
PDF
Complete Chord Freedom in 30 Days
UNLOCK THE SECRETS OF YOUR FRETBOARD
By Rob Ashe
GuitarZoom
Learn Any Skill In 90 Days Or Less, Or Your Money Back™

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Complete Chord Freedom in 30 Days

Rob Ashe

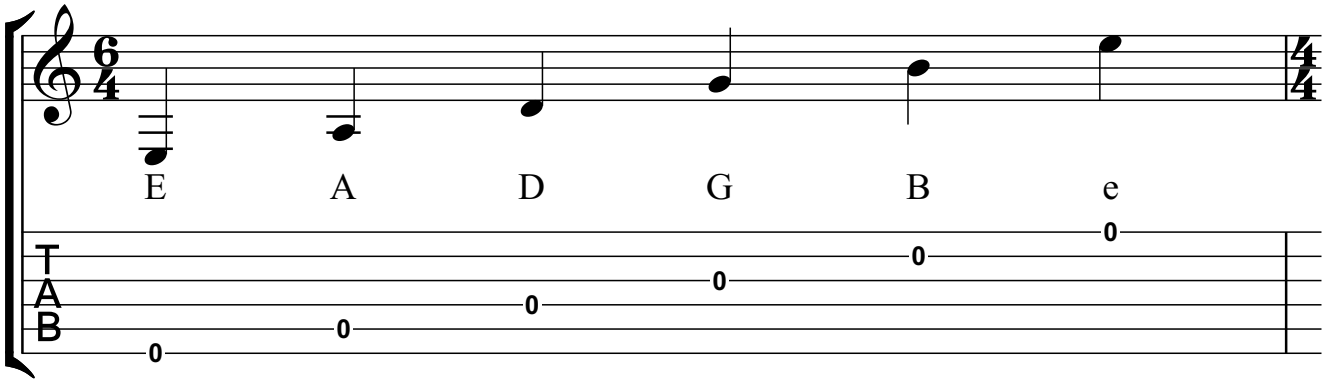
Guitar Tuning:

⑥ = E2 ③ = G3
⑤ = A2 ② = B3
④ = D3 ① = E4

Tuning

Ex.1

Moderate ♩ = 100 to 105

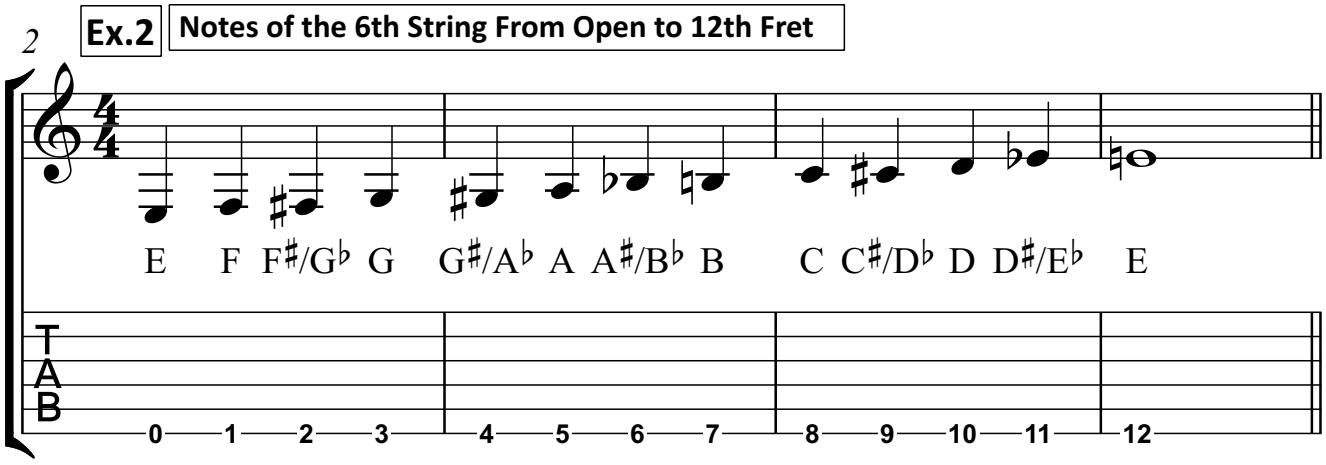


How The Fretboard Works

Standard guitar tuning, as described above, provides a lot of friendly positions for the hand to grab various chords that would otherwise be unavailable if the guitar was tuned differently.

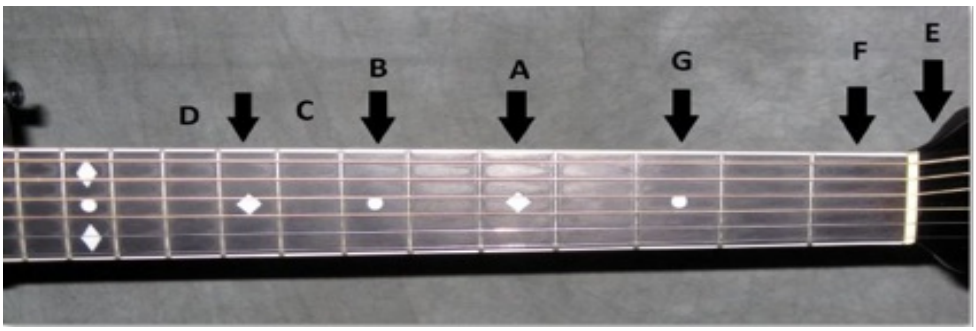
A guitar string is pretty much laid out in a linear fashion like a piano. Each guitar string starts at the lowest pitch it is tuned into, and then it progressively goes up a half step in pitch every fret until the entire sequence repeats itself every 12 frets (albeit at a higher pitch). Since the guitar has six stirngs, it's like having six pianos laid out across the fretboard.

Ex.2 **Notes of the 6th String From Open to 12th Fret**

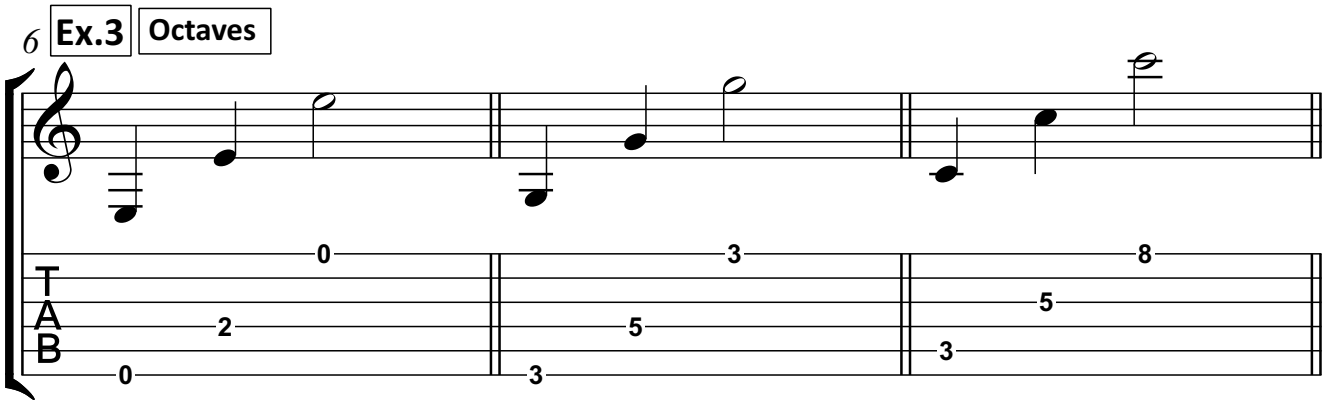


The sequence of 12 notes, from the open string to the note on the 11th fret, is called the **chromatic scale.** The note on the 12th fret of each string is the same as that of the open string's note. only sounding an octave higher.

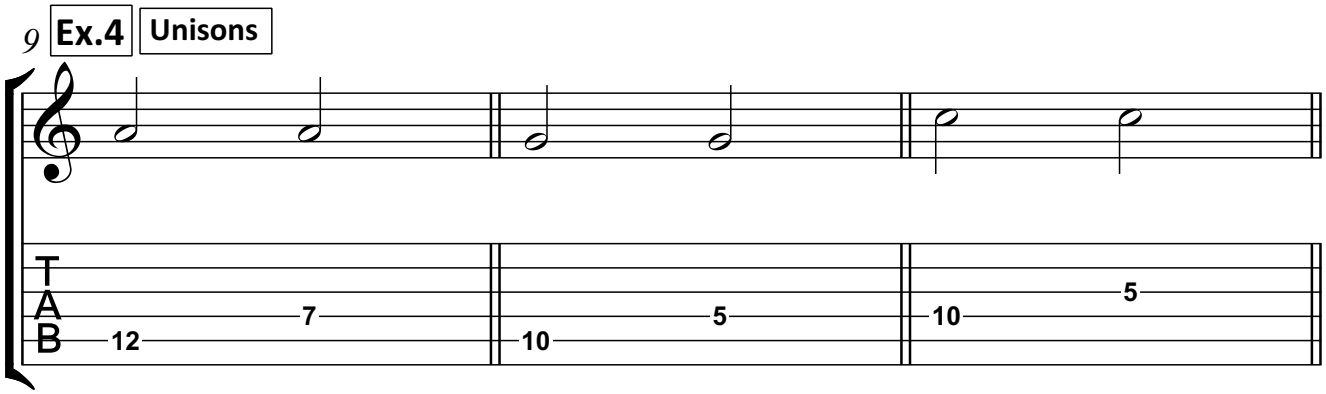
Fret markers (the dots on the fretboard) help a guitar player navigate the fretboar easier. We typically find dots at the 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th frets. The 12th fret typically has two or more dots representing the octave from the open string.



Since the fretboard is designed as such, there will be numerous patterns all over the fretboaard that can be repeated. For example, every guitar player can memorize one chord or scale shape and be able to transpose it up or down by simply moving the entire shape to a different location rather than learn new fingering. To successfully do this, one must be able to identify on the fretboard the root notes of a scale or a chord.

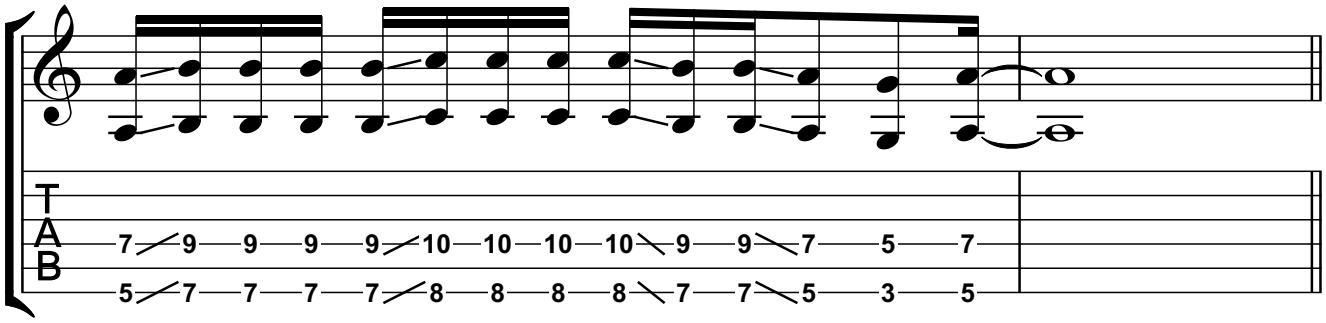


Knowing where octaves and unisons are on the fretboard also helps in navigating the fretboard to find root notes.

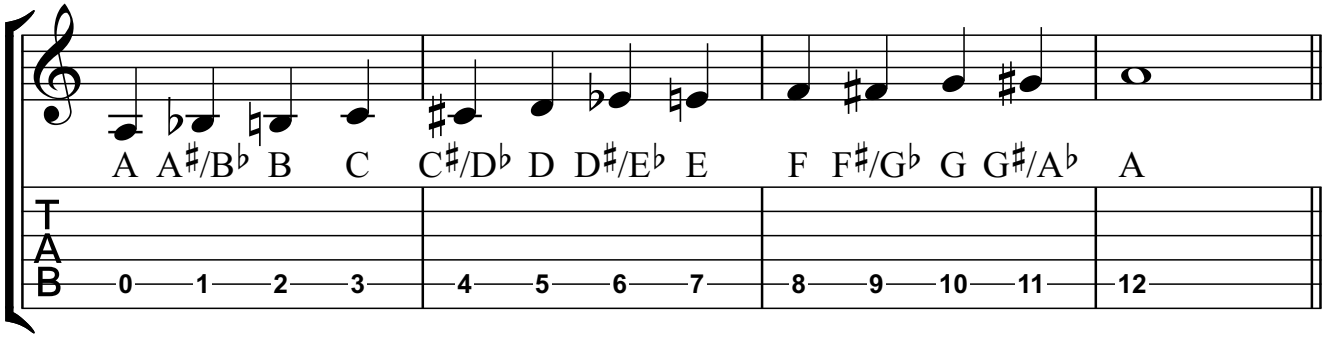


Other than for fretboard navigation by looking for root notes, octaves can also be used to create very interesting melody or lead lines.

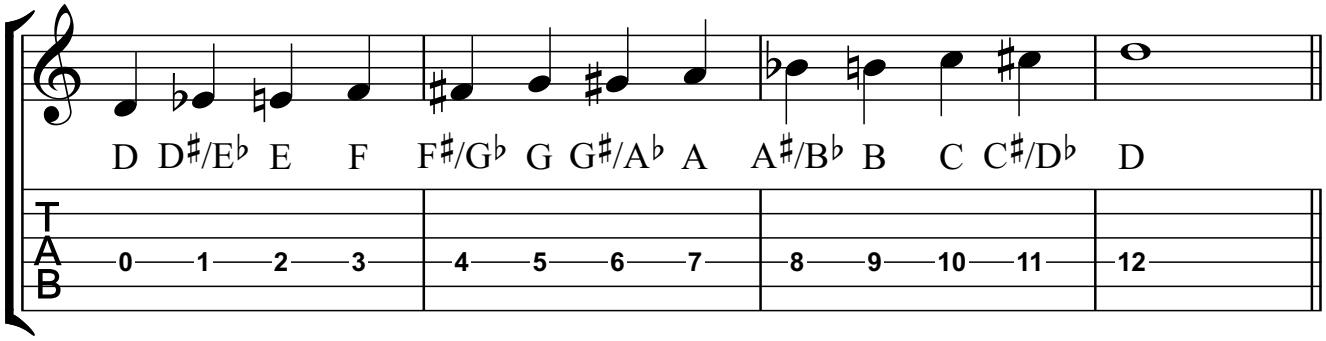
12 **Ex.5** **Octaves Used In a Melody/Lick**



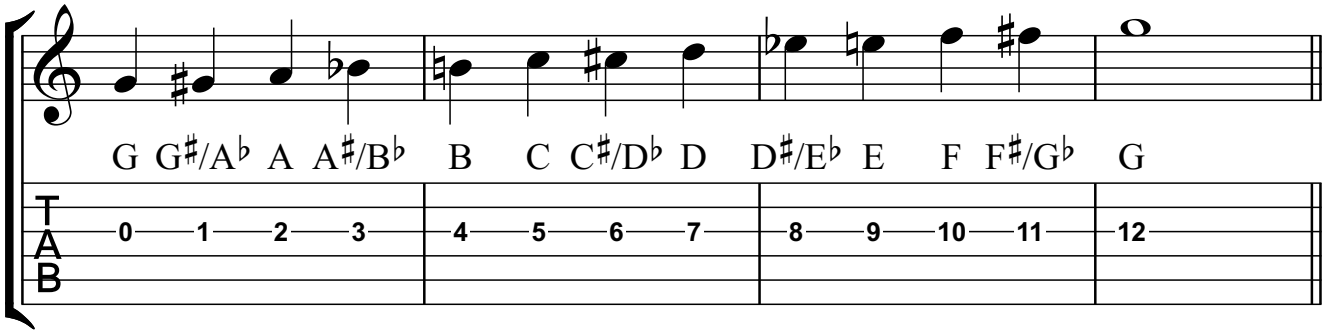
14 **Ex.6** **Notes of the 5th String From Open to 12th Fret**



