

Here is a quick lesson on how to play most of the popular chords on the guitar. I wrote this up quickly and I hope you will take the time to contact me if you need any clarifications, corrections or have some suggestions. All rights to the illustrations, text and concepts are reserved and remain the property of Joseph J Grimaldi you are not authorized to reproduce in whole or in part for commercial purposes without my written approval, however, the user may reproduce this document in its entirety only to augment free lessons.

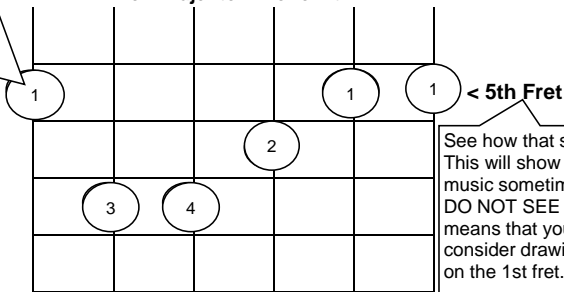
### Open E' Position Chords

Major chords in the 'Open E' position - use your first finger to bar across the entire fret board - OR, YOU CAN ONLY PRESS DOWN THE BOTTOM TWO OR THE TOP ONE STRING IF YOU DO NOT WANT THE STRONG HIGH NOTES OR LOW NOTES (or if your first finger is just too tired). Then put your other fingers (counting from the pointer finger to the pinky) as numbered. **A SPECIAL NOTE** - when you want to play an "E" chord in the 1st position, simply bring your first finger off of the fret board to the other side of the 'nut' leaving the "E" string open - all of the other rules remain the same.

In the 'Open E' position the fret you have your 1st finger on the top (fattest) string names the chord. So, if you have your first finger on the 5th fret of the top string - that is an "A" note and consequently an "A chord", lift your 2nd finger and it is an "A minor" (or: Ami) and so on for "A7th"(A7) and "Ami7" chords.

#### A (Major)

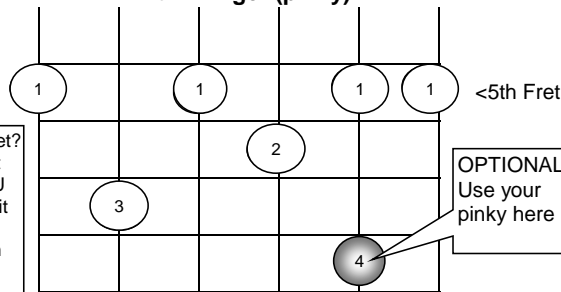
Just lift a finger to change this chord shape from major to minor or 7th



See how that says 5th Fret? This will show up in sheet music sometimes. IF YOU DO NOT SEE THIS then it means that you can consider drawing to begin on the 1st fret.

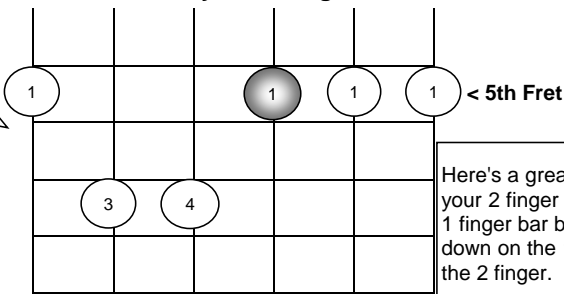
#### A7th (A7, A7)

To turn the major into 7th = Just Lift #4 finger (pinky)



