

# **Guitar Basics of Chords, Keys, and Scales**

Resources:

[http://www.drpsychotic.com/strike\\_a\\_chord/strieachord.html](http://www.drpsychotic.com/strike_a_chord/strieachord.html)

<http://www.theorylessons.com/index.html>

[http://www.jmdl.com/howard/music/keys\\_scales.html](http://www.jmdl.com/howard/music/keys_scales.html)



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## The Key of C

This is the first section of what I hope will be a series of useful articles, designed to help the beginner/intermediate guitarist learn guitar chords, as they apply to each given key. We start with the key of C in this issue's article. In music theory, the key of C is basically the center of the tonal universe, and therefore, a good place to start. Now everybody has a different method that they may apply when attempting to teach what I'm about to. If this doesn't work for you, accept my apologies and don't let it discourage you. If it does work for you, then my life will have had some meaning. Let's start with the basic chords in the key of C.

### The Basic chords in the key of C

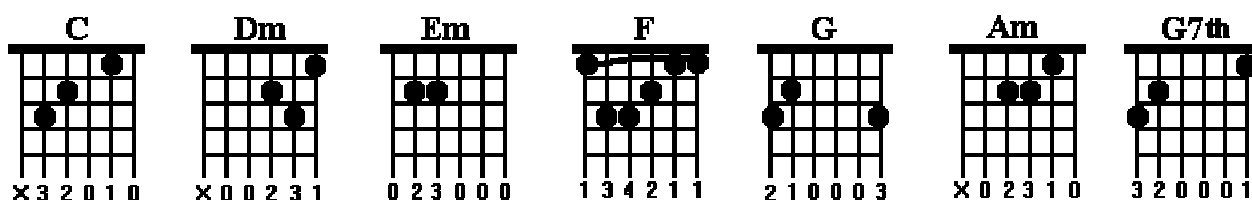


Chart 1

Now let me explain the chord charts in case you don't understand them. They represent the guitar neck, as you would look at it sideways. From right to left are the six strings of the guitar and the horizontal lines represent the frets. Got it? Good. Each finger is represented by a number from 1-4, with 1 being the index finger, 2 being the middle finger, 3 being the ring finger and 4 being the pinky. The "x" means that the string isn't played, plucked, strummed or touched. Leave it alone! Whenever you see a line connecting the dots, it means that all of the dots are pressed down by the same finger. This is called "barring" the chord. Simplified: one finger lays across the strings. Above, I've shown the basic chords for the key of C. Below are some additional chords that I refer to as substitute chords.

### Some substitute chords for the key of C

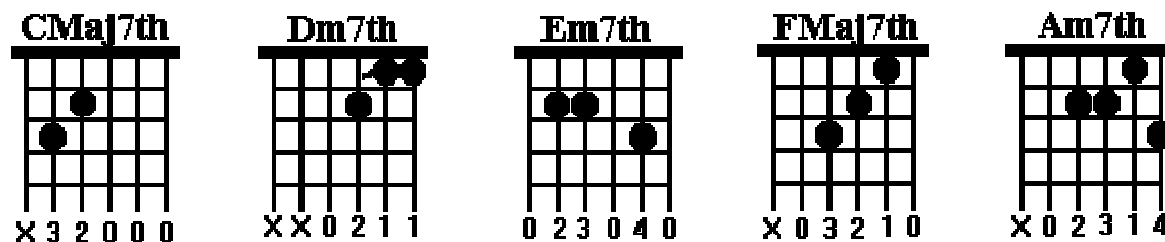


Chart 2

The above chart lists what are called substitute chords. Let's say you played the first chords listed in chart 1, in the order that they were listed. For the C major chord, you can substitute a C major 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The D minor chord can be replaced by the D minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The same is true for each of the remaining. Play them. Has a jazzy ring to it, doesn't it? Some people refer to

substitute chords as orchestral chords but it doesn't matter. A rose by any other name still has a thorn. I've included additional substitute chords so that you can improve your chord vocabulary. You'll be the life of the party and the envy of all your peers. You will be on your way to achieving greatness. The sky is the limit. Let's move on to some more substitute chords.

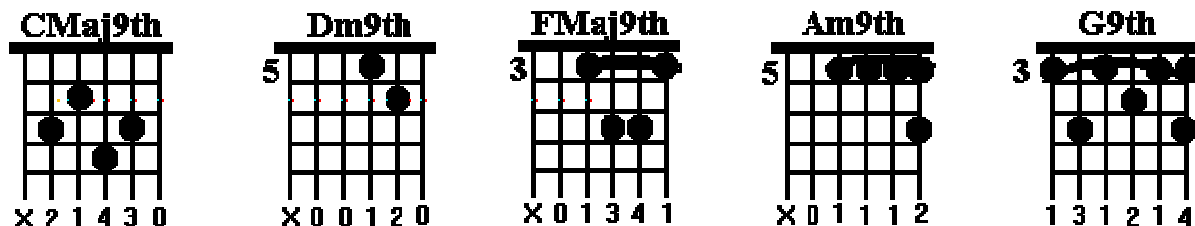


Chart 3

You may have noticed that most of the chord diagrams in chart 3 have a number to the left of them. Let's use the Dm 9<sup>th</sup> as an example. The 5 to the left of the diagram means that the first fret displayed is to be regarded as the fifth fret on your guitar.

## The Key of G

We started out with the key of C in the previous section. In this section we will cover the wonderful key of G. Let's start with the basic chords in the key of G.

