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Guitar Made Easy

By Louise Slavic

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About the Author



Louise Slavnic is the holder of a *Diploma of Teaching* [Primary – Australian Catholic University] and *Bachelor of Education* [Primary – Australian Catholic University]. She has a passion for helping people of all ages reach their goals, and realize their potential in all parts of life. Louise learned to play the guitar at 8 years of age. Now with over 20 years playing the guitar, teaching children and adults to play guitar as a hobby, Louise has combined her educational skills and practical experiences to develop the *Guitar Made Easy* video/workbook program. Remember her words of encouragement: “*You’ll always be glad you can play.*”

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Part 1

1a) Holding the Guitar

When learning to play the guitar it is important to realize that personal style will develop later, and that you should not assume that you will be as accomplished as those you have seen playing guitar in various bands of sorts (as above illustration shows).

As previously mentioned, a strap may be used to provide security (some players do not like the risk of the guitar slipping while they play) whilst sitting or to allow playing to occur whilst standing up. Again please be aware that this is a personal thing and you will develop your own style as you practice more you will discover what is comfortable.

Beginner's Tips

Some beginners are very aware of how they are holding the guitar and this can cause undue strain on the body as it is tensed with the anxiety of correct position. The most important thing about playing the guitar is to enjoy it, to have fun. So before we even go in to the details of correct position, grip and strumming action, let's remember that we are doing this in order to acquire a skill that will bring us great enjoyment all of our lives (and joy to others!).

Naturally some people become more proficient at playing the guitar than others, and learn very quickly (natural talent one could say). This is not to say that those who take longer do not enjoy it. Remember, whilst some may not have natural ability, they can still become (very) good guitar players, depending on their

desire. Often those who have to work harder become better simply because their commitment is stronger.

How to Hold Your Guitar

1. For starters you should always play sitting down. Make sure it is not a chair with armrests as you may knock the guitar against them. Although you will probably be leaning forward to see music, it is best to sit where there is no danger of the guitar being knocked against anything. Choose a lounge or table chair that is the right height for you to place music or instructions on a table in front of you. Try not to use a table that is too low as you will find yourself leaning forward too much and becoming uncomfortable very quickly. Plus you will lose your spot on the music/instructions you are referring to as you are looking too far down.

Obviously a music stand is ideal or a book stand for use on a table. However these items are not always easy to come by at a reasonable price, but do keep your eyes out in second hand stores, used goods in newspapers and garage sales etc. Some people sit on a cushion on the floor! It is up to you how you develop and practice your style.

Be comfortable, keep the guitar out of danger and be able to see music/instructions clearly.

2. Do not be nervous, simply relax – take things easy and you will learn with confidence and enjoyment. Once seated appropriately, make sure the strap is either removed or not touching any of the strings. If you are using a strap, place it around your neck and shoulders and allow the guitar to sit naturally.

Legs may be crossed or uncrossed, whatever is comfortable. The lower curved part of the guitar body rests on the right thigh (or left if you are left handed*). The guitar is lightly supported by the right (*) arm by placing the hand over the sound hole thereby bending the elbow approximately at the highest point of the wide part of the guitar body and keeping the wrist slightly arched.

3. The neck of the guitar points slightly upward and using your left hand (or right if you are left handed), nestle the neck in the hollow between your thumb and forefinger – at the top of the neck. Curve your fingers in slightly.
4. Your left (or right) elbow which is holding the neck should be about 15cm away from your corresponding side.

This position may feel awkward now, but sooner than you think it will be as natural as getting comfortable to start driving a car. Remember not to be too over conscious of the positioning as you will prevent your own comfort and cause nervousness, thereby affecting your actual playing.

Holding the guitar correctly makes it easier for you to play and you will soon find out why it is held the way it is suggested here.

IMPORTANT: When playing, the hand around the neck of the guitar is not to hold any weight of the instrument. This must be on your thigh. The left (or right) hand is kept free of weight so it can move quickly along the fret board playing chords or strings.

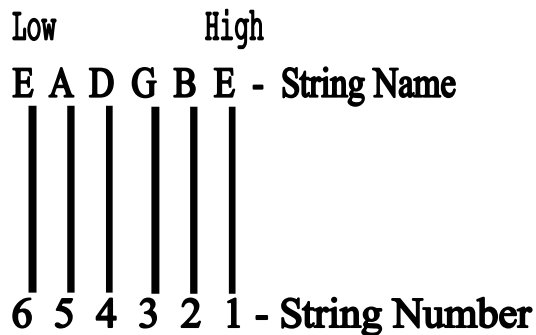
You will also find that you arms will become sore from being held in these positions as you are not used to using them in this capacity. The arm over the top of the guitar and the wrist playing chords will be the most noticeable. Do not be concerned as just like learning any new skill, time is needed for the body to adjust/strengthen.

1b) Tuning Methods

1. **Piano/Keyboard**
2. **Pitch Pipe**
3. **Tuning Machine**
4. **Using 6th String**

1. Piano/Keyboard

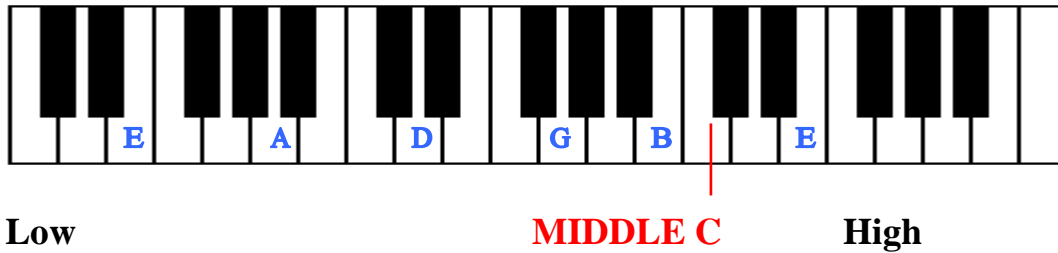
As you can see from the illustration, each string has a name that matches a note on a piano or keyboard. Unless you also happen to know how to play a piano



and have one handy, this method is not really useful. However, if you do have one around that is perhaps used by others but is available to you, you can always learn where these notes are. To do this please note:

You tune a guitar from a piano/keyboard from MIDDLE C. This note is found just below the two black keys near the center of the piano where the maker's name usually appears. If you are using a keyboard, sometimes the names of the

notes are written above the keys. Middle C will of course be the 'C' that is closest to the middle.



To start from the top of the guitar, note that the 6th or top string, is low 'E' and therefore you must sound the 'E' on the keyboard that is low (as illustrated).

Once you sound the low 'E' note on the piano, sound the top string (being sure that the string is 'open'), move the tuning key that is attached to it until the sounds match. If you do not have an ear for it to start, do not worry, with practice you will become better. However if after 3 months of tuning and playing you still have trouble matching the sounds, then a tuning machine may be best for you.

After doing the low 'E', move on to A, D, G, B and finally high 'E' which is on the other side of middle 'C' matching the sound of the note to the sound of the guitar string.

2. Pitch Pipe

A *Pitch Pipe* consists of 6 small tubes which operate on the mouth organ principle. It is small and much handier to check that your guitar is tuned when you are not at home. It is designed so that the top 3 (6th, 5th, and 4th strings – Low 'E', A and D) are protruding on one side, and the last three (3rd, 2nd and 1st – G, B and high 'E') are on the other side.

Applying the same principle as tuning a guitar using a piano/keyboard, sound the low 'E', then sound the low 'E' (open string) on the guitar and turn the attached tuning key either up or down until the sounds match. Then move on to A, D, G, B and high 'E'.

3. Tuning Machine



Obviously for the development of your musical ear (the ability to detect a pitch), using a piano or tuning pipe is better. However many guitarists who simply play for pleasure for themselves or small groups are happy with being able to carry around one of these machines and tune their guitar quickly with minimal fuss.

The way it works is you simply tell the machine [by selecting the name of the string on the machine with the switch] which string you are tuning and either have it on your knee or a small table in front of you where the machine can detect the sound. (Make sure it is turned on before use and off when you are finished, keep batteries fresh by storing the machine inside the case with your guitar which you naturally keep in a cool, dry place).

Start as usual with the top string (6th or low 'E'), sound the string (open) and the needle will move informing you of the pitch of the string. There is a definite middle where you want the needle to be pointing that indicates that the string is in tune. If the needle goes above the middle point, it is too high and must be lowered using the appropriate tuning key. If the needle stays below the middle point, it is too low and the string must be made higher.

It is important to remember that you once a string is tuned and you move on to the next string that you make sure that you have moved the appropriate switch to match the string you are tuning!!!

4. Using 6th String

General Info About 6th String Tuning

Once you master this method you can use just about any instrument to provide you with the low 'E' top (6th) string sound, and then you can do the rest yourself. It is also the best method for tuning when there is no other in tune instrument around. Of course when you use the top string to begin tuning, it may not be at the correct pitch. However you can still tune the guitar so that you can practice or play for pleasure.

As mentioned, any instrument that is tuned can provide you with the starting point, low 'E'. Another guitar player may be present that has already tuned their guitar. You can simply tune your top string to theirs by listening to their OPEN top string and you match the pitch of your guitar to it by turning the tuning key up or down. The more you tune your guitar the better you will be able to hear the pitch and therefore whether you need to go up or down. A handy instrument is the recorder as it is quite compact and a lot of people have one. You need an in tune instrument to start so that your instrument matches the pitch of all the other instruments you may be playing with. Remember, for your own personal use, you can still use this method to tune your guitar but it may not be at the correct pitch.

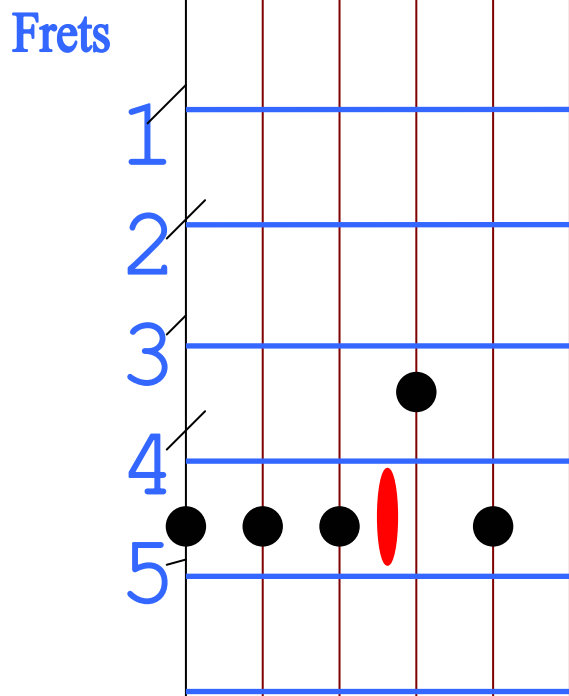
Personal experience has led me to believe that once new string has stretched, the top 2 strings (6th and 5th – low 'E' and 'A') generally stay in tune quite well (with the proper care). It is usually the other four strings that slip out of tune and especially the last two (2nd and 1st – 'B' and high 'E'). So when you have mastered this method, tuning your guitar is simple, quick and easy and most of the time, close to the correct pitch. You will notice most accomplished guitarists use this method for tuning.

How to Tune a Guitar with the 6th String Method

Frets* 1-6

The 5th fret is where 6th string tuning begins and is usually marked with the first position dot between the 4th and 3rd strings (D and G). The 6th String (low 'E')

Notes	E	A	D	G	B	E
Strings	6	5	4	3	2	1



Summary of 6th String Tuning

The black dots in the diagram above depict that a finger is placed firmly in that spot in order to tune the string directly below it.

As previously mentioned, the top or 6th string (low 'E') must first be tuned to a musical instrument matching the note low 'E' note sound before this tuning procedure commences. Remember to play the string OPEN when tuning it to the instrument available.

Once the 6th string is tuned correctly, the rest of the strings can be tuned accordingly.

- Pressing on the 6th string in the 5th fret gives the sound for the OPEN 5th string. So press in this position, sound the string, then sound the 5th string.

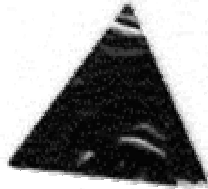
Move the according tuning key (5th string) until the 5th string matches the sound of the pressed 6th string.

- Move your finger to the 5th string in the 5th fret and press, sound the string and this gives the sound for the OPEN 4th string. Move the according tuning key (4th string) until the 4th string matches the sound of the pressed 5th string.
- Move your finger to the 4th string in the 5th fret and press, sound the string and this gives the sound for the OPEN 3rd string. Move the according tuning key (3rd string) until the 3rd string matches the sound of the pressed 4th string.
- Move your finger to the 3rd string *in the 4th fret* and press, sound the string and this gives the sound for the OPEN 2nd string. Move the according tuning key (2nd string) until the 2nd string matches the sound of the pressed 3rd string.
- Move your finger to the 2nd string in the 5th fret and press, sound the string and this gives the sound for the OPEN 1st string. Move the according tuning key (1st string) until the 1st string matches the sound of the pressed 2nd string.