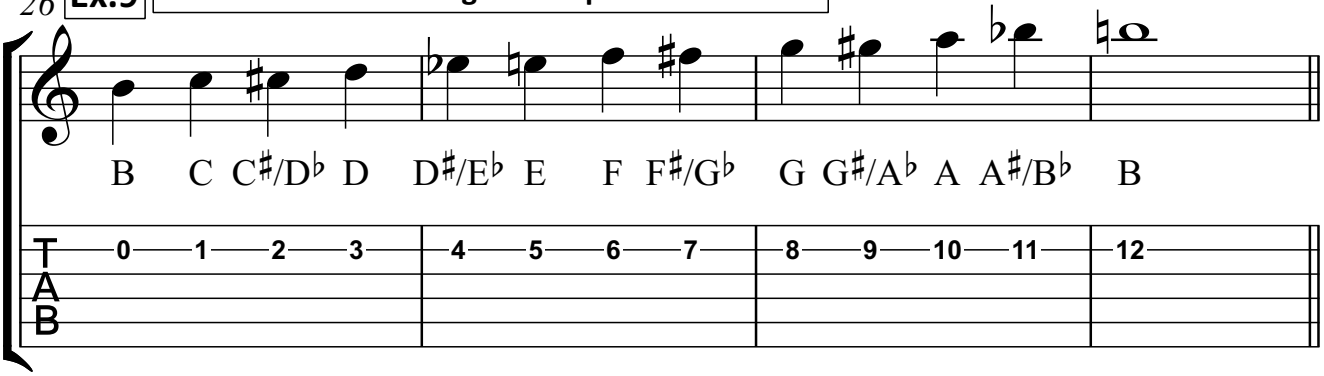
18 **Ex.7** **Notes of the 4th String From Open to 12th Fret**



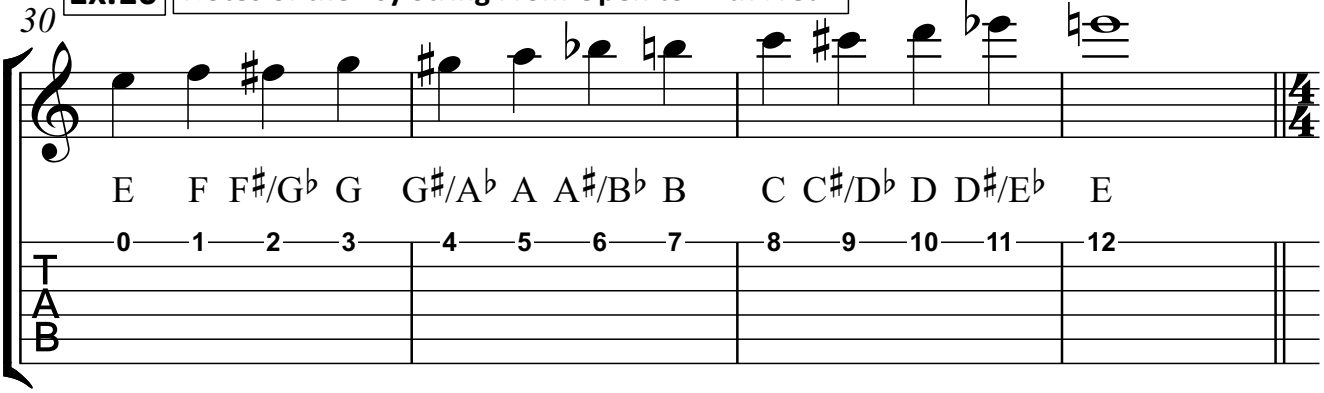
22 **Ex.8** **Notes of the 3rd String From Open to 12th Fret**



26 **Ex.9** **Notes of the 2nd String From Open to 12th Fret**



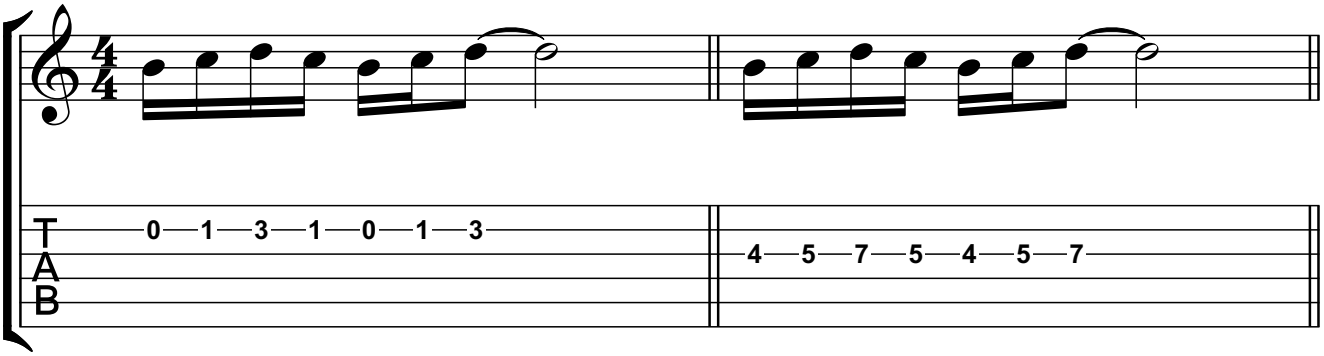
30 **Ex.10** **Notes of the 1sy String From Open to 12th Fret**



Guitar Strings, Same Notes on Different Strings, and Timbre

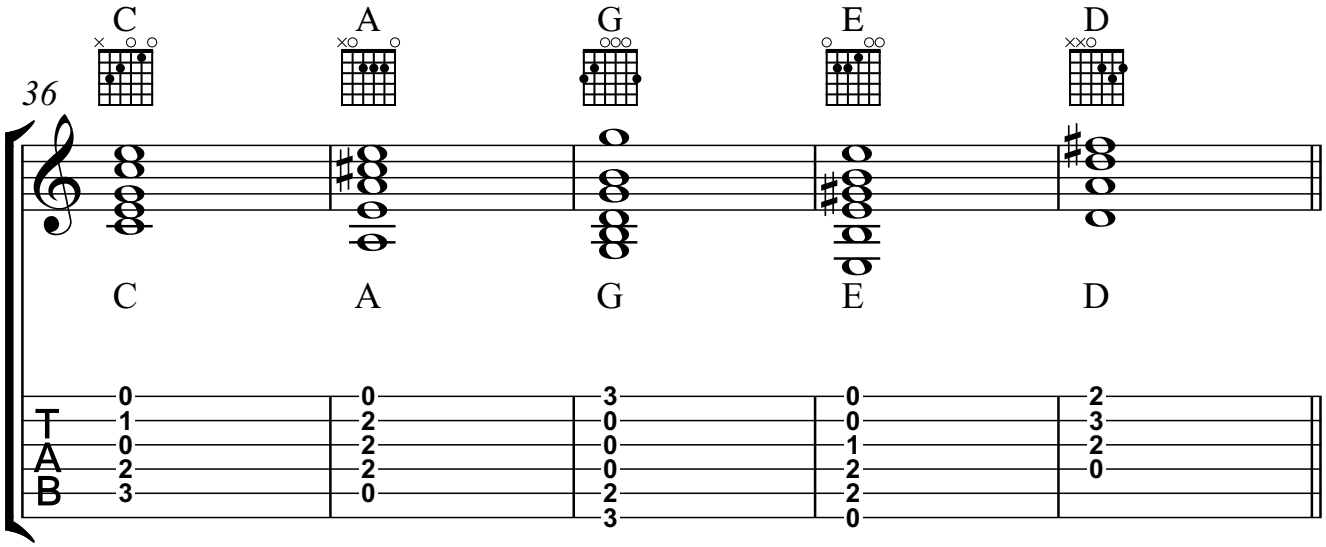
One of the remarkable things on the guitar is the ability to play the same note on different strings (as demonstrated when finding unisons). However, it does not mean that they will sound exactly the same. For example, if we play a passage on the 2nd string, we expect it to have a bright sound. If we play the same passage on the 3rd string. the pitches may be the same but the tone or timbre will be rounder/warmer because the string is thicker plus there is copper or bronze wire wrapped around the string.

34 **Ex.11** **Sample Lick on 2nd String** **Ex.12** **Sample Lick on 3rd String**



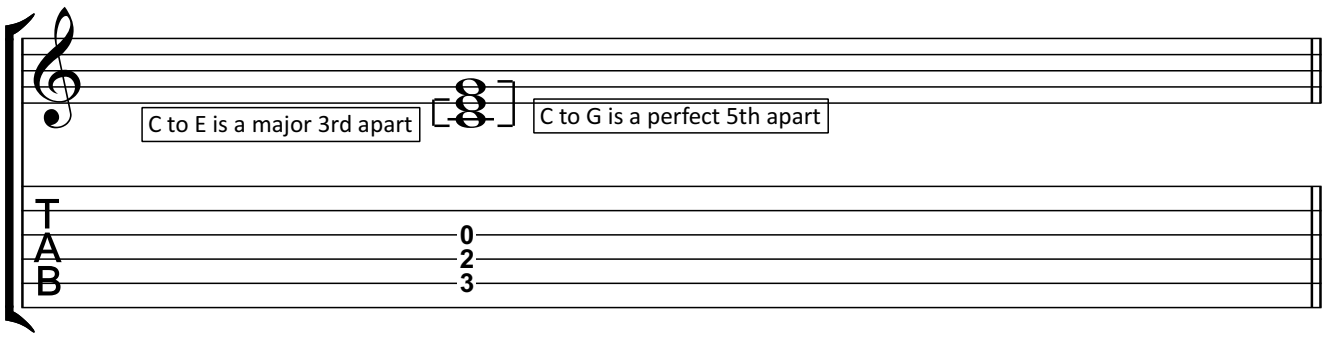
Chord Basics and Major Chords

Ex.13 **CAGED Chord Shapes (a.k.a. Cowboy or Church Chords)**

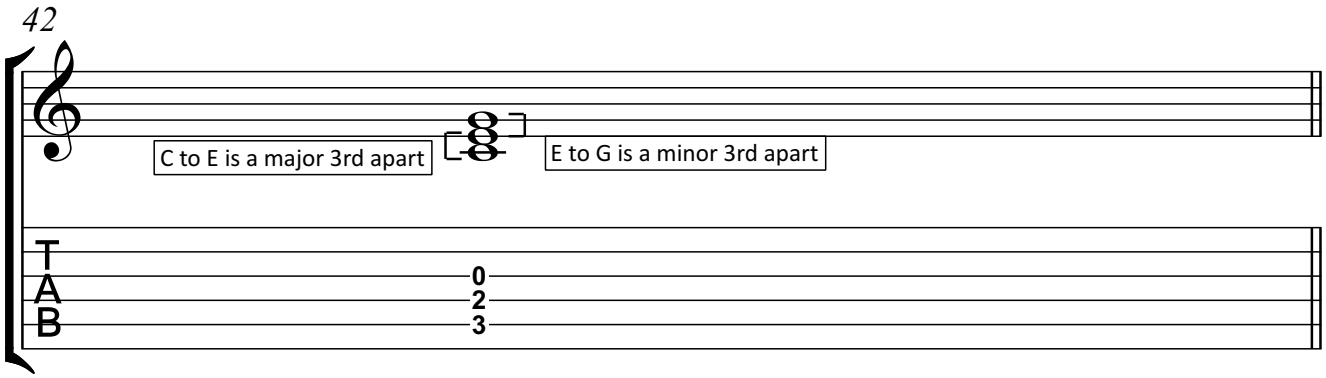


Ex.14 **Building Chords**

The basic chord consists of a triad, three notes that together form a harmony. A triad contains a root note, a note an interval of a 3rd away, and another note a 5th away.

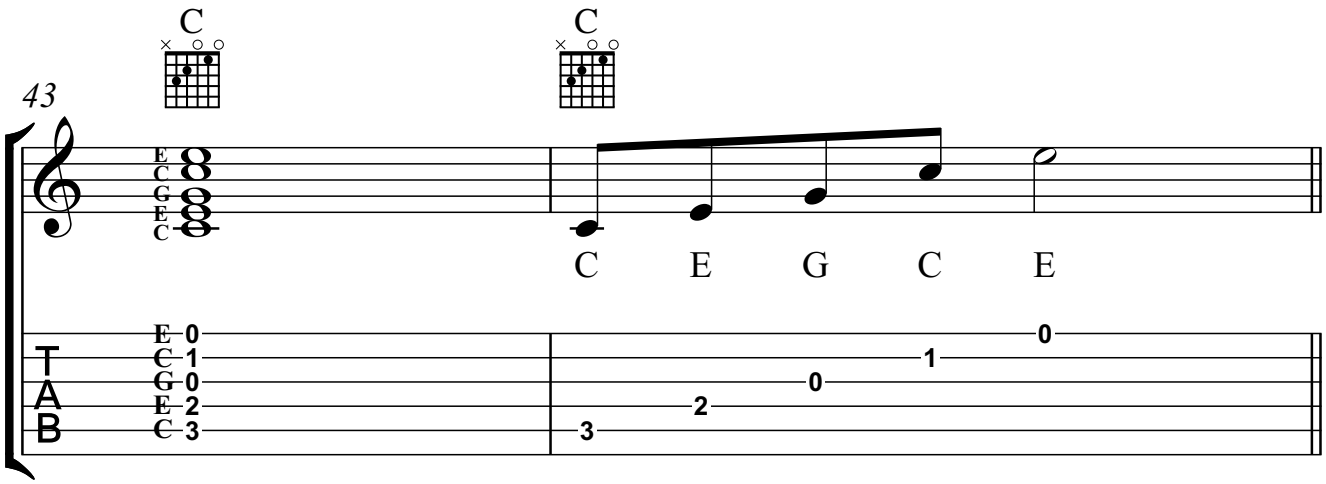


We can also think of a triad as a stack of 3rds. In this case, our C major chord consists of a major 3rd (C to E) stacked over a minor 3rd (E to G).



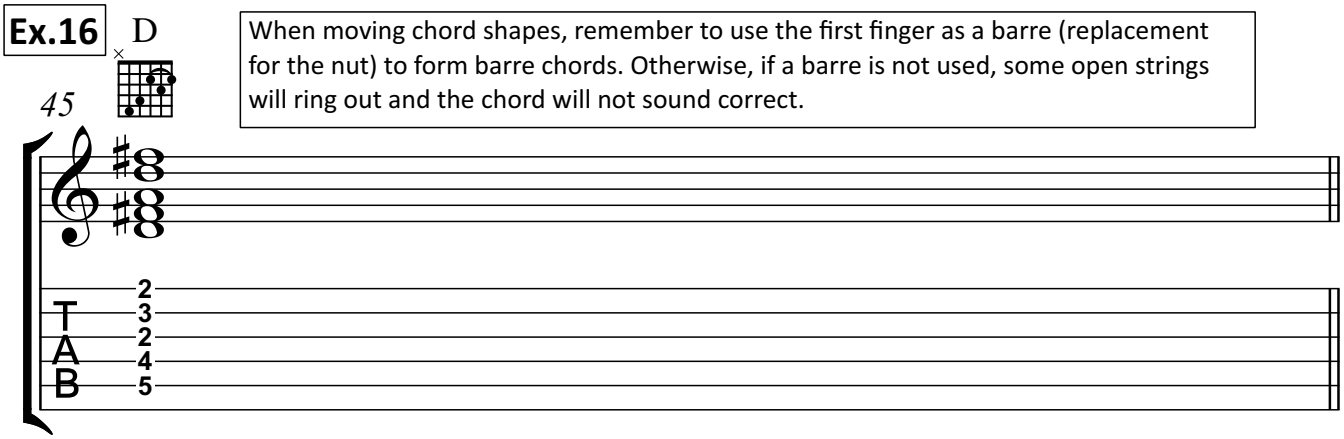
Ex.15 The "C" Chord Shape

Typical guitar chords consist only of the root, 3rd, and 5th repeating themselves in different strings. For example, the "cowboy" chord C has the C (root) and E (repeating themselves in a number of strings:



Any shape or pattern on the fretboard, as said earlier, can be moved around to transpose it. In the case of choirds, a "C" chord shape can be moved to turn it into a different chord. All that is needed is to find the root, and then form the chord shape. For example, we can build a D chord using a "C" chord shape:

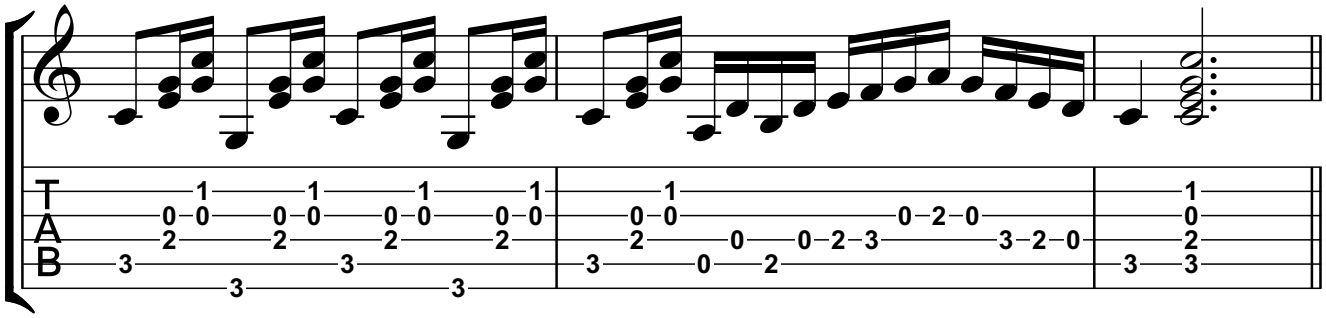
Ex.16



When moving chord shapes, remember to use the first finger as a barre (replacement for the nut) to form barre chords. Otherwise, if a barre is not used, some open strings will ring out and the chord will not sound correct.