### *The Basic chords in the key of G*

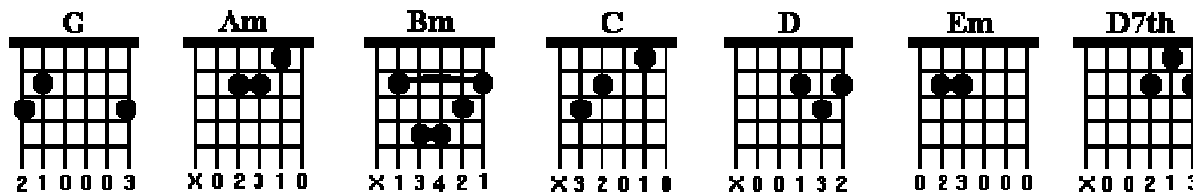


Chart 4

Now let me explain the chord charts in case you don't understand them. They represent the guitar neck, as you would look at it sideways. From right to left are the six strings of the guitar and the horizontal lines represent the frets. Got it? Good. Each finger is represented by a number from 1-4, with 1 being the index finger, 2 being the middle finger, 3 being the ring finger and 4 being the pinky. The "x" means that the string isn't played, plucked, strummed or touched. Leave it alone! Whenever you see a line connecting the dots, it means that all of the dots are pressed down by the same finger. This is called "barring" the chord. Simplified: One finger lays across the strings. Above, I've shown the basic chords for the key of G. Below are some additional chords that I refer to as substitute chords.

### Some substitute chords for the key of G

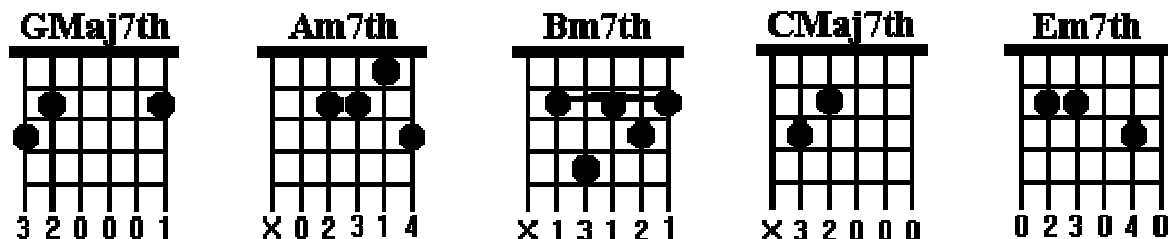


Chart 5

In the above chart is listed what are called substitute chords. Let's say you played the first chords listed in chart 1, in the order that they were listed. For the G major chord, you can substitute a G major 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The A minor chord can be replaced by the A minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The same is true for each of the remaining. Play them. Has a jazzy ring to it, doesn't it? Some people refer to substitute chords as orchestral chords but it doesn't matter. A rose by any other name still has a thorn. I've included additional substitute chords so that you can improve your chord vocabulary. You'll be the life of the party and the envy of all your peers. You will be on your way to achieving greatness. The sky is the limit. Let's move on to some more substitute chords.

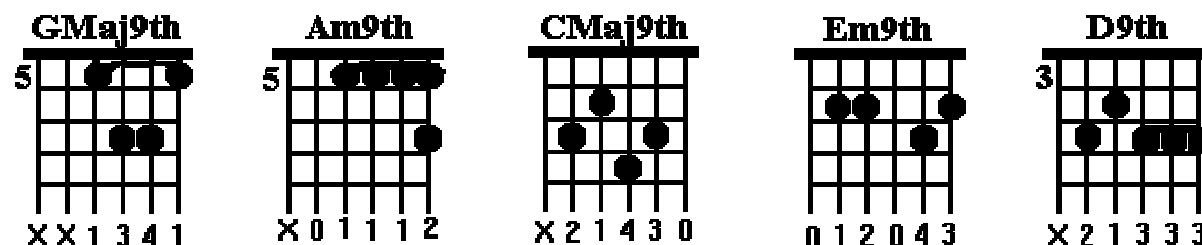


Chart 6

You may have noticed that most of the chord diagrams in chart 3 have a number to the left of them. Let's use the A minor 9<sup>th</sup> as an example. The 5 to the left of the diagram means that the first fret displayed is to be regarded as the fifth fret on your guitar.

### The Key of F

We ended our last section with the key of G. In this section we will cover the wonderful key of F. Let's start with the basic chords in the key of F.

### *The Basic chords in the key of F*

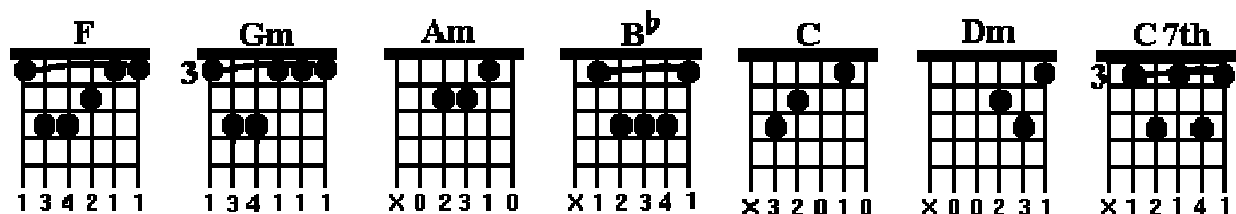


Chart 7

Now let me explain the chord charts in case you don't understand them. They represent the guitar neck, as you would look at it sideways. From right to left are the six strings of the guitar and the horizontal lines represent the frets. Got it? Good. Each finger is represented by a number from 1-4, with 1 being the index finger, 2 being the middle finger, 3 being the ring finger and 4 being the pinky. The "x" means that the string isn't played, plucked, strummed or touched. Leave it alone! Whenever you see a line connecting the dots, it means that all of the dots are pressed down by the same finger. This is called "barring" the chord. Simplified: One finger lays across the strings. You may have noticed that most of the chord diagrams in chart 1 have a number to the left of them. Let's use the G minor as an example. The 3 to the left of the diagram means that the first fret displayed is to be regarded as the third fret on your guitar. Okay? Above, I've shown the basic chords for the key of F. Below are some additional chords that I refer to as substitute chords.