1c) Strumming and using a Plectrum



Common



Triangle



Brazilian



Thumb Pick

Sounding the Strings

As shown above, there are a few varieties of the sounding device used by guitarists called a PLECTRUM. It should also be noted that such plectrums come in different thicknesses: heavy/medium/soft – like a toothbrush. This is to suit the personal style of the guitarists. Everyone has a different style as well as taste – so plectrums also come in varying designs/patterns to suit personal taste. There are also different textures available like the Brazilian Stone shown above. Some guitarists have their own names printed on them and an individual pattern (Metallica etc.) as playing the guitar is such a big part of their lives, they encompass their own personality into the playing of it.

Using the plectrum, the bare thumb or a thumb pick, is entirely personal. However, when learning to play, it is usually best to get used to sounding the strings using the bare thumb, and develop a personal style as you practice and become more comfortable.

However, (particularly on a steel stringed guitar) using the thumb to start may give you blister if you overdo it, it is still the best way to kick off your guitar playing career.

THUMB PICK

A thumb pick is specially shaped to fit around the thumb and must be carefully selected for the individual. If it is too tight it will cause discomfort and affect your playing. If it is too loose it will move too easily causing your playing to be interrupted. It should fit snugly over the thumbnail generally, but some guitarists have it further down the thumb. As already pointed out, it is a personal thing.

PLECTRUM

All other plectrums should be selected on the size and texture first and then the thickness to suit the individual player. The plectrum is held between the fleshy part of the thumb and the first joint of the forefinger.

Hold the plectrum just firmly enough for control. Avoid a tight grip as it will tire your hand. A firm grip is all that is needed while still keeping the hand and wrist



relaxed and flexible. If held too loosely or too turned, it will not strum correctly giving a vibrating or scratchy sound instead of clear and melodious.

Hold the plectrum as shown here – the top part of the plectrum covered with about 1 to 1.5 cm showing below the thumb. When using the plectrum, only the tip of the plectrum makes contact (same applies to thumb pick) with the strings.



Some players curl their fingers in to the palm as they play. Others rest the three fingers on the scratch plate or further down – all dependant on personal style and comfort.

How to Strum

Until you become accustomed to playing and gain confidence, use your bare thumb to strum until you are ready to use a correct rhythmic strum. Once you do start to use a plectrum, allow yourself a week or so to get used to the rhythmic strum as well as gripping the plectrum.

Strumming is usually a movement of the hand and wrist only. Using the entire weight of the forearm makes things awkward and tiresome.

To get the feel of things, while simply resting the neck of the guitar in the cup between thumb and index finger, strum across all of the strings. Using the thumb (nothing else to touch strings), start from the 6th string and sound each string in turn until you reach the 1st string. One string at a time being sure to sound each string gently but enough to obtain sound. If the string vibrates you have strummed it too hard.

The part of the thumb making contact should be the inner part closest to the guitar, just below the thumbnail. Strum slowly with reasonable firmness across all strings in turn, keeping your wrist relaxed. After about 20 attempts you should be able to strum all strings with one strum instead of slow one at a time motion.

For now, the sound coming from the guitar is not particularly musical, but so long as the guitar is in tune, the sound will resemble a pleasant sound.

FOR BEST RESULTS

Do not “dig” your thumb in to the strings or try to “push” it across them. Allow the thumb to pivot freely with the wrist and in this way, the strum is actually achieved by a downward movement of the thumb, assisted by the bending of the wrist. Practice until a smooth strum over all 6 strings is achieved. Keep the hand relaxed.

Beginner's Creed

- ✓ **HOLD**
- ✓ **TUNE**
- ✓ **STRUM (gentle)**
- ✓ **FOUNDATION FOR STRUMMING STYLE**
- ✓ **BE COMFORTABLE**
- ✓ **HAVE FUN**

You will know when you are ready for the *Chord Structure* section when:

- holding the guitar is comfortable
- tuning is becoming easier and more natural
- strumming is becoming smoother

Part 2

2a) Chord Structure

How to Write/Draw & Read, Chord Structure/Position Diagrams

Identifying Chord Structure

You may recall the following diagram being similar to the details of “6th String” tuning. I keep the ‘names’ or musical notes of each of the strings for your benefit. Generally when you see a diagram of a chord, it may or may not have the numbers of the strings or the frets. It is assumed that you will know that the top of the diagram is the nut, and that that is where the frets begin. It is also assumed that you will know that the top string (6th) is where the strings begin.

Please be aware that regular chord shape drawings will not indicate names or numbers of strings nor the finger to use in each spot as I have for the purposes of familiarization.

A guitar is like a piano in that the same chord can be played in three or more places with different structure/finger positions AND, the same chord can have many of its own variations. (see appendix 1) If you choose to develop your guitar playing skills, you will come across the other structures and learn to recognize in pieces of music, which ‘key’ that chord is required to be played in - thereby indicating which structure is needed. For example, the chord ‘D’ can be played in a few different positions and with many variations, almost like a ‘D’ family. (see appendix 1)

For our (beginner’s) purposes, we will be learning the basic chord structure of the chords which all other chords are based on. Although this sounds complicated, some of you may also recall that the use of a capo can assist with the playing of more chords even when you only know the basics.

On the diagrams below are the finger positioning for three basic chords. The black dots indicate where there should be fingers pressing. The parentheses indicate which strings should be strummed when playing this chord. Finally, be sure to note which finger goes where, by referring to the finger guide below.



L = little

R = ring

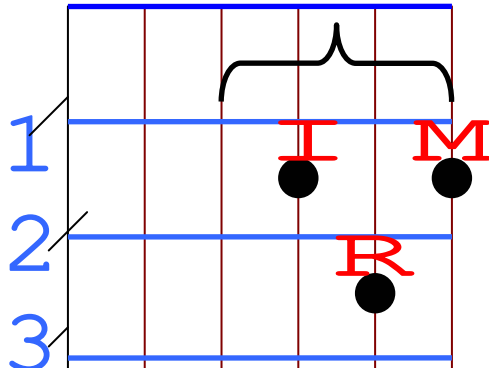
M = middle

I = index

'D' chord

<i>Notes</i>	E	A	D	G	B	E
<i>Strings</i>	6	5	4	3	2	1

Frets

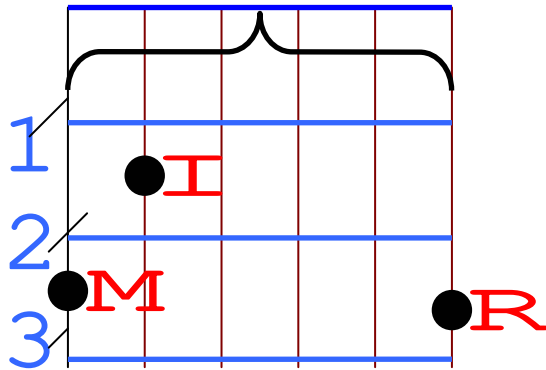


D

'G' chord

Notes E A D G B E
Strings 6 5 4 3 2 1

Frets

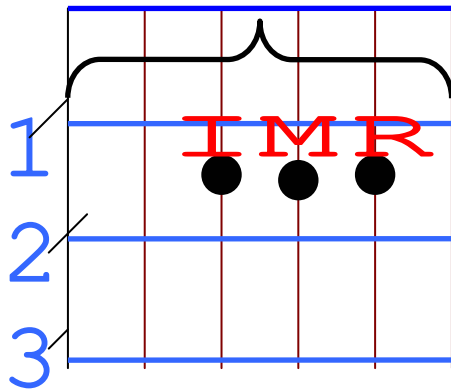


G

'A' chord

Notes E A D G B E
Strings 6 5 4 3 2 1

Frets



A

Now that you know some basic chords you will be able to practice playing them using the downward strum we covered earlier. This will be to condition your fingers to the pressing action required to produce the correct sound when you strum.

2b) Finger Conditioning and Chord Change Practice

Now it's time to apply and practice what we have learned! You have been practicing STRUMMING the open strings in order to get the right feel of the guitar and hold it correctly. You have been laying the foundation for your style by strumming and have had the chance to practice tuning your guitar. Most importantly, you have become much more comfortable with your new lifelong friend and companion.

So far you have accomplished

HOLD

TUNE

STRUM (gentle)

FOUNDATION FOR STRUMMING STYLE

BE COMFORTABLE

HAVE FUN

*****Introduction to Chord Changing -Practice Routine*****

Now we have the information to play chords. Let's now turn to a new addition to our Beginner's Creed.

HOLD

TUNE

POSITION FINGERS - *Start with D, then G then A. Repeat 5 times in that sequence.*

PRESS

STRUM (5 downward strums) [i.e. 5 strums of D & change, 5 strums of G then change, 5 strums of A then change]

Start from the top again checking that the guitar is still in tune.

POSITION FINGERS *This time start with A, then D then G. Repeat 5 times in that sequence.*

PRESS

STRUM (5 downward strums for each chord)

Start from the top again checking that the guitar is still in tune.

POSITION FINGERS - *Lastly, start with G, then A then D. Repeat 5 times in that sequence.*

PRESS

STRUM (5 downward strums for each chord)

Practice these 3 sequences of these chords with the single downward strum over and over until the chord change is not too stilted. It will take more practice for a complete flow, for now it is enough to practice the pressing, producing of the sound and the action of changing chords. This is finger conditioning/chord change practice. (Next comes rhythm.)

Handy Hint For Chord Changing Practice

When changing chord positions, do not remove hand from the guitar neck. Likewise, do not move your hand/fingers away from the strings.

Keep the hand close to the strings, ‘hovering’ over the frets as your change to the next chord. This promotes the ‘flow’ of chord changing and ensures that you are developing the skill correctly.

OW!

If your hand/fingers/arm/wrist/neck are sore, stop and stretch as follows.

Hands/fingers/ wrist: open
shut
shake
open
shut
shake

Arm (either holding neck or body of guitar):

stretch [reach] up (vertical)
stretch [reach] out (horizontal)

Neck (Your neck often becomes stiff from the continuous looking at the fingers changing chords):

- move neck from side to side in a stretch motion

- roll neck around stopping at the front to stretch down and stopping at the rear to stretch back

You should stretch using these exercises both before and after practice and anytime during practice that you feel the need. As you become better, you will not need to stretch during practice and once you are more accomplished, you may just warm up before playing.

Handy Hint For Finger Conditioning

Soak fingertips (chord changing fingers) in methylated spirits (metho) before and after practicing. This helps to harden the skin so that the pressing is not painful. The fingers do not become ugly and hard, they simply become hardened enough to alleviate the pain. Some beginners choose to use a cotton bud to dab the “metho” on to their finger tips. Neither of these things will make you a better guitarist nor will it make the learning process faster and easier – it will simply help to make practice and therefore playing, more pleasant and FUN!! [Since pain is not usually associated with fun(!).]

Always keep fingernails trimmed as long nails hinder chord formation, slow down chord changing and damages the guitar by putting grooves in the fret board.

Handy Hint For Rapid Chord Familiarization

As you practice what has been outlined in the chord practice routine, follow this pattern:

- say the name of the chord as you begin change
- say the name of the chord as you position each finger

AM I READY?

You will know when you are ready to move on to the *Structured Rhythm* section when:

1. Position the chord you are changing to without referring to the chord chart.
2. Change to a chord with minimal (less than when you started) pause between change.
3. Can practice playing for 15-20mins without becoming sore to the point of stopping because of fingers/wrist changing chords.

Part 3

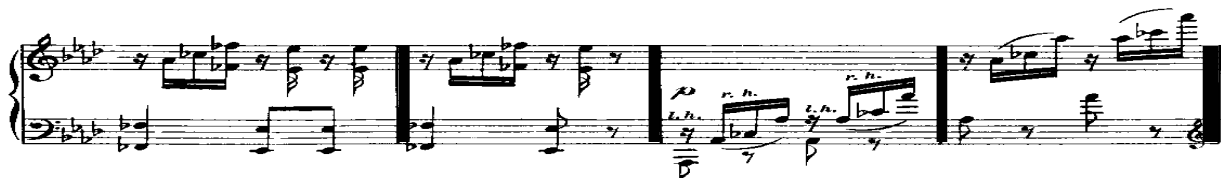
3a) Fundamental 4/4 Rhythm Strum

The Rhythm is Gonna Get Ya!

Now that you are able to play and change a few basic chords, you are ready to learn a **rhythmic strum** so you can practice changing chords while keeping a rhythm.

The basic strum that all other guitar rhythms are based on is what is known as the 4/4 beat. This is a foundation beat keeping strum. Once mastered and a feel is developed for the rhythm, any strum that is required can be carried out by the guitarist.

4/4 simply means, 4 beats must occur within each bar of music. This is also called four - four time. The start of music will have the beat required where you will see the 4/4 symbol. (see appendix 2) A bar of music? What does that mean?



You will notice in the above piece of music that not only are there notes, but also symbols indicating all sorts of musical specifics. What we are interested in are the lines that occur vertically which I have made extra thick to express a point. Between each vertical line is what is referred to as a 'bar' of music.

When playing guitar, the beat that is played is usually (not always) stipulated by the composer. There is also music composed just for guitar playing for more accomplished guitarists. For our purposes we will be referring to general music designed to be enjoyed by many instruments. Do not concern yourself with the

complexities of music reading at this stage. Simply concentrate on learning this rhythm so all other strumming becomes natural. The 4/4 beat can also be indicated in music as a C meaning common. (see appendix 3 and 4)

Getting back to the beat keeping. The 4/4 rhythm strumming, goes as follows:

Down
Down
Up
Up
Down
Up

Using your thumb or plectrum, play this DDUUDU (4/4) over and over until it is smooth and melodious. Following is a practice routine for learning this rhythm.

