

GENERAL NOTES ON MUSICIANSHIP

Three essential components of musical performance are Fluency, Accuracy, and Confidence.

Fluency

The word means "in a flowing manner". Music must flow - not stop and start, or be hesitant or jerky.

Accuracy

Fluency and accuracy both come from the same source - PRACTICE.

If you don't like practicing, ask yourself why you are learning.

Is there something else you would rather learn or do?

Practice

If you really are meant to be a performer - nobody will stop you.

If you are really meant to be a musician, it's not practice, it's something you love to do.

(The only comments my parents made about my practising were "Shut up and go to bed".)

- The recommended minimum practice time is 30 minutes a day - better a little every day than a lot once a week.
- Practice smart - practice things you find difficult - isolate the road blocks and analyse why they're hard.
- BUT play things that are easy for some of the time too, particularly the first few minutes to warm up.
- Learning does not occur smoothly. Sometimes you go for weeks without much improvement, and then you quite suddenly improve, only to get onto a Plateau (flat spot.) It's the plateaus that are the testing grounds - only the strong survive. But what's happening is that your brain is putting it all together (even as you sleep) and eventually it clicks into place, and up you go. Have patience - the hardest part is the first six months (if you practice - forever if you don't).

Beyond Fluency and Accuracy there is something else

That something else comes from inside you, and makes you unique. If you can put that into your music, it becomes unique too.

Confidence

Confidence comes from believing in yourself and gaining satisfaction from your achievements.

If you **really want to** succeed, you probably will. If you don't, you most certainly won't. The more you progress, the more your confidence grows. Nothing succeeds like success.

Convincing musicianship

What is Musicianship?

It's the ability to present a polished performance - at whatever level you may be. Apart from fluency, accuracy, and confidence, it's a lot about being organised. For example:

- Check your tuning (you should **never** have to tune up on stage).
- Have you got a guitar tuner? - if you are serious, you will need one.
- Know your words (if it's a song), your chords, and melody if you need to.
- **Know how you are going to start.**
- **Know how you are going to finish.**

Communication skills

Who are you communicating with?

- Your audience.
- Other musicians or singers you may be playing with.

Communicating With Your Audience

- Be friendly - act as if you like them.
- Be well organised - don't fiddle about with music sheets or tuning or anything else before you start.
- Just talk naturally about what you are going to do, and anything else about the song - or anything else if you like - but keep it short.
- At the end of the song, pause in silence for about 5 seconds, then relax and smile at the audience. The pause is important - it is a clear signal that you have finished. (People are less likely to clap if they are not sure whether you have finished or not.) As they applaud, acknowledge them by bowing, or if you are using a microphone, saying thank you is sufficient. Remember, it's not just about the song, it's about you too. If they identify with the song, and they warm to you, you will **connect with them emotionally - and that's the whole reason for performing..**

Communicating With Other Musicians

This is a big part of musicianship. I have many times played with musicians I have never played with or even met before. Many people think that's amazing. It's not. Playing with other musicians is all about understanding and communication. How do we play with people we don't even know?? Heres how:

- We all know most of the songs we are playing, and can transpose them into any key in our heads.
- If we don't know a song, there are usually **chord charts** (see below) to read from.
- We know how to improvise, so we can make up fills and solos as we go. The chords tell us what note choices we have.
- If you don't know the song and there are no charts, listen to the chord changes and learn it on the spot - or just keep quiet. Play "safe notes". (Notes that are least likely to be

completely wrong.). Damage control (getting out of trouble, or bluffing one's way through) is an important skill.

- Somebody counts in the song, so everybody starts together.
- Everyone listens to the drummer, or whoever else is establishing the rhythm.

We watch each other and communicate with our eyes and head movements. (If playing with a singer, just watching her lips is often enough know what she is doing.)

- At the end we often "wing it" but are always listening and **watching** so we **end together**.