### *Some substitute chords for the key of F*

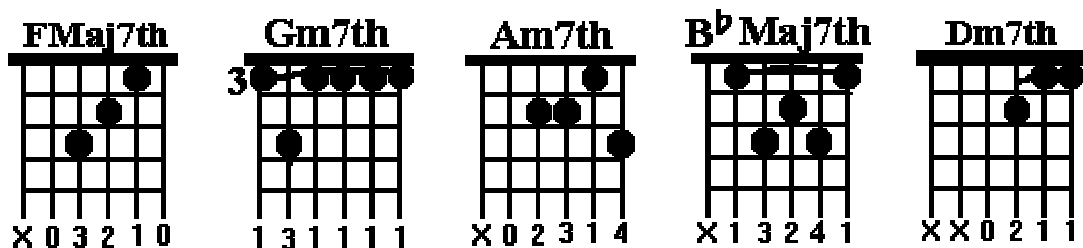


Chart 8



In the above chart, are listed what are called substitute chords. Let's say you played the first chords listed in chart 1, in the order that they were listed. For the F major chord, you can substitute an F major 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The D minor chord can be replaced by the D minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The same is true for each of the remaining. Play them. Has a jazzy ring to it, doesn't it? Some people refer to substitute chords as orchestral chords but it doesn't matter. A rose by any other name still has a thorn. I've included additional substitute chords so that you can improve your chord vocabulary. You'll be the life of the party and the envy of all your peers. You will be on your way to achieving greatness. The sky is the limit. Let's move on to some more substitute chords.

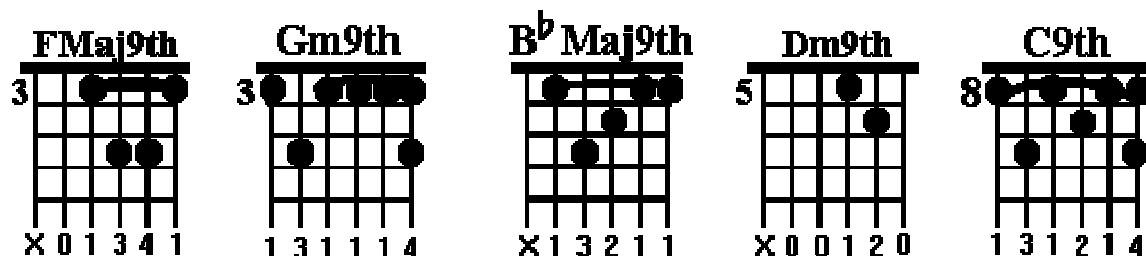


Chart 9

## The Key of D

In this section we will cover the key of D. Let's start with the basic chords in the key of D.

### *The Basic chords in the key of D*

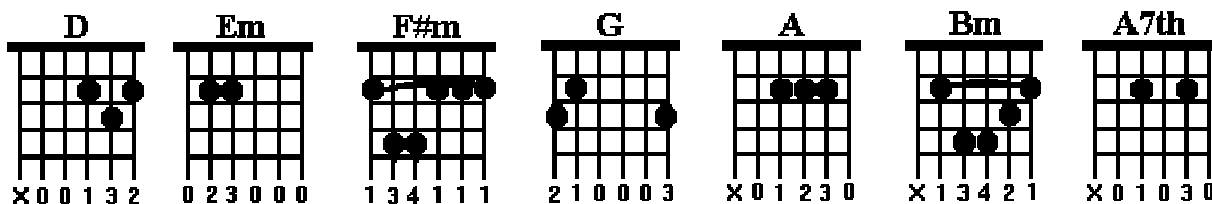


Chart 10

Now let me explain the chord charts in case you don't understand them. They represent the guitar neck, as you would look at it sideways. From right to left are the six strings of the guitar and the horizontal lines represent the frets. Got it? Good. Each finger is represented by a number from 1-4, with 1 being the index finger, 2 being the middle finger, 3 being the ring finger and 4 being the pinky. The "x" means that the string isn't played, plucked, strummed or touched. Leave it alone! Whenever you see a line connecting the dots, it means that all of the dots are pressed down by the same finger. This is called "barring" the chord. Simplified: One finger lays across the strings. Above, I've shown the basic chords for the key of D. Below are some additional chords that I refer to as substitute chords.

### Some substitute chords for the key of D

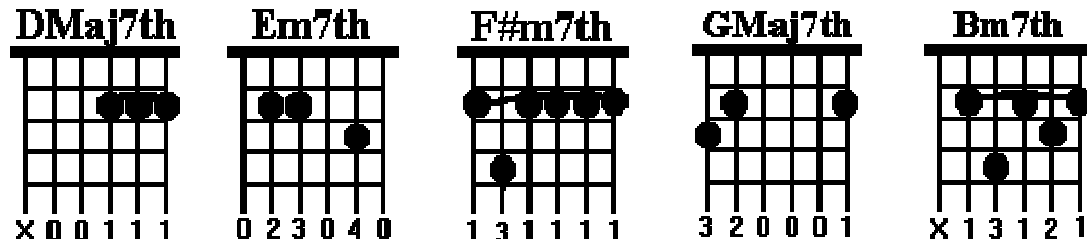


Chart 11

The chart above lists what are called substitute chords. Let's say you played the first chords listed in chart 1, in the order that they were listed. For the D major chord, you can substitute a D major 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The E minor chord can be replaced by the E minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The same is true for each of the remaining. Play them. Has a jazzy ring to it, doesn't it? Some people refer to substitute chords as orchestral chords but it doesn't matter. A rose by any other name still has a thorn. I've included additional substitute chords so that you can improve your chord vocabulary. Let's move on to some more substitute chords.

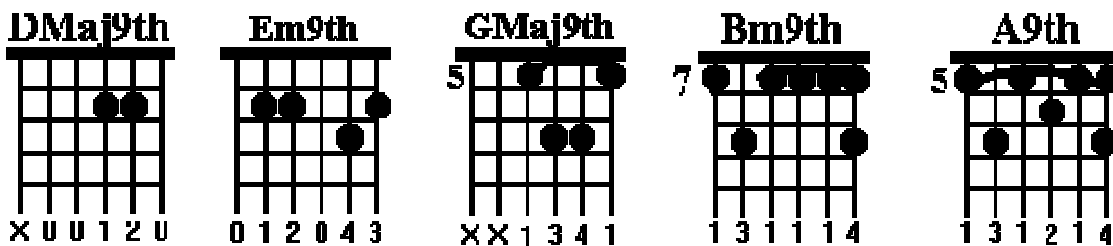


Chart 12

You may have noticed that some of the chord diagrams in the above chart have a number to the left of them. Let's use the B minor 9<sup>th</sup> as an example. The 7 to the left of the diagram means that the first fret displayed is to be regarded as the fifth fret on your guitar.

