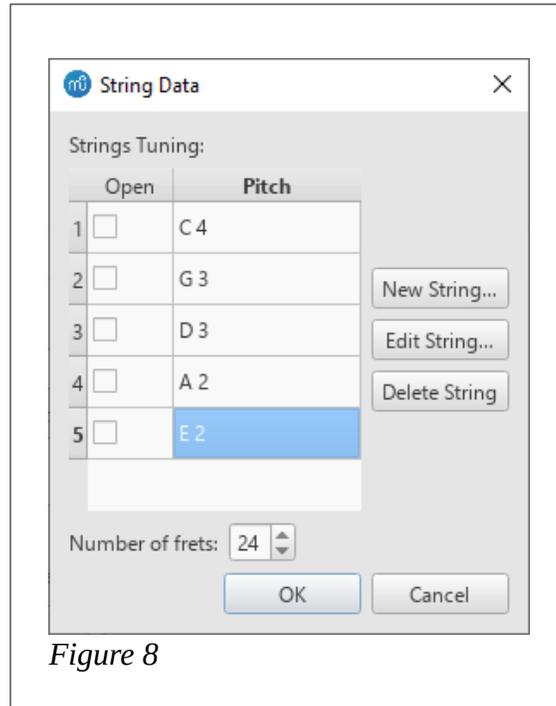


Figure 8

19. Verify that the "Style group" under "Staff Properties" is displaying "Tablature", and change the number of lines to 5. Note that you will leave this as 6 if you're creating a template for a 12-string Stick. Change it to 4 if working on an 8-string Stick.
20. Repeat this process by invoking the Staff/Part Properties dialog for the tab staff for the bass strings (or click on "Apply", then navigate to the bass tablature via the down-arrow button as described above). Change the number of strings to display in the tablature if necessary to match the instrument for which you're writing notation. Change the names to "Stick Bass", "Bass" and "Bass"
21. It seems that when starting out with a 5-string bass for the bass strings, MuseScore defaults to a transposition value of 1 octave up. Change this to 0.
22. Again, click the "Edit String Data" and enter the "open" (X-fret) values for each string for your tuning. Again, enter the pitch values from highest to lowest, top-to-bottom. For 10-string MR I'm entering E3, A2, D2, G1, C1.
23. Change the "Usable Pitch Range" to that for your particular tuning. For a 10-string Stick in MR, I'm entering "C1" to "E5".

24. For the bass part, the lines in the tablature must represent the pitches in ascending order, from the lowest pitched string at the top (string 6 for a 10-string instrument) to the highest-pitched string at the bottom (string 10). To accomplish this, click on the Advanced Style Properties at the upper right of the Staff/Part Properties dialog. Click on the “Upside down” checkbox to reverse the order of the strings in the tablature.