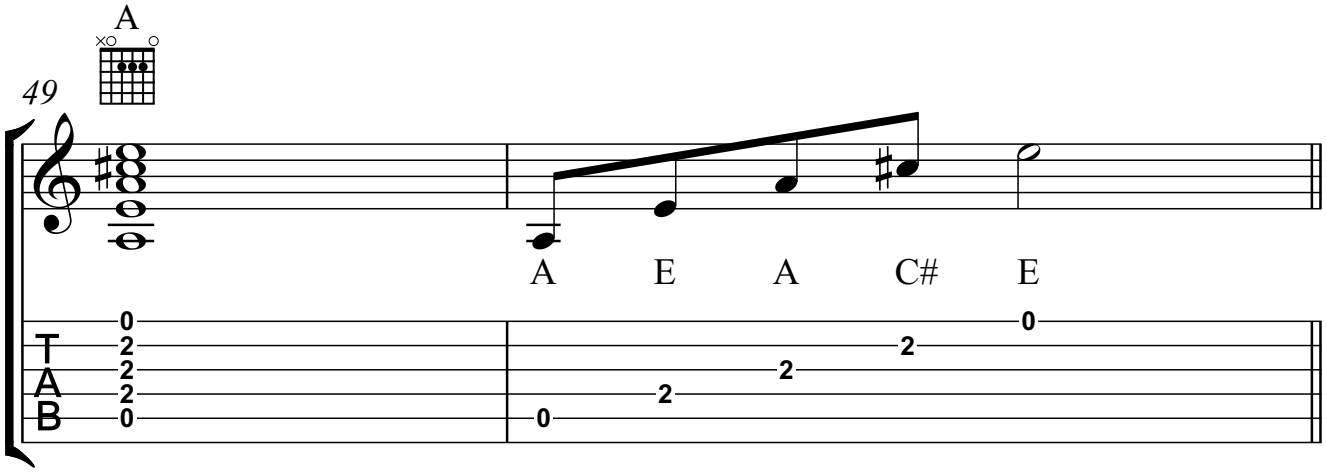
Chord shapes can also provide a framework for melodic playing or soloing (especially in styles such as Bluegrass) since the root, 3rd, and 5th are already there. All that is needed to do is to fill in the blanks to follow a particular scale.

Ex.17 Bluegrass Lick Using C Chord Shape



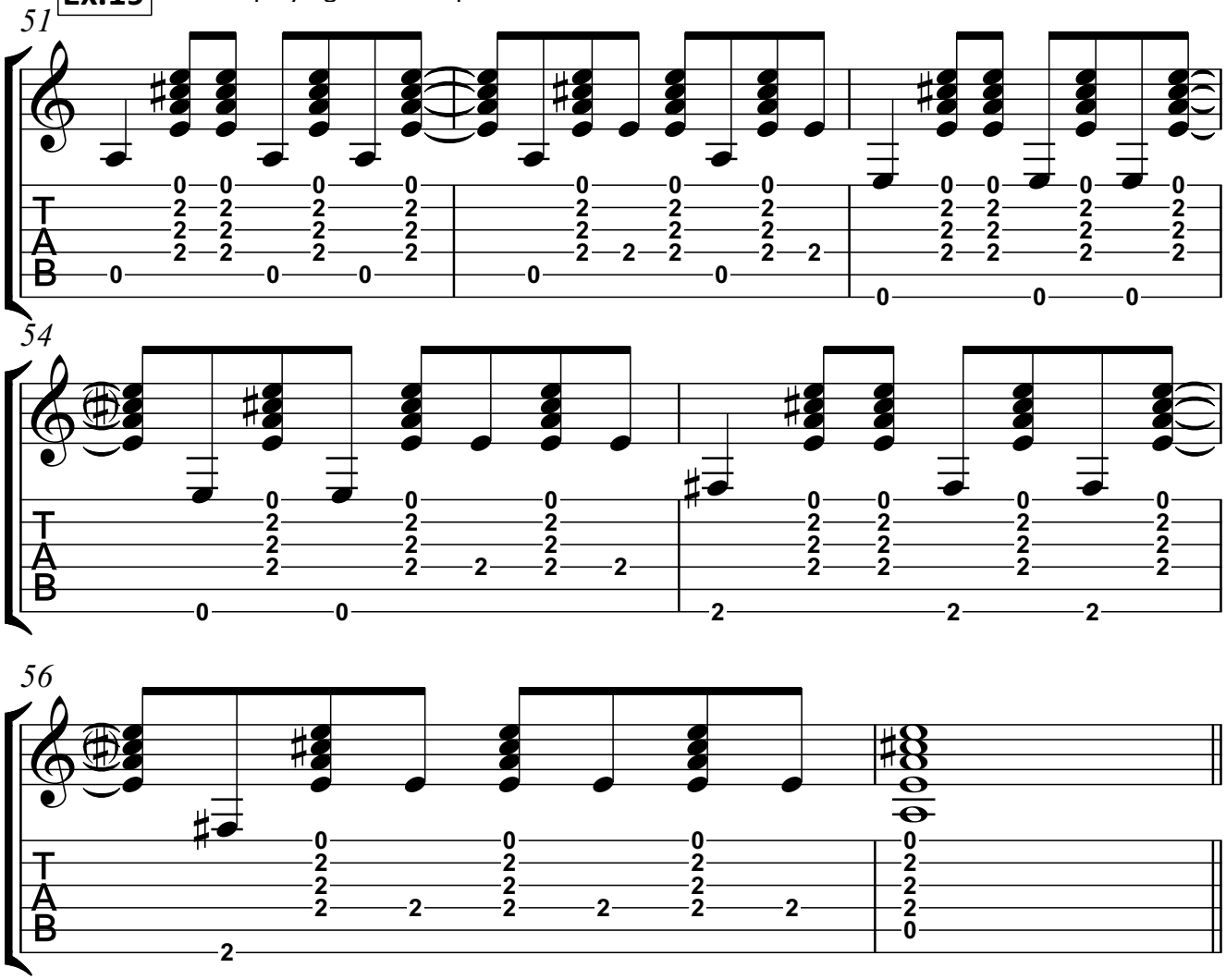
Ex.18 The "A" Chord Shape

When playing the A chord we often leave out the E on open 6th string. Although the E on the 6th string will belong to the A chord, we tend to leave it out or even mute it with the thumb of the fretting hand to keep it from ringing. This is because this low E can make the chord sound muddy.



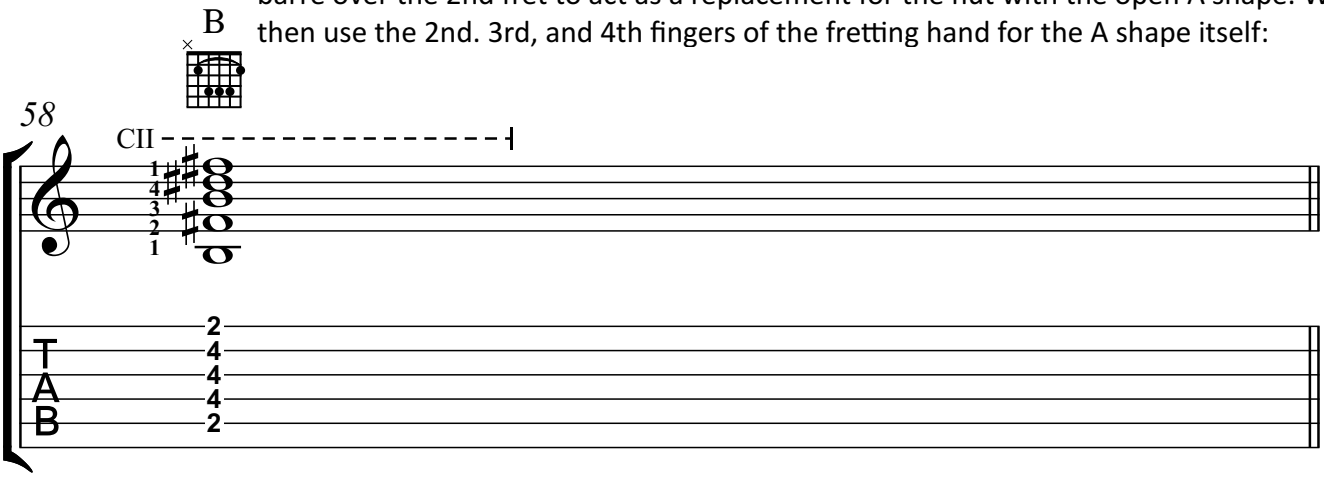
Ex.19

Bass notes on the 6th string can work well with an A chord if the situation calls for playing some simple bass lines:



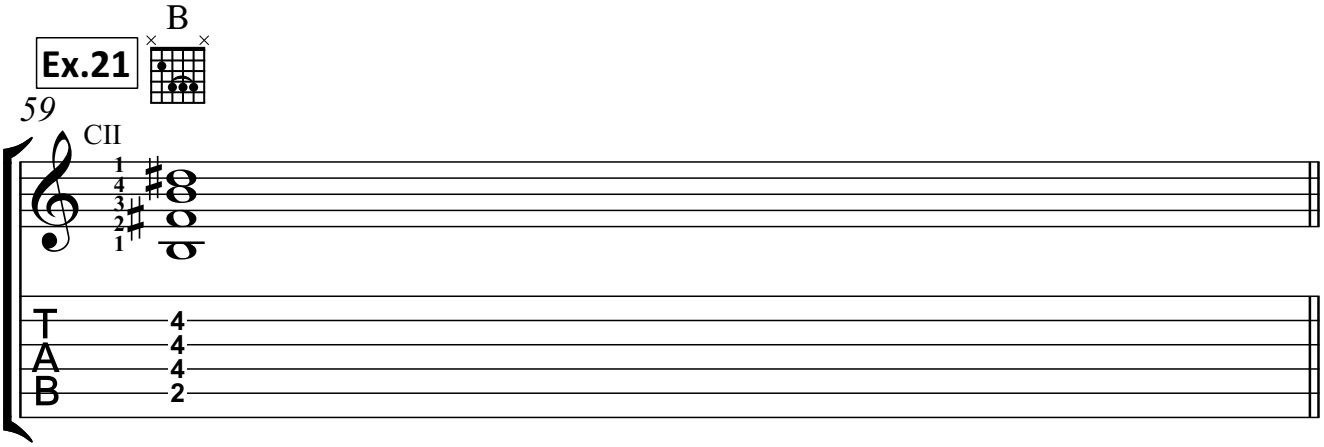
Ex.20

The A shape (like many other shapes and patterns for guitar) is movable. In this instance, we can move the A shape to play a B chord. We use our first finger to form a barre over the 2nd fret to act as a replacement for the nut with the open A shape. We then use the 2nd. 3rd, and 4th fingers of the fretting hand for the A shape itself:



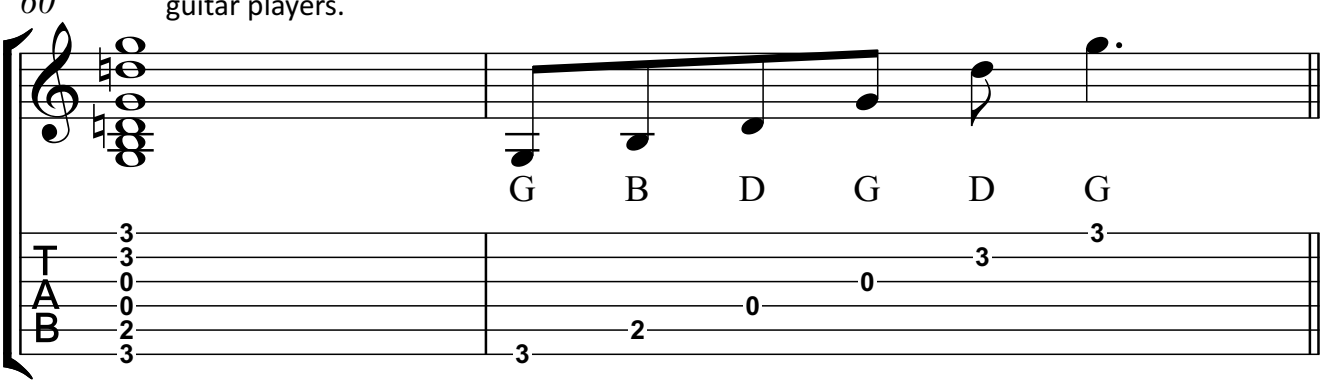
One alternate fingering for the barre chord that uses the A shape involves the entire 3rd finger barring over the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th strings to form the A shape and then the 1st string is muted. This alternate fingering is used when a darker, less chimy sound is desired . Some people also use this fingering when using the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th fingers prove to be too cumbersome over a single fret.

Ex.21

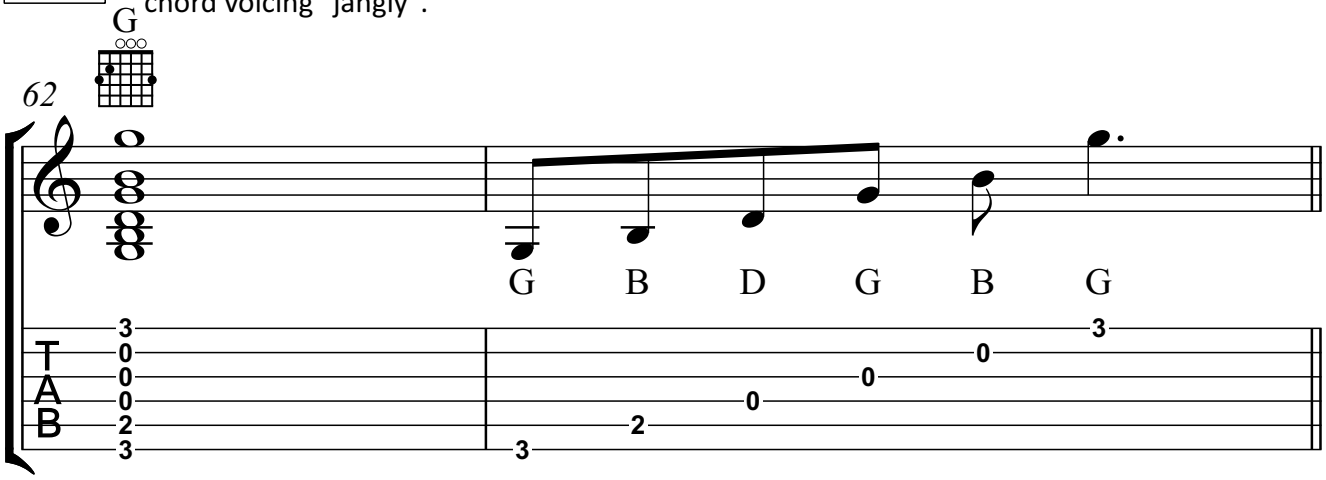


Ex.22 **The "G" Chord Shape**

This particular G chord voicing has an extra D played on the 2nd string. This makes the chord sound rather tight, making it a favored chord voicing by many guitar players.