Chord Charts

Chord Charts are the by far the most common form of written music used by non-classical musicians. A chord chart gives the structure of the song, and you can use the same ones for most instruments. From the chord chart, the musician can play bass, rhythm, improvise solos and fills **without ever having heard the song before**.

Here are some chord charts of some songs you will know. Use them for practice. Always count 4 to each bar unless it tells you otherwise.

Happy Birthday (a useful song to know, if musically somewhat less than inspiring. And actually, this one has 3 beats in the bar.)

$\frac{3}{4}$ //D /A7 /A7 /D /D /G /D A7 /D //

COUNT 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

The Rose (Count 1 2 3 4)

//C /G /F /C /C /G /F /C //Em /Am /
/F /G //C /G /F /C //

Unchained Melody (Note bars 1 to 8 are repeated)

//:C /Am /F /G //C /Am /Em /G ://C /G /Am /Am /F /G /C //F
G /F Em /F G /C /F /G /F Em /F G /C /

Hallelujah

//G Em /G Em /C D /G //G CD /Em C /D B7 /Em /C D /Em /C D
/Em D /

Singing and Playing

Find the right key for the song.

The version of the song that you know may not be in a key that suits your voice.

Your voice has a range - from your lowest comfortable note to your highest. You can't do much to change it.

Every song has a range too, from its lowest to highest notes. If you are to sing a song well, it must **fit into** your range. The usual way is to find the *highest note of the song*, and make

sure it is no higher than *your highest note*. Depending on how you want the song to sound, you may choose to go lower, but the lowest note must be within your range.

If you are going to sing and play, a capo is very useful - you can change key and keep using chord shapes that you know and like. Most acoustic guitar music has a resonant, sustaining sound which requires at least some open strings, and using a capo gives that sound.

Rhythm

Rhythm is the heartbeat of music - if the heartbeat is erratic or weak, the music will not sound alive.

When a band is backing a singer, or soloist, the musicians do certain fairly consistent things. The heart of any band is the rhythm section - that is, Bass and Drums.

In a bar of 4 beats there Strong beats 1 and 3, and weak beats 2 and 4. (They are also called ON beats and OFF beats.)

The bass drum and the bass player emphasise the ON beats.

The snare drum and the rhythm guitar emphasise the OFF beats.

When the OFF beats are emphasised, it's called SYNCOPATION. (Syncopation contrasts the predictable 1 & 3, with the less expected 2 & 4, producing tension and excitement in the listener's mind.)

When you are using guitar as the only backing instrument, try to make it sound like a band.

Play the low strings on the ON beats 1 & 3.

Play the high strings on the OFF beats 2 & 4 (and to create syncopation, make the highs short and sharp. (Percussive).

Fingerstyle Guitar

For acoustic guitar, fingerstyle is the most common way of playing, and the most versatile.

You can play solo or accompany any kind of song, with the ability to play chords, melody and bass lines, often at the same time, and still play strong rhythms.

Here are some basic fingerstyle exercises. Use any chord.

High Strings			
Fingers 1 2 3 2 1			
Bass Note (Thumb)			
	The Arpeggio	The Block Chord	The Spread Chord
		All fingers together	Roll off T 1 2 3

Remember: Keep the guitar at the right height for playing, with the top of the neck at about eye level. Use a strap.

Keep your arm still and let your fingers do the work.

Keep your right hand thumb outside your fingers.

Don't choke the neck with your left hand - let your thumb pivot.

SCALES - THE FOUNDATION OF MUSIC

Many people play at a basic level without knowing much about scales, but all competent musicians have a good knowledge of music theory, and scales are at the heart of that knowledge.

Most music teaching presents music theory as being all about how music is written down, that is, *music notation*. Reading music is a very useful skill, and in the classical world an essential one, but it has little to do with actual music theory. There are many very accomplished jazz musicians, who rely on a very good knowledge of theory, who cannot read music very well, or at all.