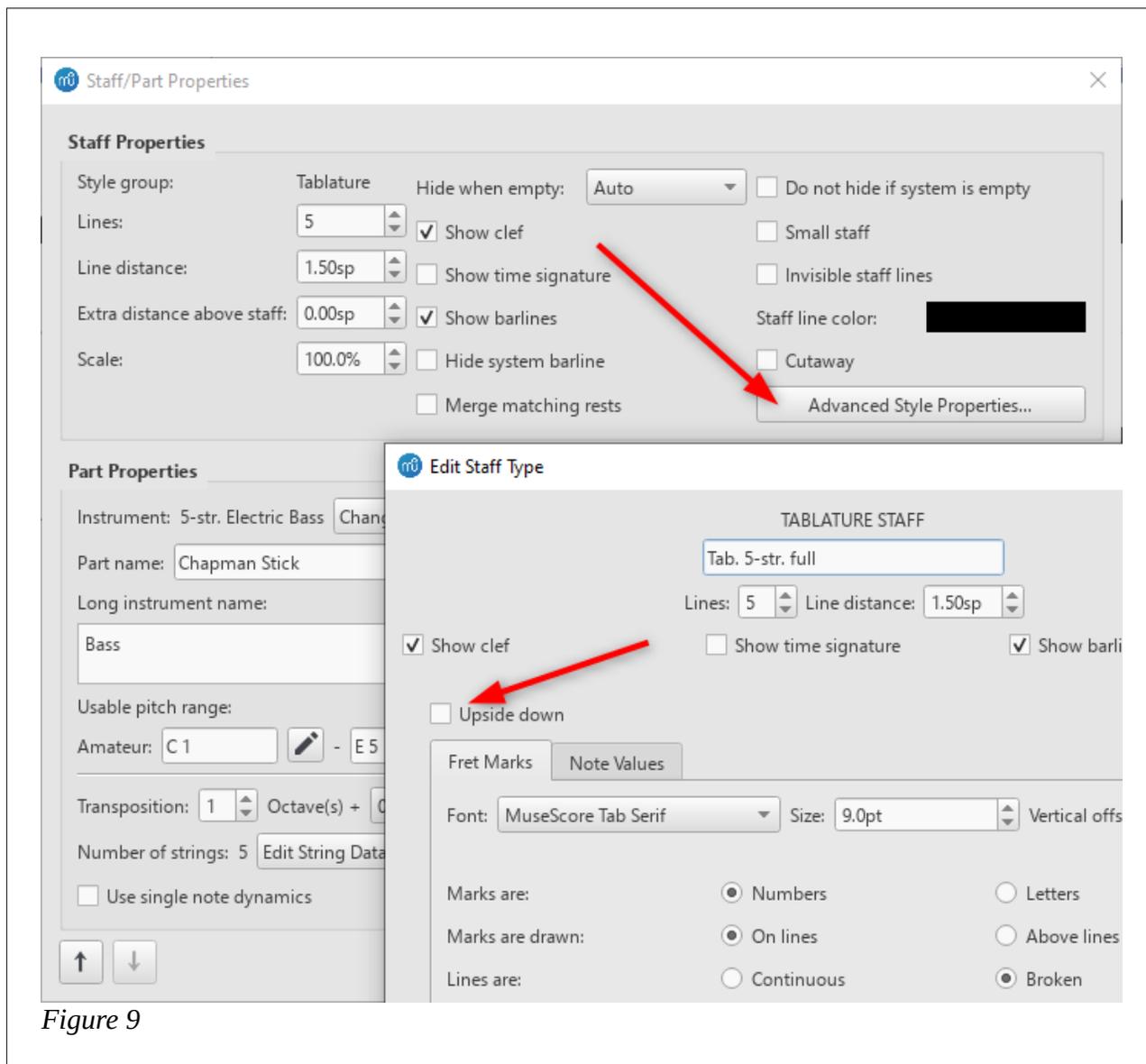


Figure 9

25. The last step is to change the bass clef to an 8va bass clef.

26. Locate and expand the Clefs section of the Palettes in MuseScore. Click on the “More”, and locate the “Bass clef 8va bassa” clef, and drag-and-drop this clef onto the first measure of the bass staff in the score. This will cause the notation to be one octave higher than the actual pitch. This practice is common in guitar notation to avoid excessive ledger lines.