*****Introduction to 4/4 Beat Keeping -Practice Routine*****

Remember before commencing practice to:

HOLD correctly

TUNE the guitar

then

STRUM in the 4/4 DDUUDU beat

Handy Tips for Getting the Beat Going!

- Do not play a chord, simply *play the strings open*, you are learning a separate skill that will be merged with chord playing shortly.
- Do four sets at a time, meaning 4 x DDUUDU before stopping (you will probably pause between each set but this will improve).
- Whilst strumming say the words down down up up down up as you do it.
- Then start saying out loud for one set, to yourself for the next set, out loud then to yourself.
- Then say it only for the first and last sets, then just for the first set.

- Finally you should be playing 4 sets of the 4/4 rhythm without pausing between sets and without saying it out loud.
- When you can play four sets of 4/4 time on open (tuned) strings without pausing you are ready to add chords to the mix.

*****Introduction to 4/4 Beat Keeping With Chords -Practice Routine*****

POSITION FINGERS - *Start with D, then G then A. Repeat 3 times in that sequence.*

PRESS

STRUM (4 sets of 4/4 for each chord) [i.e. 4 sets of D & change, 4 sets of G then change, 4 sets of A then change]

Stop and stretch if necessary – think fun ☺

POSITION FINGERS *This time start with A, then D then G. Repeat 3 times in that sequence.*

PRESS

STRUM (4 sets of 4/4 for each chord) [i.e. 4 sets of A & change, 4 sets of D then change, 4 sets of G then change]

Stop and stretch if necessary – think fun ☺

POSITION FINGERS - *Lastly, start with G, then A then D. Repeat 3 times in that sequence.*

PRESS

STRUM (4 sets of 4/4 for each chord) [i.e. 4 sets of G & change, 4 sets of A then change, 4 sets of D then change]

Because of the previous practice, chord playing should not be as strenuous or painful now. What we are trying to achieve is the inclusion of a specific rhythm that with practice, you do not have to say **DDUUDU** to yourself at all.

When is it “Time For A Song”?

When you can play all of these sequences without stopping for too long between each chord AND you can keep the beat without constantly repeating the beat to yourself – you are ready to play a song.

For now we are working for natural strumming, relax - you will start off concentrating on the DDUUDU but eventually it becomes part of playing. We are also striving for confident chord changing. These two skills are VITAL for playing a song smoothly for enjoyment as much as anything else – which is why we are doing this isn't it?! FUN ☺

4/4 SONG

Remember: When playing a song, generally the 4/4 DDUUDU is finished before a chord change occurs. However, by now you should not be too fussed about counting the DDUUDU – you should be doing it quite smoothly as you have been practicing chord change and keeping the beat quite extensively until now.

To make things easy, we will be learning “Folk Music” songs to apply our chord knowledge and 4/4 rhythm ability. Such songs are easy and most people are familiar with the tune – if not you can usually find someone who is.

To apply the 4/4 rhythm and the chords we know, we shall be using the Peter, Paul and Mary song: *Blowing In The Wind* and another golden song from the 1960's called: *Speak To The Sky*

For copyright reasons I am not placing the music here but merely the words and guitar chords required. This cannot be copied or sold and is for educational purposes only.

Blowing In The Wind

Played in 4/4 beat slowly

VERSE:

D G D G D A
How many roads must a man walk down, before you can call him a man?

D G D G A
And how many seas must a white dove sail, before she can sleep in the sand?

D G D G D
And how many times must a cannonball fly, before they're forever banned?

CHORUS:

G A D G A D
The answer may friend is blowing in the wind, the answer is blowing in the wind.

Speak To The Sky

Played in 4/4 beat in an up tempo

VERSE:

D
Speak to the Sky whenever things go wrong, and you'll know you're not talking

G D A D
to the air, to the air, and the world will look better from up there. REPEAT
VERSE

CHORUS:

A G D A G
And if I stumble and it seems like I am blind, or if the road I'm on seems awful

D A G D G
hard to find, and though my conversation doesn't always rhyme, I'll always try

A D
to find some time to . . . go to verse

Handy Tips for Playing Songs on Guitar

- Most of the time when using sheet music, guitar chords are above the words they go with. Occasionally the chords are underneath the words. (see appendix 5)
Here the chords are above the words as is most common. (see appendix 6)
- There are two songs here for you to practice. Both with the same chord combination (G, A, D) and both with the same rhythm – 4/4. However, one is relatively slow, and the other has an upbeat tempo. This will help you develop your ability to play within song specifications, and to feel the beat of two different songs.
- As you develop as a guitarist you will understand more and more the need for a guitarist to ‘feel’ a song as you play it. It is important to play according to music, but it is just as important to be part of it. You will feel the time to change the chord sometimes even though the composer does not always point out exactly where to place the chord change – you feel it.
- The more familiar you are with a song, the better you will play it, so do not be discouraged by the way you play the song to start with.
- PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE these two songs until there’s NO stopping to change chords and you are not even thinking DDUUDU!!

3b) 3/4 Rhythm Structure & Practice Routine

As pointed out earlier, the 4/4 beat is the fundamental rhythm from which all other beats are based. Now that you have mastered the 4/4, all other beats are a variation, and often something you 'feel' your way through based on your foundational guitar knowledge.

The other commonly used structured rhythm is the 3/4 beat. Mostly used for fast paced songs. As also covered earlier, 4/4 means four beats per bar of music as follows:

4/4 = 1 2 3 4
 DD **UU** **D** **U**

A three four means three beats per bar of music as follows

3/4 = 1 2 3
 D **DU** **DU**

*****Introduction to 3/4 Beat Keeping -Practice Routine*****

Remember before commencing practice to:

HOLD correctly

TUNE the guitar

then

STRUM in the 3/4 **DDUDU** beat

Handy Tips for Getting the Beat Going!

- Do not play a chord, simply *play the strings open*, you are learning a separate skill that will be merged with chord playing shortly.
- Do four sets at a time, meaning 4 x DDUDU before stopping (you will probably pause between each set but this will improve).
- Whilst strumming say the words down down up down up as you do it.

- Then start saying out loud for one set, to yourself for the next set, out loud then to yourself.
- Then say it only for the first and last sets, then just for the first set.
- Finally you should be playing 4 sets of the 3/4 rhythm without pausing between sets and without saying it out loud.
- When you can play four sets of 3/4 time on open (tuned) strings without pausing you are ready to add chords to the mix.

*****Introduction to 3/4 Beat Keeping With Chords -Practice Routine*****

POSITION FINGERS - *Start with D, then G then A. Repeat 3 times in that sequence.*

PRESS

STRUM (4 sets of 3/4 for each chord) [i.e. 4 sets of D & change, 4 sets of G then change, 4 sets of A then change]

Stop and stretch if necessary or just continue with new chord sequence – ☺

POSITION FINGERS *This time start with A, then D then G. Repeat 3 times in that sequence.*

PRESS

STRUM (4 sets of 3/4 for each chord) [i.e. 4 sets of A & change, 4 sets of D then change, 4 sets of G then change]

Stop and stretch if necessary or just continue with new chord sequence – ☺

POSITION FINGERS - *Lastly, start with G, then A then D. Repeat 3 times in that sequence.*

PRESS

STRUM (4 sets of 3/4 for each chord) [i.e. 4 sets of G & change, 4 sets of A then change, 4 sets of D then change]

By now you are quite accomplished at positioning and playing these chords. Increase your confidence now by making sure your guitar is in tune and practicing these chords with new rhythm, the 3/4, in a song

Remember: When playing a song, generally the 3/4 DDUDU is finished before a chord change occurs. However, by now you should not be too fussed about counting the DDUDU – you should do it quite smoothly as you have been practicing chord change and keeping the beat quite extensively until now.

The $\frac{3}{4}$ is also quite common for faster or more up beat songs but a $\frac{3}{4}$ does not necessarily indicate a fast song. Remember that you must often feel the rhythm which is why it is good to start your guitar playing career playing songs you know. As you become better you will be able to work out the chords and rhythm of songs you like, and of course purchase the sheet music for songs that may 'stump' you a little.

I wanted to mention some of the other rhythms you may see at the start of music such as $\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{12}{8}$ and $\frac{6}{8}$. These are all variations of the $\frac{4}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ rhythms. Now that you are well accomplished at the two fundamental beats, you will be able to strum to any given beat. This is the importance of laying a solid foundation. Once you can play the basics, the rest is just building on what you know.

You will be surprised and elated at how easily you can 'pick up' a rhythm now that you know what the foundations are. Remember to feel the beat, play the song as you know it and your solid practical knowledge will do the rest.

ONE LAST WORD

The $\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{12}{8}$ and $\frac{6}{8}$ rhythms mentioned generally indicate a quick pace and definitely indicate a great deal of strums per bar (e.g. $\frac{12}{8}$ means 12 beats per bar and the indicates double time pace). Do not be overly concerned with the exact number of strums etc., as I have already outlined, your knowledge of the basics will hold you in good stead and allow you to ENJOY!

AM I READY?

You will know when you are ready to move on to the *More Chords & Songs* section when you can:

4. Play the rhythms without thinking down or up
5. Play all songs with almost no pause between chord change
6. Tune the guitar within 5 to 7 minutes
7. Practice playing for 30-40mins comfortably, but ready to stop.

Part 4

4a) Chords, Chords, Chords & More Practice Songs

Congratulations!!

Now it is time for you to learn the chord formation for all the other basic guitar chords. Once that is done, some songs will be provided for you to practice the familiar and new chords, chord changing and various chord combinations.

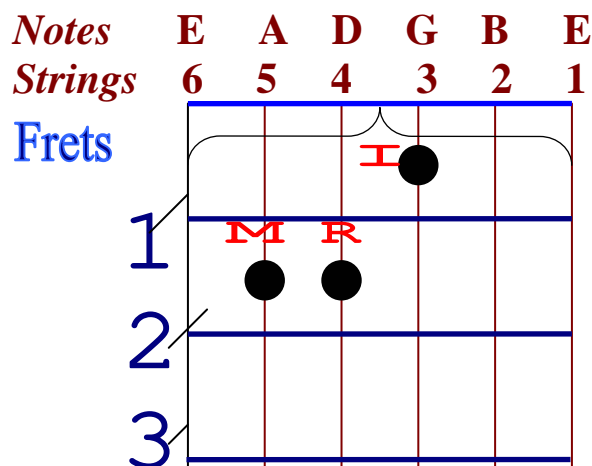
After mastering all of the basic chords, it will be time for chord variations, simply meaning that all the basic chords have variations (e.g. A has Am, A7 etc). We will cover the most common chord variations and combinations and again you can practice these in some songs.

Now that you are much more confident and relaxed about guitar playing, I hope enjoyment is becoming part of the equation! Remember – Always hold, tune and strum to be sure of the correct pitch) before playing a song. When you are ready to play a song, you hold, tune, strum and position fingers ready to play!

The remaining chords for you to learn are: E, C, F and B. Making a total of A,B,C,D,E,F,G.

You already know A, D and G. The next two logical additions are E and C as they are the next most commonly used. The chord “E” is also commonly used to check the correct tuning of a guitar. Below is the chord formation for E.

'E' chord



After tuning a guitar, this chord is commonly 'strummed' one string at a time quite deliberately, as it is the 'central' chord that indicates perfect tuning. If this chord sounds 'off', then the guitar must be tuned again. As you may recall, "E" is the name of the note played by the top (6th) string and the last (1st) string, only in different pitches (high and low). The playing of the E chord is therefore the best indicator of correct tuning.

Practice this chord by playing two 4/4 sets of E, then two 4/4 sets of A, then D, then start again (E, A, D). Keep practicing until you can play the sequence 3 times without stopping (smoothly).

Practice Song to Include D, A, G and new chord – E

Below is another folk song that includes all the chords you now know. Again there is no music, just words and required guitar chords.

DISCLAIMER: The following song details are not for re-sale or copying but for educational purposes only.

I'd Like to Teach The World to Sing

Played in 4/4 beat moderately

VERSE:

D **E** **A**
I'd like to build the world a home and furnish it with love; grow apple trees and
honey

G **A** **D** **E**
bees and snow-white turtle doves. I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect

A **G** **D**
harmony, I'd like to hold it in my arms and keep it company. I'd like to see the
world

E **A** **G**
for once, all standing hand in hand, and hear them echo through the hills for
peace

D
throughout the land.

CHORUS:

E **A**
That's the song I hear, let the world sing today. A song of peace that echoes on
and

G **D** **E** **A**
never goes away. I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony, I'd like
to hold

G **D** **E**
it in my arms and keep it company. I'd like to see the world for once all standing
hand

A **G** **D**
in hand, and hear them echo through the world the hills for peace throughout the
land.

This is an exceptional song for chord changing practice as it is not too fast but has plenty of chords to keep you busy. A nice simple tune that is repeated also makes it conducive to lifting your confidence and enjoyment. Most people keep playing this song until they don't even need to look at the chords. Just about everyone knows this song and can't help but sing along. HAVE FUN!

