

# Chord Primer for Guitar

By Thom Gustafson



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# Introduction

One of the best ways to develop basic musical skills is performing solo or group vocal music with guitar accompaniment. Senses of pitch, rhythm, and harmony can all be improved dramatically if a person learns to smoothly make chord changes while singing.

To my thinking as a guitar teacher, a beginner's chord book should start with a smooth, graduated study of basic open chords. Songs must be selected which fit into the overall plan of learning and are widely known by today's students.

After mastering open chords, the serious guitar student should learn to play bar chords and other moveable chord forms. This enables the student to play songs in every key.

I have also included transposition and capoing guides to help the guitarist perform music in the key most suitable for their guitar and/or vocal abilities.

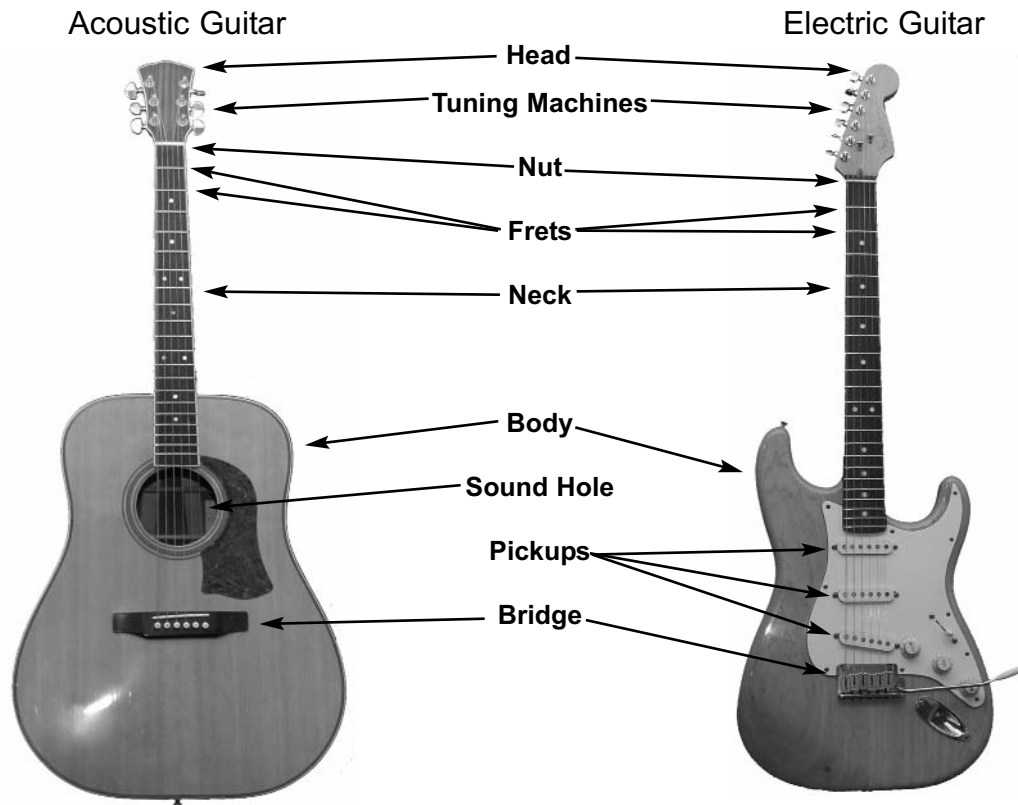
This work is not intended as a sole source of guitar instruction. I assume that a serious guitar student is also learning to read and play from musical notation. Hence no explanations of such things as bar lines, measures, time signatures, and guitar note locations are included.

I dedicate this work to my wife Bobbi whose love of music and understanding has helped my career as a musician and guitar instructor immeasurably.

Happy strumming!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thom Gustafson". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

# Parts of the Guitar



## Gripping The Pick



Although many different and successful methods are used to hold a pick, it is good to use the most common as a starting point. Grip the pick firmly, but no more firmly than is necessary, between the thumb and the slightly curled index finger. The remaining fingers of the picking hand may lightly curl behind the index finger as shown.

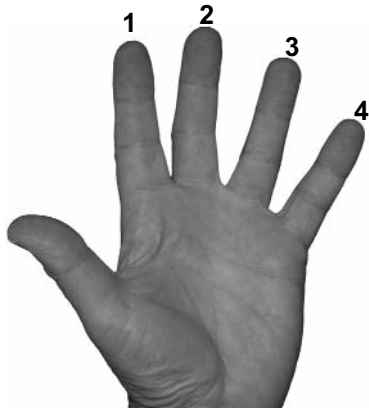
## Left Hand Positioning



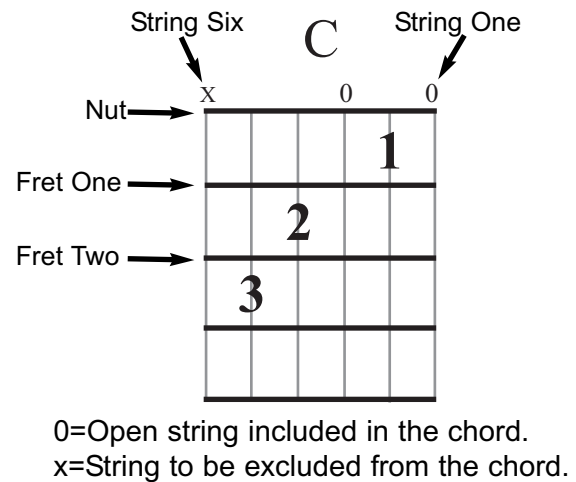
The left hand is positioned with the thumb at or near the back of the neck. The fingers arch gracefully over the fretboard. The left hand does not support the neck of the guitar. The guitar is instead supported when standing by a strap and when seated by being held/balanced between a leg and the right arm. The right leg is usually used to support acoustic or electric guitars and the left leg for classical (nylon strung) guitars.

# Reading Chord Diagrams

## Left Hand Fingering



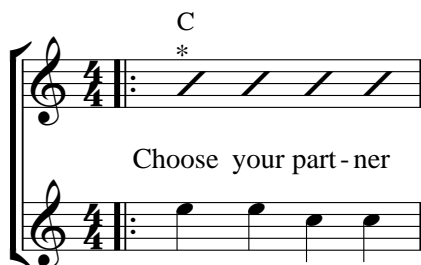
## Chord Diagram



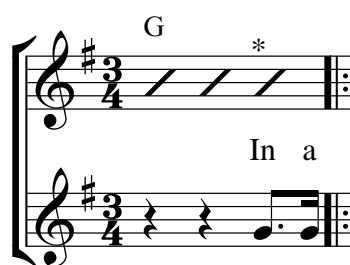
1. Place the thumb on the back of the neck between frets one and two. Thumb placement with larger hands is usually closer to fret one. Thumb placement with smaller hands is usually closer to fret two.
2. Arch the fingers around the fretboard and lightly place the tips of the fingers needed for each chord on the correct string and directly behind the fret. Do not allow any joint of any finger to straighten (or collapse) unless the same finger is playing more than one string. The fingertips should be as perpendicular to the fretboard as possible when fretting strings. Only the thumb and fingertips should be in contact with the neck.
3. Apply equal pressure to those fingers being used for each chord. Do not squeeze with the thumb.
4. Strum the chord, then pick each string individually. Dead or buzzing strings can be caused by finger placement either too far from the fret or on top of the fret or by the side of another finger touching it.

## Getting Started

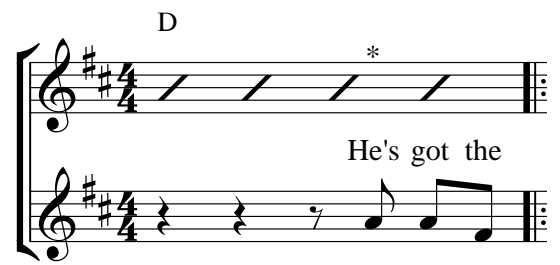
Each *system* of music consists of two lines, one for strumming and changing chords and one for actually playing the melody. The melody line is intended for another instrumentalist to play while the student is strumming chords. An asterisk (\*) is used to show which beat the melody begins on. Below are examples:



Melody begins on first strum

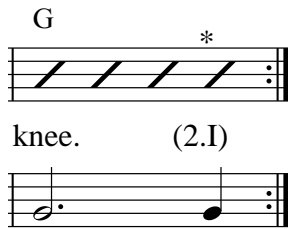


Melody begins on third strum

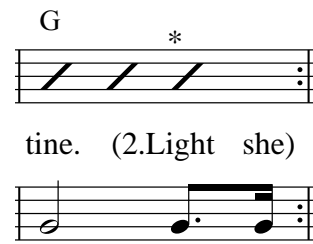


Melody begins between strums three and four

If a melody does not begin on the first strum and has more than one verse, an asterisk might be used in the last measure to show which strum the next verse begins on. The top of the next page shows two examples:



Next verse begins on fourth strum

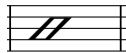


Next verse begins on third strum

## Endings

Songs with more than one verse have no specific ending shown. The student should end the song with a final strum on a beat that seems appropriate.