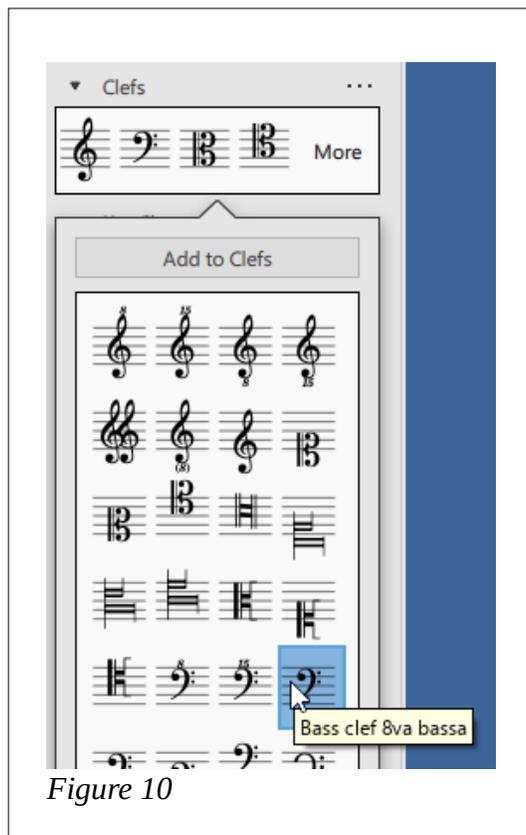


Figure 10

NOTE: There appears to be a bug in MuseScore that causes the added clef to appear on both the standard notation and the tablature. Simply select the 8va bass clef in the tablature and hit [Delete] to remove it and reveal the TAB “clef”.

27. To verify that everything is working correctly, enter notation for all of the “open” (X-fret) pitches. All notes should appear in the tablature at fret 0 on separate strings. See Figure 11.

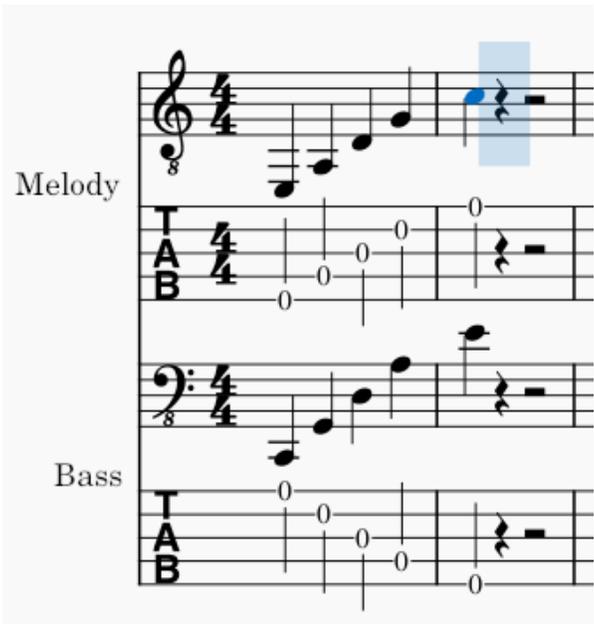


Figure 11

28. Save the file to act as a template by placing it into the User Templates folder. See the following picture or follow this link to the appropriate page in the MuseScore Handbook.

<https://musescore.org/en/handbook/3/create-new-score#templates>

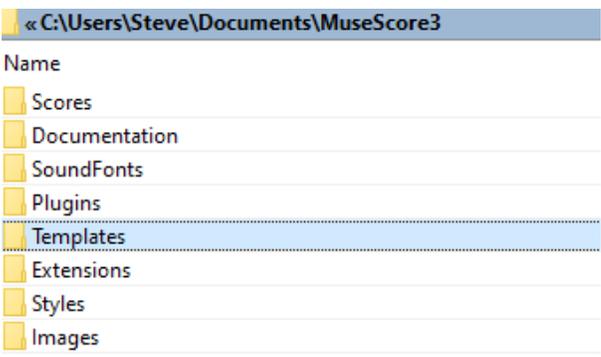


Figure 12

29. By saving as a template, the template will show up in the New Score Wizard in the “Choose template file” dialog as shown in Figure 13.