### The Key of B flat

In this section we will cover the key of B flat. Let's start with the basic chords in the key of B flat.

### *The Basic chords in the key of B flat*

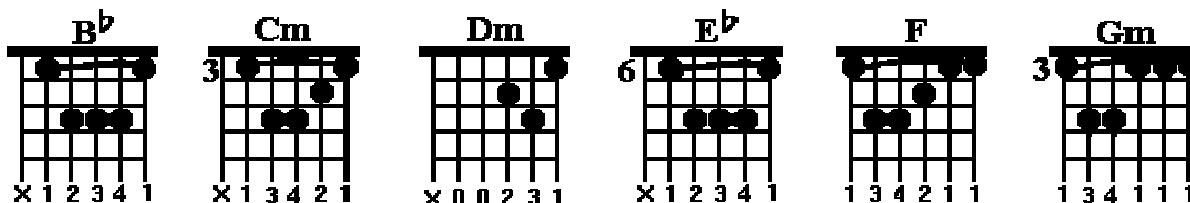


Chart 13

Now let me explain the chord charts in case you don't understand them. They represent the guitar neck, as you would look at it sideways. From right to left are the six strings of the guitar and the horizontal lines represent the frets. Got it? Good. Each finger is represented by a number from 1-4, with 1 being the index finger, 2 being the middle finger, 3 being the ring finger and 4 being the pinky. The "x" means that the string isn't played, plucked, strummed or touched. Leave it alone! Whenever you see a line connecting the dots, it means that all of the dots are pressed down by the same finger. This is called "barring" the chord. Simplified: One finger lays across the strings. You may have noticed that most of the chord diagrams in chart 1 have a number to the left of them. Let's use the G minor as an example. The 3 to the left of the diagram means that the first fret displayed is to be regarded as the third fret on your guitar. Okay? Above, I've shown the basic chords for the key of B flat. Below are some additional chords that I refer to as substitute chords.

### *Some substitute chords for the key of B flat*

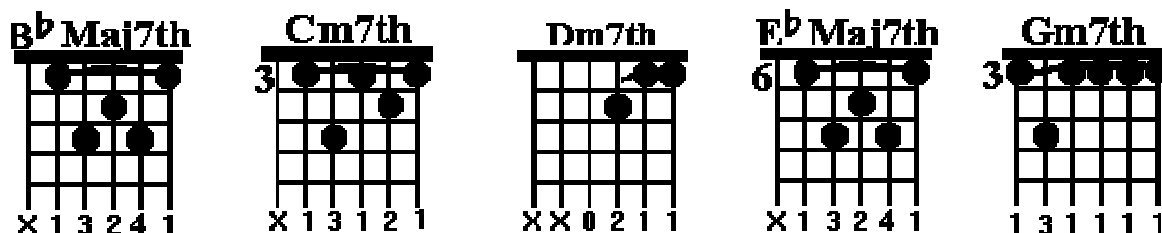


Chart 14

The chart above lists what are called substitute chords. Let's say you played the first chords listed in chart 1, in the order that they were listed. For the B flat major chord, you can substitute a B flat major 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The C minor chord can be replaced by the C minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The same is true for each of the remaining. Play them. Has a jazzy ring to it, doesn't it? Some people refer to substitute chords as orchestral chords but it doesn't matter. A rose by any other name still has a thorn. I've included additional substitute chords so that you can improve your chord vocabulary. You'll be the life of the party and the envy of all your peers. You will be on your

way to achieving greatness. The sky is the limit. Let's move on to some more substitute chords.

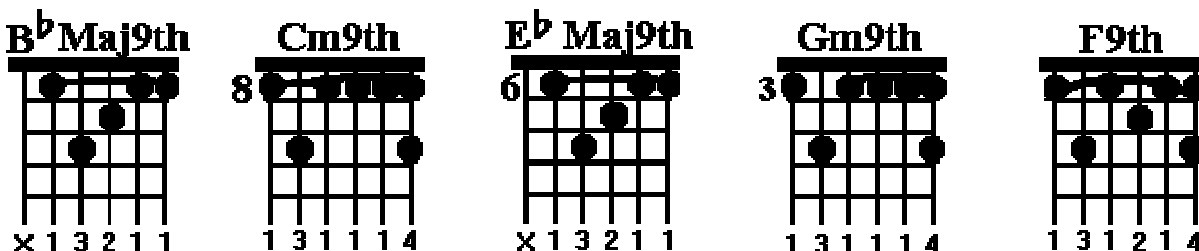


Chart 15

## The Key of A

This is the 6<sup>th</sup> section of this article—designed to help the beginner/intermediate guitarist learn guitar chords, as they apply to each given key. We ended our last section with the key of B flat. In this section we will cover the wonderful key of A. Let's start with the basic chords in the key of A.

### *The Basic chords in the key of A*

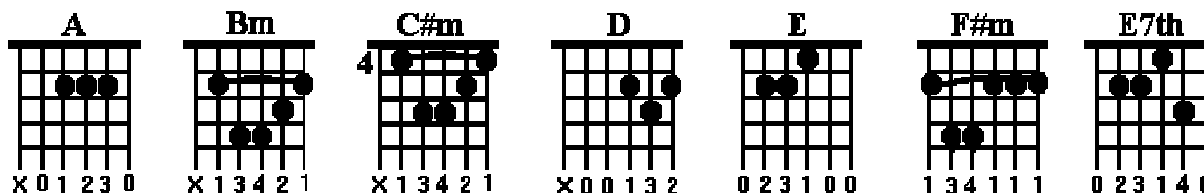


Chart 16

Now let me explain the chord charts in case you don't understand them. They represent the guitar neck, as you would look at it sideways. From right to left are the six strings of the guitar and the horizontal lines represent the frets. Got it? Good. Each finger is represented by a number from 1-4, with 1 being the index finger, 2 being the middle finger, 3 being the ring finger and 4 being the pinky. The "x" means that the string isn't played, plucked, strummed or touched. Leave it alone! Whenever you see a line connecting the dots, it means that all of the dots are pressed down by the same finger. This is called "barring" the chord. Simplified: One finger lays across the strings. You may have noticed that most of the chord diagrams in chart 1 have a number to the left of them. Let's use the C# Minor as an example. The 4 to the left of the diagram means that the first fret displayed is to be regarded as the fourth fret on your guitar. Okay? Above, I've shown the basic chords for the key of A. Below are some additional chords that I refer to as substitute chords.