#### A Minor (Ami, A<sup>mi</sup>)

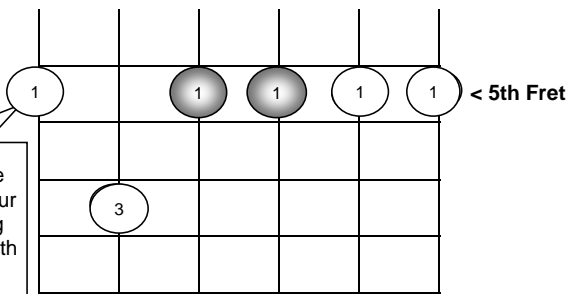
Just lift your #2 finger



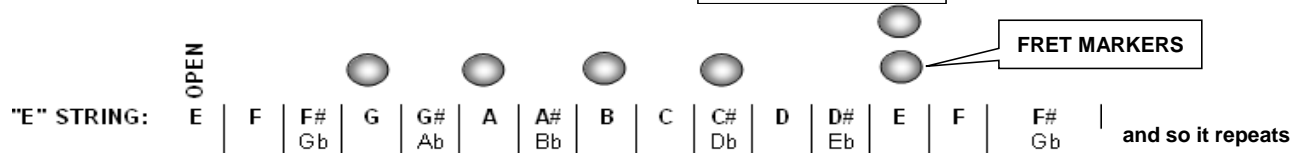
Here's a great hint: Use your 2 finger to help your 1 finger bar by pressing down on the 1 finger with the 2 finger.

#### A Minor 7th (Ami7, Ami7)

Just lift #2 & #4 fingers



To make 'Open E' position major chords into **Minor Chords**: Using the picture above lift finger number 2 and let your 1 finger "bar" down to cover that fifth fret on the third string - use your 2 finger to help your 1 finger bar by pressing down on the 1 finger with the 2 finger.



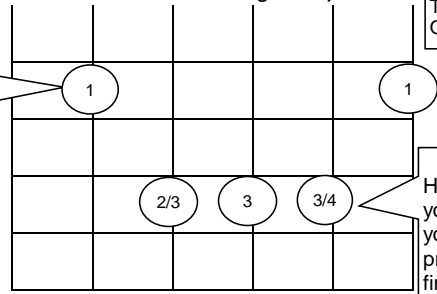
Above are the notes of the "E" String - each one separated by a 'fret'. Notice that not all guitars have markers (usually dots, diamonds or rectangles) as shown above, but most guitars have some marker system. These markers are your best way to quickly identify where certain notes/chords are played. (For example, if you know that the "A" note has a marker, it is much easier to remember that marker than to count in your head "E, F, F#, G, G#, A" every time you want to play an "A" chord.) Knowing the name of each marker's notes on the 6th and 5th strings (E, A) will quickly have you saving a lot of energy as you move to more convenient chord locations taking advantage of both 'Open E' and Open 'A' position chords.

# Open 'A' Position Chords

**Major chords in the Open 'A' position** - use your first finger to *bar* across the entire fret board - but start on the second string from the top (Or if you want you can do all six strings and use the top string to play a funky bass note. **A SPECIAL NOTE** - when you want to play an "A" chord in the Open 'A' position, simply bring your first finger off of the fret board to the other side of the nut leaving the "E" and "A" strings open all of the other rules remain the same.

## D (Major)

According to which strings you strum, you may bar your #3 finger or use your 2-3-4 fingers (to include the Hi E String's note).



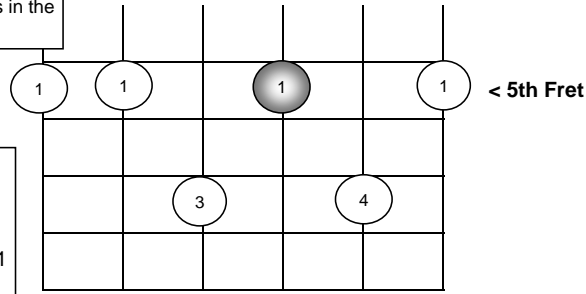
See how that says 5th Fret? The same rules apply as in the Open 'E' position.

Here's a great tip: Use your 2 finger to help your 3 finger bar by pressing down on the 1 finger with the 2 finger

In the Open 'A' Position the fret you have your 1st finger on the 'A'(#5) string names the chord. So, if you have your #1 finger on the 5th fret of the "A" string - that is a "D" note and consequently a "D chord".