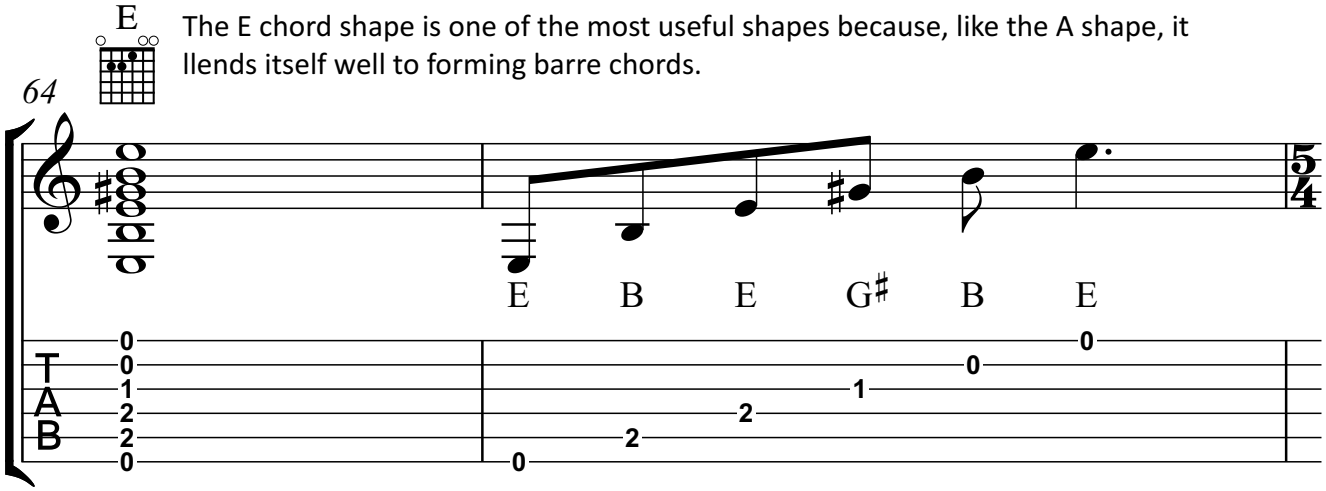


Ex.23 This is another chord voicing for G. The open B at the 2nd string makes this chord voicing "jangly".

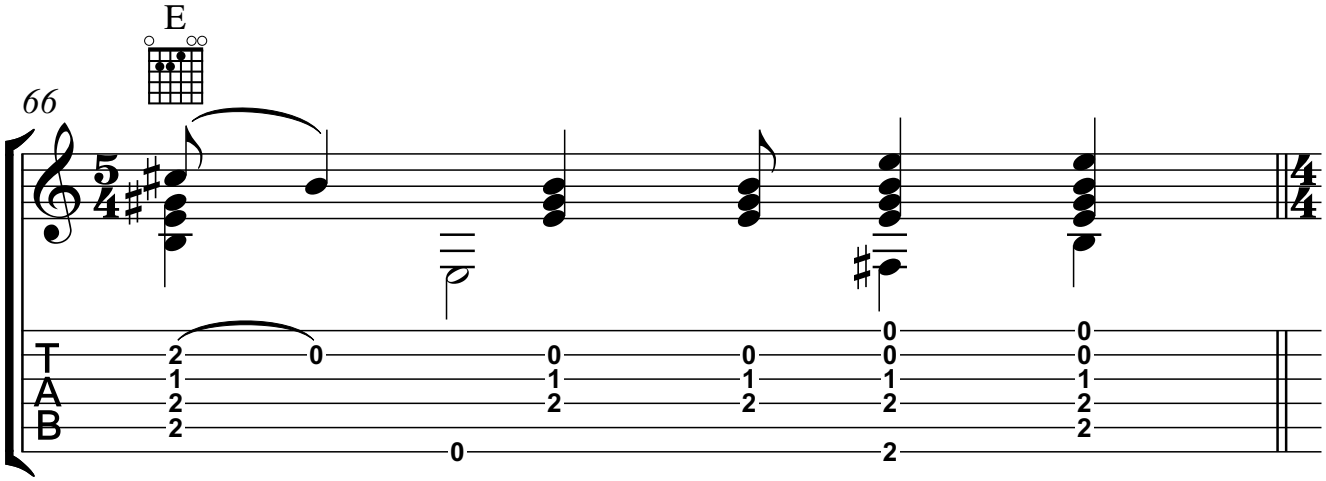


Ex.24 **The "E" Chord Shape**

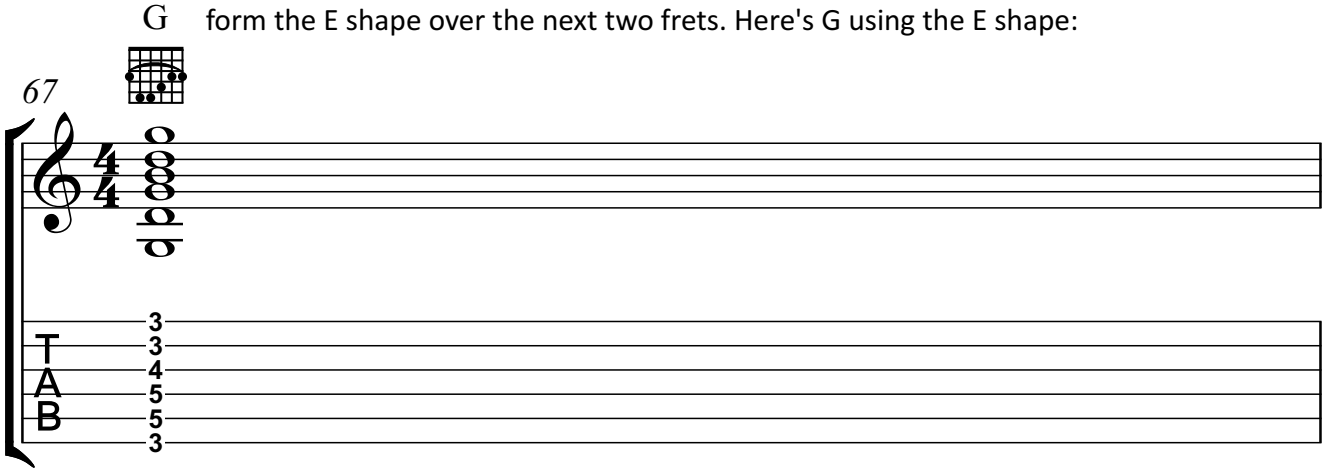
The E chord shape is one of the most useful shapes because, like the A shape, it llends itself well to forming barre chords.



Ex.25 Becaise of its compact shape plus easy access to open strings, the E chord shape lends well to playing lead/melody lines and licks.

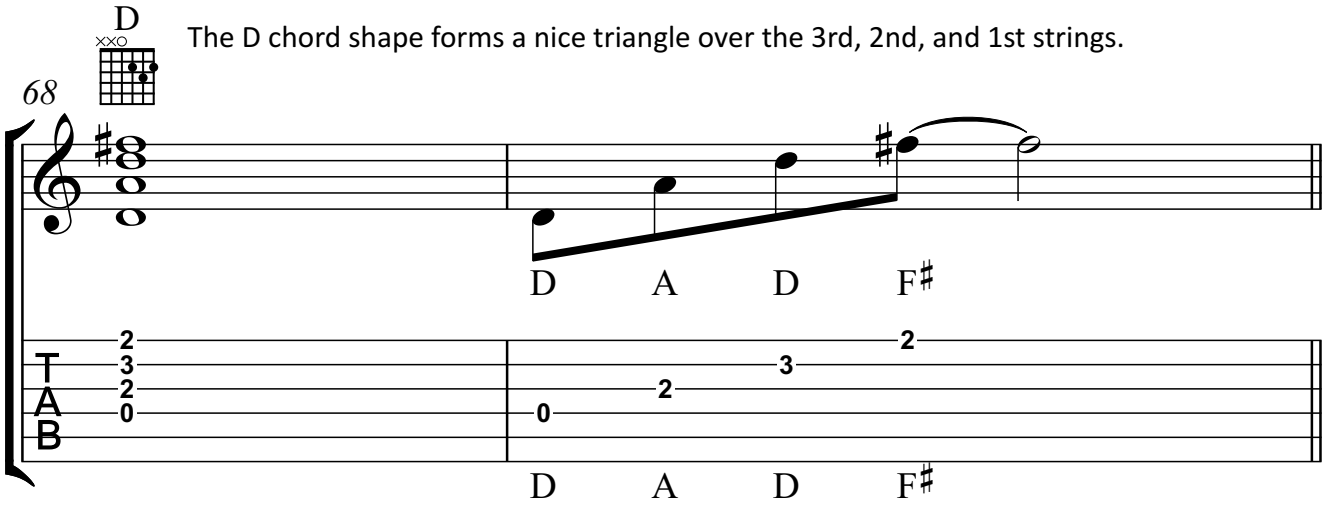


Ex.26 The great thing about the E shape is that it can be easily moved up and down the neck to form what's called 6th-string barre chords. All that one has to do is find the root on the 6th string, foirm a barre over that fret where the root is. and then form the E shape over the next two frets. Here's G using the E shape:

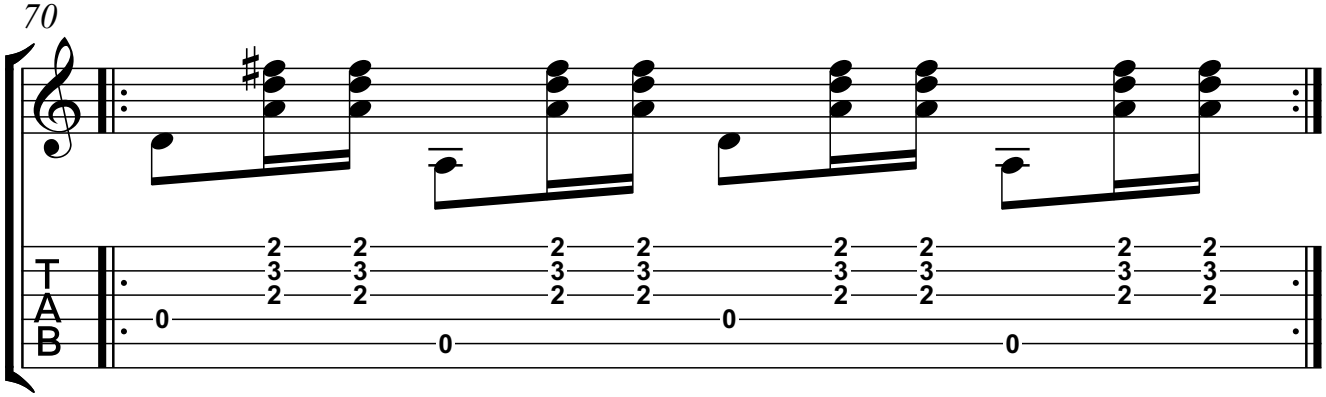


Ex.27 **The "D" Chord Shape**

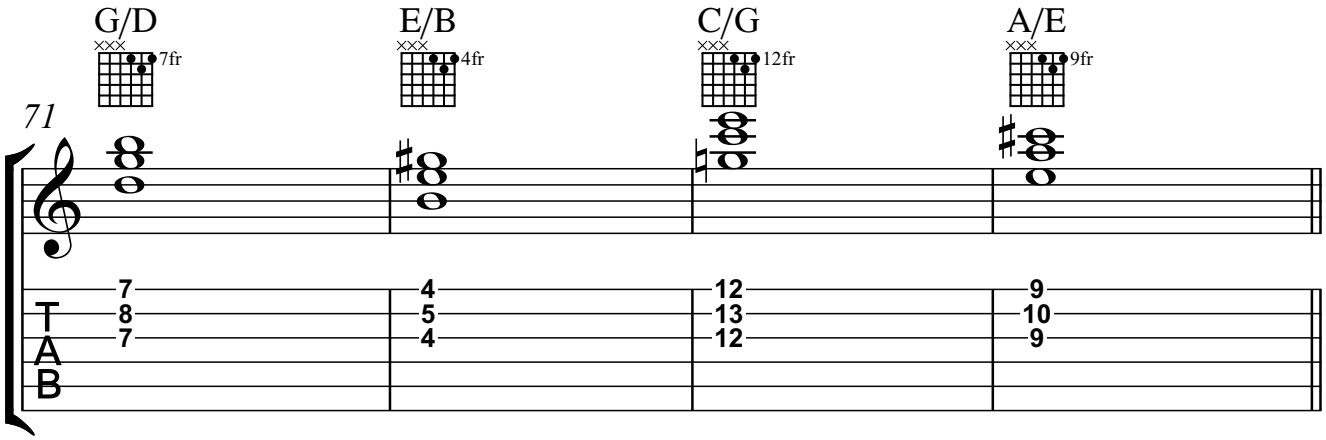
The D chord shape forms a nice triangle over the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st strings.



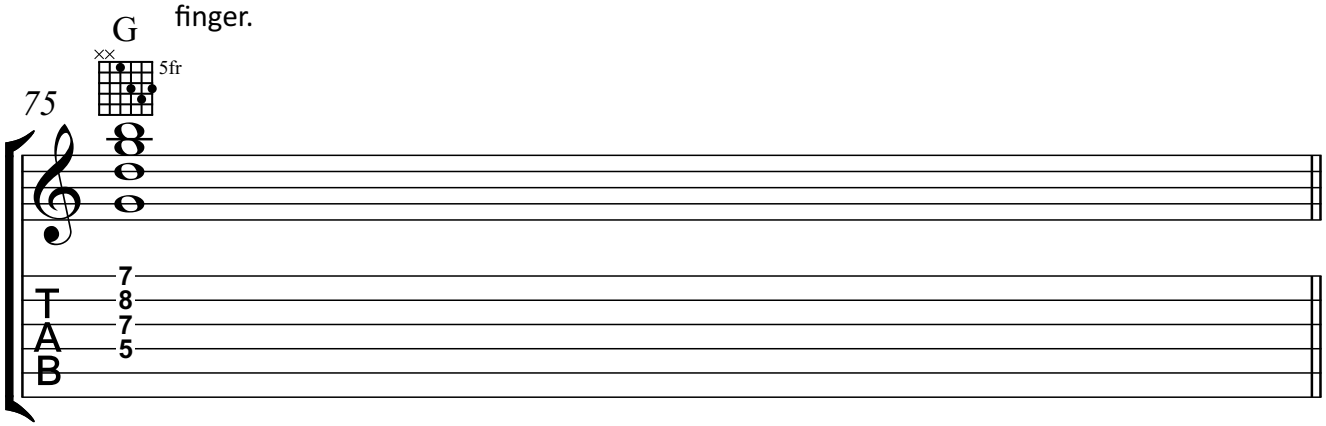
Ex.28 The D chord can be played with a simple bass line using the open 4th and 5th strings.



Ex.29 The D chord's triangle shape can be easily moved up the fretboard, leading to chord voicings on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd strings that sound really interesting. In this example, we have a G that has the voicing of a D chord shape. The trick to using this shape is to remember that the root note is at the 2nd string (3rd finger).

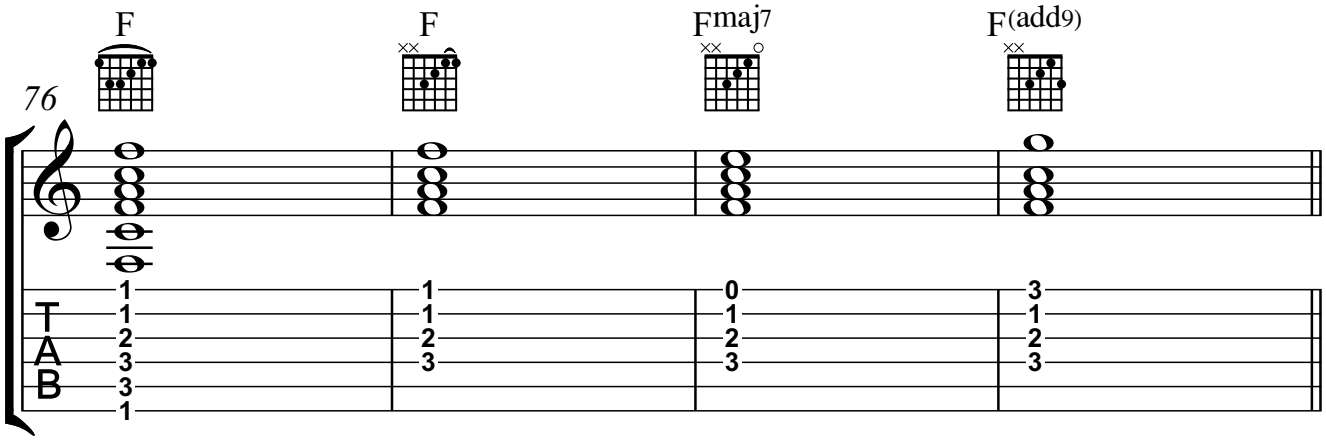


Ex.30 Another chord voicing that uses the D shape has the root on the 4th string. This kind of chord voicing takes a bit more practice because of that stretch between the 1st and 2nd finger.