'C' chord

<i>Notes</i>	E	A	D	G	B	E
<i>Strings</i>	6	5	4	3	2	1

Frets

1
2
3

R
L
M
I

C

You will have noticed that this chord uses four fingers as opposed to the usual three. This chord can be played with three, but I have always felt that it is best to get into the habit of learning the full chord not just for superior sound, but to head you in the right direction for playing chord variations more easily.

Practice this chord by playing two 4/4 sets of C, then two 4/4 sets of D, then G, then start again (C, D, G). Keep practicing until you can play the sequence 3 times without stopping (smoothly).

Practice Song to Include D, G and new chord – C

Below is an early folk- rock song that includes some of the chords you now know. Again there is no music, just words and required guitar chords.

DISCLAIMER: The following song details are not for re-sale or copying but for educational purposes only.

The Purple People Eater

Played in 4/4 beat 'swinging'

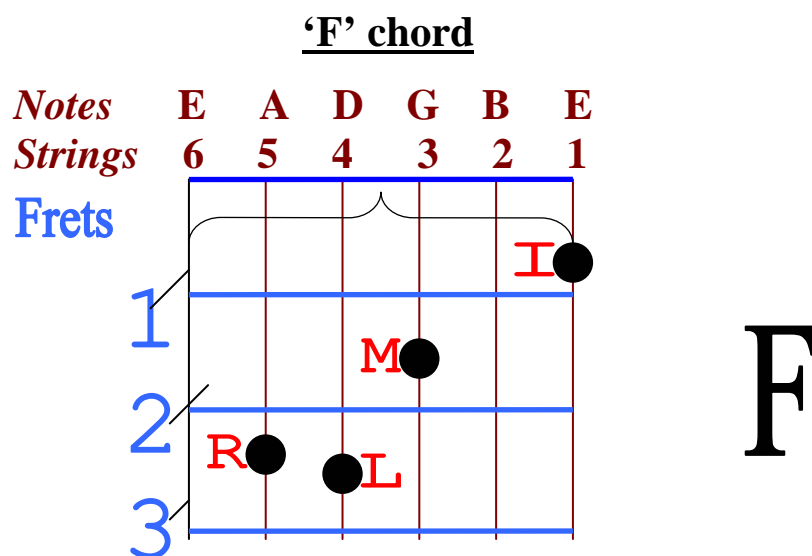
VERSE:

G **D** **G**
Well I saw this thing coming out of the sky, it had one long horn and one big eye
G **C** **D**
I commenced a – shakin' and I said ooh – wee, It looks like a purple people eater
to me.

CHORUS:

G **G** **D**
It was a one-eyed, one-horned, flyin' purple people eater. One-eyed, one-horned
flyin'
G **G** **C**
purple people eater. One-eyed, one-horned flyin' purple people eater – sure
looked
D **G**
strange to me.

Do not concern yourself with the unusual lyrics or the un-contemporary delivery of the above provided song. Suffice it to say that the purpose of the song is to assist you with rapid chord change ability. This song provides the chords you know and at a pace that promotes your ability. It is also worth mentioning that this song was a top 10 hit in the 1950's and while it is out of date, it is here to help you and of course, make sure you HAVE FUN. So don't judge it – enjoy it!



You will notice again that this chord engages the use of four fingers. You may also be glad to see that it is in the same formation as C, only in a different spot on the fret board (lower or under where C is formed. The four fingers provides a fuller sound and is perfect for developing your chord playing/changing ability. Learning chords properly from the start makes it far easier for you to learn common chord variations and will greatly assist you when working out song chords (because you will know common chord combinations). For now simply practice this chord – F. It is not as common as the first 5 chords you know (D, A, G, E and C), but is nevertheless used quite often and is a fundamental chord to know as a guitarist.

Practice this chord by playing two 4/4 sets of F, then two 4/4 sets of C, then G, then start again (F, C, G). Keep practicing until you can play the sequence 3 times without stopping (smoothly).

Practice Song to Include G, C and new chord – F

Below is a contemporary song that includes some of the chords you now know. Again there is no music, just words and required guitar chords.

DISCLAIMER: The following song details are not for re-sale or copying but for educational purposes only.

Catch a Falling Star

Played in 4/4 beat moderately

CHORUS:

C

Catch a falling star and put it in your pocket, never let it fade away.

Catch a falling star and put it in your pocket, save it for a rainy day.

VERSE:

F

C

For love may come and tap you on the shoulder, some starless night.

F

C

G

And just in case you feel you want to hold her, you'll have a pocket full of starlight.

Last Chord Standing

Finally it's time to learn the last basic chord for guitar playing. This is the least common chord but I am placing the correct formation here for your reference. "B" is usually played as what is called a 'bar' chord (where the index finger lays flat on the fret board) so I have put here the 'open chord' formation and the 'bar chord formation.

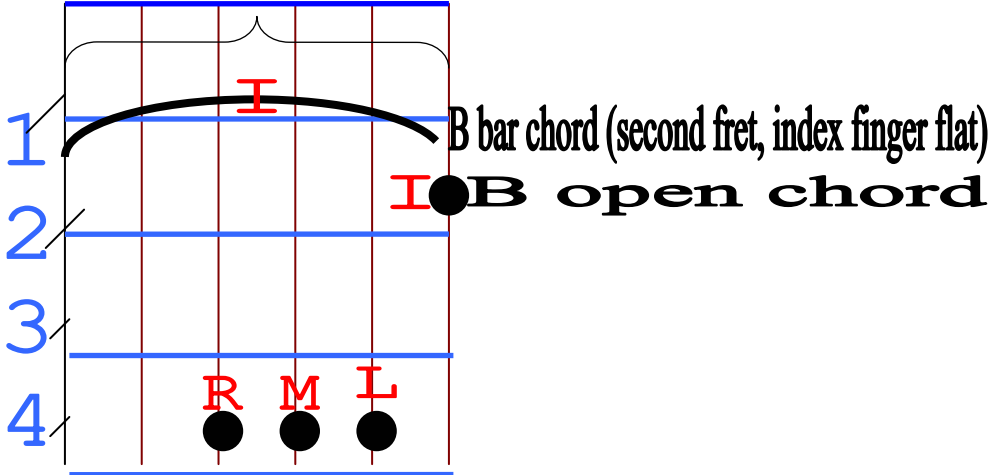
I am not placing a song here to practice this chord as it is not used frequently. Suffice to say that simply practicing it with other chords as outlined, and knowing of its correct formation will hold you in good stead.

For both open and bar chord for B, the ring, middle and little finger remain the same. It is only the index finger that changes. You may see on sheet music (see appendix 7) that the arched line used below indicates a bar chord formation (on music that shows chord formations).

'B' chord

Notes E A D G B E
Strings 6 5 4 3 2 1

Frets



4b) OPTIONAL SECTION – Common Chord Combinations

In the world of guitar playing, there are certain chords that ‘go together’. This is not a concrete rule, but rather a great way to accelerate your skills to being able to work out ‘chord sequences’ for a song you know and would like to play. It is also useful if you wish to write simple songs. Be aware that we are looking at commonalities, there are obviously numerous ways to combine chords, here we are focusing on the basic chords we have learned, and the most common ways that these chords are combined.

A, E and D

C, F and G

G, D and A

D, G and C

These combinations can be seen in many songs. As you invest in sheet music, you will also notice the patterns. Where there is a G, and F or C is usually nearby. Where there is an E, an A or D is close and so on.

Following is a song that shows the use of some of these chord combinations. Some of you may now be aware that specific chord combinations were used in the songs that have been previously provided while you were practicing various new chords.

Chords which you have not learned as yet are also commonly combined with **G** in particular. They are **Em** (E minor) and **D7** (D seventh). With **C** there is also often, **Am** (A minor) and **Dm** (D minor). Plus G and **D** often go with **A7** (A seventh) We will point out these and other common chord variations in our chord reference list later. Obviously the more chords you know, the more patterns you will see that emerge with certain chords ‘going together’.

The first song is a smooth and sweet melody you may or may not be familiar with, but demonstrates some common chord combinations in **A, E and D**; plus there is also the ‘combo’ of **C, F and G**. While you will note the presence of other chords, you should also see that there is a pattern of chord combination.

The second song is a song that whilst employing the 4/4 structure, has a distinct rhythm that is a great way for you to break open your ‘feel’ of a song. This song also combines **C**, **F** and **G** with **Em** and **Am** present – they like to go together – but usually where **G** and **C** are somewhere close! ENJOY. ☺ (Look up Em and Am on common chord variations chart.)

DISCLAIMER: The following song details are not for re-sale or copying but for educational purposes only.

The Never Ending Story

4/4 beat played sweetly

VERSE:

A E D E A E D - E
Turn around, look at what you see (eeeeeeee), in her face, the mirror of your dreams.

CHORUS 1:

C F G C F
Make believe I’m everywhere, hidden in the lines, vision on the pages is the answer to

G A - E - D - E
a never ending story; ahahahahah

VERSE:

A E D - E A E D-E
Reach the stars, fly a fantasy (eeeeeeee). Dream a dream, and what you dream will be.

4c) OPTIONAL SECTION Common Chord Variations – Songs For Practice

Try A Little Kindness (F#m and E7)

4/4 - Jaunty Folk Style – for special effect, place capo on the 3rd fret and play chords as is.

Intro chord sequence: **A – G – D – A**

VERSE:

A **D** **A** **E - D**
If you see your brother standing by the road, with a heavy load from the seeds he

A **D** **A** **E - D**
sowed. And if you see your sister falling by the way, just stop and say, you're
going the

A
wrong way.

CHORUS:

E **D** **A** **D**
You've got to try a little kindness, just show a little kindness; shine your light for

A **E - E7** **D** **A** **F#m**
everyone to see. And if you try a little kindness, then you'll over look the
blindness, of

D **E** **D** **E** **A - G - D - A**
the narrow minded people, on the narrow minded streets.

Top Of The World (Em, B, D7 and A7)

3/4 - Jaunty Folk Style

VERSE:

D **A** **G D** **F#m** **Em A7 D**
G

Such a feelings coming over me, there is wonder in most everything I see. Not a cloud

A **F#m** **B7** **Em** **A**
in the sky, got the sun in my eyes and I won't be surprised if it's a dream.

CHORUS:

A **D** **G** **D Em A**
I'm on the top of the world, looking down on creation and the only explanation I can

D-D7 **G** **A D** **G** **D**
find, is the love that I've found ever since you've been around, your love puts me on the

Em A D G - D - G - D - G - D
top of the world.

You've Got A Friend (Am7, C7 and G7)

4/4 Sweetly, moderate pace

VERSE:

Em **B7** **Em** **Am7** **D7**
When you're down and troubled, and you need a helping hand, and nothing, oh
nothing is

G **B7** **Em** **B7** **Em** **Am**
going right. Close your eyes and think of me, and soon I will be there; to
brighten up

D **Am7 - D**
oh, even your darkest night.

CHORUS:

G **C** **G**
You just call out my name, and you know wherever I am I'll come running, to
see you

D7 **G** **G7** **C** **G** **C**
again. Winter, Spring, Summer or Fall, all you've got to do is call, and I'll be
there,

D **G**
yeah, yeah, yeah; you've got a friend.


Appendix Index

- (i) Same Chord – Different Positions
- (ii) 4/4 - Rhythm Sheet Music Indicator
- (iii) C Symbols – Meaning ‘Common’ Beat [4/4] on Sheet Music
- (iv) C Symbols – Meaning ‘Common’ [4/4] with a *kick* on Sheet Music
- (v) Chords UNDER Words on Sheet Music
- (vi) Chords ABOVE Words & Chord Structure NOT Shown
- (vii) Chord Structure IS Shown in Sheet Music