### Some substitute chords for the key of A



Chart 17

The chart above lists what are called substitute chords. Let's say you played the first chords listed in chart 1, in the order that they were listed. For the A major chord, you can substitute an A major 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The C# minor chord can be replaced by the C# minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The same is true for each of the remaining. Play them. Has a jazzy ring to it, doesn't it? Some people refer to substitute chords as orchestral chords but it doesn't matter. A rose by any other name still has a thorn. I've included additional substitute chords so that you can improve your chord vocabulary. Let's move on to some more substitute chords.

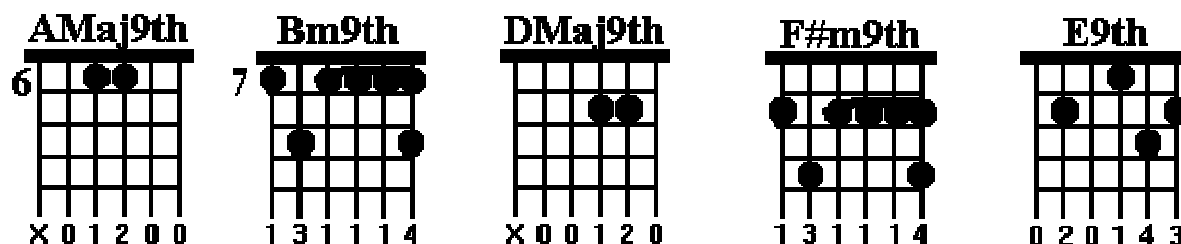


Chart 18

### The Key of E flat

We ended our last section with the key of A. In this section we will cover the key of E flat. Let's start with the basic chords in the key of E flat.

#### The Basic chords in the key of E flat

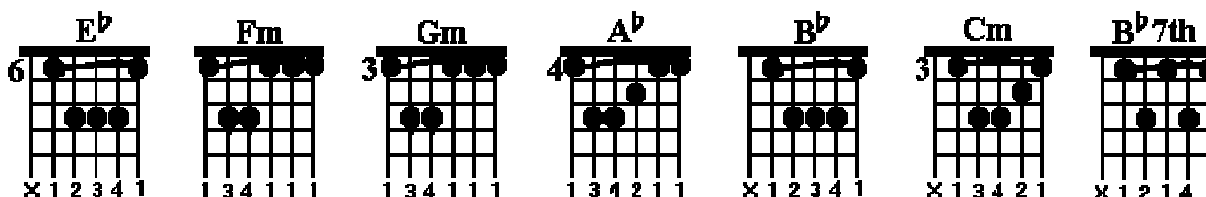


Chart 19

Now let me explain the chord charts in case you don't understand them. They represent the guitar neck, as you would look at it sideways. From right to left are the six strings of the guitar and the horizontal lines represent the frets. Got it? Good. Each finger is represented by a number from 1-4, with 1 being the index finger, 2 being the middle finger, 3 being the ring finger and 4 being the pinky. The "x" means that the string isn't played, plucked, strummed or touched. Leave it alone! Whenever you see a line connecting the dots, it means that all of the dots are pressed down by the same finger. This is called "barring" the chord. Simplified: One finger lays across the strings. You may have noticed that most of the chord diagrams in chart 1 have a number to the left of them. Let's use the C Minor as an example. The 3 to the left of the diagram means that the first fret displayed is to be regarded as the fourth fret on your guitar. Okay? Above, I've shown the basic chords for the key of E flat. Below are some additional chords that I refer to as substitute chords.

### ***Some substitute chords for the key of E flat***

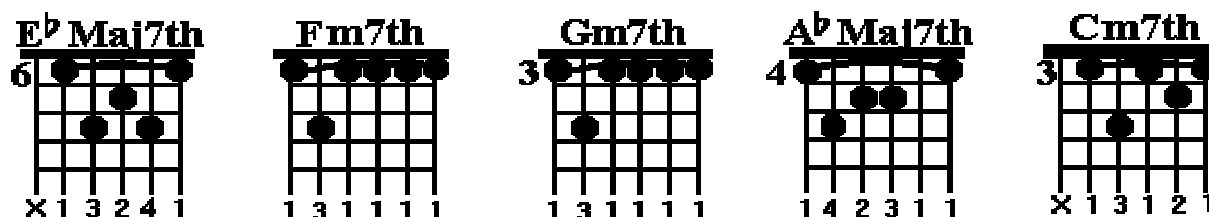


Chart 20

The chart above lists what are called substitute chords. Let's say you played the first chords listed in chart 1, in the order that they were listed. For the E flat chord, you can substitute an E flat major 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The C minor chord can be replaced by the C minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The same is true for each of the remaining. Play them. Has a jazzy ring to it, doesn't it? Some people refer to substitute chords as orchestral chords but it doesn't matter. A rose by any other name still has a thorn. I've included additional substitute chords so that you can improve your chord vocabulary. Let's move on to some more substitute chords.