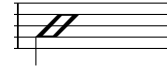
Most of the songs with only one verse shown end with a held chord. Below are examples of strums lasting more than one beat:



Whole Note Strum  
Four Beats



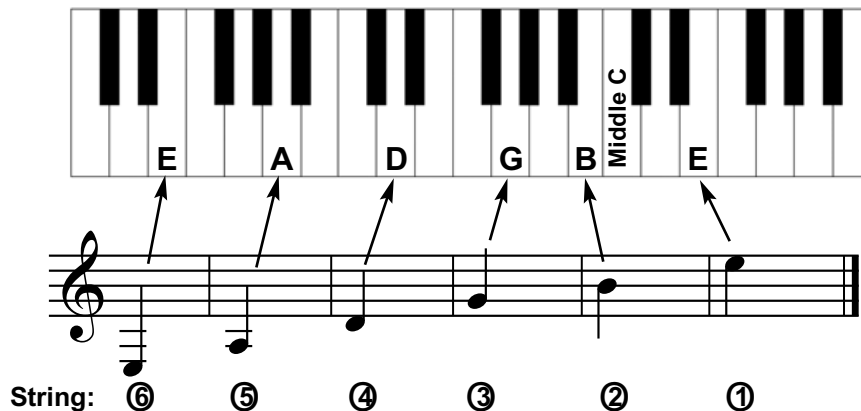
Dotted-Half Note Strum  
Three Beats



Half Note Strum  
Two Beats

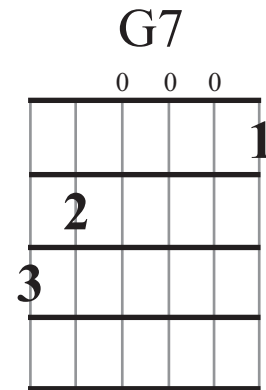
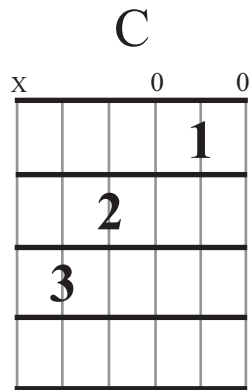
## Tuning The Guitar

You may tune the guitar to a keyboard instrument in the manner shown below. Music written for the guitar sounds one octave below the actual or *concert* pitch.



## Another Tuning Method

1. Tune string one to E above middle C using another instrument, pitch pipe or tuning fork.
2. Tune string two, fret five in unison with the open first string.
3. Tune string three, fret four in unison with the open second string.
4. Tune string four, fret five in unison with the open third string.
5. Tune string five, fret five in unison with the open fourth string.
6. Tune string six, fret five in unison with the open fifth string.



### Chord Exercise 1

C G7 C G7 C G7

Count 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 etc.

## 1. Skip To My Lou

Begin repeat sign

C G7

Choose your part - ner Skip to My Lou. Choose your part - ner Skip to My Lou.

C G7 C

Choose your part - ner Skip to My Lou. Skip to My Lou my dar - lin'.

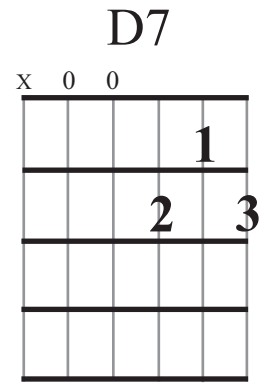
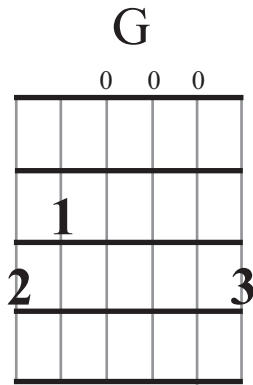
End repeat sign

For extra verses, return to the begin repeat sign after reaching the end repeat.

2. Flies in the buttermilk shew fly, shew!  
Flies in the buttermilk shew fly, shew!  
Flies in the buttermilk shew fly, shew!  
Skip to my Lou my darlin'.

3. Lost my partner, what'll I do?  
Lost my partner, what'll I do?  
Lost my partner, what'll I do?  
Skip to my Lou my darlin'.

4. I'll find another one prettier than you.  
I'll find another one prettier than you.  
I'll find another one prettier than you.  
Skip to my Lou my darlin'.



## Chord Exercise 2

G D7 G D7 G D7

Count 1 2 3 1 2 3 etc.

## 2. Clementine

Repeat to here for extra verses

G \* G D7

In a ca-vern in a can-yon ex-ca - va-ting for a mine. Dwelt a mi-ner four-ty

G D7 G Chorus

ni - ner and his daugh-ter Cle-men- tine. Oh my dar lin', oh my dar lin', oh my dar-lin' Cle- men

D7 G D7 G \*

tine. You are lost and gone for e - ver dread-ful sor - ry Cle-men-tine. (2.Light she)

2. Light she was and like a fairy,  
And her shoes were number nine.  
Herring boxes without topses,  
Sandals were for Clementine.  
(Chorus)

3. Drove she ducklings to the water,  
Every morning just at nine.  
Hit her foot against a splinter,  
Fell into the foaming brine.  
(Chorus)

4. Ruby lips above the water,  
Blowing bubbles soft and fine.  
Alas for me I was no swimmer,  
So I lost my Clementine.  
(Chorus)



## Chord Exercise 3

Chord Exercise 3

G G<sup>7</sup> C D<sup>7</sup>

## 3. She'll Be Comin' Round The Mountain

G G

\* She'll be co-min' round the moun-tain when she comes. She'll be

D<sup>7</sup>

co - min' round the moun-tain when she comes. She'll be

G G<sup>7</sup> C

co - min' round the moun-tain, she'll be co - min' round the moun-tain, she'll be

D<sup>7</sup> G

co - min' round the moun-tain when she comes. (2. She'll be)

\*

2. She'll be drivin' six white horses when she comes (etc.).
3. Oh we'll all go out to meet her when she comes (etc.).
4. We'll be singing "Hallelujah" when she comes (etc.).

## 4. On Top Of Old Smoky

G<sup>7</sup> C

\* On top of Old Smo - - ky

G

all co - vered with snow.

D<sup>7</sup>

I lost my true lo - - ver

G

come a - cour - tin' too slow.

2. Well courtin's a pleasure, but parting is grief  
And a false hearted lover is worse than a thief.

3. A thief always robs you and takes all you save.  
But a false hearted lover sends you to your grave.

## 5. Oh Susanna

G \* G D<sup>7</sup>

I came from A - la - ba - ma with my ban - jo on my knee. I'm

G D<sup>7</sup> G

goin' to Louis - i - a - na, my true love for to see. It rained all night the

D<sup>7</sup> G

day I left, the wea-ther it was dry. The sun so hot I froze to death, Su-

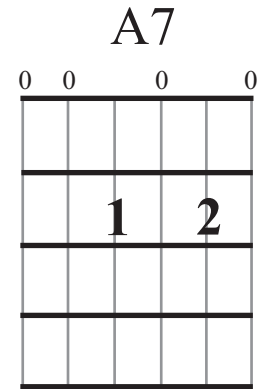
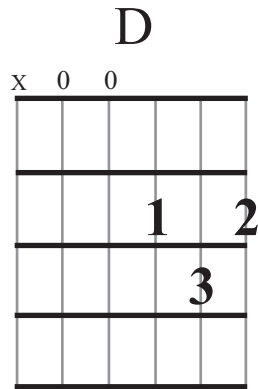
D<sup>7</sup> G G<sup>7</sup> C Chorus G

san - na don't you cry. Oh Su - san - na, oh don't you cry for

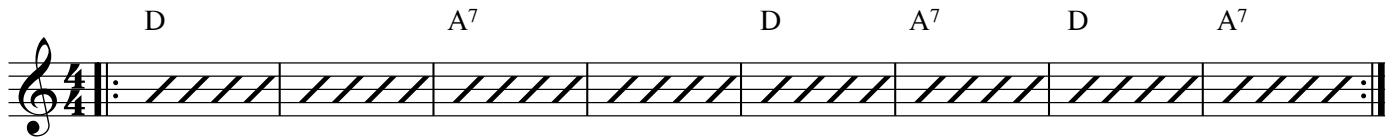
D<sup>7</sup> G D<sup>7</sup> G \*

me. I've come from A - la - ba - ma with my ban - jo on my knee. (2.I)

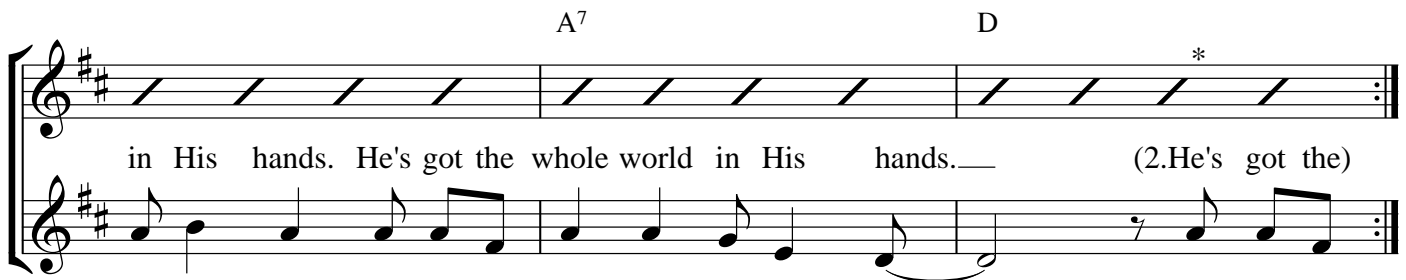
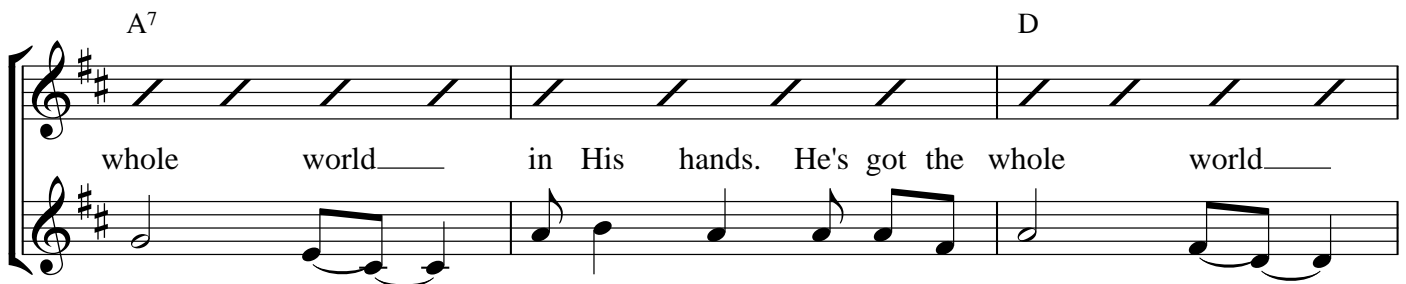
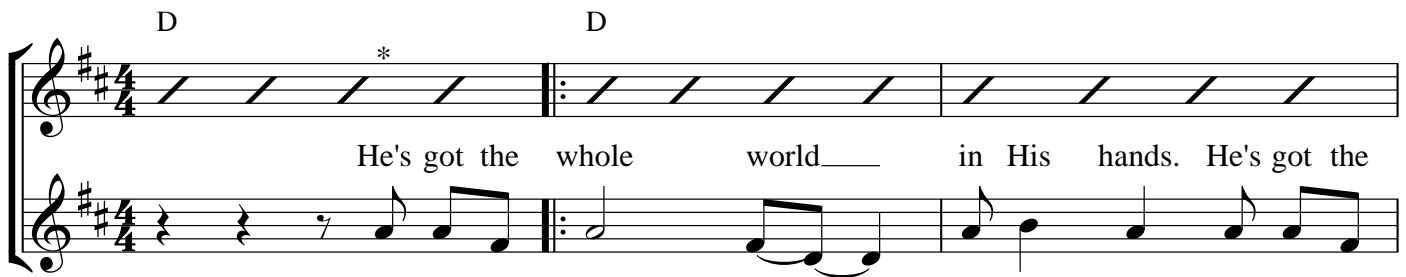
2. I had a dream the other night when everything was still.  
 I thought I saw Susanna a-comin' down the hill.  
 The buckwheat cake was in her mouth, the tear was in her eye.  
 Said I, "I'm comin' from the South, Susanna don't you cry".  
 (Chorus)



## Chord Exercise 4



## 6. He's Got The Whole World In His Hands



2. He's got the wind and rain in His hands.  
 He's got the wind and rain in His hands.  
 He's got the wind and rain in His hands.  
 He's got the whole world in His hands.