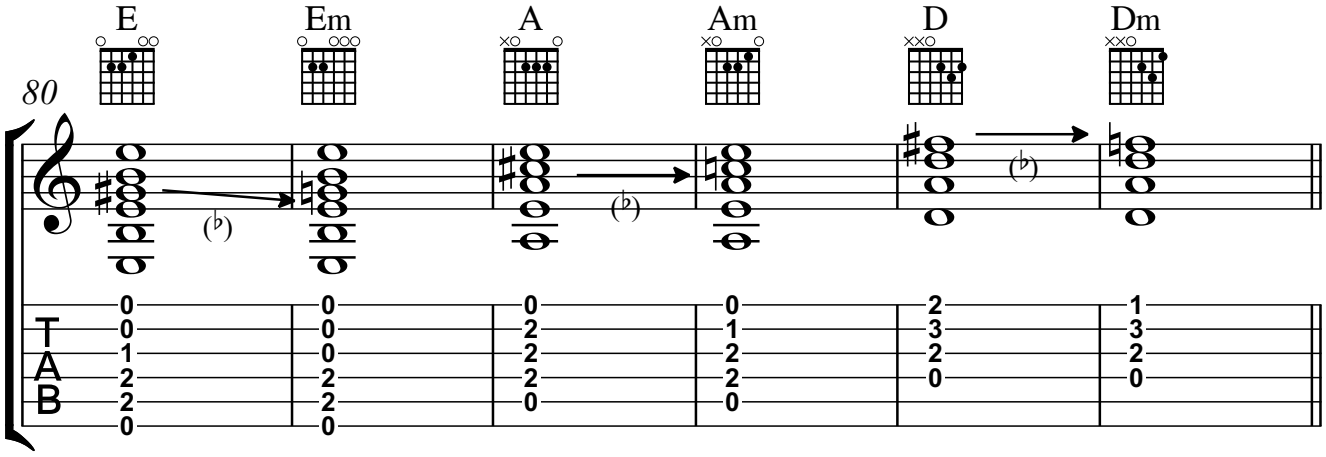
Ex.31 **Using Chord Fragments**

Look at this F chord. While this is traditionally played as a barre chord, we can also make use of the fragment at the 1st four strings that looks like a modified C shape and play it. You can further modify the chord into an Fmaj7 or an F(add9).

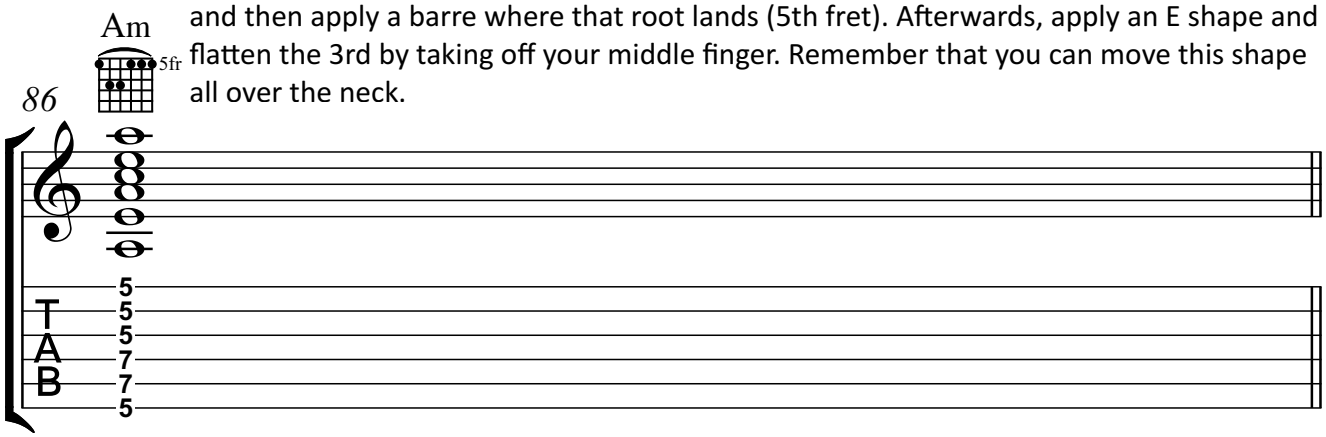


Minor Chords

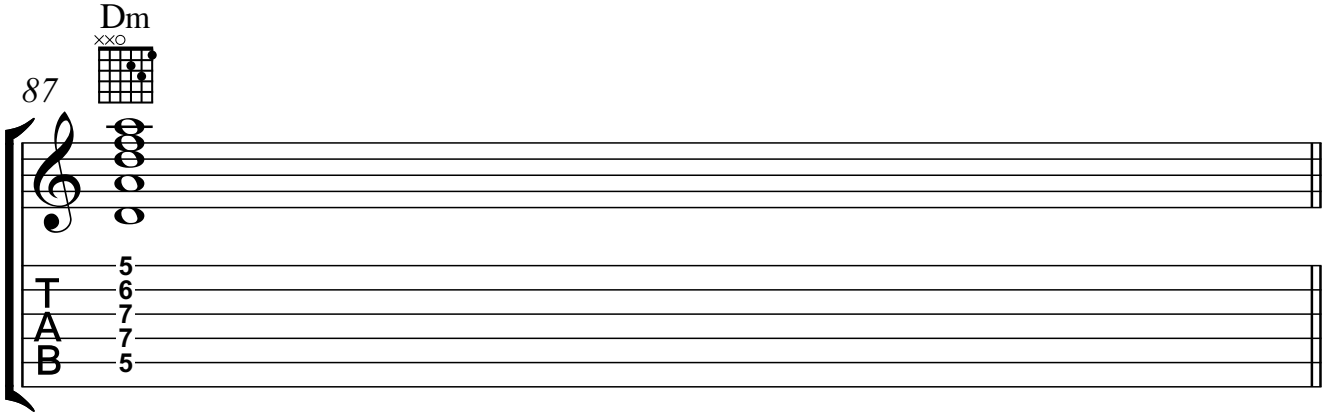
Ex.32 The process of turning major chords into minor chords is lowering the pitch of the 3rd by a half step (going flat). The diagrams below show some open major chords contrasted with open minor chords (emphasis on flat 3rd)



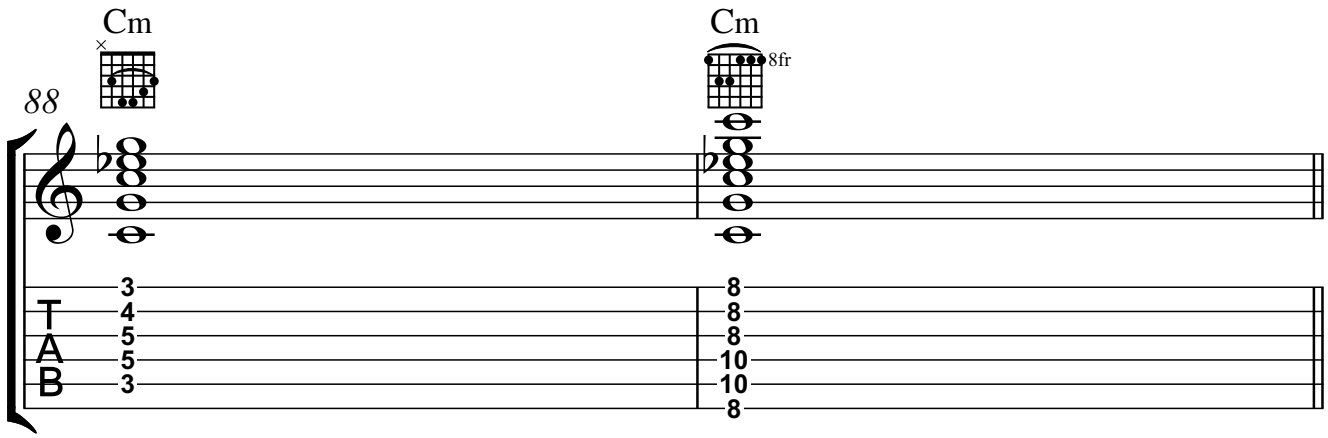
Ex.33 When dealing with barre chords, the process is the same: we just flatten the 3rd. For instance, if you want a 6-string voicing of Am, you just find the root note on the 6th string and then apply a barre where that root lands (5th fret). Afterwards, apply an E shape and flatten the 3rd by taking off your middle finger. Remember that you can move this shape all over the neck.



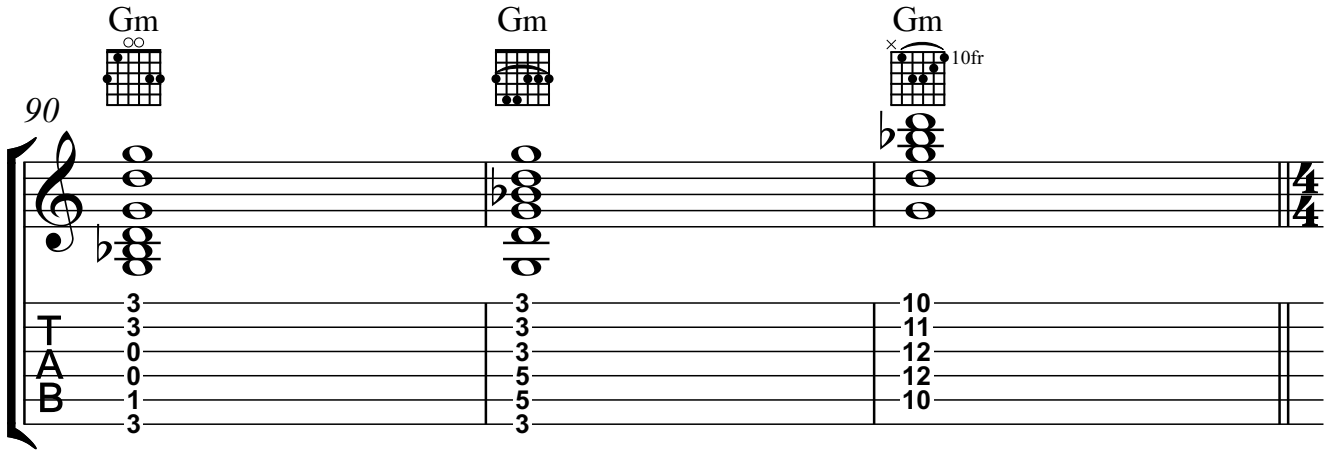
Ex.34 The Am shape can be moved all over the neck as well. This is example is Dm using the Am shape:



Ex.35 Converting the C shape into minor is rather impractical or unwieldy. To get Cm, we can just use either the Am shape (5th-string barre chord at the 3rd fret) or the Em shape (6th-string barre chord at the 8th fret) as a more practical way of doing it:

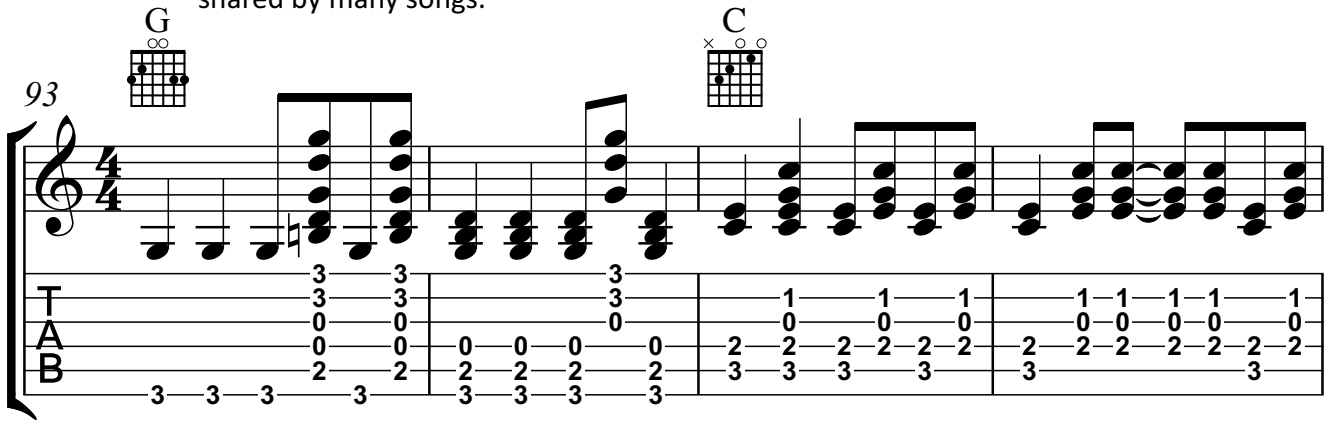


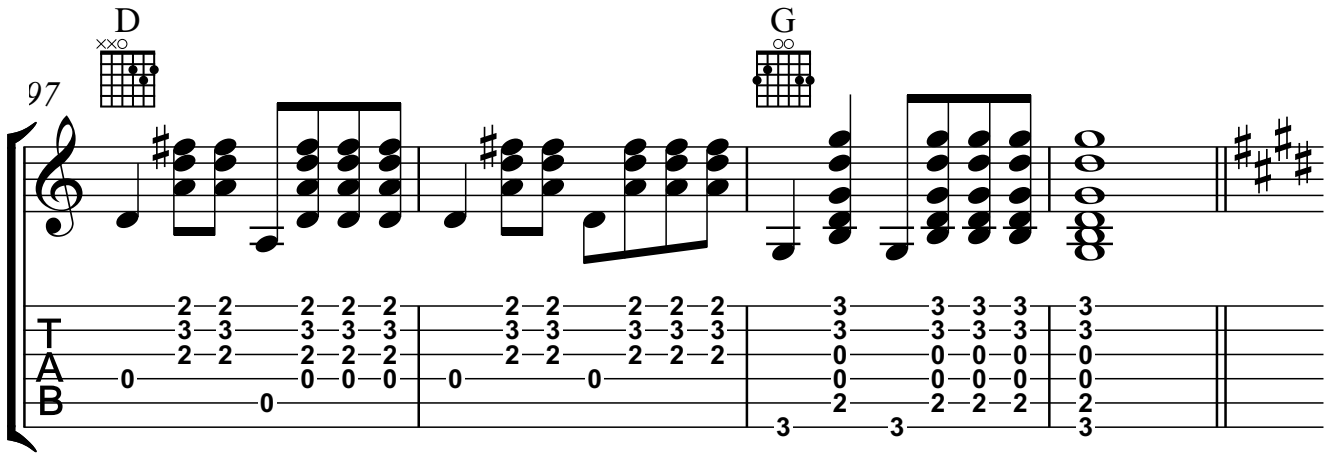
Ex.36 The G shape is also unwieldy to convert to minor, and therefore we use other shapes to be able to play Gm. It is possible to form a Gm out of the open G shape by simply flattening the 3rd. It can be easier to use an Em (6th-string barre chord at the 3rd fret) shape to do that but we can also use an Am shape (5th-string barre chord at the 10th fret):



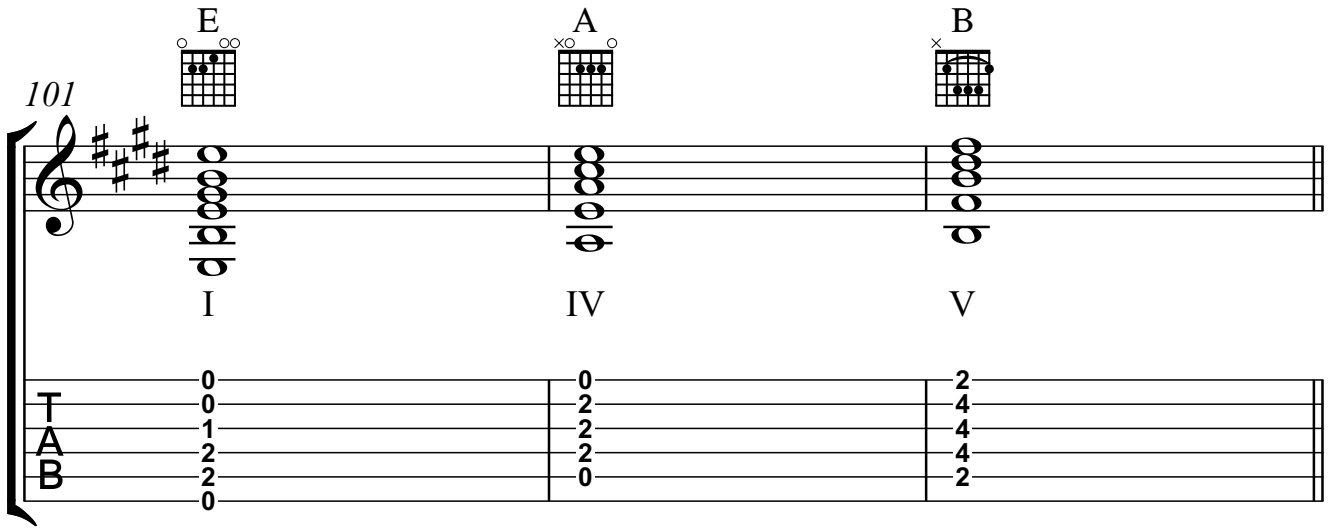
I-IV-V In Major Keys

Ex.37 It pays well to know a number of chord progressions such as the I-IV-V because they are shared by many songs.