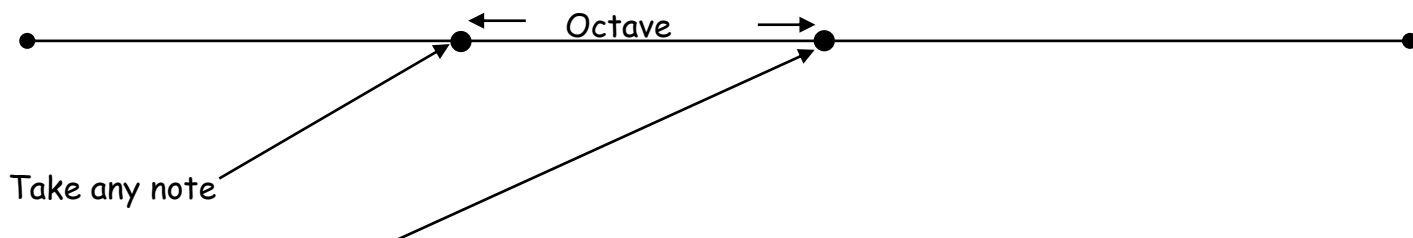
True music theory reveals how and why music works, and the relationships between scales, chords, melody, harmony and rhythm

The notes below explain these relationships. There is a lot of information in the next few pages, so **don't be freaked out**. You can't learn about music by just reading about it. All of it needs to be demonstrated so that you can hear what it means. I will spend a lot of time doing this and answering your questions in my workshop.

HOW MUSIC WORKS

All sounds have a waveform, with a **frequency** (vibration) which equates to **pitch** (how high or low the note is).

Music is based on sounds of different pitch, from low to high:



And another one exactly double its frequency. The result is a note which sounds melodically similar, but in a higher register.

The interval between these notes is called an **Octave**.

If we take an octave, and divide it into 12 equal parts, we have the **Chromatic Scale**.



The notes in the chromatic scale are separated by an intervals called **semitones**.

The chromatic scale contains all the notes available, but musically it is not very interesting.

Because all the notes are equally spaced, it gives no sense of "resolution" or key.

For music to sound meaningful, the notes need to be arranged in a pattern. This pattern is called a **scale**. The **Major Scale** is the most familiar scale used in western music.

Major Scale - all major scales follow this pattern, where some of the notes of the chromatic scale are omitted:

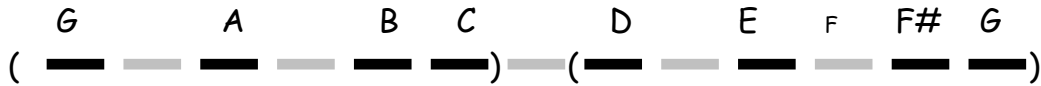
Pattern	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1 next octave
Notes (key of C)	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C

The scale of C major is the only scale that uses the plain note names, i.e. no sharps or flats.

We recognise scales by their **intervals** - that is the gaps between the notes. If we start the scale on the note G for example, we have to change F to F# to **preserve the same melodic pattern**. This is called the key signature (one sharp). All keys have their own unique number of sharps OR flats (they don't have both.)



The major scale has two halves of four notes, each with the same pattern of intervals.



Notice that the lower half of the G scale is the same as the upper half of the C scale.

This is a very important property of scales - they overlap. In doing this, they establish relationships.

This is how scales and chords have relationships with each other.

The C scale consists of the upper half of the F scale and lower half of G scale.

The 3 principal chords of C are C, F, and G.

The G scale consists of the upper half of the C scale and lower half of D scale.

The 3 principal chords of G are G, C, and D.

The D scale consists of the upper half of the G scale and lower half of A scale.

The 3 principal chords of D are D, G, and A.

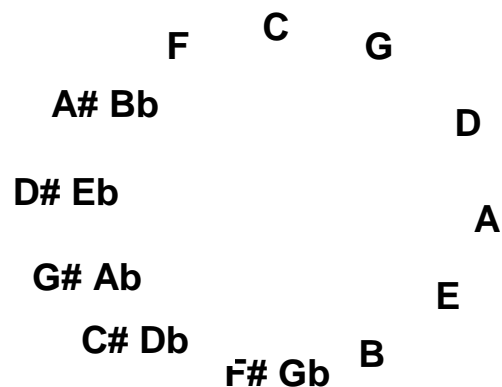
The A scale consists of the upper half of the D scale and lower half of E scale.