3. He's got both you and me in His hands.  
 He's got both you and me in His hands.  
 He's got both you and me in His hands.  
 He's got the whole world in His hands.

## 7. Michael Row The Boat Ashore

D                      D                      G

Mi-chael row the boat a shore, Ha - le - lu -

D                      A7                      D                      \*

jah. Mi-chael row the boat a- shore, Ha - le - lu jah. (2. Bro - ther)

2. Brother lend a helping hand, Hallelujah.  
Brother lend a helping hand, Hallelujah.

3. Sister help to trim the sail, Hallelujah.  
Sister help to trim the sail, Hallelujah.

## 8. Silent Night

D                      A7                      D

Si - lent night, Ho - ly night. All is calm, all is bright.

G                      D                      G                      D

Round yon Vir - gin mo - ther and child. Ho - ly in - fant so ten - der and mild.

A7                      D                      A7                      D

Sleep in hea - ven - ly peace. Sleep in hea - ven - ly peace

2. Silent night, Holy night. Shepards quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from Heaven afar. Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia.  
Christ the Savior is born. Christ the Savior is born.

# 9. Home On The Range

G \* C G A<sup>7</sup>

Oh give me a home where the buf-fa-lo roam, where the deer and the an-te-lope

D D<sup>7</sup> G C

play. Where sel-dom is heard a dis-cour-a-ging word, and the

G D<sup>7</sup> G Chorus D<sup>7</sup>

skies are not clou-dy all day. Home, home on the

G A<sup>7</sup> D D<sup>7</sup> G

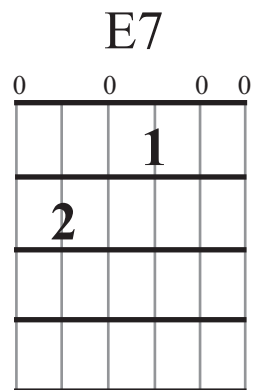
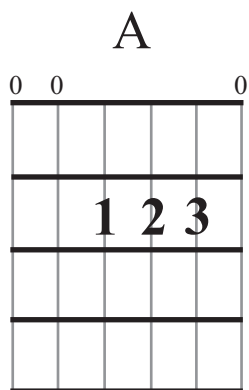
range where the deer and the an-te-lope play. Where sel-dom is

C G D<sup>7</sup> G

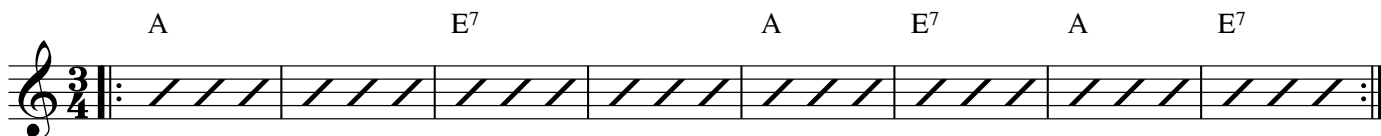
heard a dis-cour-a-ging word, and the skies are not clou-dy all day.

2. Where the air is so pure, the zephyrs so free,  
The breezes so balmy and light.  
That I would not exchange my home on the range  
For all the cities so bright.  
(Chorus)

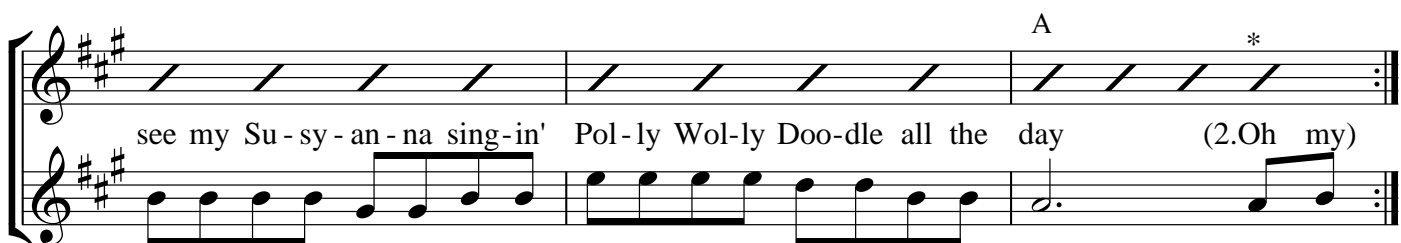
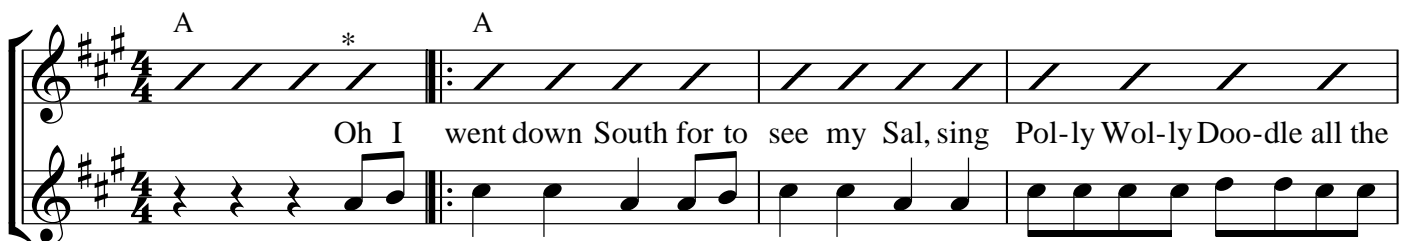
3. Oh give me a land where the bright diamond sand  
Flows leisurely down the stream.  
Where the graceful white swan goes gliding along  
Like a maid in a heavenly dream.  
(Chorus)



## Chord Exercise 5



## 10. Polly Wolly Doodle



2. Oh my Sal she am a maiden fair, (etc.).  
With curly eyes and laughing hair (etc.).  
(Chorus)

3. Oh I came to a river and I couldn't get across (etc.).  
So I jumped on a 'gator and I thought it was a hoss (etc.).  
(Chorus)

# 11. If You're Happy

A \* A E<sup>7</sup>

If you're hap - py and you know it clap your hands. If you're

A D

hap - py and you know it clap your hands. If you're hap - py and you know it then you

A E<sup>7</sup> A \*

real - ly ought to show it. If you're hap - py and you know it clap your hands. (2.If you're)

2. If you're happy and you know it stamp your feet. (etc.)    3. If you're happy and you know it shout Amen! (etc.)  
 4. If you're happy and you know it do all three. (etc.)

# 12. Amazing Grace

A \* A<sup>7</sup> D A E<sup>7</sup>

A - ma - zing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me.

A A<sup>7</sup> D A E<sup>7</sup> A

I once was lost, but now am found. Was blind but now I see.

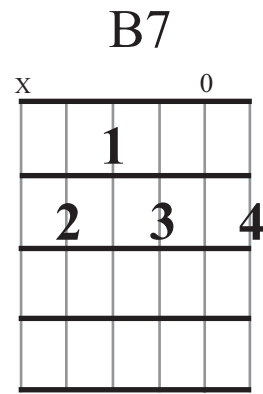
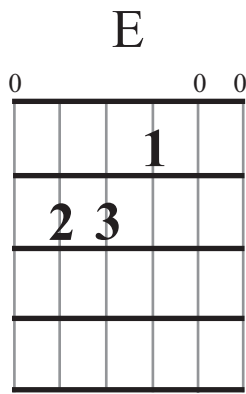
2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fears relieved. How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.  
 3. Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come. 'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home.  
 4. When we've been there ten thousand years bright shining as the sun. We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun.



## 13. Dixie Land

D \* D D<sup>7</sup> G  
 I wish I was in the land of cot-ton old times there are not for-got-ten look a  
 way, look a-way, look a-way Di-xie Land. In Di-xie land where  
 I was born in ear-ly on one fros - ty mor-ning look a - way, look a - way, look a -  
*Chorus*  
 A<sup>7</sup> D D<sup>7</sup> G E<sup>7</sup> A<sup>7</sup>  
 way, Di-xie Land. Then I wish I was in Di-xie, hoo - ray, hoo - ray. In  
 D G D A<sup>7</sup> D A<sup>7</sup>  
 Di-xie Land I'll make my stand to live and die in Di-xie. A - way, a - way, a -  
 D A<sup>7</sup> D \*  
 way down South in Di-xie. A - way, a - way, a - way down South in Di-xie. (2. Old

2. **Old Missus marry Will "de weaver", William was a gay deceiver look away (etc.).**  
**But when he put his arm around her he smiled as fierce as a fourty pounder look away (etc.)**  
**(Chorus)**
3. **His face was sharp as a butcher's cleaver, but that did not seem to grieve her look away (etc.)**  
**Old Missus acted the foolish part and died for a man that broke her heart, look away (etc.)**  
**(Chorus)**



Chord Exercise 6

E B7 E B7 E B7

14. The Old Gray Mare

E \* B7

Oh the old gray mare she ain't what she used to be, ain't what she used to be,

E B7

ain't what she used to be. The old gray mare she ain't what she used to be ma-ny long years a-

E B7 E

go. Ma-ny long years a - go, ma-ny long years a - go, Oh the

B7 E

old gray mare she ain't what she used to be, ain't what she used to be, ain't what she used to be the

B7 E

old gray mare she ain't what she used to be ma - ny long years a - go.