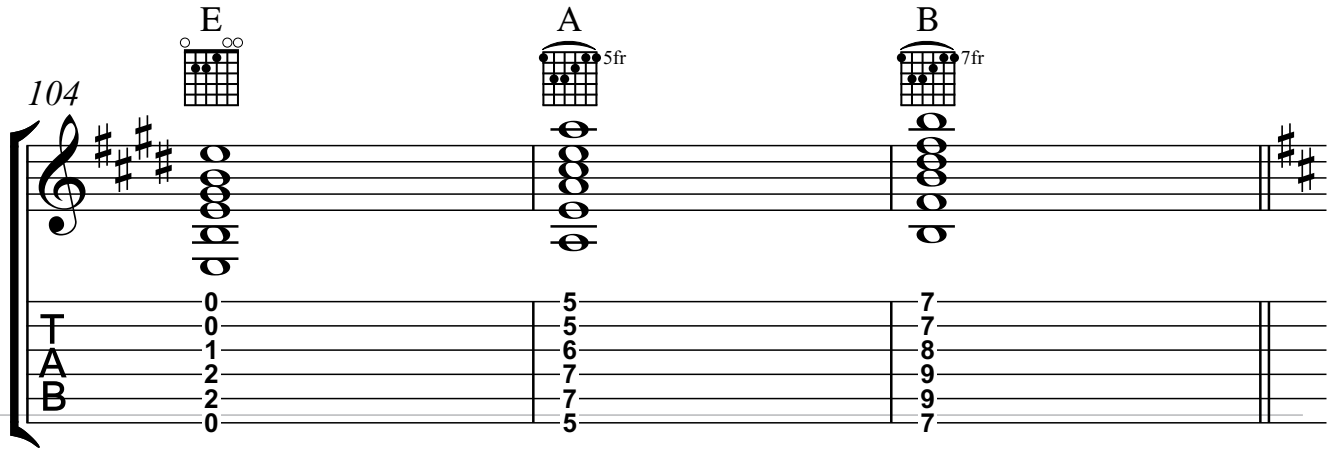




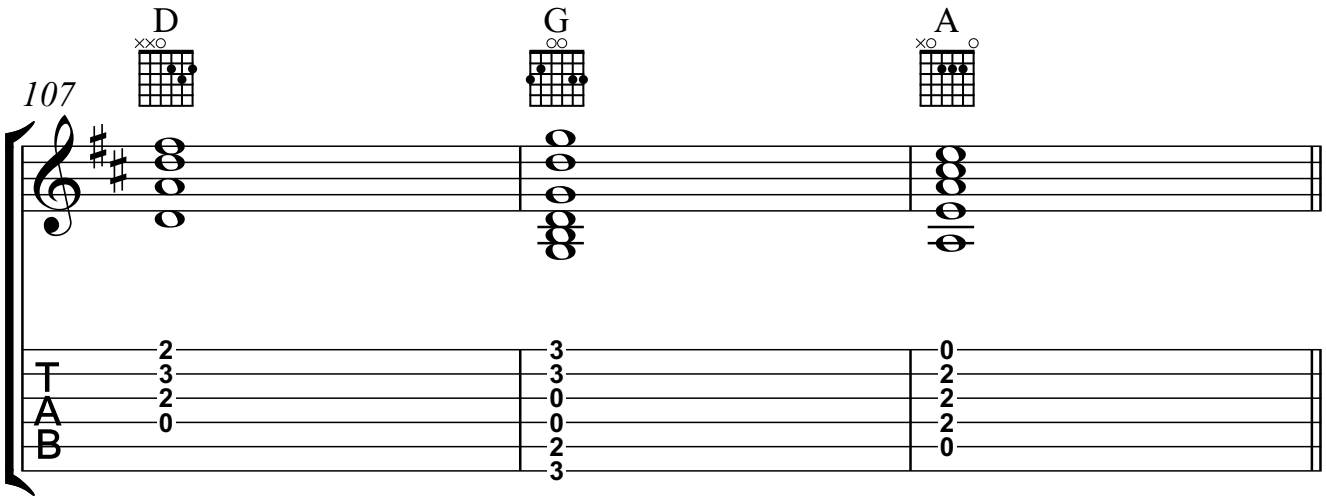
Ex.38 **I-IV-V in the Key of E**



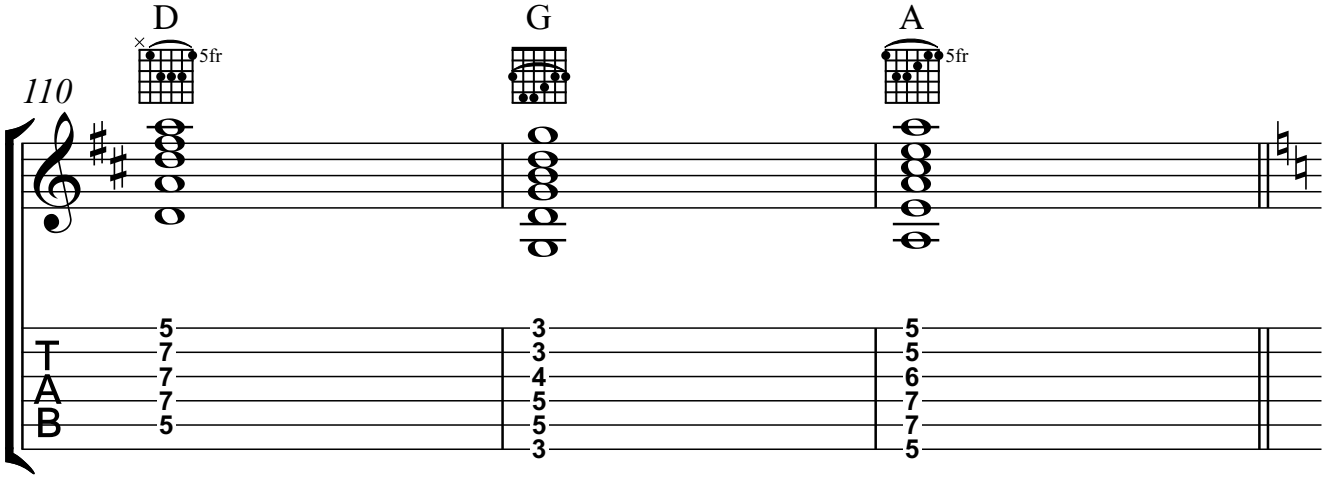
Ex.39 **I-IV-V in the Key of E Using 6th String Barre Chords**