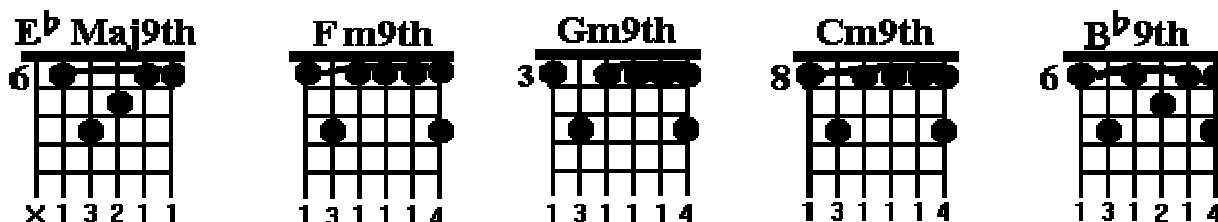


Chart 21

## **The Key of E**

We ended our last section with the key of E flat. In this section we will cover the key of E. Let's start with the basic chords in the key of E.

### The Basic chords in the key of E

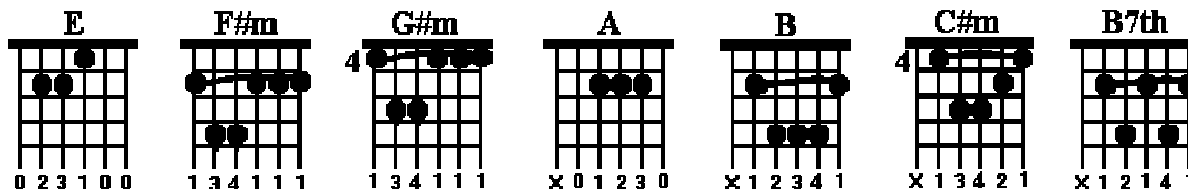


Chart 22

Now let me explain the chord charts in case you don't understand them. They represent the guitar neck, as you would look at it sideways. From right to left are the six strings of the guitar and the horizontal lines represent the frets. Got it? Good. Each finger is represented by a number from 1-4, with 1 being the index finger, 2 being the middle finger, 3 being the ring finger and 4 being the pinky. The "x" means that the string isn't played, plucked, strummed or touched. Leave it alone! Whenever you see a line connecting the dots, it means that all of the dots are pressed down by the same finger. This is called "barring" the chord. Simplified: One finger lays across the strings. You may have noticed that most of the chord diagrams in chart 1 have a number to the left of them. Let's use the C# Minor as an example. The 4 to the left of the diagram means that the first fret displayed is to be regarded as the fourth fret on your guitar. Okay? Above, I've shown the basic chords for the key of E. Below are some additional chords that I refer to as substitute chords.

### Some substitute chords for the key of E

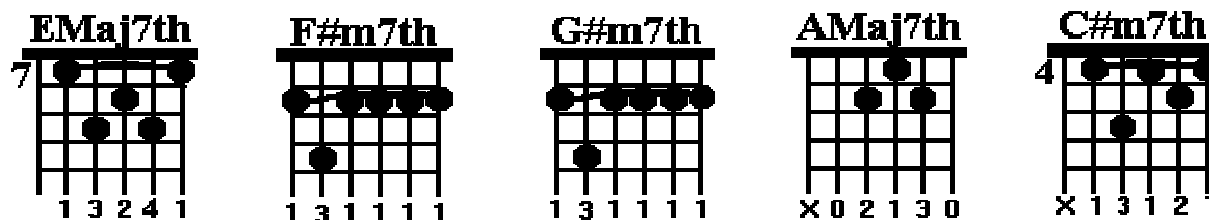


Chart 23

The chart above lists what are called substitute chords. Let's say you played the first chords listed in chart 1, in the order that they were listed. For the E flat chord, you can substitute an E major 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The C# minor chord can be replaced by the C# minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The same is true for each of the remaining. Play them. Has a jazzy ring to it, doesn't it? Some people refer to substitute chords as orchestral chords but it doesn't matter. A rose by any other name still has a thorn. I've included additional substitute chords so that you can improve your chord vocabulary. Let's move on to some more substitute chords.

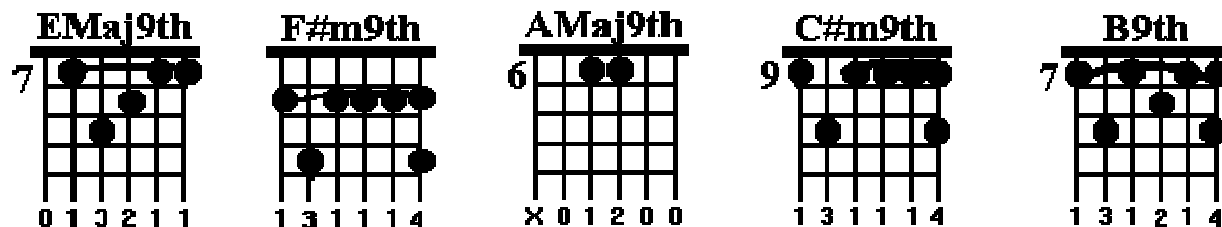


Chart 24

## The Key of A flat

We ended our last section with the key of E. In this section we will cover the key of A flat. Let's start with the basic chords in the key of A flat.

### *The Basic chords in the key of A flat*

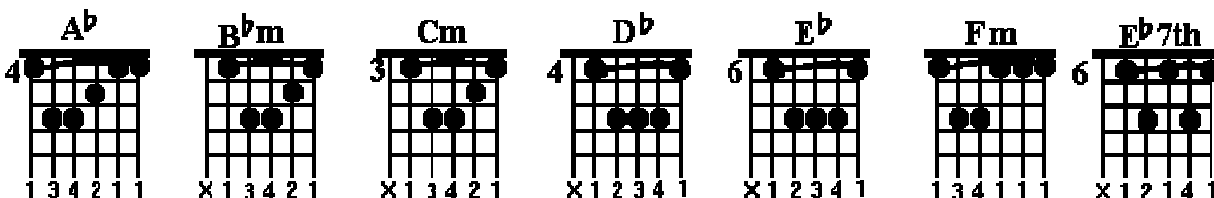


Chart 25

Now let me explain the chord charts in case you don't understand them. They represent the guitar neck, as you would look at it sideways. From right to left are the six strings of the guitar and the horizontal lines represent the frets. Got it? Good. Each finger is represented by a number from 1-4, with 1 being the index finger, 2 being the middle finger, 3 being the ring finger and 4 being the pinky. The "x" means that the string isn't played, plucked, strummed or touched. Leave it alone! Whenever you see a line connecting the dots, it means that all of the dots are pressed down by the same finger. This is called "barring" the chord. Simplified: One finger lays across the strings. You may have noticed that most of the chord diagrams in chart 1 have a number to the left of them. Let's use the C Minor as an example. The 3 to the left of the diagram means that the first fret displayed is to be regarded as the fourth fret on your guitar. Okay? Above, I've shown the basic chords for the key of A flat. Below are some additional chords that I refer to as substitute chords.