# 15. When The Saints Go Marching In

Oh, when the saints go mar ching in. Oh, when the

saints go mar - ching in. Oh Lord I want to be in that

num ber, when the saints go mar - ching in.

2. And when the sun begins to shine,  
And when the sun begins to shine.  
Oh Lord I want to be in that number  
When the sun begins to shine.

3. Oh, when the trumpet sounds its call.  
Oh, when the trumpet sounds its call.  
Oh, Lord I want to be in that number  
When the trumpet sounds its call.

Am

0 0 0

			1
2	3		

Em

0 0 0 0

1	2		

Dm

x 0 0

			1
	2		
		3	

## Chord Exercise 7

Am Em Am Dm

# 16. My Bonnie

My Bon - nie lies o - ver the o - cean. My Bon - nie lies o - ver the sea. My Bon - nie lies o - ver the o - cean.

*Chorus*

Oh, bring back my Bon-nie to me. Bring back, bring back, oh, bring back my Bon-nie to me, to me. Bring back, bring back, oh, bring back my Bon-nie to me.

2. Oh blow ye winds over the ocean,  
And blow ye winds over the sea.  
Oh blow ye winds over the ocean,  
And bring back my Bonnie to me.  
(Chorus)

3. Last night as I lay on my pillow,  
Last night as I lay on my bed.  
Last night as I lay on my pillow,  
I dreamed that my Bonnie was dead.  
(Chorus)

4. The winds have blown over the ocean,  
The winds have blown over the sea.  
The winds have blown over the ocean,  
And brought back my Bonnie to me.  
(Chorus)

# 17. I've Been Workin' On The Railroad

G<sup>\*</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C G

I've been wor-kin' on the rail - road all the live long day.

A<sup>7</sup> D

I've been wor-kin' on the rail - road just to pass the time a - way.

D<sup>7</sup> G C B<sup>7</sup>

Don't you hear the whis-tle blow - in'? Rise up so ear - ly in the morn.

C G D<sup>7</sup> G

Don't you hear the cap-tain shou - ting "Di - nah blow your horn".

C A<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G

Di-nah won't you blow, Di-nah won't you blow, Di-nah won't you blow your horn—

C A<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G

Di-nah won't you blow, Di-nah won't you blow, Di-nah won't you blow your horn.

# 18. The Flying Trapeze

19

C\* Dm G7 C

Once I was hap-py, but now I'm for-lorn, Like an old coat that is tat-tered and

A7 D7 G7

torn; Left in this wide world to weep and to mourn, be-trayed by a maid in her

C Am E7 Am

teens. Now this girl that I loved, she was hand - some, and I tried all I

E7 Am E7 Am

knew her to please; But I ne-ver could please her one quar-ter so well as the

E7 Am G7 C Dm

man on the fly-ing tra-peze. Oh, he floats through the air with the grea-test of

G7 C

ease, this da-ring young man on the fly-ing tra-peze; His ac-tions are grace-ful, all

Dm G7 C

girls he does please, my love he has pur-loined a-way.

# 19. America The Beautiful

G G D Am D<sup>7</sup> G D<sup>7</sup>

\* Oh, beau - ti - ful for spa - cious skies for am - ber waves of grain. For

G D A<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

pur - ple moun - tain ma - jes - ties a - bove the frui - ted plain. A -

G D Am D<sup>7</sup> G G<sup>7</sup>

me - ri - ca, A - me - ri - ca, God shed his grace on thee, and

C G Am D<sup>7</sup> G \*

crowned thy good with bro - ther - hood from sea to shi - ning sea. (2.Oh)

2. Oh, beautiful for patriot dream that sees beyond the years.  
 Thine alabaster cities gleam, undimmed by human tears!  
 America, America, God shed his grace on thee.  
 And crowned thy good with brotherhood from sea to shinging sea.

# 20. The Star Spangled Banner

G \* D Em B<sup>7</sup> Em A<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G

Oh\_ say can you see, by the dawn's ear - ly light. What so prou - dly we

D<sup>7</sup> G D Em B<sup>7</sup>

hailed at the twi-lights last glea-ming. Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the

Em A<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G D<sup>7</sup> G

pe - ri - lous fight, o'er the ram - parts we watched were so gal-lant - ly strea-ming. And the

Em Am D<sup>7</sup> G

roc - kets red glare, the bombs burs - ting in air, gave proof through the

D<sup>7</sup> G A<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G C E<sup>7</sup>

night that our flag was still there. Oh, say does that\_ star span - gled

Am D<sup>7</sup> G C G D<sup>7</sup> G

ban - ner\_ yet\_ wave o'er the land\_ of the free, and the home of the brave.



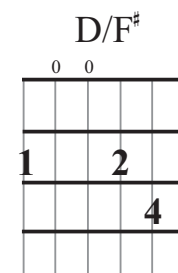
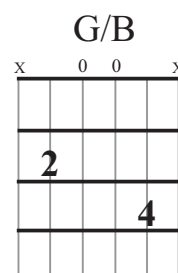
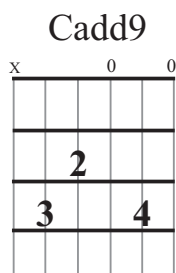
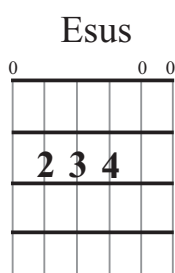
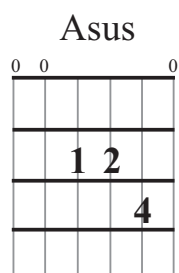
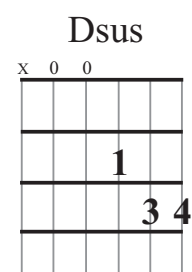
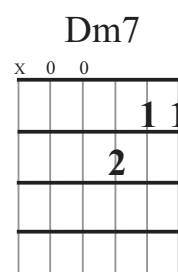
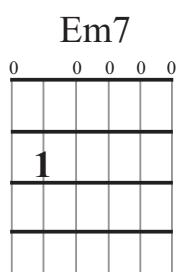
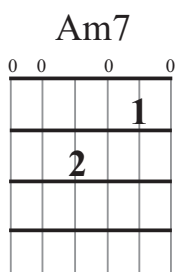
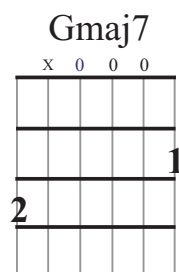
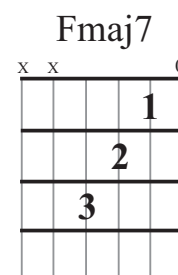
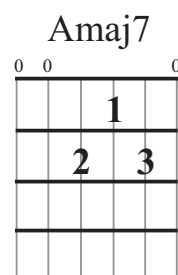
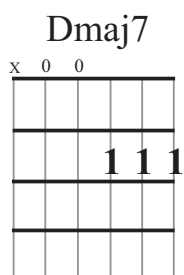
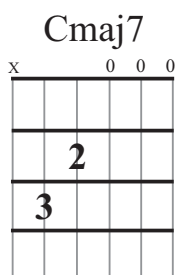
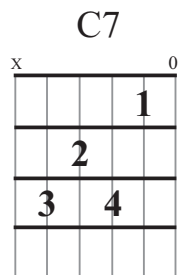
# Summary Of Chords Used For The Preceding 20 Songs

<p><b>C</b></p>	<p><b>G</b></p>	<p><b>D</b></p>	<p><b>A</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>
<p><b>G7</b></p>	<p><b>D7</b></p>	<p><b>A7</b></p>	<p><b>E7</b></p>	<p><b>B7</b></p>
<p><b>Am</b></p>	<p><b>Em</b></p>	<p><b>Dm</b></p>	<p>0=Open string included in the chord. x=String to be excluded from the chord.</p>	

## Open Chord Review

E	A	B7	E7	A	D		
E7	A7	D	G	A7	D7		
G	C	D7	G7	C	A m		
D m	G7	C	Em	D m	G7	C	B7

## More Chords Using Open Strings



"G with a B bass"

0=Open string included in the chord.

x=String to be excluded from the chord.

There are often several ways the same chord can be fingered. Each fingering will have advantages and disadvantages depending on the ease of transition from the previous chord and to the following chord. It is good to be flexible with chord fingerings. It is suggested the student try to become as familiar with any chord fingerings in this book that differ from fingerings the student has previously used.

Bar chords are open chords refingered in such a way as to allow the index finger (finger 1) to act as a moveable nut. As bar chords are moved up and down the guitar neck, they will change in letter name according to the chromatic scale:

$$A \left| \begin{array}{c} A^\sharp \\ B^\flat \end{array} \right| B \left| C \left| \begin{array}{c} C^\sharp \\ D^\flat \end{array} \right| D \left| \begin{array}{c} D^\sharp \\ E^\flat \end{array} \right| E \left| F \left| \begin{array}{c} F^\sharp \\ G^\flat \end{array} \right| G \left| \begin{array}{c} G^\sharp \\ A^\flat \end{array} \right| A$$

As a bar chord ascends the neck, it will ascend through the chromatic scale. As a bar chord descends the neck, it will descend according to the chromatic scale.