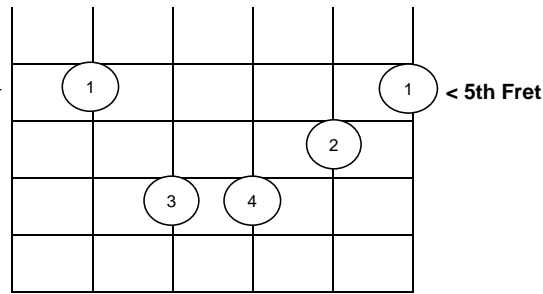
## D7th (D7, D<sup>7</sup>)

This position is a little tricky at first, with a little practice it is really easy



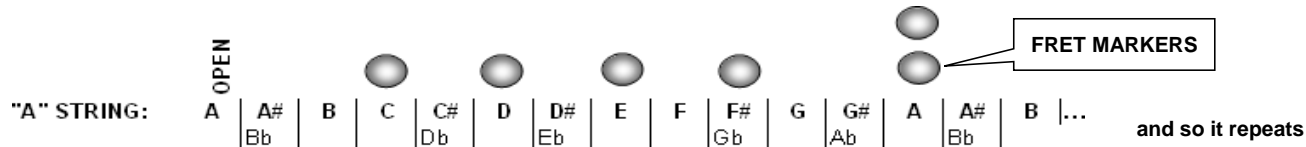
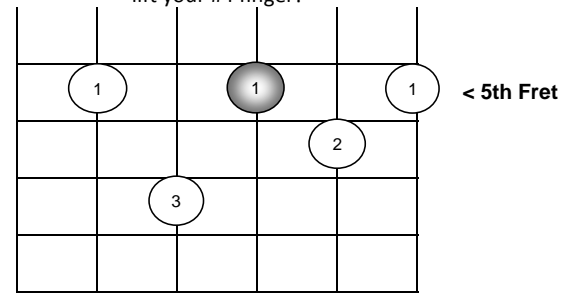
## D Minor (Dmi, D<sup>mi</sup>)

To make Open 'A' position Minor Chords: Notice that our fingering is the same as the Open 'E' Position Major chord, except each finger is one string down - remember this and you will be able to quickly get into the minor



## D Minor 7th (Dmi7, D<sup>mi7</sup>)

This is the same as the Minor position, just lift your #4 finger!



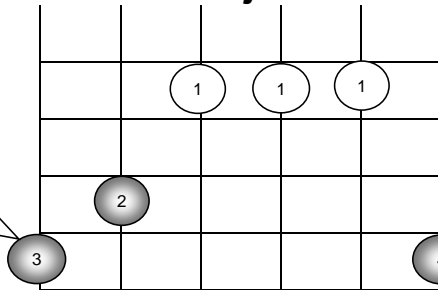
Above are the notes of the "A" String - each one separated by a 'fret'. Notice that not all guitars have markers (usually dots, diamonds or rectangles) as shown above, but most guitars have some marker system. These markers are your best way to quickly identify where certain notes/chords are played. (For example, if you know that the "A" note has a marker, it is much easier to remember that marker than to count in your head "A, A#, B, B#, C, C#, D" every time you want to play a "D" chord.) Knowing the name of each marker's notes on the 6th and 5th strings (E, A) will quickly have you saving a lot of energy as you move to more convenient chord locations taking advantage of both 'Open E' and Open 'A' position chords.

# Open 'G' Position Chords

When we use the Open 'G' Position (a relative of the more full Open 'A' position) we typically do not strum either the Hi 'E' (#1) string or the Low 'E' and 'A' strings (or we alternate according to whether we want to add high or low strings). The #5 and #6 string notes are darkened as they are optional and included just so you can have the full information. Of course, when you are actually playing a 'G' chord in the Open 'G' position, you would use the full complement of notes and all 6 strings. This position is typically used when you will be augmenting the chord with added bass or melody line notes.

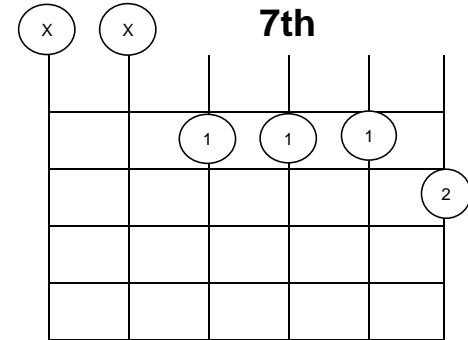
Even though you may use your #3 finger, it is on the fret that you would normally use your #4 finger - and, since this is also an 'E' string this is also the name note (root) for the chords in the 'G' position.

## Open 'G' Position Major



Your #4 finger falls on the root note (the note that names the chord - if it is an 'A' note it is an 'A' chord), however, you may choose not to play that note, the full 3 note chord also falls on the #2-3-4 strings, with the root also being the note played on the 'G' (#3) string.