Appendix 1 : Same Chord – Different Positions

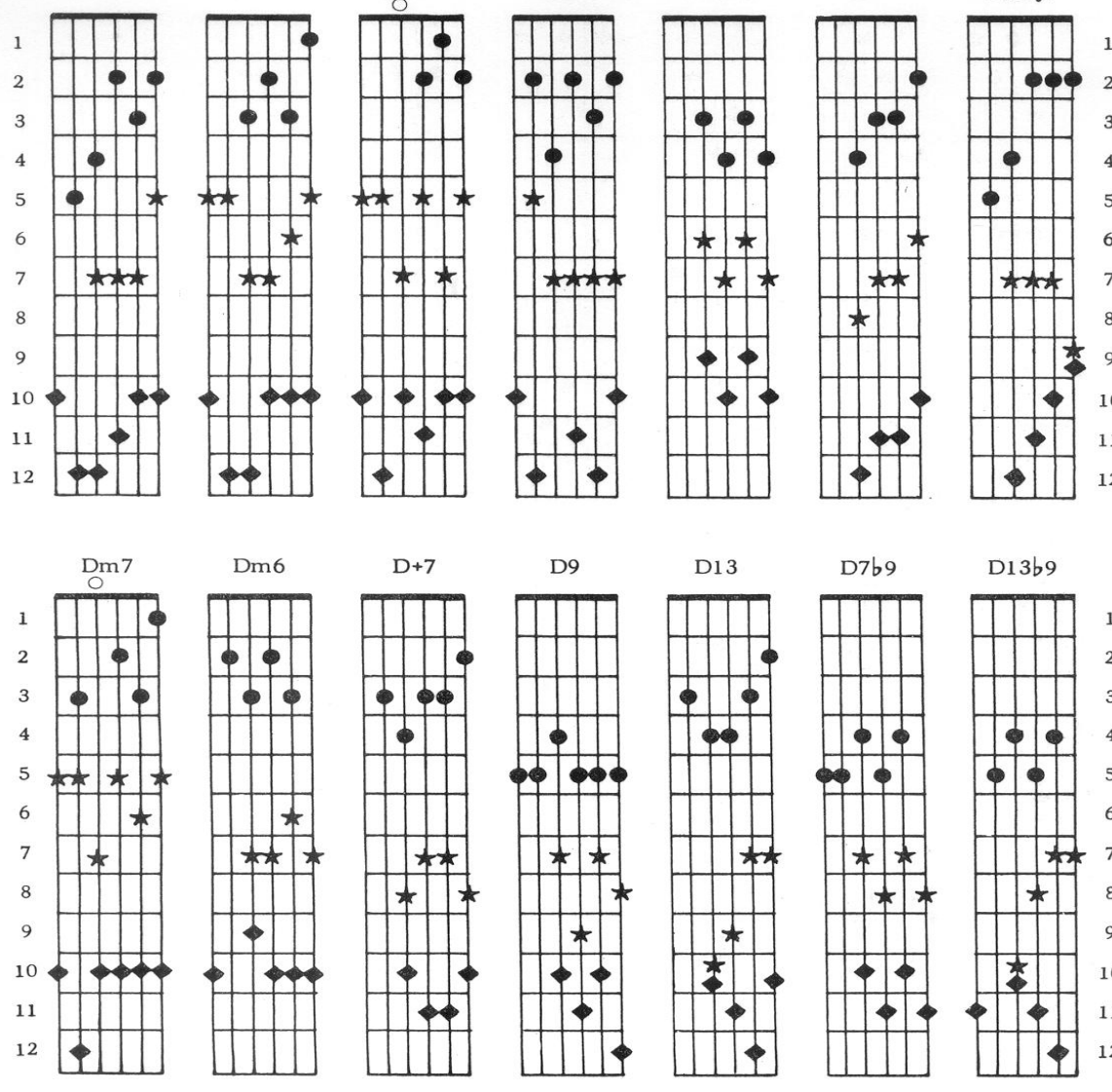
One Chord can have various positions : example shown here : D chord shapes

Key of D



D Dm D7 D6 Ddim D+ Dmaj7

Dm7 Dm6 D+7 D9 D13 D7b9 D13b9



Appendix 2 : 4/4 - Rhythm Sheet Music Indicator

Sheet Music shows required rhythm beat : example shown here : 4/4

The image displays a musical score for guitar in 4/4 time, divided into two sections: "BRIGHT TEMPO" and "VERSE".

BRIGHT TEMPO Section:
This section is marked with a common time signature (C) and a 4/4 time signature. It features a treble clef staff with a melody of quarter notes and eighth notes, and a bass clef staff with a bass line of quarter notes. An arrow points to the first measure of the treble staff.

VERSE Section:
This section is marked with a common time signature (C) and a 4/4 time signature. It features a treble clef staff with a melody of quarter notes and eighth notes, and a bass clef staff with a bass line of quarter notes. A key signature change to Bb is indicated by a flat symbol and the letter 'Bb' above the staff.

Appendix 3 : C Symbols – Meaning ‘Common’ Beat [4/4]

Sheet Music shows required rhythm beat : example shown here : C meaning ‘common’ or 4/4

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "Fast, Driving Rock". The score is written in 4/4 time, indicated by a common time signature (C) circled in the first measure. The tempo is marked "Fast, Driving Rock". The score is divided into two systems. The first system consists of two staves: a piano part on the left and a guitar part on the right. The piano part begins with a dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte). The guitar part features a series of chords and single notes. The second system also consists of two staves. The piano part begins with a dynamic marking of *f* (forte). The guitar part includes a chord diagram for the C major chord (x02321) and continues with a melodic line. The score concludes with a double bar line.

Appendix 4 : C Symbols – Meaning ‘Common’ [4/4] with a *kick*

Sheet Music shows required rhythm beat : example shown here : C = ‘common’ or 4/4 with a kick

The image displays a sheet music page for a piece titled "Medium Calypso". The music is written for guitar and piano. The guitar part is in the key of D major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The piano accompaniment is in the same key and time signature. The guitar part features a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes and eighth notes, with a "kick" (a strong downbeat) on the first beat of each measure. The piano part provides harmonic support with chords and a bass line. The sheet music includes guitar chord diagrams for C#m, B, and C#m, with a circled "4fr." indicating a four-finger fretting technique. The piano part is marked with a dynamic of *mf* (mezzo-forte). The title "Medium Calypso" is written above the first system. The guitar part is written on a single staff, and the piano part is written on two staves (treble and bass clef).

Appendix 5 : Chords for song appear UNDER words in Sheet Music

— were bright, — *words of song are here*

Chords under words of song ... → A E

words are here words

A G° F#

If I had *words*.....

B7 E

..... *words of song here*.....

A E

words

D A

Appendix 6 : Chords ABOVE Words & Chord Structure NOT Shown

Chord structure is NOT shown on some Sheet Music : Also chords are ABOVE words

The image displays a musical score with four systems of staves. The first system includes a treble clef staff with a 'D' time signature and 'Slow tempo' marking, and a piano accompaniment. A circled 'D' chord symbol is placed above the staff, with an arrow pointing to it from a text box that reads 'Chord name above words' and 'Chord structure is not shown'. Below the staff, the word 'VERSE' is written, followed by a dotted line and the word 'WORDS...'. The second system shows a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a piano accompaniment. Chord symbols 'F#m/C#' and 'C' are placed above the staff, with a dashed line labeled 'WORDS' underneath. The third system shows a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a piano accompaniment. Chord symbols 'F#m/C#' and 'C' are placed above the staff, with a dashed line labeled 'WORDS' underneath. The fourth system shows a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a piano accompaniment. Chord symbols 'D', 'F#m/C#', and 'C' are placed above the staff, with a dashed line labeled 'WORDS' underneath.

Appendix 7 : Chord Structure IS Shown in Sheet Music

Name of chord and structure shown

The image displays a musical score for guitar, consisting of four systems of music. Each system includes a treble clef staff with a melody line and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) for accompaniment. Chord diagrams are placed above the treble clef staff at the beginning of each system, with an arrow pointing to the first diagram. The diagrams are labeled with chord names: C, Bb, F, Bb, C, G, and C. The lyrics are written below the treble clef staff, with some words obscured by white boxes. The first system has two lines of lyrics, the second has one, the third has one, and the fourth has one. The text "(Opt. pattern continued)" is written below the second system. The word "WORDS" is written in all caps in the second, third, and fourth systems.

words ——— words - - - -

(Opt. pattern continued)

WORDS

WORDS

WORDS

Resources

a) Basic Chords

Formations for chords:

D G A E C F B

b) Common Chord Variations

Formations for common chord variations:

<i>Dm</i>	<i>D7</i>	<i>Dm7</i>
<i>Am</i>	<i>A7</i>	<i>Am7</i>
<i>G7</i>	<i>Gm</i>	<i>G#m</i>
<i>Cm7</i>	<i>C7</i>	<i>C#m</i>
<i>Bb</i>	<i>B7</i>	<i>Bm</i>
<i>F#m</i>		

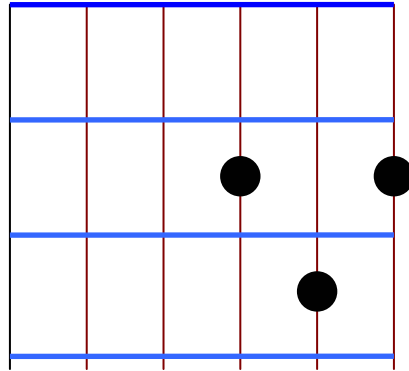
c) Practice Songs

Song words and chords for:

<i>Blowin' in the Wind</i>	<i>Speak to the Sky</i>
<i>Sing C'est La Vie</i>	<i>Teach the World to Sing</i>
<i>The Purple People Eater</i>	<i>Catch A Falling Star</i>
<i>Never Ending Story</i>	<i>I'll Find My Way Home</i>
<i>Try A Little Kindness</i>	<i>Top of the World</i>
	<i>You've Got A Friend</i>

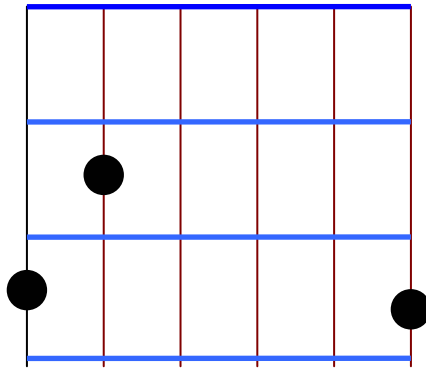
a) Basic Chords

'D' chord



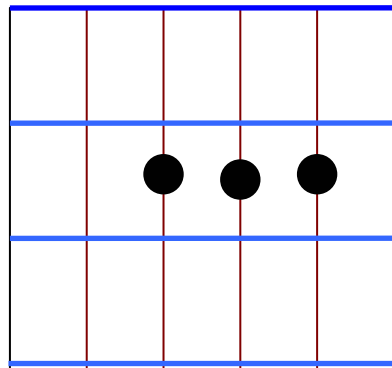
D

'G' chord



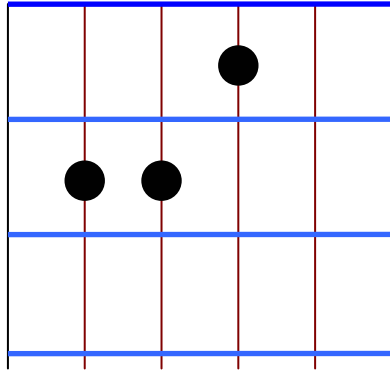
G

'A' chord



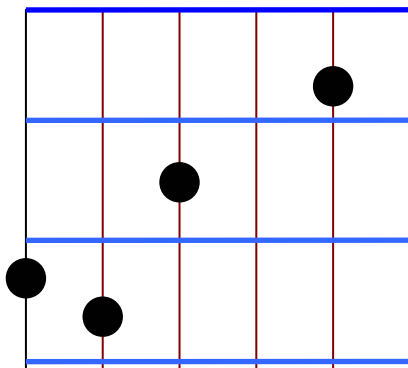
A

'E' chord



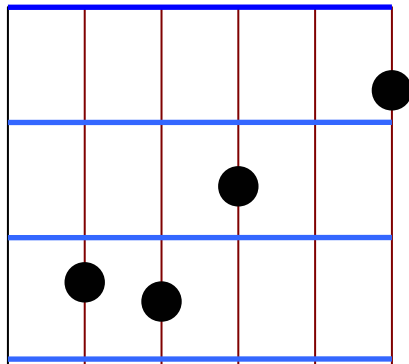
E

'C' chord



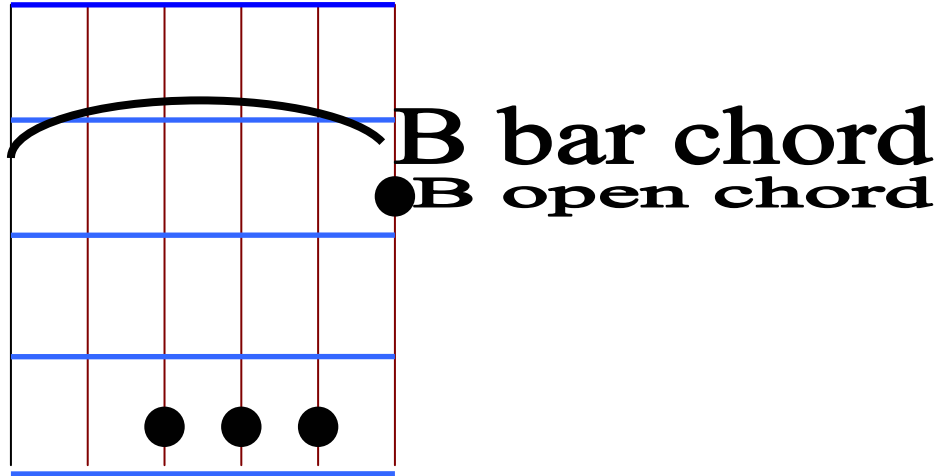
C

'F' chord



F

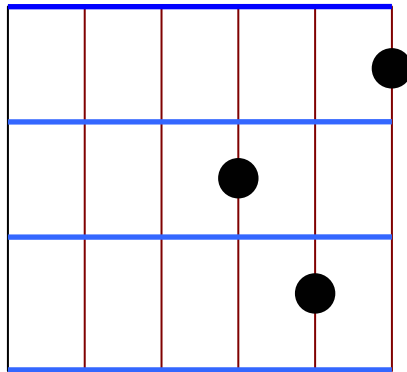
'B' chord



b) Common Chord Variations

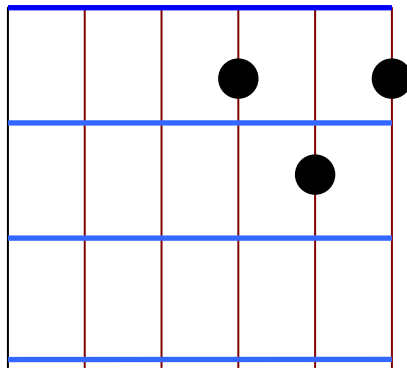
These chords have been placed here for you to be aware of, learn if you wish to and of course for your reference. There are also some songs in the common chord variations songs for practice section, that will help you to assimilate some of these chords in to what we call your 'chord repertoire'. The more chords you know, the more songs you can play, the more fun you can have! ☺