## Major Chord Type 1

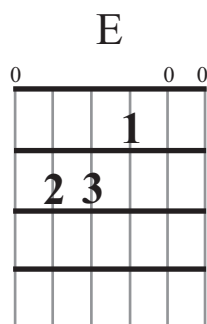


Fig.1

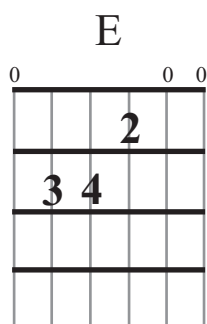


Fig.2

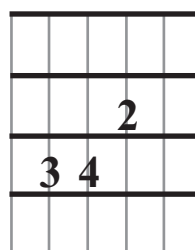


Fig.3

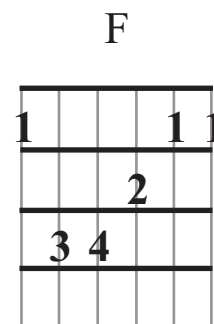


Fig.4

Fig.1 shows the usual fingering for an open E chord. Strings 1,2 and 6 are actually "fretted" by the nut.

Fig.2 shows an E chord refingered to free finger 1 for use as a bar.

Fig.3 shows the new E chord fingering moved up the neck one fret. All of the notes of what was an E chord have now been raised one fret except for the open notes on strings one, two and six.

Fig.4 shows the first finger applying a bar to take the place of the nut. The name of the chord has ascended one pitch up the chromatic scale and is now named F (or F "major").

When first playing bar chord exercises, relax the left hand immediately after each strum to produce a rhythmic, chopping sound. This technique will help to prevent cramping.

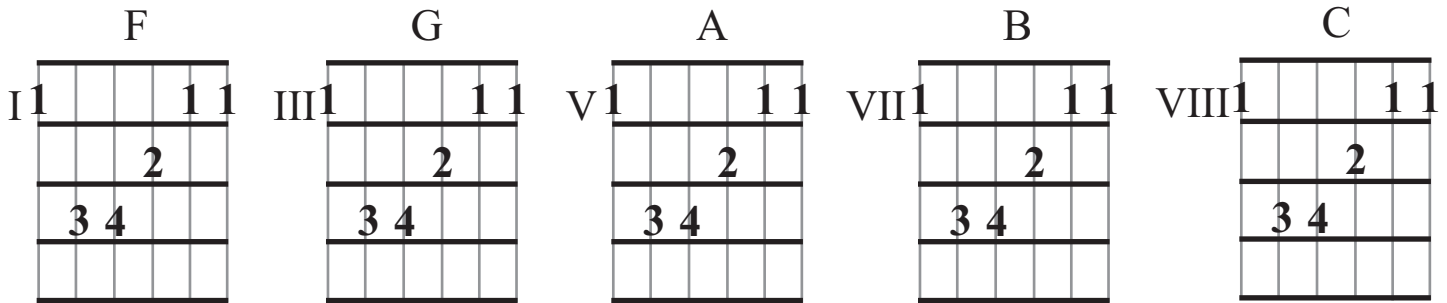
Don't use more pressure than is necessary to produce a clear sound. Avoid putting too much pressure on the thumb.

The index finger should be straight from the large joint where it joins the palm to the fingertip.

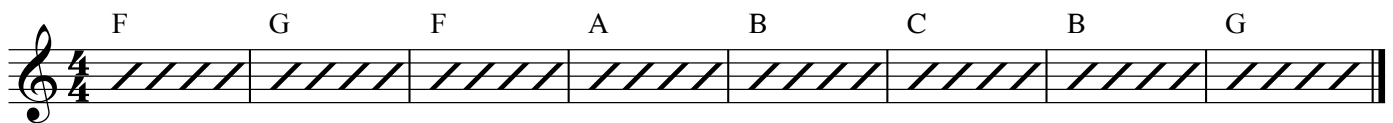
To slide the same bar chord form to another fret relax the pressure of the left hand while retaining the chord shape, slide the shaped left hand to the new fret, and reapply pressure.

Fig.5 shows the location of each of the bar chords needed for Exercise 1. Roman numerals are being used to indicate fret numbers.

Fig.5 - Type 1 Major Bar Chord Locations

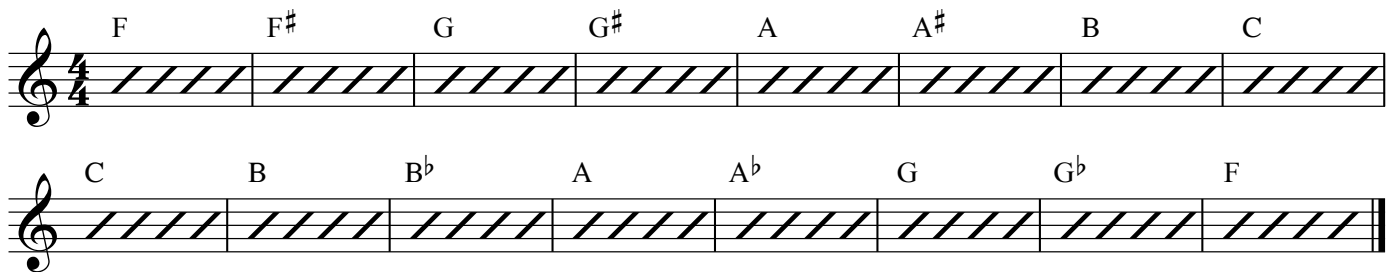


### Exercise 1



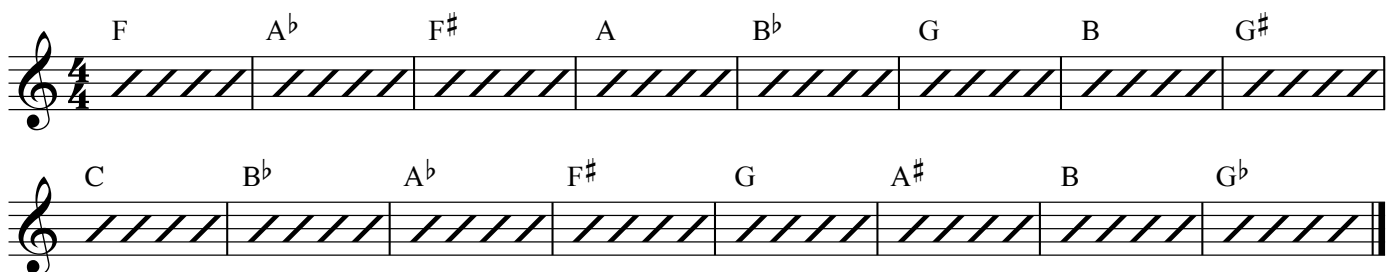
To sharp (#) a chord, slide it one fret to the right. To flat (b) a chord, slide it one fret to the left. Notice that both the chords F# and Gb are located at fret two. F# and Gb are "enharmonic", that is both chords share the same sound.

### Exercise 2



To avoid cramps, remember to relax the left hand immediately after each strum. Also, say out loud the chord name and the fret number it is located on while playing it. Strive for an easy tempo that allows you to make chord changes without stopping.

### Exercise 3



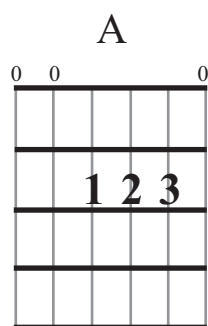


Fig.6

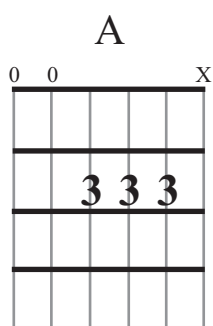


Fig.7

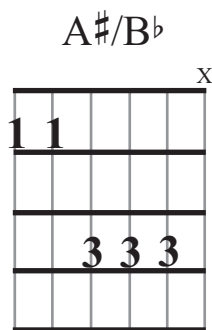


Fig.8

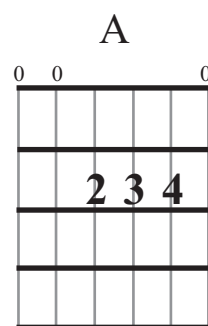


Fig.9

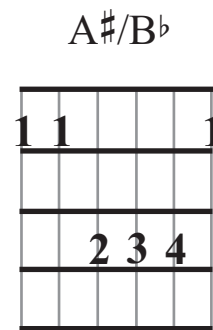


Fig.10

Fig.6 shows a fingering for an open A chord.

Fig.7 and Fig.9 show two ways to refinger an A chord and free finger one for use as a bar.

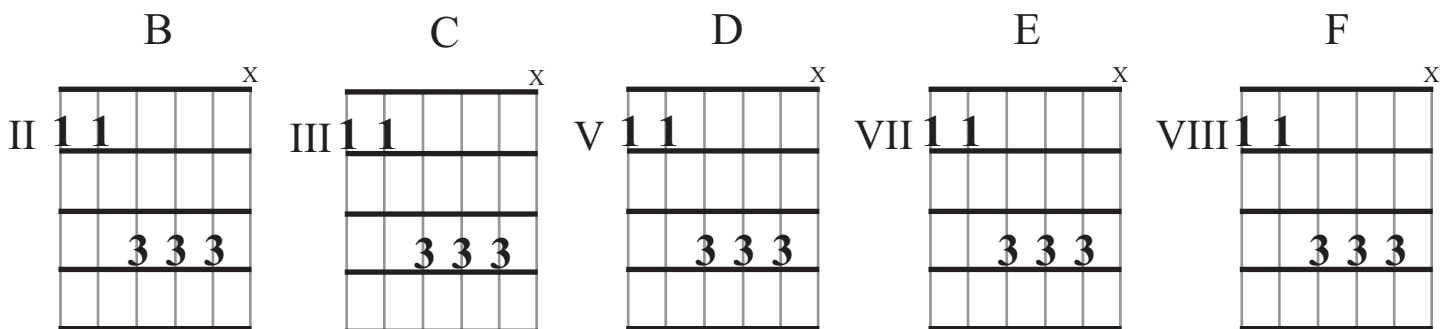
Fig.7 shows finger three applying a half bar to strings two, three, and four. When applying a half bar, the joint closest to the fingertip should be collapsed slightly backwards.

In Fig.8, the index finger plays strings five and six while deadening string one by touching the string without actually fretting it. If your guitar has steel strings and a narrow neck, this is probably the way you will play a "Type 2" major chord.