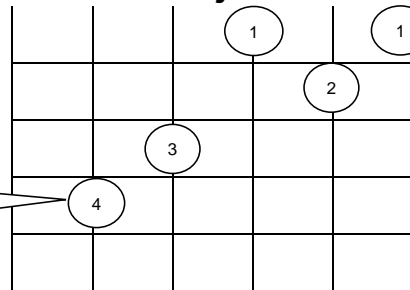
## Open 'G' Position 7th



# Open 'C' Position Chords

Open 'C' Position Chords are full sounding beautiful chords that are worth the #4 finger workout to master. We typically use this position for the '7th' and Major 7th' variations and not for the major nor minor position (not shown).

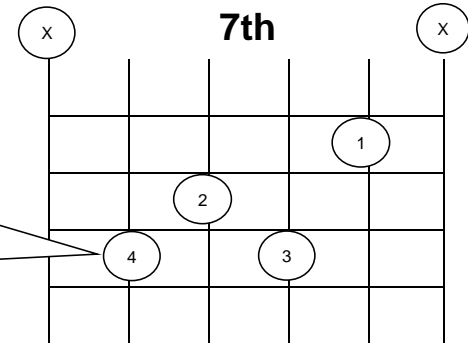
## Open C Position Major



This note is the Root (the note that names the chord, if it is an 'A' note it is an 'A' chord)

Your #1 finger can 'bar' as far up the fret board as you feel comfortable but is only responsible for the #1 and #3 strings

## Open C Position 7th

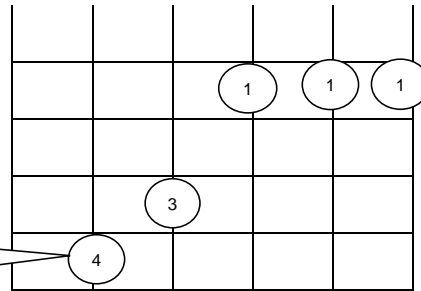


This note is the Root (the note that names the chord, if it is an 'C' note then this is an 'C7' chord)

# Major 7th Chords

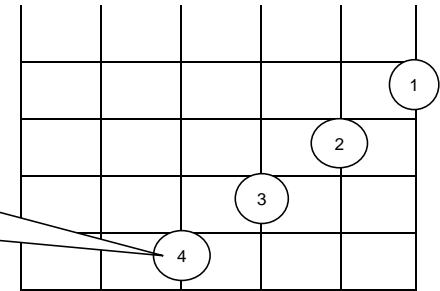
These beautiful chords speak for themselves. Simply going up or down 2 frets can create a great improvised jam. Let your 'Fun Hand' (strumming hand), pick a tempo and these chords will just make you sound good!

### Open 'C' Position MAJOR 7th



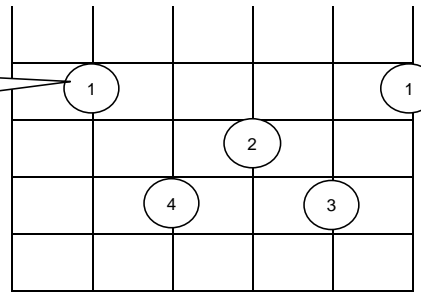
This note is the Root (the note that names the chord, if it is an 'A' note it is an 'A' chord)

### Open 'E' Position MAJOR 7th



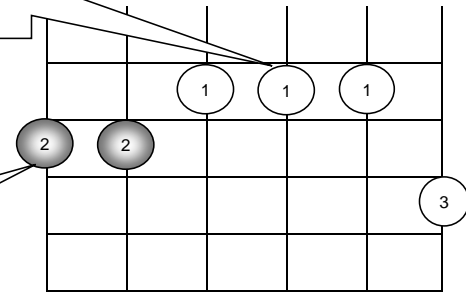
This note is the Root (the note that names the chord, if it is an 'A' note it is an 'A' chord)

### Open 'A' Position MAJOR 7th



This note is the Root (the note that names the chord, if it is an 'A' note it is an 'A' chord)

### Open 'G' Position MAJOR 7th



This note is the Root (the note that names the chord, if it is an 'A' note it is an 'A' chord)

Optional Alternative Method