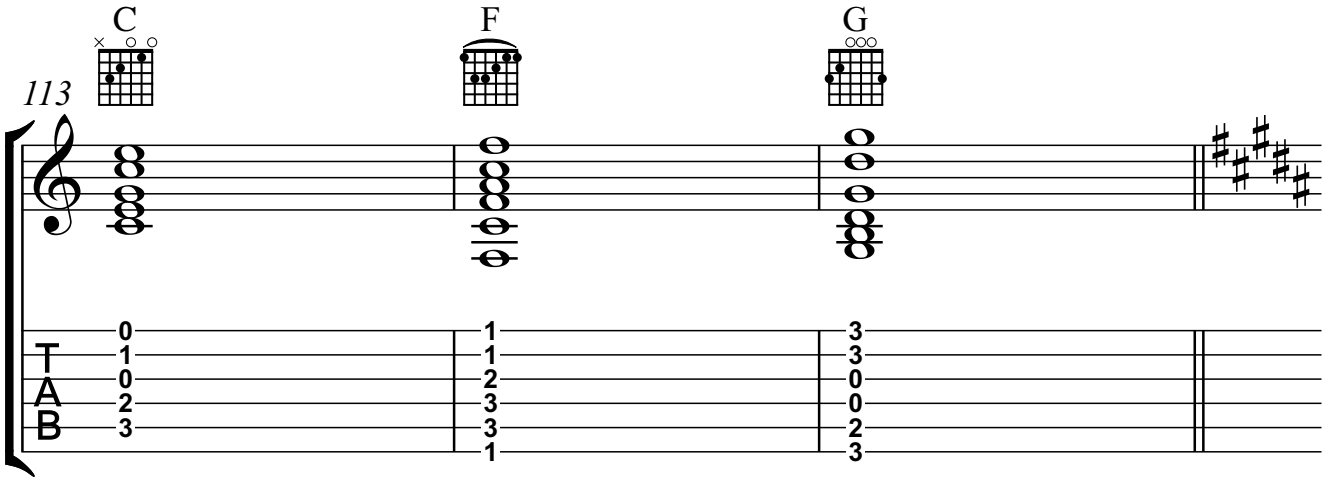
Ex.40 I-IV-V in the Key of D



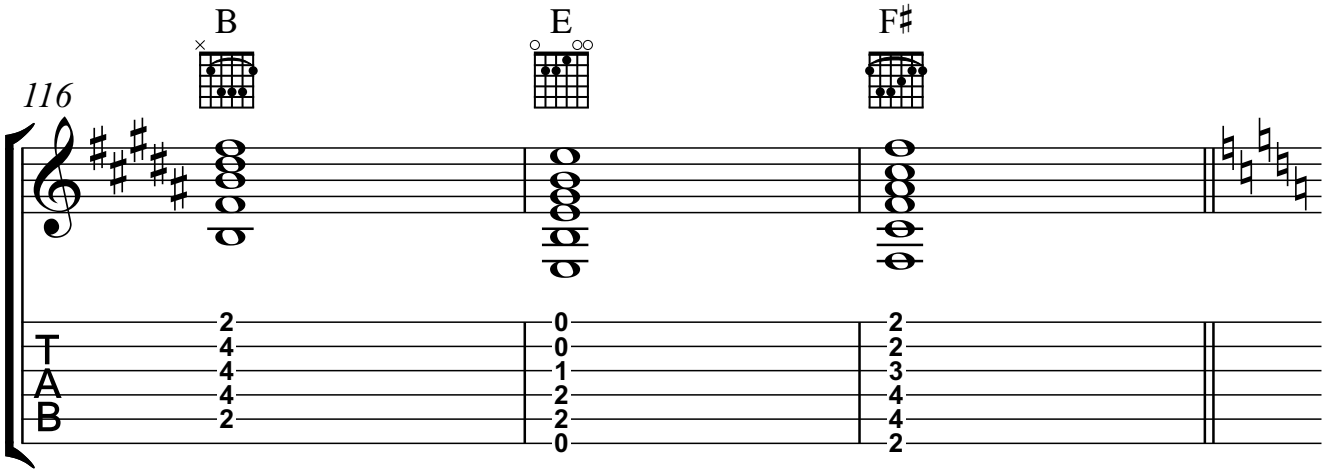
Ex.41



Ex.42 I-IV-V in the Key of C

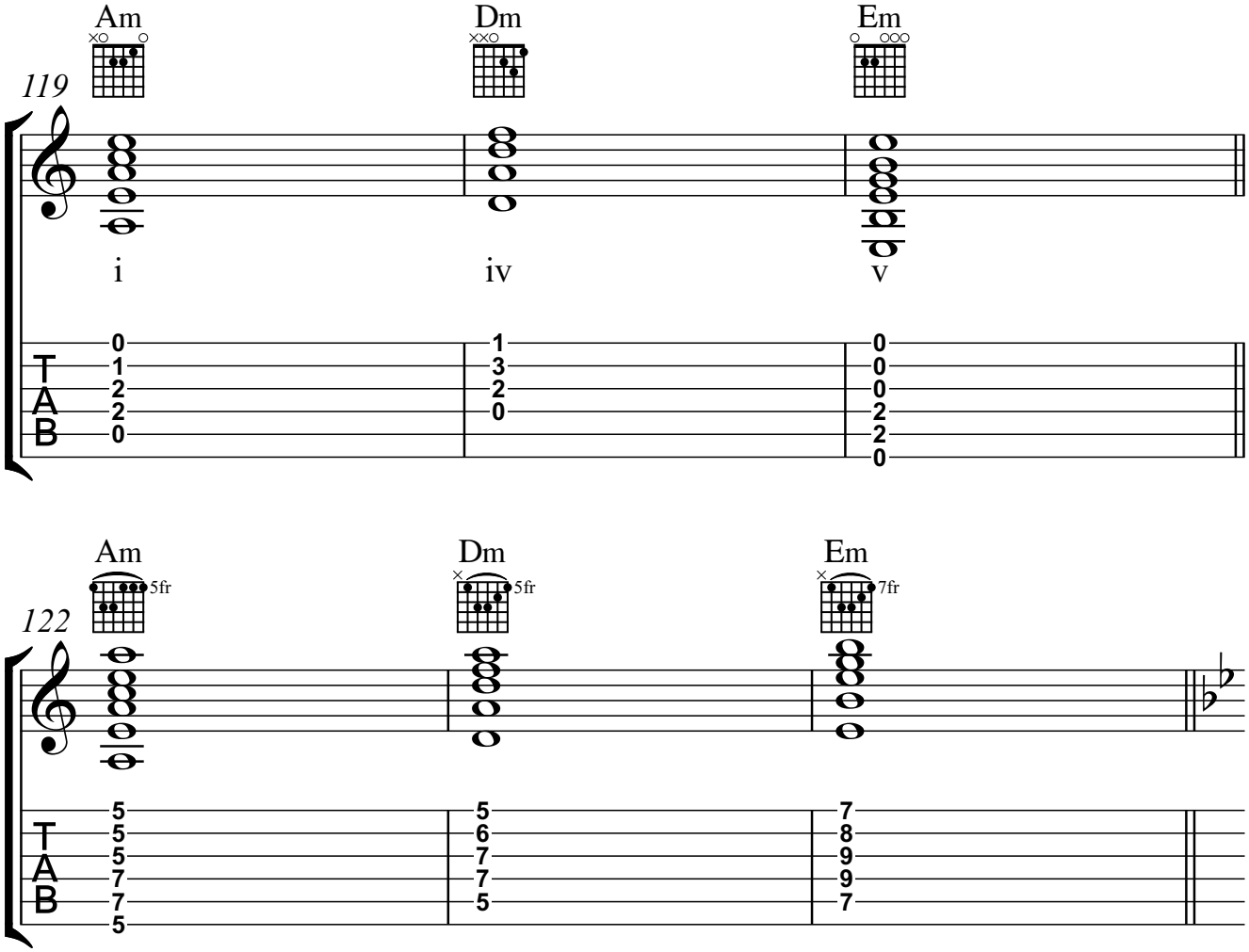


Ex.43 I-IV-V in the Key of B

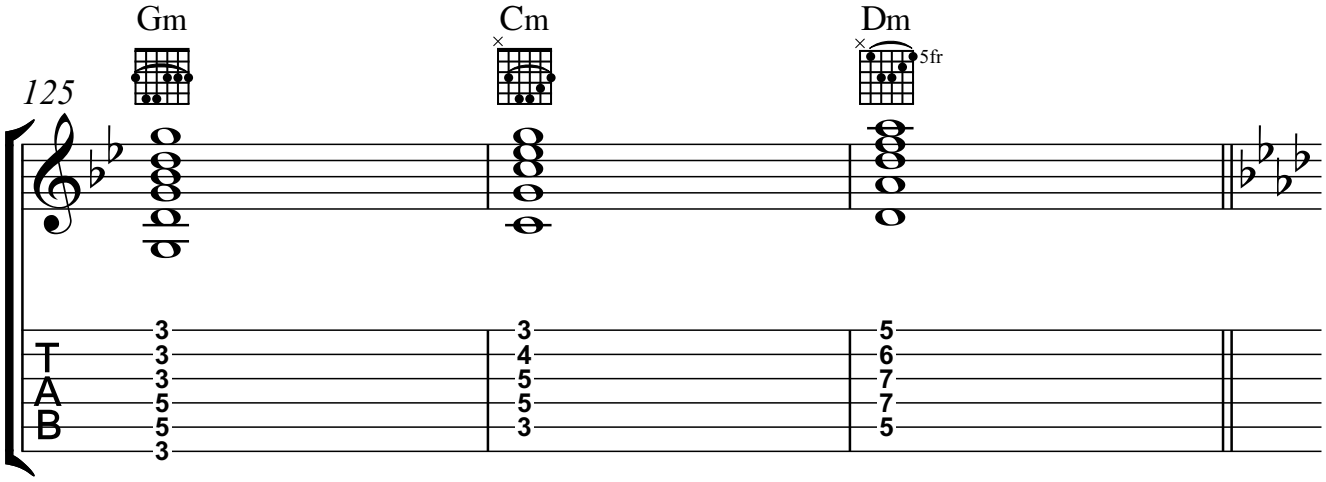


Minor Key Chord Progression i-iv-v

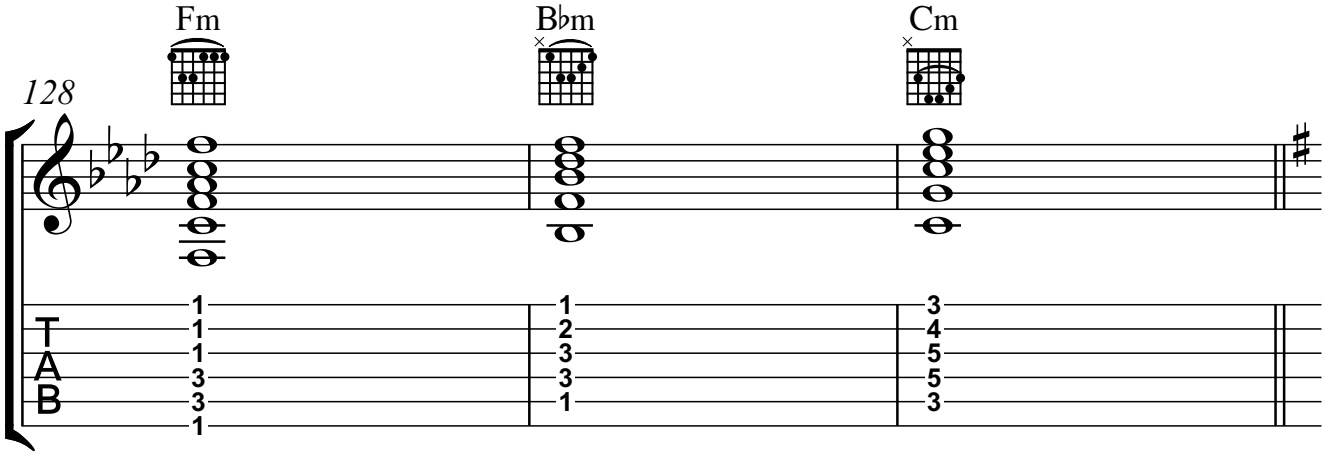
Ex.44 i-iv-v in the Key of A Minor



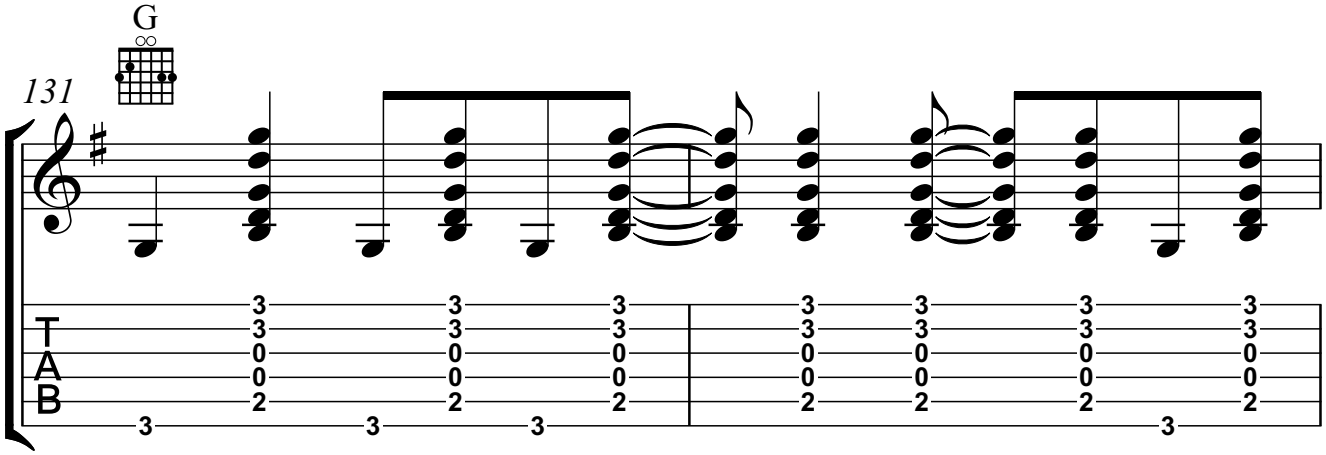
Ex.45 i-iv-v in the Key of G Minor

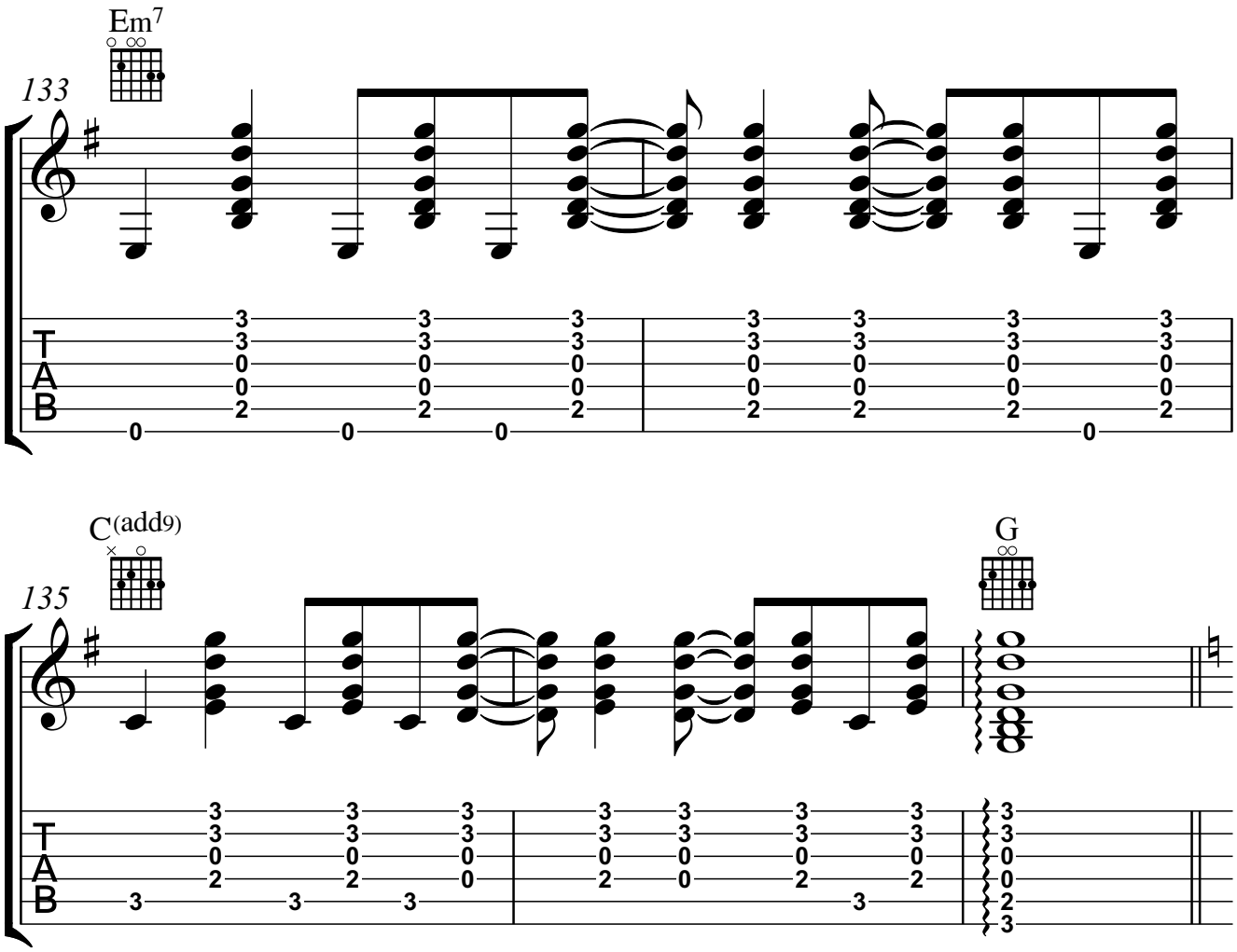


Ex.46 i-iv-v in the Key of F Minor



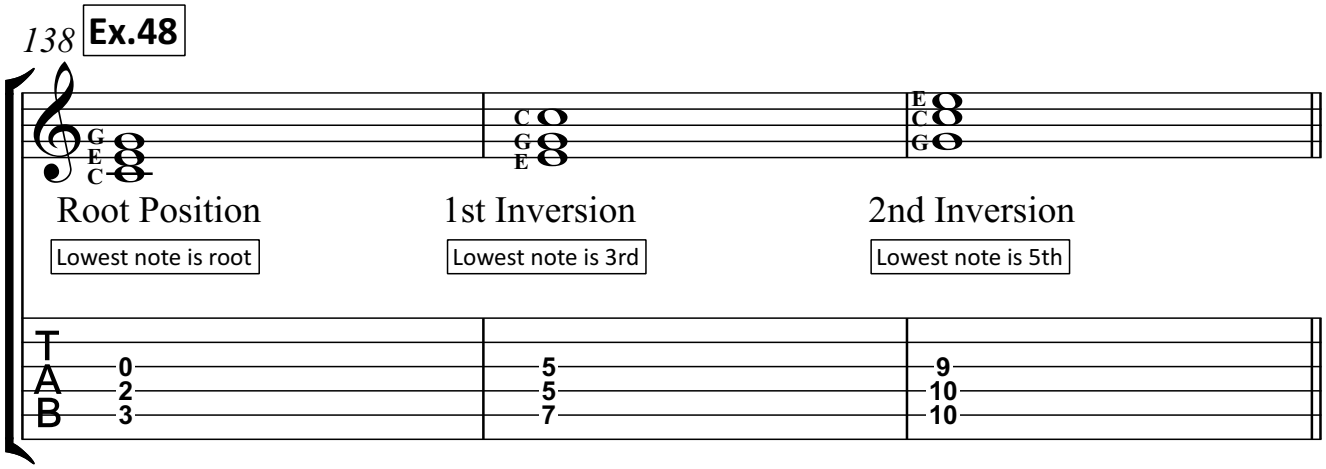
Ex.47 G-Em-C Chord Progression



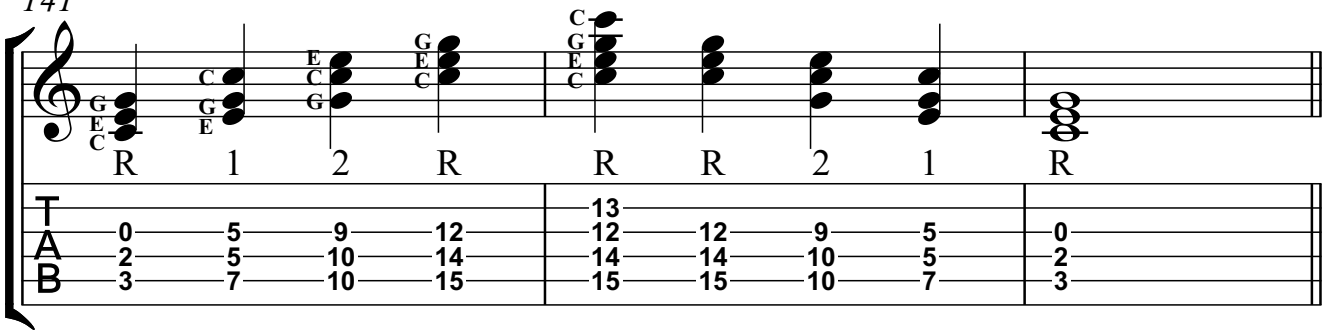


Chord Inversions

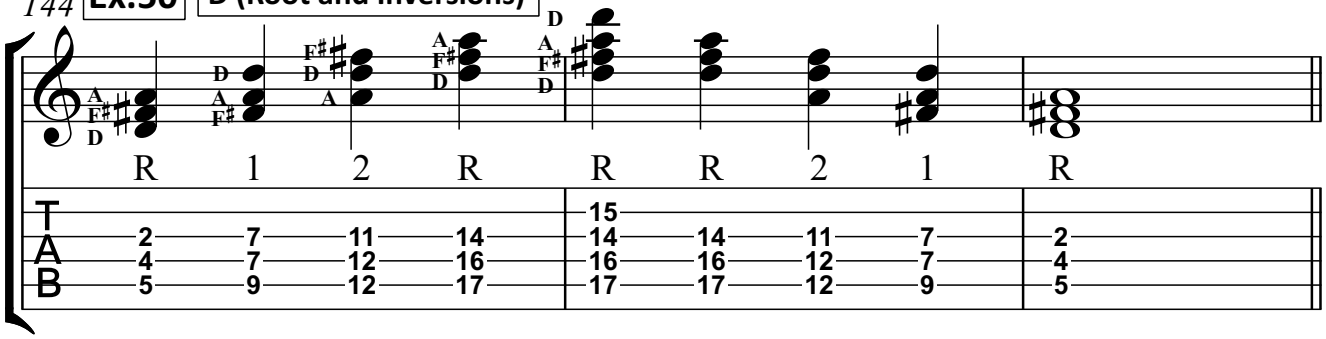
There are instances when chords start at notes other than the root. These kinds of chord voicings are called **inversions.** Why do we bother learning inversions? There are many benefits including interesting chord voicings, efficient transition between chords, smooth voice leading, lead and melody lines. and better visualization and navigation of the fretboard for maximum freedom to do everything that you want.



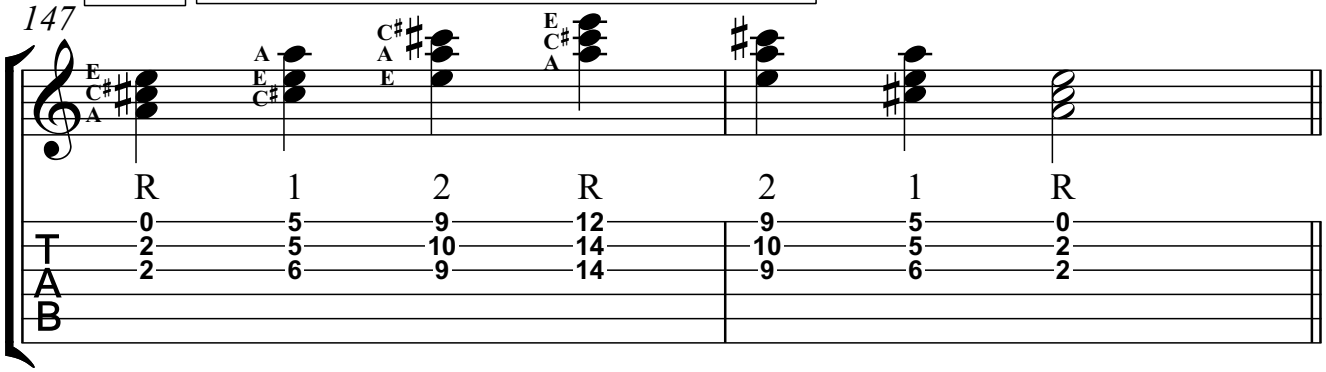
Ex.49 C (Root and Inversions)



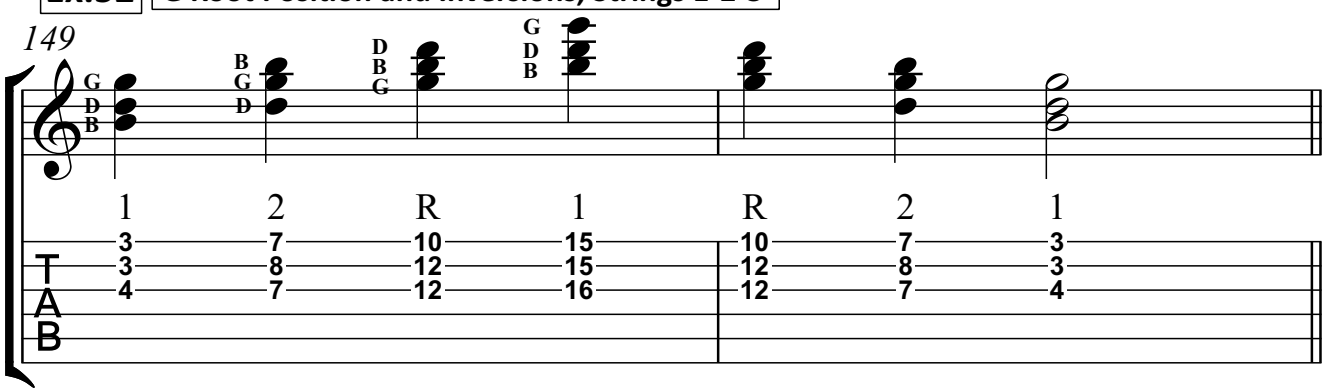
Ex.50 D (Root and Inversions)