'Dm' (D minor) chord



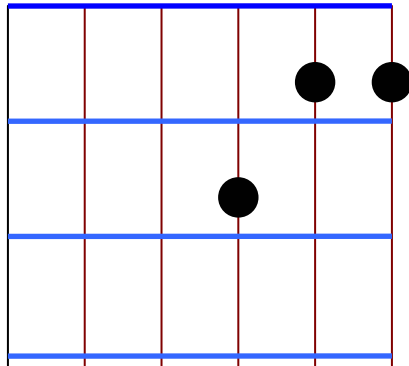
Dm

'D7' (D seventh) chord



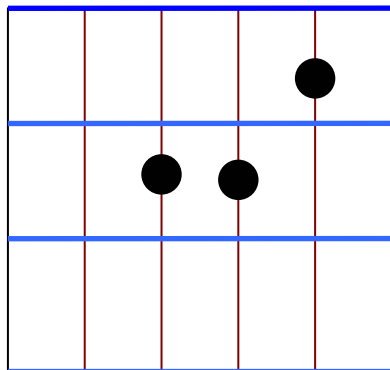
D7

'Dm7' (D minor seventh) chord



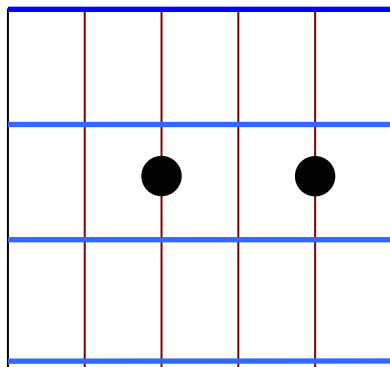
Dm7

'Am' (A minor) chord



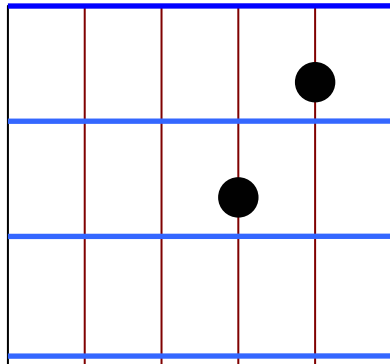
Am

'A7' (A seventh) chord



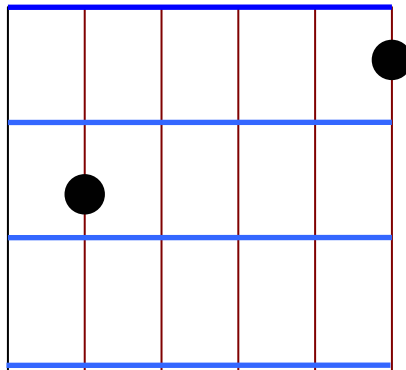
A7

'Am7' (A minor seventh) chord



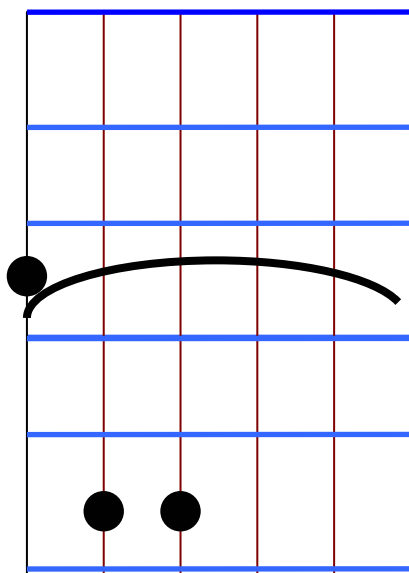
Am7

'G7' (G seventh) chord



G7

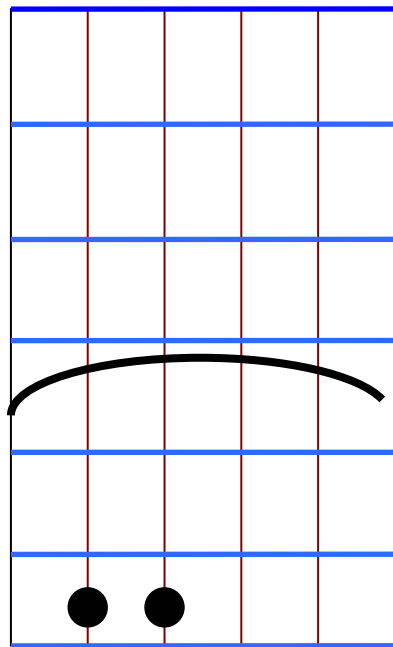
'Gm' (G minor) chord



Gm bar chord

Gm

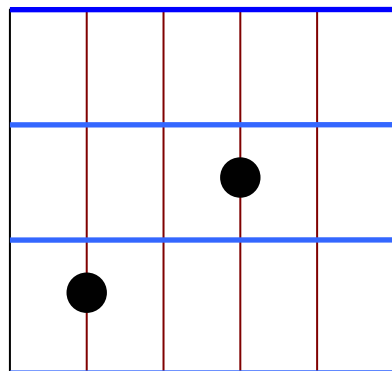
'G#m' (G sharp minor) chord



G#m bar chord

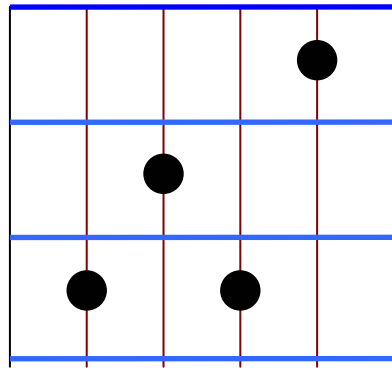
G#m

'Cm7' (C minor seventh) chord



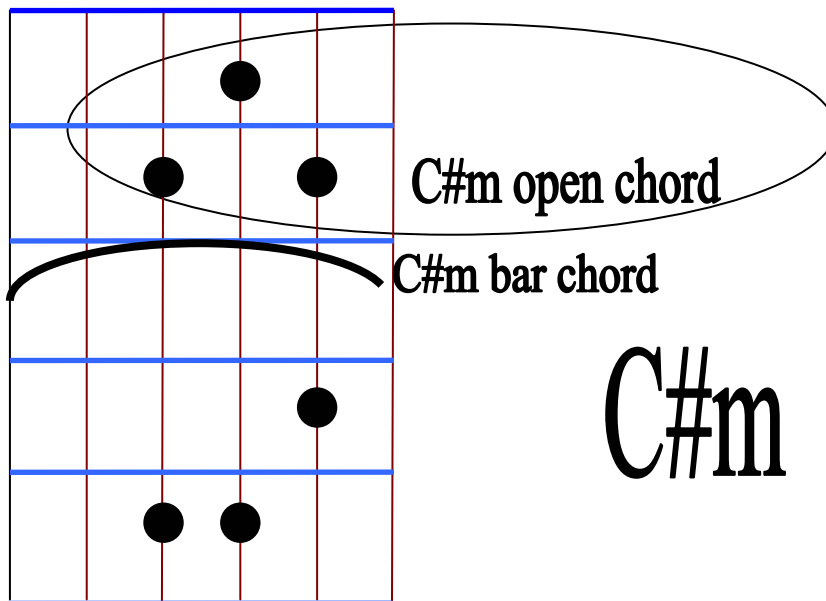
Cm7

'C7' (C seventh) chord



C7

'C#m' (C sharp minor) chord

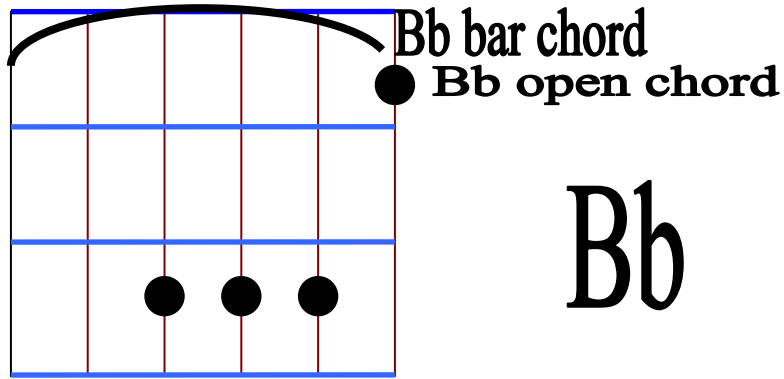


C#m open chord

C#m bar chord

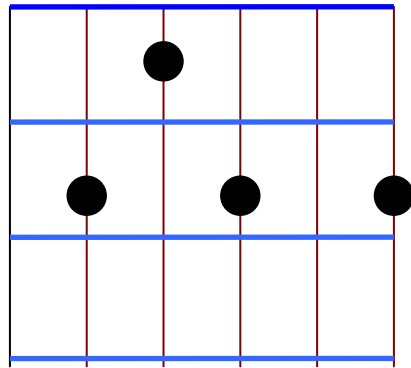
C#m

'B flat' (B Flat) chord



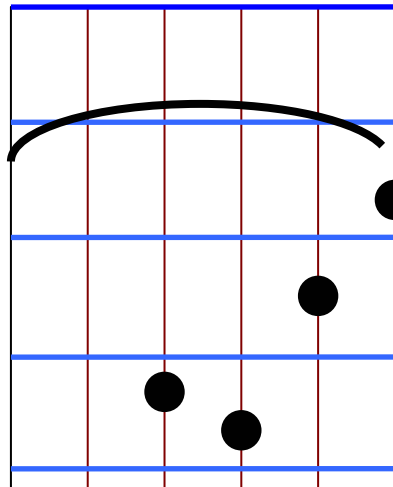
Bb

'B7' (B seventh) chord



B7

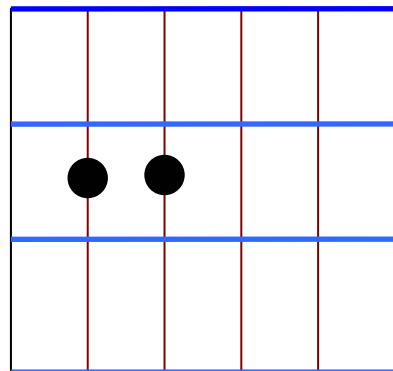
'Bm' (B minor) chord



Bm bar chord
● Bm open chord

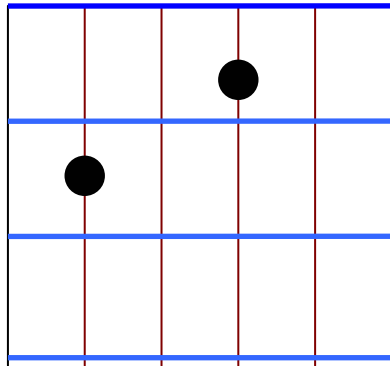
Bm

'Em' (E minor) chord



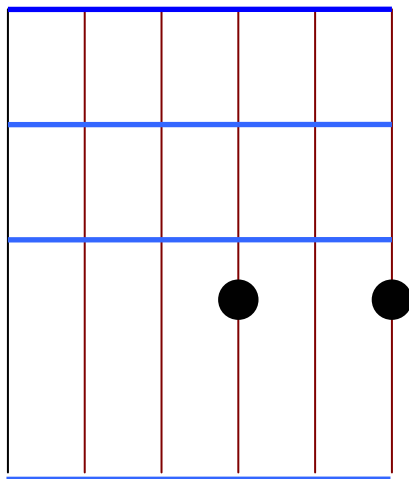
Em

'E7' (E seventh) chord



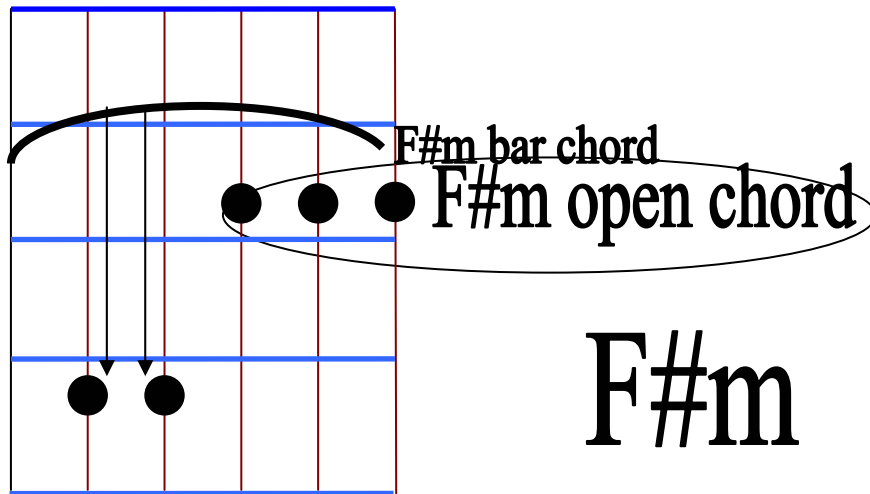
E7

'Eb' (E Flat) chord



E_b

'F#m' (F sharp minor) chord



c) Practice Songs

DISCLAIMER: The following song details are not for re-sale or copying but for educational purposes only.