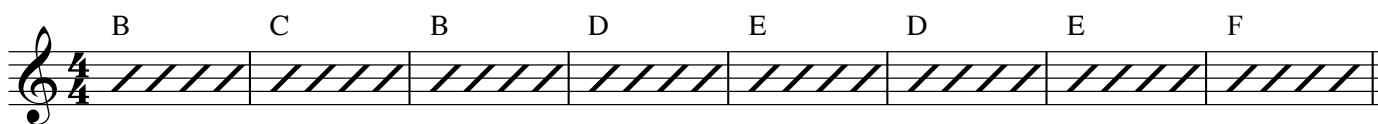
Fig.10 shows an optional fingering for a "Type 2" major chord. In this example, finger one plays strings one, five and six. If your guitar has nylon strings and a wide neck, you will probably find this fingering easier for a "Type Two" major chord.

Fig.11 shows the location of each chord needed for Exercise 4. Once again, remember to relax pressure after each strum and say the name of the chord or fret number while playing each chord.

Fig.11 - Type 2 Major Bar Chord Locations



#### Exercise 4



Like Type 1 bar chords, Type 2 bar chords are sharpened by sliding one fret to the right and flatted by sliding one fret to the left.

### Exercise 5 - Type 2 Major Chords

Exercise 5 - Type 2 Major Chords

Staff 1: A<sup>#</sup>(I), B, C, C<sup>#</sup>, D, D<sup>#</sup>, E, F

Staff 2: F, E, E<sup>b</sup>, D, D<sup>b</sup>, C, B, B<sup>b</sup>

### Exercise 6 - Type 2 Major Chords

Exercise 6 - Type 2 Major Chords

Staff 1: B<sup>b</sup>, D<sup>b</sup>, B, D, E<sup>b</sup>, C, E, C<sup>#</sup>

Staff 2: F, E<sup>b</sup>, D<sup>b</sup>, A<sup>#</sup>, C, D<sup>#</sup>, E, B

For exercise 7, alternate Type 1 and Type 2 major chord fingerings. Apply no more pressure with the left hand than is necessary to make each chord sound properly.

### Exercise 7

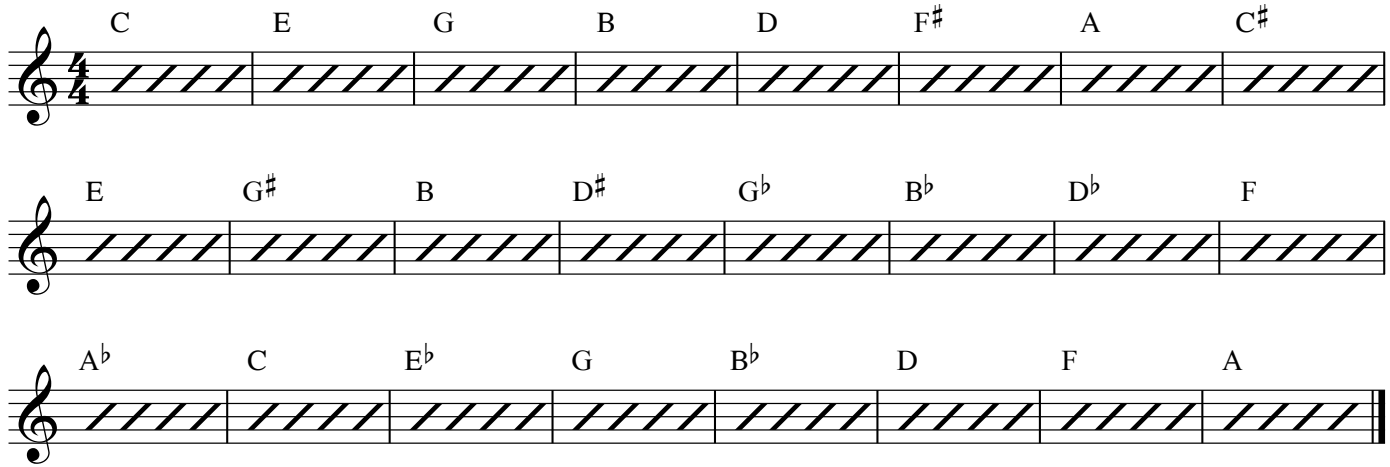
Exercise 7

Staff 1: Type 1 (F), Type 2 (B<sup>b</sup>), Type 1 (G), Type 2 (C), Type 1 (A), Type 2 (D), Type 1 (B), Type 2 (E)

Staff 2: Type 1 (F<sup>#</sup>), Type 2 (B), Type 1 (A<sup>b</sup>), Type 2 (D<sup>b</sup>), Type 1 (B<sup>b</sup>), Type 2 (E<sup>b</sup>), Type 1 (C), Type 2 (F)

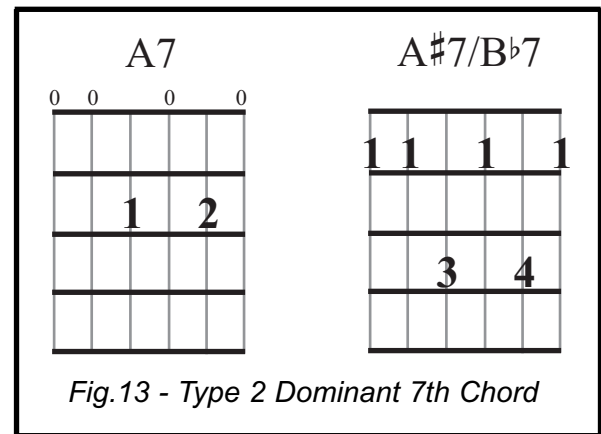
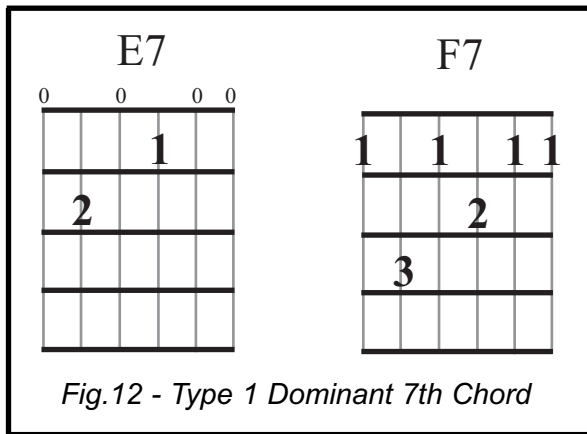
Exercise 8 - For this exercise Type 1 and Type 2 major chord forms may be mixed freely. Use only frets one through eight for chord positions. Note that the chords A $\sharp$ /B $\flat$ , B, C and F may each be played as either Type 1 or Type 2 chords.

### Exercise 8



## Dominant 7th Chords

Fig.12 and Fig.13 show two open Dominant 7th chords and the bar chord forms derived from them.



Exercise 9 - Type 1 and Type 2 Dominant 7th chords ascend the neck in the same manner as Type 1 and Type 2 Major chords. For example, both Type 1 G and G7 chords are found at fret III.

### Exercise 9

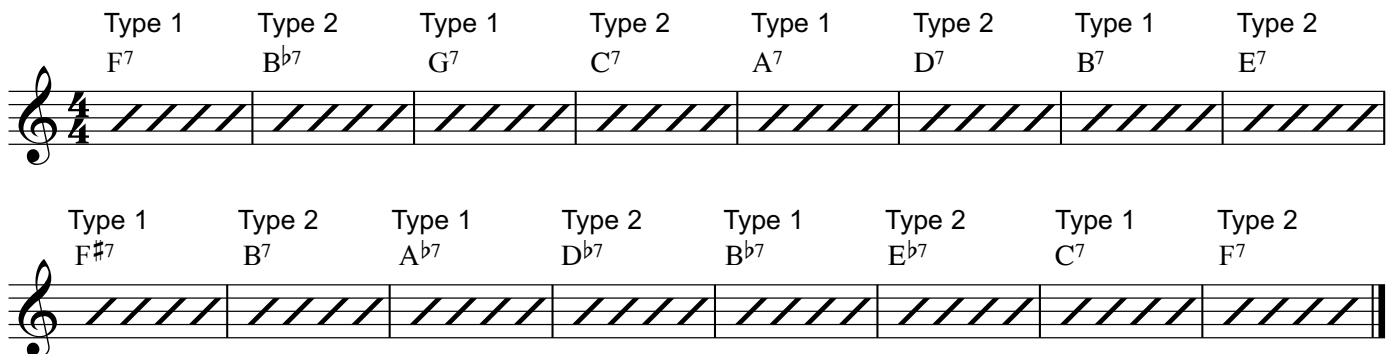
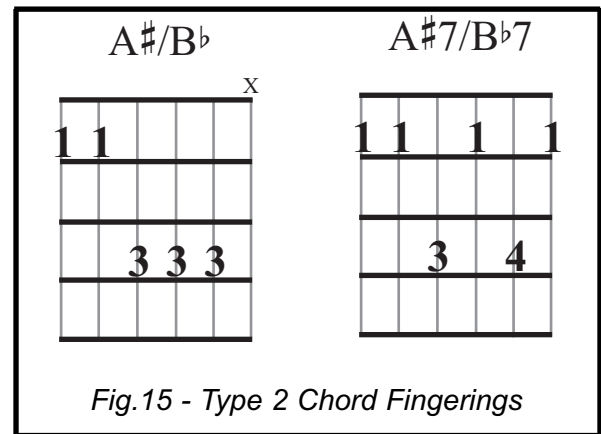
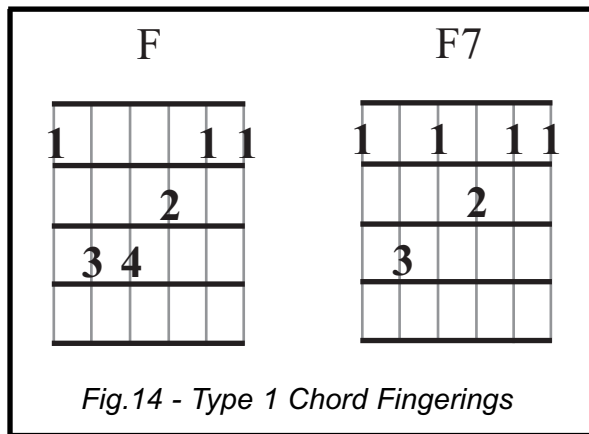


Fig.14 and Fig.15 summarize the four bar chord fingerings studied.