The 3 principal chords of A are A, D, and E.

The E scale consists of the upper half of the A scale and lower half of B scale.

The 3 principal chords of E are E, A, and B.

These relationships are often described as the "Circle of 5ths" (or 4ths if moving anticlockwise)



The next 5 pages show the common keys for basic guitar, including their scales, principal chords, and some simple ways of playing accompaniments.

Key of C: Scale and Three Principal Chords

The Scale has no sharps, no flats: C D E F G A B C

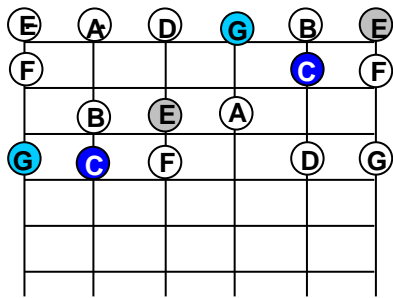
The notes of a major chord are 1,3,5, where 1 is the root note of the chord).

The principal chords are based on 1,4,5 – C F G7 (CEG, FAC, GBDF)

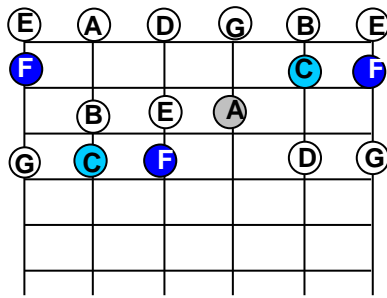
The 5 (Dominant) Chord is a seventh chord.

Notes are shown as 1 ● 3 ○ 5 ○ 7 ○ Other notes in scale ○

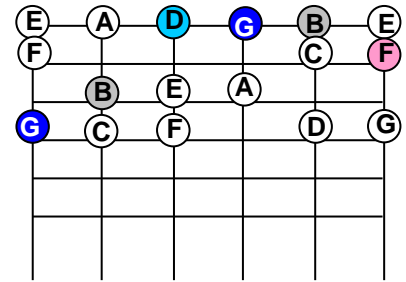
C CHORD



F CHORD

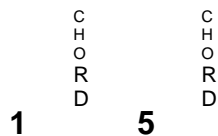


G7

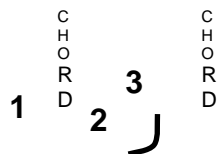


Chord Chart: Play for each exercise below: ||C |C |F |F |G7 |G7 |C |C ||

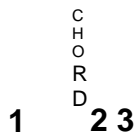
Exercise 1: Alternating Bass



Exercise 2: Hammer-on 3rd



Exercise 3: Linking Bass Notes:



Exercise 4: Adding the 6th:



Key of G: Scale and Three Principal Chords

The Scale has one sharp, F#: **G A B C D E F# G**

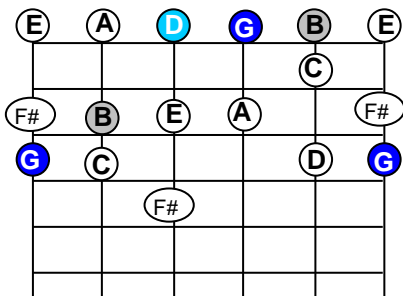
The notes of a major chord are 1,3,5, where 1 is the root note of the chord).

The principal chords are based on 1,4,5 – G C D7 (GBD, CEG, D F# A C)

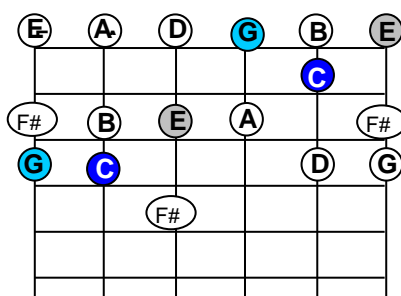
The 5 (Dominant) Chord is a seventh chord.