Blowing In The Wind

Played in 4/4 beat slowly

VERSE:

D G D G D A

How many roads must a man walk down, before you can call him a man?

D G D G A

And how many seas must a white dove sail, before she can sleep in the sand?

D G D G D A

Yes and how many times must a cannonball fly, before they're forever banned?

CHORUS:

G A D G A D

The answer may friend is blowing in the wind, the answer is blowing in the wind.

Speak To The Sky

Played in 4/4 beat in an up tempo

VERSE:

D

Speak to the Sky whenever things go wrong, and you'll know you're not talking to the

G D A G D

air, to the air; and the world will look better from up there. REPEAT VERSE

CHORUS:

A G D A G

And if I stumble and it seems like I am blind, or if the road I'm on seems awful hard to

D A G D G

find, and though my conversation doesn't always rhyme, I'll always try to find some

A D

time to . . . go to verse

Sing C'est La Vie

Played in 3/4 Brightly

CHORUS:

G A D G

When things go wrong, just sing this song, the birds in the trees, will sing harmonies.

A **D** **G**
Sing *c'est la vie*, and soon you will see, your cares will be free, just sing *c'est la*
vie.

VERSE:

G **A**
I once knew a man, who owned a butcher's shop, He also had, apartments to rent
up on

top. But he didn't include on the sign that he painted "No Pets", and the tenant
who

D **G**
rented had six hundred dogs he regrets. (spoken) But he said . . . When things go

I'd Like to Teach The World to Sing

Played in 4/4 beat moderately

VERSE:

D **E** **A**
I'd like to build the world a home and furnish it with love; grow apple trees and
honey

G **A** **D** **E**
bees and snow-white turtle doves. I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect

A **G** **D**
harmony, I'd like to hold it in my arms and keep it company. I'd like to see the
world

E **A** **G**
for once, all standing hand in hand, and hear them echo through the hills for
peace
D
throughout the land.

CHORUS:

E **A**
That's the song I hear, let the world sing today. A song of peace that echoes on
and

G **D** **E** **A**
never goes away. I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony, I'd like
to hold

G **D** **E**
it in my arms and keep it company. I'd like to see the world for once all standing
hand

A **G** **D**
in hand, and hear them echo through the world the hills for peace throughout the
land.

The Purple People Eater

Played in 4/4 beat 'swinging'

VERSE:

G **D** **G**
Well I saw this thing coming out of the sky, it had one long horn and one big eye

G **C** **D**
I commenced a – shakin’ and I said ooh – wee, It looks like a purple people eater
to me.

CHORUS:

G **G** **D**
It was a one-eyed, one-horned, flyin’ purple people eater. One-eyed, one-horned
flyin’

G **G** **C**
purple people eater. One-eyed, one-horned flyin’ purple people eater – sure
looked

D **G**
strange to me.

Catch a Falling Star

Played in 4/4 beat moderately

CHORUS:

C
Catch a falling start and out it in your pocket, never let it fade away.

Catch a falling start and out it in your pocket, save it for a rainy day.

VERSE:

F **C**
For love may come and tap you on the shoulder, some starless night.

F **C** **G**
And just incase you feel you want to hold her, you'll have a pocket full of
starlight.

The Never Ending Story

4/4 beat played sweetly

VERSE:

A **E** **D** **E** **A** **E** **D - E**
Turn around, look at what you see (eeeeeeee), in her face, the mirror of your
dreams.

CHORUS 1:

C **F** **G** **C** **F**
Make believe I'm everywhere, hidden in the lines, vision on the pages is the
answer to

G **A - E - D - E**
a never ending story; ahahahahahah

VERSE:

A **E** **D - E** **A** **E** **D-E**
Reach the stars, fly a fantasy (eeeeeeee). Dream a dream, and what you dream
will be.

CHORUS 2:

C **F** **G** **C**
Rhymes that keep their secrets will unfold behind the cloud, and there upon the
rainbow

F **G** **A - E - D - E**
Is the answer to a never ending story; ahahahahahahaha

VERSE:

A **E** **D-E** **A** **E** **D - E**
Show no fear, for she may fade away, in your hands, the birth of a new day.

CHORUS 2

I'll Find My Way Home

4/4 Rhythmical

VERSE:

C **G F-G** **C** **G F- G** **C** **G F-G**
You ask me where to begin, am I so lost in my sin? You ask me where did I fall,
I say I

C **G F-G** **Em Am F-G** **C** **G F-G**
can't tell you when. But if my spirit is lost, how will I find what is near?

CHORUS:

Em Am F-G **C** **G F-G**
Don't question I'm not alone, somehow I'll find my way home.

Try A Little Kindness (F#m and E7)

4/4 - Jaunty Folk Style – for special effect, place capo on the 3rd fret and play chords as is.

Intro chord sequence: **A – G – D – A**

VERSE:

A **D** **A** **E - D**
If you see your brother standing by the road, with a heavy load from the seeds he

A **D** **A** **E - D**
sowed. And if you see your sister falling by the way, just stop and say, you're
going the

A
wrong way.

CHORUS:

E **D** **A** **D**
You've got to try a little kindness, just show a little kindness; shine your light for

A **E - E7** **D** **A** **F#m**
everyone to see. And if you try a little kindness, then you'll over look the
blindness, of

D **E** **D** **E** **A - G - D - A**
the narrow minded people, on the narrow minded streets.

Top Of The World (Em, B, D7 and A7)

4/4 - Jaunty Folk Style

VERSE:

D A G D F#m Em A7 D G
Such a feelings coming over me, there is wonder in most everything I see. Not a
cloud

A F#m B7 Em A
in the sky, got the sun in my eyes and I won't be surprised if it's a dream.

CHORUS:

A D G D Em A
I'm on the top of the world, looking down on creation and the only explanation I
can

D-D7 G A D G D
find, is the love that I've found ever since you've been around, your love puts me
on the

Em A D G - D - G - D - G - D
top of the world.

You've Got A Friend (Am7, C7 and G7)

4/4 Sweetly, moderate pace

VERSE:

Em B7 Em Am7 D7
When your down and troubled, and you need a helping hand, and nothing, oh
nothing is

G B7 Em B7 Em Am
going right. Close your eyes and think of me, and soon I will be there; to
brighten up

D Am7 - D
oh, even your darkest night.

CHORUS:

G C G
You just call out my name, and you know wherever I am I'll come running, to
see you

D7 G G7 C G C
again. Winter, Spring, Summer or Fall, all you've got to do is call, and I'll be
there,

D G
yeah, yeah, yeah; you've got a friend.

Points of Interest – Index

1. History of the Guitar
2. Basic Guitar Terminology
3. Golden Rules of Guitar Care
4. Details on Parts of a Guitar
5. Capo Information

1. History of Guitar

The guitar's roots are in Spain. Realistically, it cannot be traced back further than the **15th Century**. It is thought to have been invented by the people of Malaga. This early instrument was a "four course" guitar, from which the **ukulele** is derived. The first guitars were very small, and were originally strung with **four pair** of strings. Each pair was called a *course*.

During the Renaissance, the guitar never had the respect the lute enjoyed. It was not considered a serious instrument. The first publication for guitar is thought to have been Alonso Mudarra's "Tres Libros de Musica en Cifras para Vihuela." Eventually, the guitar began to attract players, more publications and music began to appear.

During the **Baroque period**, A fifth course was added. Even more music became available. It's repertoire and the complexity of the music increased.

The fifth course was tuned in one of three ways.

1. A low "A" as it is now.
2. A low "A" plus an octave for the second part of the course
3. Both strings an "A" an octave higher than the modern guitar.

If a modern player really wants to have a complete, accurate repertoire of the Baroque Guitar, it would be necessary to either re-string for different pieces, or have at least three instruments for the different tunings.

At the end of the Baroque period two significant changes were made. The **double strings were replaced** by single strings, and instead of five pairs, there were six single strings.

During the **Classical period** there were many publications, composers and performers. Fernando Sor, Mauro Guilliani, Matteo Carcassi, Fernando Carulli

and many others wrote music, published methods and performed concerts. The guitar was very popular and guitar concerts were common.

Sor played the guitar as a solo instrument at the London Philharmonic Concert in 1817. In memoirs, George Hogarth stated: "He astonished the audience by his unrivaled execution." *Paganinni was also active, playing and writing for the guitar as well as the violin. Stradivarius made guitars as well as violins.*

At the end of the 19th century, the guitar had fallen out of favor, but was resurrected by Francisco Tarrega. His best piece in my opinion is the now very famous "Receurdos De La Alhambra." He did few public performances and chose to perform for friends at his home. He did compose, and he wrote a method for teaching guitar. He also transcribed many pieces of music for the guitar. Segovia was one of many guitarists that were influenced by him. Tarrega began the tradition of playing with the fingernails.

Up until this point the instrument itself was small and narrow. *Manual Torres* worked with the design and construction of the guitar. He increased the size and experimented with anything that would improve the sound, and was especially interested in volume. He was the first maker to use "fan" bracing underneath the top. He once built a Guitar with a spruce top and paper mache back and sides to prove his theory that it was the top that produced most of the volume. *He was the father of the modern guitar.*

Some well known composers who played the guitar are Carl Maria Von Weber, Rossini and his wife, Verdi, and for many years Franz Schubert did his composing on his guitar which hung over his bed. He didn't have a piano at the time. Berlioz also composed the guitar.

Segovia performed, transcribed, taught and discovered a tremendous amount of music. He also encouraged many composers to write for the guitar. He was the first person to perform in a concert hall. Before Segovia, people believed this could not be done.

Although Segovia did all these things, the real debt that we owe to him is that of making the guitar truly a world instrument. By traveling and performing throughout the world, he brought respect and recognition to the instrument.

Nylon strings were a big improvement over gut strings. They replaced gut in 1946.

Today there are many concerts of guitar music. There are many societies and magazines devoted to the guitar.

Here follows a brief Timeline

- 1265 Juan Gil of Zamora mentions the early guitar in "Ars Musica.
- 1283-1350 Guitarra Latina & Guitar Moresca are mentioned multiple times in the poems of the Archpriest of Hita
- 1306 A "gitarer" was played at the Feast of Westminster in England
- 1404 "Der mynnen regein" by Eberhard Von Cersne makes reference to a "quinterne."
- 1487 Johannes Tinctoris described the guitarra as being invented by the Catalans. This refers to the four course guitar. Each course represents one pair of double strings.
- 1546 "Tres Libros de Musica en Cifras para Vihuela" by Alonso Mudarra is the first publication to include music for guitar.
- 1551-1555 Nine books of tablature were published by Adrian Le Roy. These include the first pieces for 5 course guitar. The addition of the fifth course was attributed to Vicente Espinel
- 1600-1650 Many publications of tablature for the guitar. It's popularity begins to rival the lute.
- 1674 Publication of "Guitarre Royal" by F. Corbetta increased the guitar's popularity. It was dedicated to Louis XIV.
- 1770-1800 A sixth string was added to the guitar and the courses were replaced by single strings.
- 1800-1850 Guitar enjoyed a large popularity both in performances and publishing. Fernando Sor, Mauro Guiliani, Matteo Carcassi and Dioniso

Aguado all performed, taught, wrote and had published their compositions.

- 1850-1892 Guitar maker Manuel Torres develops the larger more resonant instrument we know today.
- 1916 Segovia performs at Ateneo, the most important concert hall in Madrid. Before this it was thought that the guitar did not have the volume for this type of venue.
- 1946 Nylon replaces gut as a string material

2. Basic Guitar Terminology

For the purposes of learning to play the guitar, we will be referring to a standard acoustic guitar. This type of guitar is used for learners because it allows you to develop the basics and nylon strings make way for more practice as steel strings can cause bleeding and much greater discomfort than nylon.

A nylon stringed acoustic guitar is used for Spanish Rhythmic Style strumming such as the Gypsy Kings who mainly play chords but have an acute sense of rhythm, which translates to fantastic strumming. (Nova Menco) It is also use for what is called CLASSICAL guitar, which you may understand us “plucking” the strings. Tommy Emmanuel is best known for this style here in Australia but there are others known for it such as Jose Feliciano and Armik. These guitarists play the music, not the chords, and sometimes combinations of both. Naturally there are niche guitar styles also such as, COUNTRY, JAZZ, BLUES etc. For our purposes we will refer to rhythm.

Other types of guitars include acoustic steel string which has a more pronounced tone (harsh) but is the preferred acoustic for people like me who are good rhythmic players but not “accomplished” enough to hold a nylon string as though it is an extension of my body – which is what truly dedicated/professional acoustic players look like. Many folk bands used this instrument in the 60’s (Peter, Paul and Mary) and even Folk Rock – the Beatles used acoustic sounds for some of their music.