### Some substitute chords for the key of A flat

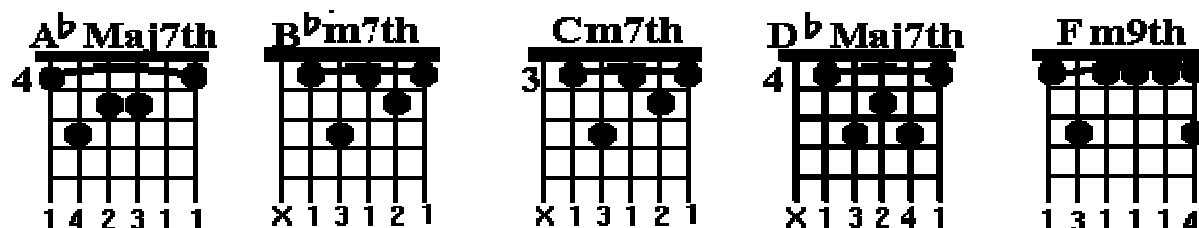


Chart 26

The chart above lists what are called substitute chords. Let's say you played the first chords listed in chart 1, in the order that they were listed. For the A major chord, you can substitute an A major 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The C minor chord can be replaced by the C minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The same is true for each of the remaining. Play them. Has a jazzy ring to it, doesn't it? Some people refer to substitute chords as orchestral chords but it doesn't matter. A rose by any other name still has a thorn. I've included additional substitute chords so that you can improve your chord vocabulary. Let's move on to some more substitute chords.

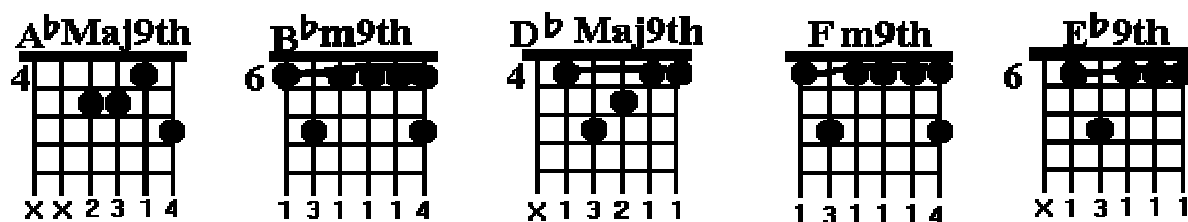


Chart 27

## The Key of B

We ended our last section with the key of A flat. In this section we will cover the wonderful key of B. Let's start with the basic chords in the key of B.

### The Basic chords in the key of B

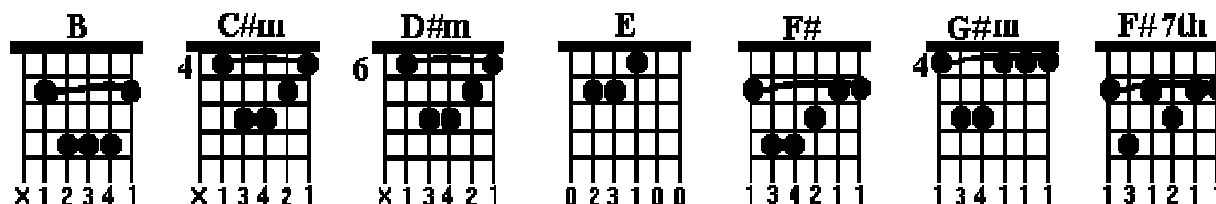


Chart 28

Now let me explain the chord charts in case you don't understand them. They represent the guitar neck, as you would look at it sideways. From right to left are the six strings of the guitar and the horizontal lines represent the frets. Got it? Good. Each finger is represented by a

number from 1-4, with 1 being the index finger, 2 being the middle finger, 3 being the ring finger and 4 being the pinky. The “x” means that the string isn’t played, plucked, strummed or touched. Leave it alone! Whenever you see a line connecting the dots, it means that all of the dots are pressed down by the same finger. This is called “barring” the chord. Simplified: One finger lays across the strings. You may have noticed that most of the chord diagrams in chart 1 have a number to the left of them. Let’s use the G minor as an example. The 3 to the left of the diagram means that the first fret displayed is to be regarded as the third fret on your guitar. Okay? Above, I’ve shown the basic chords for the key of B flat. Below are some additional chords that I refer to as substitute chords.

### ***Some substitute chords for the key of B***

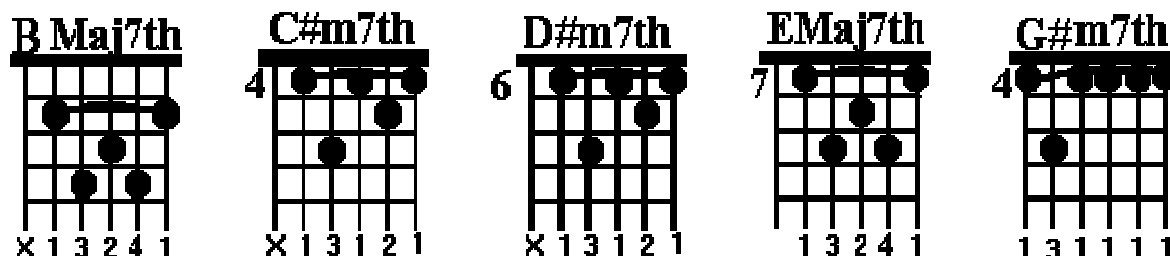


Chart 29

The chart above lists what are called substitute chords. Let’s say you played the first chords listed in chart 1, in the order that they were listed. For the B flat major chord, you can substitute a B flat major 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The C minor chord can be replaced by the C minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The same is true for each of the remaining. Play them. Has a jazzy ring to it, doesn’t it? Some people refer to substitute chords as orchestral chords but it doesn’t matter. A rose by any other name still has a thorn. I’ve included additional substitute chords so that you can improve your chord vocabulary. Let’s move on to some more substitute chords.