Notes in **chord** are shown as 1 ● 3 ○ 5 ○ 7 ○ Other notes in **scale** but not in chord ○

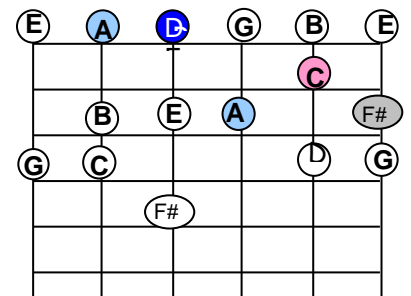
G CHORD



C CHORD



D7

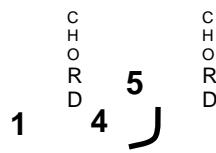
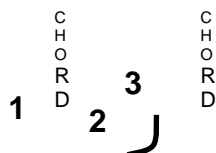


Chord Chart: Play for each exercise below: ||G |G |C |C |D7 |D7 |G |G ||

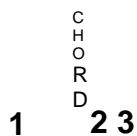
Exercise 1: Alternating Bass



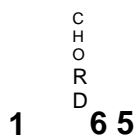
Exercise 2: Hammer-on 3rd (G & C) Hammer-on 5th (D7)



Exercise 3: Linking Bass Notes:



Exercise 4: Adding the 6th:



Key of D: Scale and Three Principal Chords

The Scale has two sharps, F# C#: **D B F# G A B C# D**

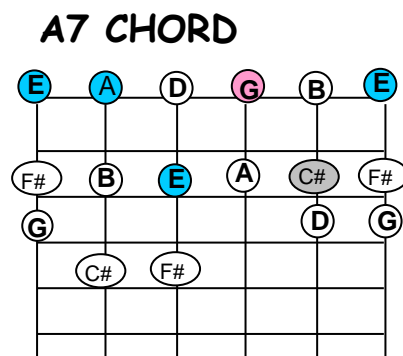
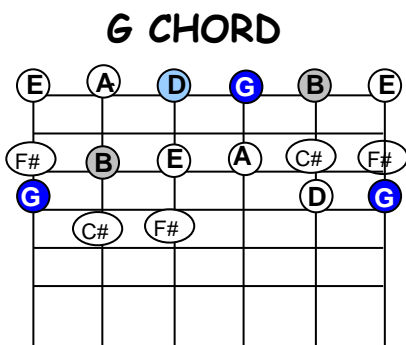
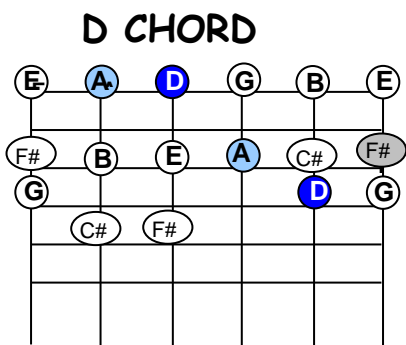
The notes of a major chord are 1,3,5, where 1 is the root note of the chord).

The principal chords are based on 1,4,5 – D G A7 (D F# A, G B D, A C# E G)

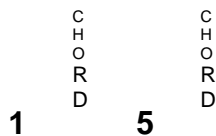
The 5 (Dominant) Chord is a seventh chord.

Notes in **chord** are shown as 1 ● 3 ○ 5 ● 7 ○ Other notes in **scale** but not in chord ○

Chord Chart: Play for each exercise below: ||D |D |G |G |A7 |A7 |D |D ||

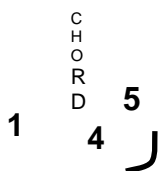


Exercise 1: Alternating Bass

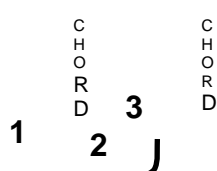


Exercise 2: Hammer-on 5th (D & A7)