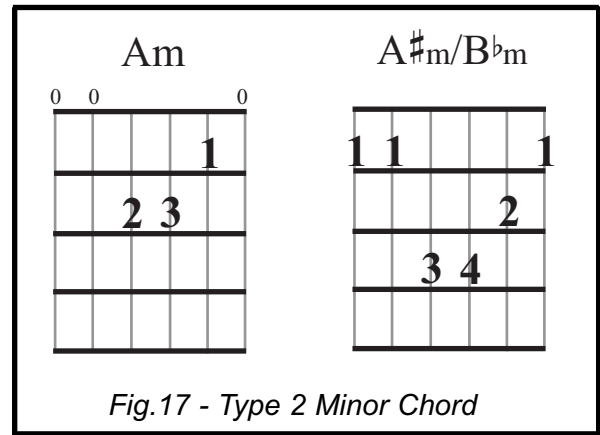
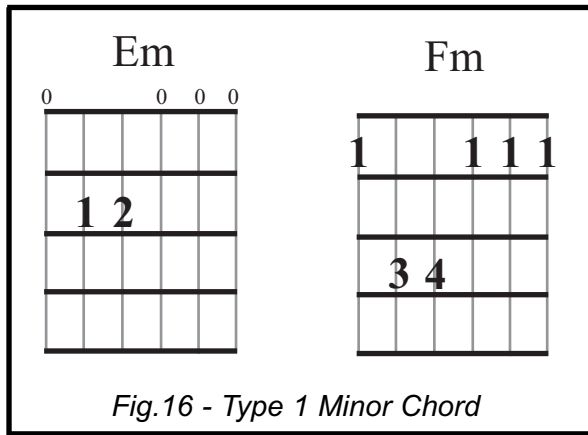
In exercise 10 Type 1 and Type 2 Major and Dominant 7th chord fingerings may be mixed freely. For now, use only frets one through eight for chord positions.

### Exercise 10

Exercise 10 consists of 40 measures of music, each containing a single chord. The chords are arranged in five rows of eight measures each. The chords are: G<sup>7</sup>, C, B<sup>7</sup>, E, D<sup>7</sup>, G, F<sup>#7</sup>, B, A<sup>7</sup>, D, C<sup>#7</sup>, F<sup>#</sup>, E<sup>7</sup>, A, G<sup>#7</sup>, C<sup>#</sup>, B<sup>7</sup>, E, D<sup>#7</sup>, G<sup>#</sup>, F<sup>#7</sup>, B, A<sup>#7</sup>, D<sup>#</sup>, D<sup>b7</sup>, G<sup>b</sup>, F<sup>7</sup>, B<sup>b</sup>, A<sup>b7</sup>, D<sup>b</sup>, C<sup>7</sup>, F, E<sup>b7</sup>, A<sup>b</sup>, G<sup>7</sup>, C, B<sup>b7</sup>, E<sup>b</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G, F<sup>7</sup>, B<sup>b</sup>, A<sup>7</sup>, D, C<sup>7</sup>, F, E<sup>7</sup>, A.



Fig.16 and Fig.17 show two open minor chords and the bar chord types derived from them.



For exercise 11, alternate Type 1 and Type 2 Minor chord fingerings.

## Exercise 11

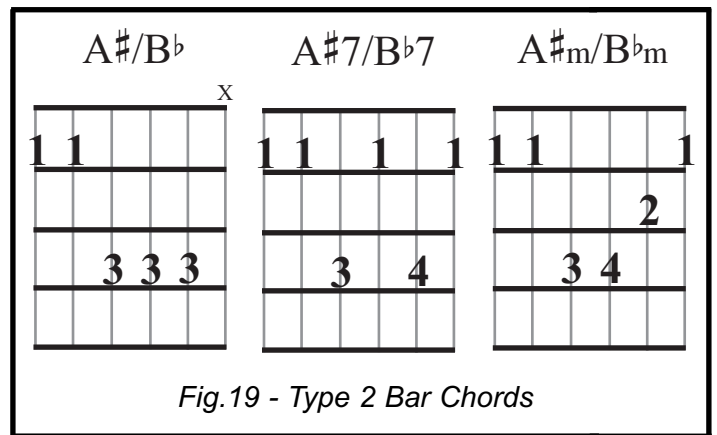
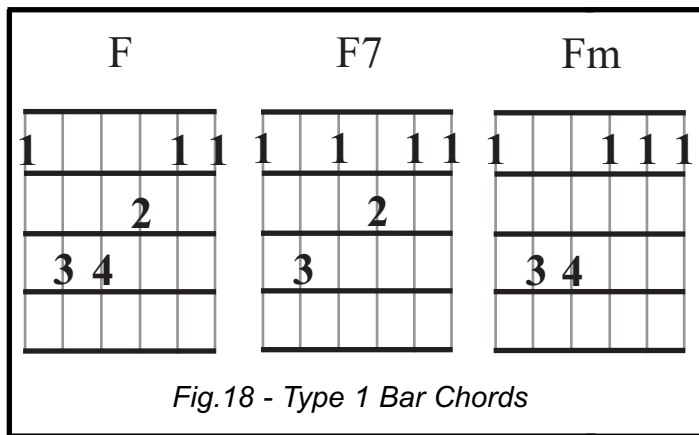
Type 1	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2
Fm	Bbm	Gm	Cm	Am	Dm	Bm	Em
Type 1	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2
F#m	Bm	G#m	C#m	A#m	D#m	Cm	Fm

Remember to avoid squeezing the neck with your thumb.

Try to apply bar finger pressure only on the strings actually being sounded by the bar. For example, when playing an Fm type 1 chord, it is unnecessary to apply pressure with the barring finger 1 on strings four and five. The bar in this case only needs to press on strings one, two, three and six.

In order to make notes on strings three and four sound clear when barred, try to push the large, middle joint of the first finger down. This technique can be achieved by trying to make your bar finger assume a slight "U" shape.

Fig.18 and Fig.19 summarize the six bar chord fingerings studied.



Exercise 12 - For this exercise, Type 1 and Type 2 Major, Dominant 7th, and Minor chord fingerings may be mixed freely.

### Exercise 12

Dm      G<sup>7</sup>      C      Gm      C<sup>7</sup>      F

Cm      F<sup>7</sup>      B<sup>b</sup>      Fm      B<sup>b</sup>7      E<sup>b</sup>

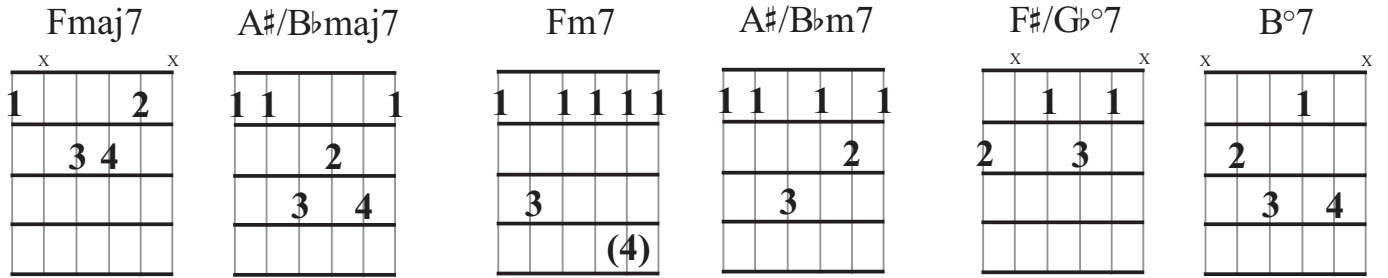
B<sup>b</sup>m      E<sup>b</sup>7      A<sup>b</sup>      E<sup>b</sup>m      A<sup>b</sup>7      D<sup>b</sup>

A<sup>b</sup>m      D<sup>b</sup>7      G<sup>b</sup>      C<sup>#</sup>m      F<sup>#</sup>7      B

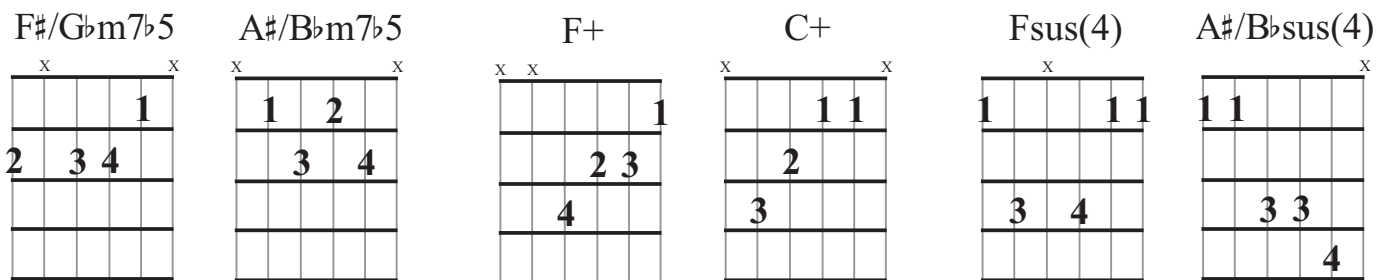
F<sup>#</sup>m      B<sup>7</sup>      E      Bm      E<sup>7</sup>      A