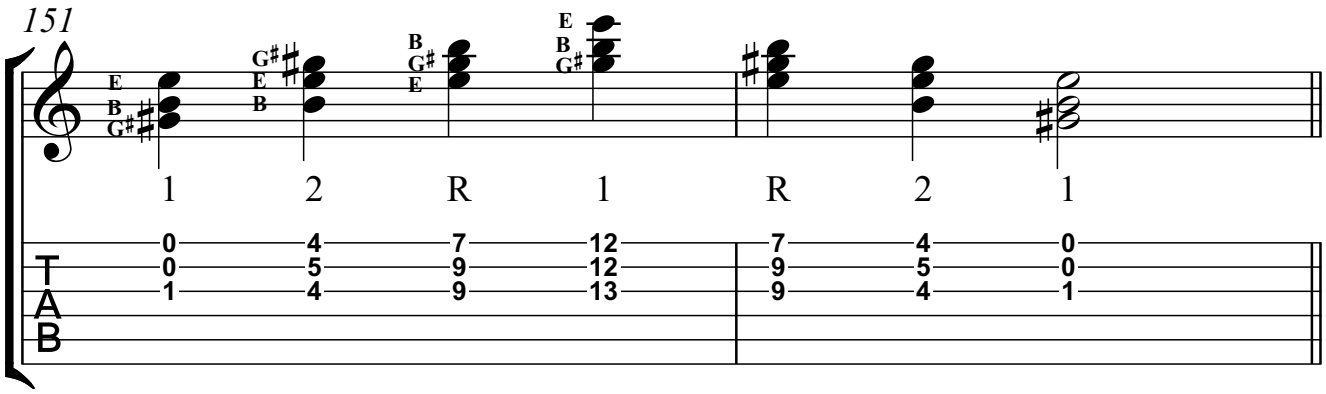
Ex.51 A Root Position and Inversions, Strings 1-2-3



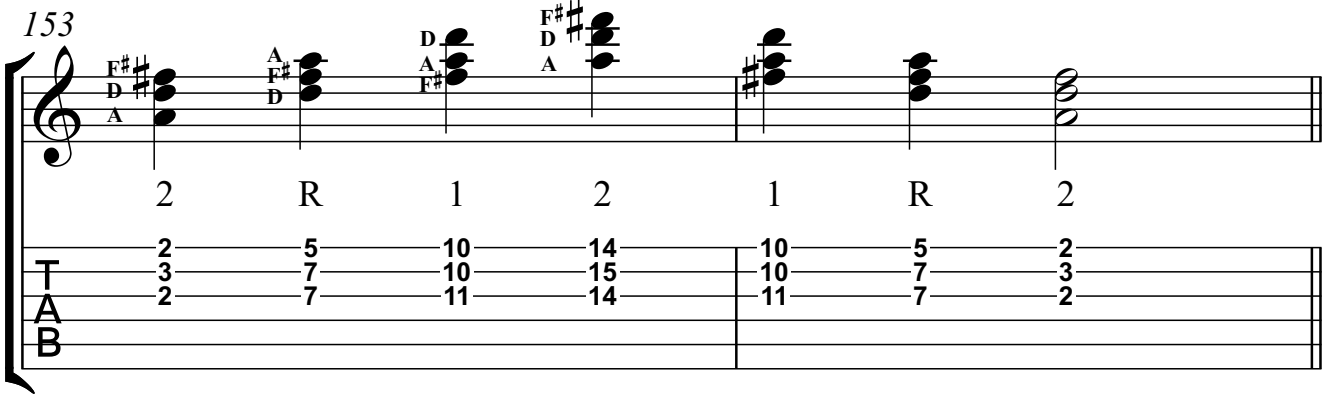
Ex.52 G Root Position and Inversions, Strings 1-2-3



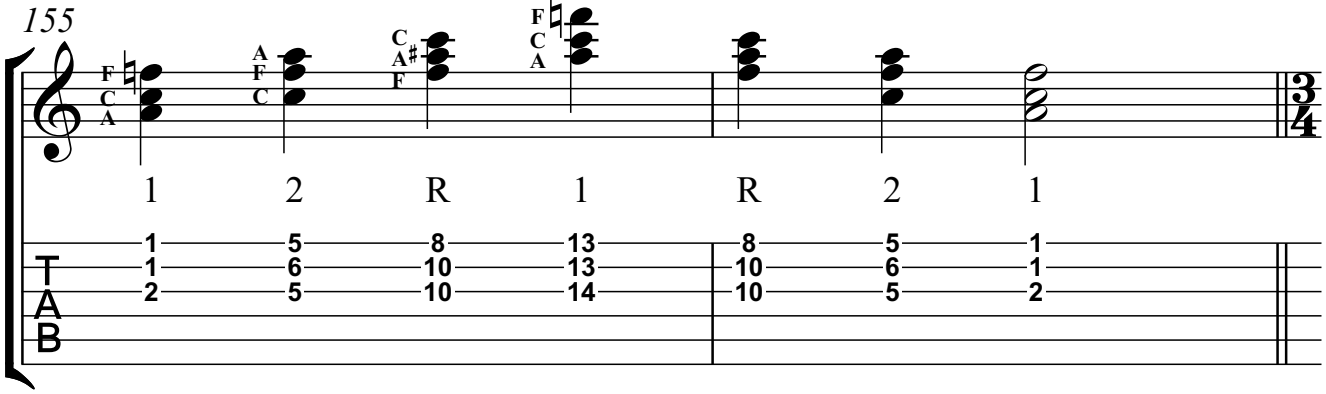
Ex.53 E Root Position and Inversions, Strings 1-2-3



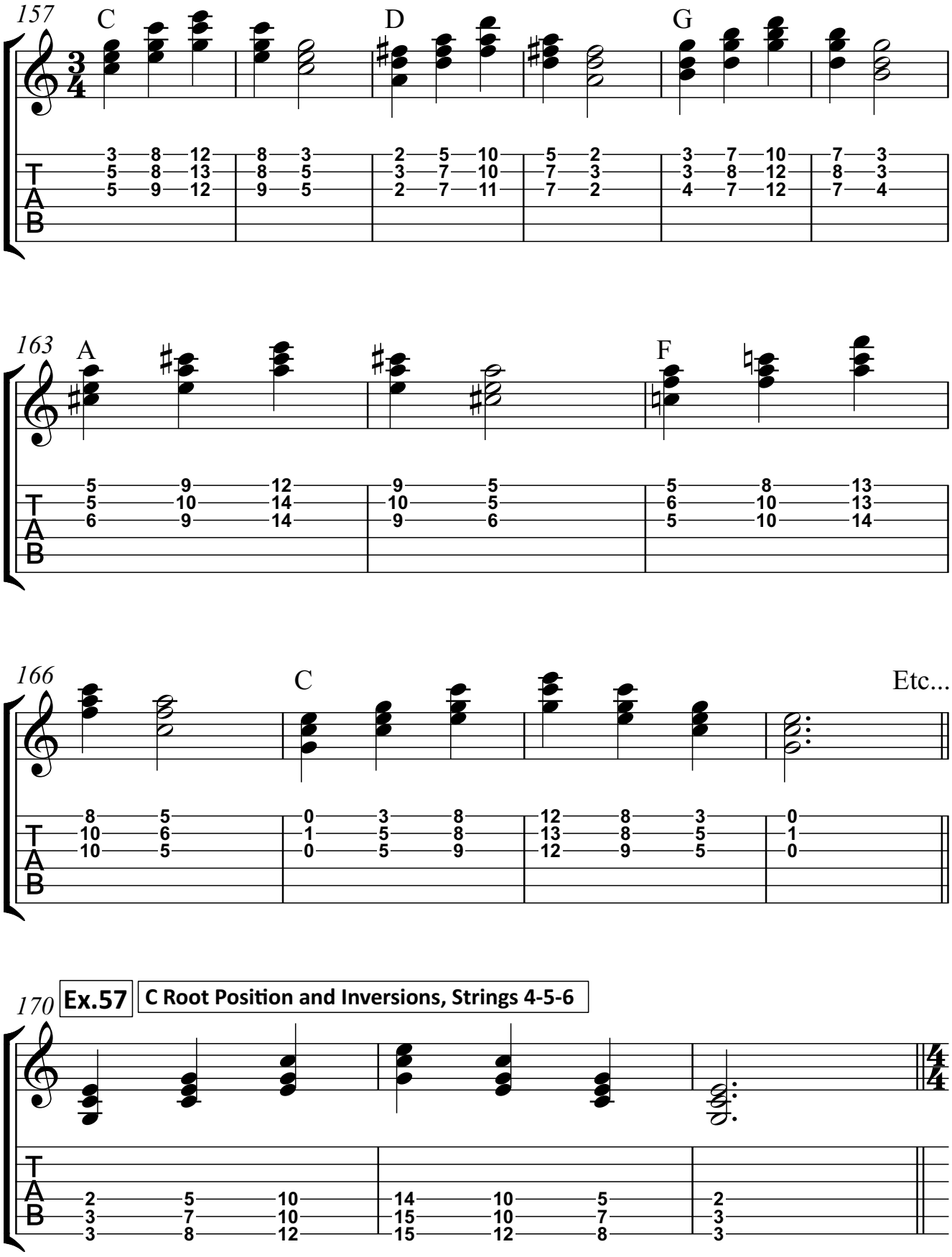
Ex.54 D Root Position and Inversions, Strings 1-2-3



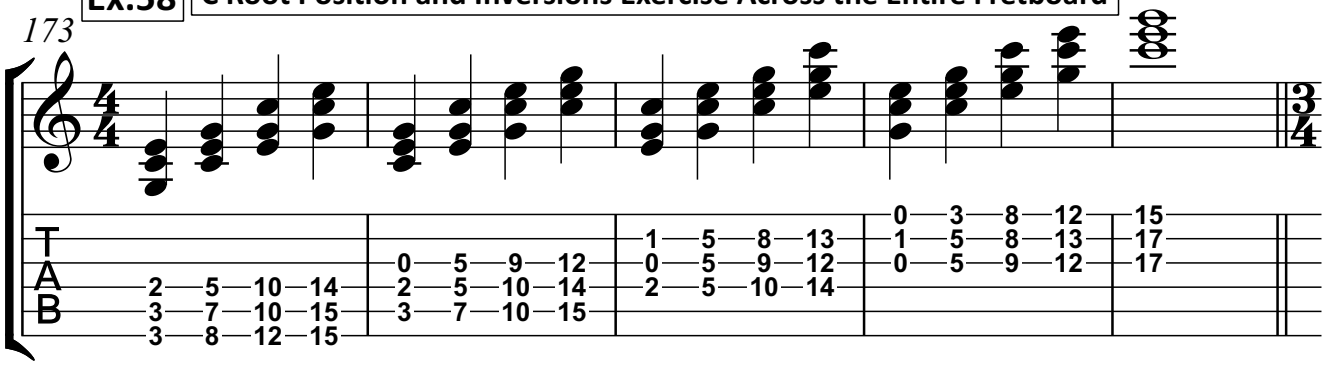
Ex.55 F Root Position and Inversions, Strings 1-2-3



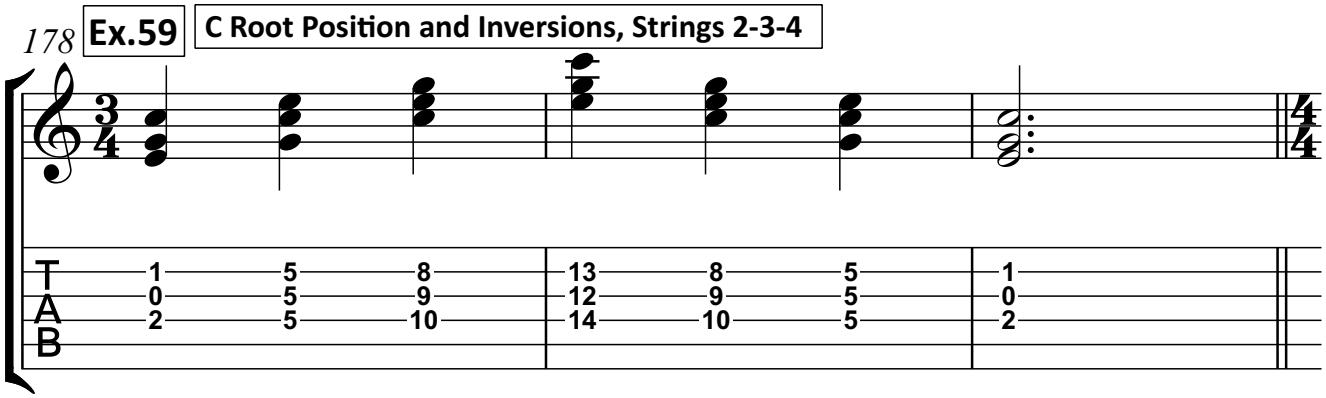
Ex.56 Chord Inversions Exercise, Strings 1-2-3



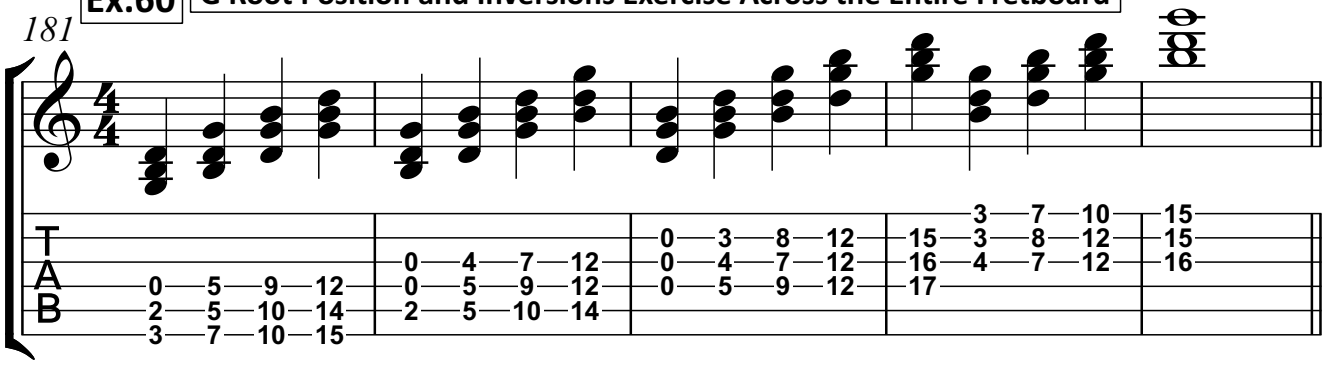
Ex.58 C Root Position and Inversions Exercise Across the Entire Fretboard



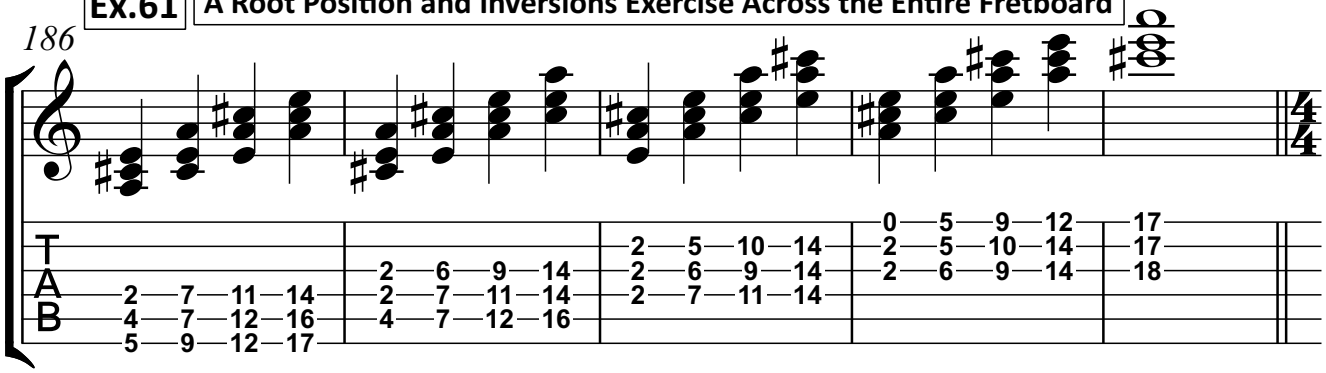
Ex.59 C Root Position and Inversions, Strings 2-3-4



Ex.60 G Root Position and Inversions Exercise Across the Entire Fretboard



Ex.61 A Root Position and Inversions Exercise Across the Entire Fretboard



Progress Tracker

		Date
☐	How to Fretboard	☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐
☐	Chord Basics and Major Chords	☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐
☐	Minor Chords	☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐
☐	I-IV-V in Major Keys	☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐
☐	Minor Key Chords Progression	☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐
☐	Chord Inversions	☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