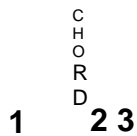
Hammer-on 3RD (G)



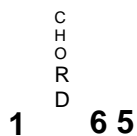
The 3rd is not easily available for hammer-ons in these chord positions



Exercise 3: Linking Bass Notes:



Exercise 4: Adding the 6th:



Key of A: Scale and Three Principal Chords

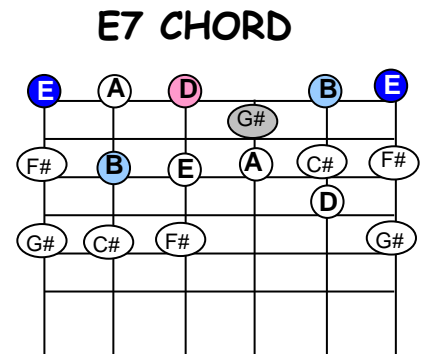
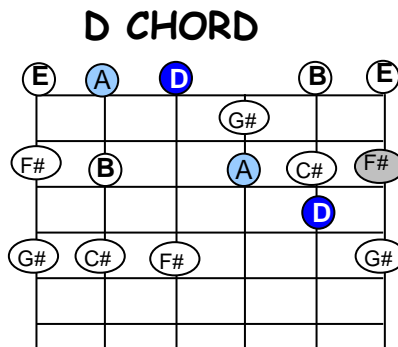
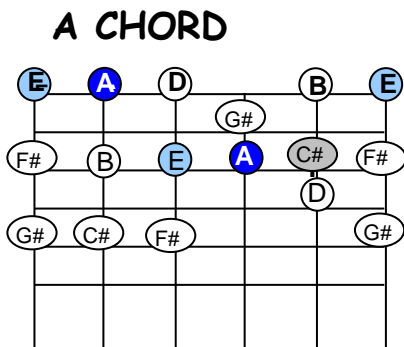
The Scale has three sharps, F# C# G#: **A B C# D E F# G# A ...**

The notes of a major chord are 1,3,5, where 1 is the root note of the chord).

The principal chords are based on 1,4,5 – A D E7 (A C# E, D F# A, E G# B D)

The 5 (Dominant) Chord is a seventh chord.

Notes in **chord** are shown as 1 ● 3 ○ 5 ○ 7 ○ Other notes in **scale** but not in chord ○

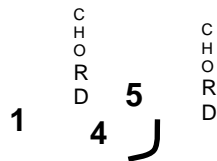


Chord Chart: Play for each exercise below: ||A |A |D |D |E7 |E7 |A |A ||

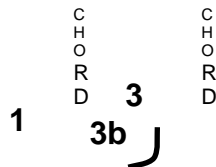
Exercise 1: Alternating Bass



Exercise 2: Hammer-on 5th (A & D)

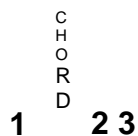


Exercise 2: Hammer-on 3rd (E)

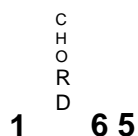


The hammer-on here for the E chord is from G (open) to G#. You could also hammer-on the 5th (B).

Exercise 3: Linking Bass Notes:



Exercise 4: Adding the 6th:



Key of E: Scale and Three Principal Chords

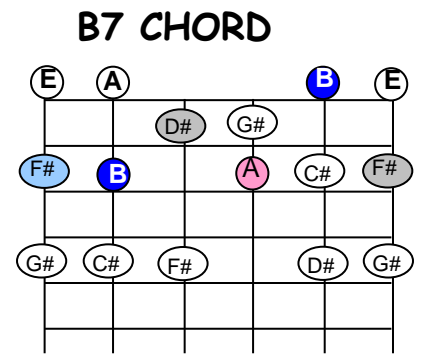
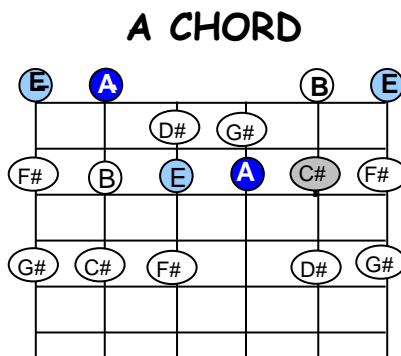
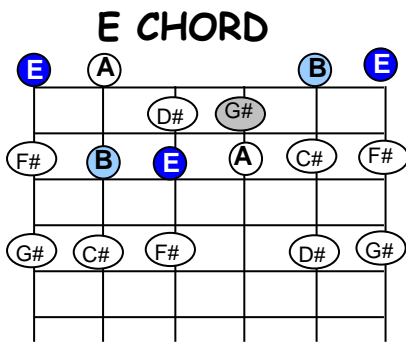
The Scale has four sharps, F# C# G# D#: **E F# G# A B C# D# E ...**

The notes of a major chord are 1,3,5. (1 is the root note of the chord).

The principal chords are based on 1,4,5 – **E, A, B** (E G# B, A C# E, B D# F#)

The 5 (Dominant) Chord is a seventh chord

Notes in **chord** are shown as 1 ● 3 ○ 5 ● 7 ○ Other notes in **scale** but not in chord ○



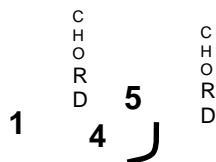
Chord Chart: Play for each exercise below: ||E |E |A |A |B7 |B7 |E |E ||

Exercise 1: Alternating Bass

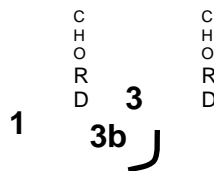


You will need to use your 2nd finger for both 1 & 5 on the B7 chord

Exercise 2: Hammer-on 5th (E & A)

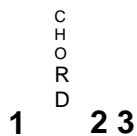


Exercise 2: Hammer-on 3rd (B7)

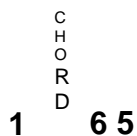


The hammer-on here for the B7 chord is from D (open) to D#. You could also hammer-on the 5th (F# on 6th string).

Exercise 3: Linking Bass Notes:



Exercise 4: Adding the 6th:



THE STRUCTURE OF SONGS: Chord Progression and melody.

The simplest songs have a melody based on only one scale, and the chords are the three principal chords. There are also three minor chords which work with a single scale melody. These are the minor chords based on the 2nd, 3rd, and 6th notes of the scale.

Another chord often used in folk & pop music is based on one tone lower than the key note. I have added it at the end of the line. This chord is based on a note that's not in the scale but because it's used a lot I have included it.

Examples

Key of C: Chords C Dm Em F G(7) Am Bb
Key of G: Chords G Am Bm C D(7) Em F
Key of D: Chords D Em F#m G A(7) Bm C
Key of A: Chords A Bm C#m D E(7) F#m G
Key of E: Chords E F#m G#m A B(7) C#m D

[The seventh chord is known as a dominant chord, and its effect is to encourage the music to resolve to the 1 chord. This will be explained and demonstrated.]

How the chords progress is up to the songwriter, there are no firm rules.

The most common chord change in songs is *up a fourth interval*, and occurs with both major and minor chords.

Examples: C to F, G to C, D to G, A to D, E to A, Dm to G, Am to Dm, E to Am.

The second most common change is up a second interval.

Examples: C to Dm, F to G, A to Bm, G to A.

More complex songs sometimes move through the circle of 4ths, as in:

C E7 A7 D7 G7 C.

There are some chord progressions which occur frequently. These are shown in the key of C.

C Am F G7

C Am Dm G7

C Em F G7

C Bb F G7

Typical Country Music:

C C F F C C G G C C F F G G C C

!2 Bar Blues:

C C C C F F C C G G C C OR C F C C F F C C G F C C

TRANSPOSITION CHART

C	D	E	F	G	A	B
D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#
E	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#
F	G	A	Bb	C	D	E
G	A	B	C	D	E	F#
A	B	C#	D	E	F#	G#