Em      A<sup>7</sup>      D      Am      D<sup>7</sup>      G

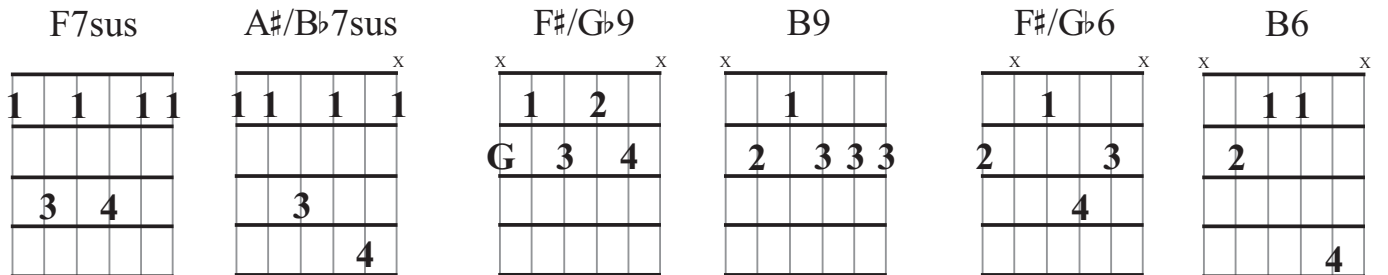
## More Moveable Chord Forms



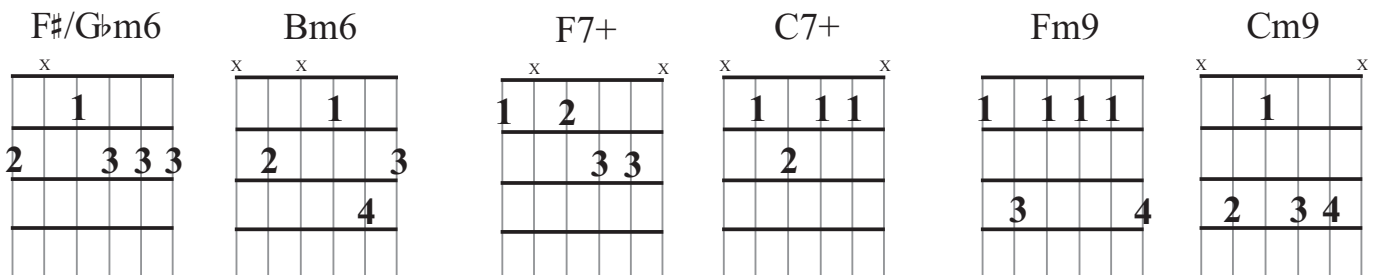
Any note of a diminished 7th chord can be considered the root.



Any note of an augmented chord can be considered the root.



G=ghost root. Use this non-played note to figure the chords root



x=string to be excluded from the chord by deadening it with the back of a finger on an adjacent string or by simply not being strummed.

Notes in parenthesis are optional.

# Harmonic Transposition

Guitarists or other musicians must often change the key of a piece of music to one that better suits a particular singer's voice. Also, it can be helpful for a guitarist to change the key of a song to one that allows easier chord fingerings. This section describes several ways to transpose music to keys which best suit the performer(s).

## Method 1

1. Determine the key the song is in. This can be done by reading the songs key signature and/or determining the songs *tonic* chord. The tonic chord (for example C in the key of C, or Am in the key of Am) is often the songs first chord and most frequently occurring chord, and is almost always the songs last chord. A common exception to this last rule is a song that changes key (or *modulates*) and does not return to the original key. Below are listed key signatures for all 24 keys:

C / Am	G / Em	D / Bm	A / F#m	E / C#m
B / G#m	F# / D#m	C# / A#m	F / Dm	Bb / Gm
Eb / Cm	Ab / Fm	Db / Bbm	Gb / Ebm	Cb / Abm

2. For the purpose of finding a better key to sing in, determine whether the song is too “high” or “low” for the singer's voice and change keys accordingly up or down the musical alphabet (ABCDEFGGABCDEF) until the singer's most comfortable key for that song is found. For example, if a song in the key of G is found to be too high for a singers voice, try changing to a lower key, such as F, E, or D. If the key of A is found to be too low for another song, try changing to a higher key, such as B, C, or D.

Each song must be dealt with individually, that is if a singer's key for one song is found to be C, that does not mean that the key of C will be best for every song.

3. To determine the chords for the new key, use the transposition chart below. Chord *roots* in the new key can be found by looking up or down the column from the corresponding chord root in the old key. For example, a song in the key of C might use the chords C, Dm, and G7 (C, D, and G roots). In order to change the key to G, the C chord would become G, the Dm chord would become Am, and the G7 chord would become D7.

## Major Key Transposition Chart

<u>Key</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>III</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>V</u>	<u>VI</u>	<u>VII</u>
<b>A</b>	A	B	C#	D	E	F#	G#
<b>B<math>\flat</math></b>	B $\flat$	C	D	E $\flat$	F	G	A
<b>B</b>	B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#
<b>C<math>\flat</math></b>	C $\flat$	D $\flat$	E $\flat$	F $\flat$	G $\flat$	A $\flat$	B $\flat$
<b>C</b>	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
<b>C#</b>	C#	D#	E#	F#	G#	A#	B#
<b>D<math>\flat</math></b>	D $\flat$	E $\flat$	F	G $\flat$	A $\flat$	B $\flat$	C
<b>D</b>	D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#
<b>E<math>\flat</math></b>	E $\flat$	F	G	A $\flat$	B $\flat$	C	D
<b>E</b>	E	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#
<b>F</b>	F	G	A	B $\flat$	C	D	E
<b>F#</b>	F#	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E#
<b>G<math>\flat</math></b>	G $\flat$	A $\flat$	B $\flat$	C $\flat$	D $\flat$	E $\flat$	F
<b>G</b>	G	A	B	C	D	E	F#
<b>A<math>\flat</math></b>	A $\flat$	B $\flat$	C	D $\flat$	E $\flat$	F	G

To transpose chords based on accidentals, the corresponding root in the new key must be raised or lowered according to the accidental. For example, an E $\flat$ 7 chord in the key of C would transpose as a B $\flat$ 7 chord in the key of G. A Bm chord in the key of F would transpose as a D#m chord in the key of A.

## Minor Key Transposition Chart

<u>Key</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>III</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>V</u>	<u>VI</u>	<u>VII</u>
<b>Am</b>	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
<b>A#m</b>	A#	B#	C#	D#	E#	A#	B#
<b>Bbm</b>	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	Gb	Ab
<b>Bm</b>	B	C#	D	E	F#	G	A
<b>Cm</b>	C	D	Eb	F	G	Ab	Bb
<b>C#m</b>	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A	B
<b>Dm</b>	D	E	F	G	A	Bb	C
<b>D#m</b>	D#	E#	F#	G#	A#	B	C#
<b>Ebm</b>	Eb	F	Gb	Ab	Bb	Cb	Db
<b>Em</b>	E	F#	G	A	B	C	D
<b>Fm</b>	F	G	Ab	Bb	C	Db	Eb
<b>F#m</b>	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D	E
<b>Gm</b>	G	A	Bb	C	D	Eb	F
<b>G#m</b>	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E	F#
<b>Abm</b>	Ab	Bb	Cb	Db	Eb	Fb	Gb

4. For beginning guitarists not using a capo, the easiest keys to play in are A, C, D, E, G, Am, Dm and Em. These keys should be tried before the others when looking for a good key to sing in. Also, a song that is in a good key to sing but a difficult key to play can often be changed to a more playable nearby key. For example, a song in the key of Ab might be changed to either the key of G or A, which are lower and upper neighbors of the key Ab.

## Method 2

1. This method may be more suitable for guitarists with a music theory background. Follow steps 1 and 2 of Method 1 to determine whether the key of the song is too low or high, and what key might be more suitable.

2. Determine the *interval of transposition* between the original key and the new key. Intervals can be measured by the number of whole steps (2 fret distances) and half steps (1 fret distances) between keys or chord roots. For example, the interval from the key of F to the key of A is two whole steps (also known as a major third). Therefore, to transpose chords from the key of F to the key of A raise each chord in the original key two whole steps.

# Capoing

The primary use of a capo is to make keys which are difficult for beginners (for example F, B $\flat$ , or E $\flat$ ) more easily playable. The easiest keys for beginners to play in are A, C, D, E, G, Am, Dm, and Em. Using a capo allows guitarists to play songs in more difficult keys while using chord fingerings common to easier keys.

A capo can also be used when a guitarist prefers the sound of chords using open strings compared to bar chords or other moveable chords or when a “special effect” is desired.

## How To Use A Capo

1. Determine the songs key (see step 1, transposition method 1).
2. Count the root of the key down in half steps (1 fret distances) to one of the easier keys. The number of half steps counted will indicate what fret to capo. For example, a song in the key of A $\flat$  might contain too many difficult chord fingerings for a beginner to play. Counting down from A $\flat$ , the first more playable key arrived at is the key of G, which is one half-step below the key of A $\flat$ . Therefore, capo fret one, which will raise chord fingerings in the key of G one half-step to become chord fingerings in the key of A $\flat$ .
3. To determine chord fingerings, count down from each chord root one half-step for the number of frets capoed. In the example above with the capo at fret one, an A $\flat$  chord would now be a G fingering, a D $\flat$  chord would now be a C fingering, and an E $\flat$ 7 chord would be a D7 fingering. By capoing fret one, the chords A $\flat$ , D $\flat$ , and E $\flat$ 7 may now be played with easier G, C, and D7 open chord fingerings.

Assume however that one of the chords in this example is Cm. Lowering the chords' root one half-step (because of the capo on fret one) results in a Bm chord. Since no open chord fingering is available for a Bm chord, this chord must be played as a barred Cm chord, ignoring the capo.

## Capoing Suggestions

The table below is in the form of **original key** | capoed key (capoed fret).

### Major Keys

A | G (II)  
B $\flat$  | A (I) or G (III)  
B/C $\flat$  | A (II) or G (IV)  
C | A (III)

C $\sharp$ /D $\flat$  | C (I)  
D | C (II)  
E $\flat$  | D (I) or C (III)  
E | D (II) or C (IV)

F | E (I) or D (III)  
F $\sharp$ /G $\flat$  | E (II) or D (IV)  
G | E (III) or D (V)  
A $\flat$  | G (I)

### Minor Keys

Am | Em (V)  
A $\sharp$ m/B $\flat$ m | Am (I) or Em (VI)  
Bm | Am (II)  
Cm | Am (III)

C $\sharp$ m | Am (IV)  
Dm | Am (V)  
D $\sharp$ m/E $\flat$ m | Dm (I) or Am (VI)  
Em | Dm (II)

Fm | Em (I) or Dm (III)  
F $\sharp$ m/G $\flat$ m | Em (II) or Dm (IV)  
Gm | Em (III) or Dm (V)  
G $\sharp$ m/A $\flat$ m | Em (IV)