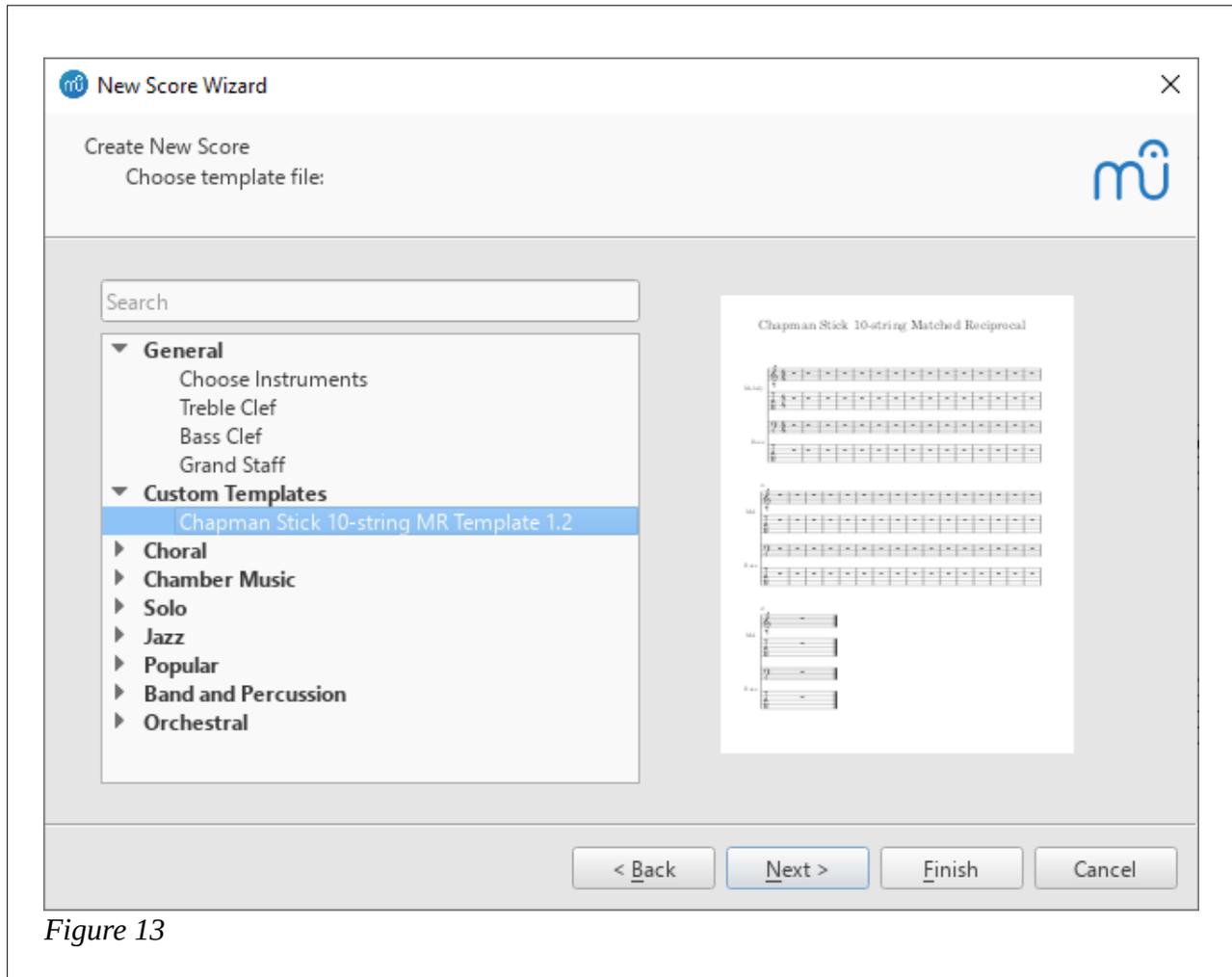


Figure 13

**NOTE:** There appear to be two bugs in MuseScore affecting the 8va bass clef that was added to the bass strings. The first causes the new clef to appear on both the standard notation AND the tablature as mentioned above; simply delete the extra clef. The second bug is that when invoked as a template, the file for some reason *loses* the 8va clef; it will be necessary to manually add it each time when creating a new score, which is a pretty trivial work-around. It's just important to remember this step, otherwise the tablature will be an octave off. The other work-around is to simply store the template with the rest of your scores, open it, and immediately save it under the name of the new score so you don't inadvertently overwrite your template. You may wish to go into your file system through Finder or Windows Explorer and mark the template file as Read-Only to avoid that.

**Final note:**

In the process of refining these instructions, I've had more than one occasion where following these steps resulted in a template in which the bass notation was appearing correctly, but showing with red notes indicating that the pitch was outside of the range for the instrument. I've been unable to track down the reason for this behavior. In both cases I simply started over, followed these instructions, and everything worked perfectly. If anyone discovers what might cause this behavior, please contact me so that I can incorporate it into these instructions.