Then there is an electric guitar which can be used for what is called a ‘lead’ guitarist who mainly plays the actual music of songs like a classical player but it is a different style of playing. Examples include Angus Young of AC/DC. Electric guitar is also used for rhythm in such bands – they keep the beat as much as the drummer with chord changes complementing the melody of the song..

There is also a bass guitar which has its own music to follow within a melody. Almost like a cello, each string has a note played open and other notes can be played in various positions. We will not be learning anything about the bass.

I have mentioned a lot of terms that while you do not need to become an accomplished player, are vital to your 'well rounded' knowledge of the guitar.

As you become better people will expect you to know these types of things, so let's go over some of these terms.

Guitar Terminology Summary

Acoustic Guitar: 6 or 12 strings (steel mostly has 12)

- ➔ 3D structure specially shaped to emanate a soft sound using the wooden hollow of the guitar. The thickness of neck & body varies depending on the make.
- ➔ Nylon strings are used for learning to play the guitar, Spanish-Style Rhythms/Strumming and for classical playing.
- ➔ Steel strings are used mostly for classical playing and for rhythm guitarists who are well practiced for a 'bigger' sound.

Rhythm Playing: Strumming the chords from sheet music.

Classical Playing: 'Plucking' the melody from sheet music.

Electric Guitar:

- ➔ Used for different type of music, therefore is flat and has volume control. Also requires amplifier to be heard, can also plug directly to earphones for practice.

Rhythm Playing: Strumming the chords from sheet music.

Classical Playing: 'Plucking' the melody from sheet music. (Known as 'lead' guitar.)

3. Golden Rules of Guitar Care

Caring for your Guitar:

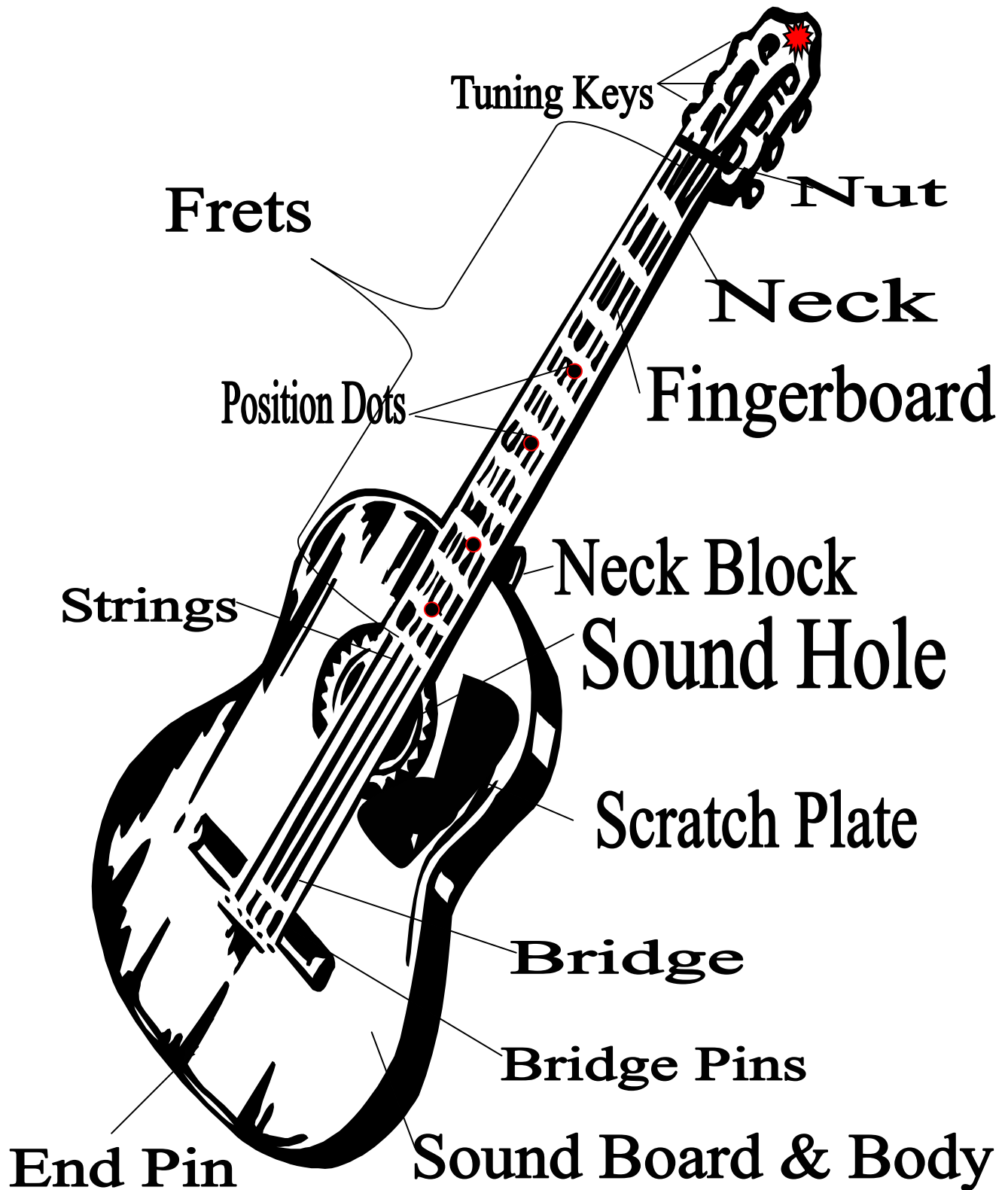
- ➔ The most important thing you need to do for your guitar is to always place it in a cover when it is not in use. This protects it from water, moisture and heat.
- ➔ Store it away from direct sunlight and avoid leaving it in a vehicle.
- ➔ Covering it and putting it away also prevents accidents where the guitar may be damaged by a stray foot, a fall or general hap-hazard accidents.
- ➔ Although a sturdy instrument, a guitar should be treated and handled gently.

Extra Care:

- ➔ Always have a spare set of strings just incase one breaks when you are playing. Good quality strings cost more, but last longer.
- ➔ Strings also sound better and last longer when they are cleaned after each use of the guitar. Invest in a soft cleaning cloth to clean the strings placing the cloth underneath each string individually and gripping it – then pull cloth the length of the string. This removes sweat and dirt accumulated from playing.
- ➔ This cloth can also be used to give the body of the guitar a once over before placing it in its cover.
- ➔ A guitar should be polished regularly to maintain it's shine and remove finger marks, dust, dirt and the wear from a plectrum.

A MUST: Always carry your guitar in an upright position when moving around.

4. Details on the Parts of a Guitar



Tuning Keys

There are six (or 12) tuning keys. One string is connected to each. A tuning key consists of a small pinion and worm gear with a twisting knob (thumbscrew) attached. There is a protruding shaft with a hole drilled through it. Through this hole the string is threaded and to make it secure, it is wound round the shaft. Turning the thumbscrews rotates the shaft, tightening or loosening the string as required.

*As the string is TIGHTENED the pitch or the sound becomes HIGHER.
As the string is LOOSENED, the string becomes LOWER.*

Neck

This is the long rounded piece of smoothed timber extending from the body of the guitar to the tuning head (like an arm). This is where the thumb grips when playing the guitar.

Fingerboard

The flat strip of timber laid on top of the neck proper. The fingerboard extends from the section just below the tuning head almost to the sound hole and carries narrow metal strips (frets). This is where the 'finger work' occurs on the guitar, open chords, bar chords, slide playing, lead/classical string plucking/picking. The string do not sit on the fingerboard, but rather must be pressed onto the fingerboard to produce various sounds.

Nut

The raised piece of wood or bone into which grooves are cut. It is found at the top of the fingerboard just as the tuning head begins. This is the device which keeps the strings raised from the fingerboard and leads them to the correct positions for effective tuning.

Frets

The narrow metal strips laid horizontally across the fingerboard, thereby dividing the neck into FRETS. These frets act just as notes on a piano or keyboard. As you move UP the frets, the notes become HIGHER. The fret numbering begins from the tuning head end of the guitar.

Body

This is the top (soundboard) the sides and the back of the main part of the guitar, and acts as the tone chamber which increases the volume from the strings.

Sound Hole

The round hole cut in the centre of the body. This allows sound to come out from the tone chamber formed by the body.

Scratch Plate/Guard

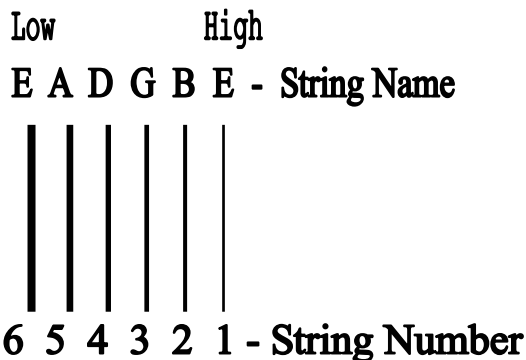
Not standard on all guitars, but is fitted for the protection of the soundboard from scratches occurring from a thumb pick/plectrum or fingers.

Position Dots

Usually placed on the 5th, 7th, 9th and 12th frets. Some instruments do not have them as they are not essential for learning or playing guitar. They are helpful for quick tuning and for more extensive playing of bar chords/lead and classical guitar etc. (Occasionally these dots are placed on the where the neck and fingerboard meet.)

Strings

The strings are of different thicknesses. Each has a name and a defined pitch to which they need to be tuned. Steel or metal strings have varying textures from copper binding on the 6th, 5th and 4th strings to plain steel on the 2nd and 1st strings. The third could be either. A nylon stringed guitar also has copper binding on the 6th, 5th and 4th strings and the 3rd, 2nd and 1st are plain nylon. These differences do not change the way the guitar is played or sounds (steel or



nylon all guitars are played in a similar fashion).

Bridge

This acts as an anchor for the strings at the lower end of the guitar and transmits the string vibrations to the soundboard. Some instruments have a tail piece which anchors the strings. If this is so, a movable bridge is usually in place to keep the strings raised in line with the nut at the opposite end (loose bridge). Do not attempt to adjust the height of the bridge unless you are an advanced player. (Allowing the strings to be closer to the fingerboard makes it easier for multiple chord/fingering – rapid playing).

Bridge Pins

These are fitted to some wooden bridges and their purpose is to fasten the bead of the string firmly into the bridge to hold the string position. To change a string, lever the pin out of the bridge by the head. Guitars which do not have the bridge pins will need to be tied in a loop fashion around the provided equipment on the guitar, until held fast.

TUNING: It is best to leave the bulk of the string to be used for the tuning keys. Strings need time to stretch when first fitted and will need to be tuned often for about the first week of its presence on the guitar. Once the string/s have settled, cut off the excess using pliers. The strings are applied to the tuning keys in a specific order as shown. It is best to secure the string/s at the bridge end first, then to the appropriate tuning key. Place the string through the hole entering from the top (allowing a little slack), and start turning towards yourself to tighten.

Remember to observe how the strings are attached to the guitar before removing old ones. If replacing a snapped string (too tight or strumming too rough).

Other causes of “out of tune” strings include direct sunlight, sustained heat in a confined space, knocks and incorrect storage in general.

End Pin

This pin is to prevent the guitar from being placed directly on the floor and thereby avoid damage if left standing. It can also be used for fastening a guitar strap to and the other end can be either fastened around the tuning head end or the other end of the body. The attachment of a guitar strap is for playing whilst

standing but can also provide stability when sitting (especially on a stool). The fashion it is worn in (tuning head end or body top) is purely for the comfort of the wearer and has no bearing on the sound.

Neck Block

This joins the neck to the body of the guitar and acts as a stabilizer plus providing strength for the neck to prevent snapping.

5. Capo Information

The word capo is an abbreviation for Capodastro. The capo is designed (many variations but serve same function) to fit snugly against the arm of the guitar when the capo is clamped into position.

The capo was invented to make the playing of certain stringed instruments easier for those who had not yet learned and memorized sufficient chords to play in various keys.

The function of the capo is to make it possible to use the same finger position on the fret board to sound more than one chord.

The capo is used by guitarists and professional singer-players as it enables one to play the chorus suitable for various keys simply by learning the minimum number of basic chord formations.

For example, you may have learnt to play the C chord. Normally you have to memorize a totally different finger formation if you wanted to play the chord of D flat.

By using the CAPO however, you only have to play C chord the way you already know. By fitting the CAPO in a certain position on your guitar, the chord C automatically sounds like the chord of D flat – without learning a new chord formation.

It is not essential to use the capo but if you wish to, you will find that it cuts the learning of new chords to a minimum. There is detailed material available about where to place the capo and how it alters the key of the guitar, allowing you to play the chords you know but playing from music that states other chords.

Obviously, more knowledge about music is required so you can easily translate chords and suffice to say that for the time being, you know what a capo is for. If you wish to learn more about using the capo, it is best to wait until you already have some basic chord ability and can play the chords you do know quite well before you investigate the uses of a capo.

NOTE: *Some song writers write songs especially to be played with the capo to be in a certain position for a specific sound to be achieved. The capo gives the guitar a special sound and this suits the melody of some songs.*

SPECIAL REMINDER: *The guitar is not to be tuned whilst the capo is attached and the capo **should not** be left on the guitar when it is stored. Make sure the guitar is already in tune when the capo is fitted, and always attach and remove a capo with care.*

Reference List

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www.guitar.about.com

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