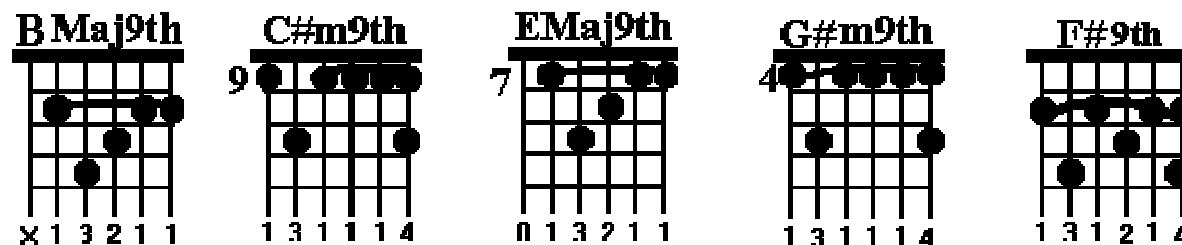


Chart 30

## **The Key of F#**

We ended our last section with the key of B. In this section we will cover the wonderful key of F#. Let’s start with the basic chords in the key of F#.

### *The Basic chords in the key of F#*

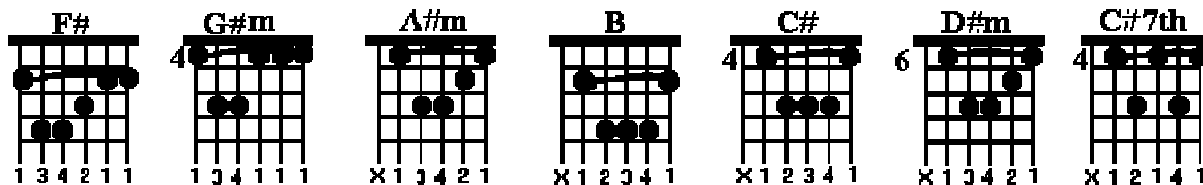


Chart 31

Now let me explain the chord charts in case you don't understand them. They represent the guitar neck, as you would look at it sideways. From right to left are the six strings of the guitar and the horizontal lines represent the frets. Got it? Good. Each finger is represented by a number from 1-4, with 1 being the index finger, 2 being the middle finger, 3 being the ring finger and 4 being the pinky. The "x" means that the string isn't played, plucked, strummed or touched. Leave it alone! Whenever you see a line connecting the dots, it means that all of the dots are pressed down by the same finger. This is called "barring" the chord. Simplified: One finger lays across the strings. You may have noticed that most of the chord diagrams in chart 1 have a number to the left of them. Let's use the G minor as an example. The 3 to the left of the diagram means that the first fret displayed is to be regarded as the third fret on your guitar. Okay? Above, I've shown the basic chords for the key of F#. Below are some additional chords that I refer to as substitute chords.

### *Some substitute chords for the key of F#*

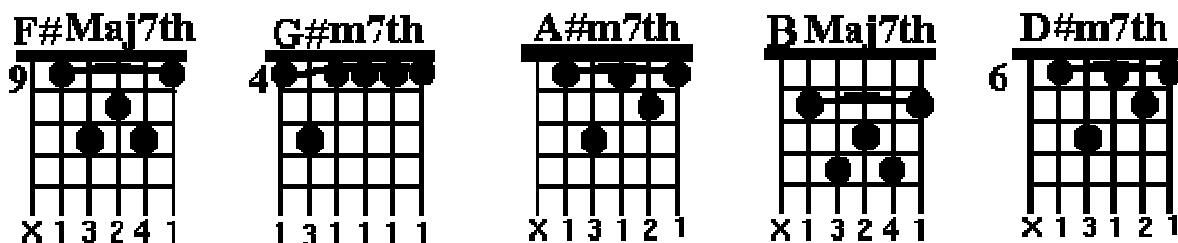


Chart 32

The chart above lists what are called substitute chords. Let's say you played the first chords listed in chart 1, in the order that they were listed. For the F major chord, you can substitute an F major 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The D minor chord can be replaced by the D minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The same is true for each of the remaining. Play them. Has a jazzy ring to it, doesn't it? Some people refer to substitute chords as orchestral chords but it doesn't matter. A rose by any other name still has a thorn. I've included additional substitute chords so that you can improve your chord vocabulary. Let's move on to some more substitute chords.

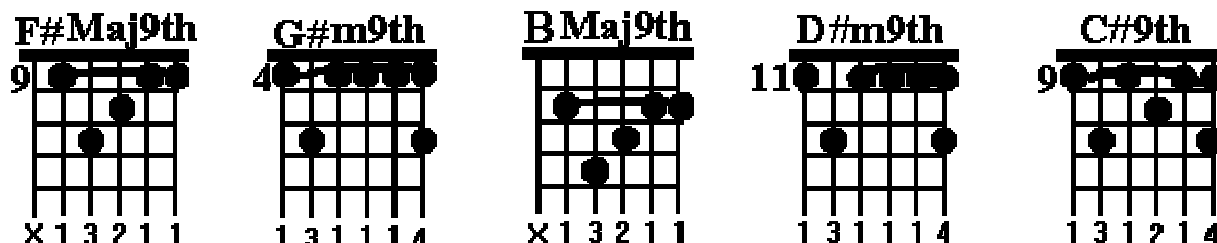


Chart 33

## The Key of D flat

We ended our last section with the key of F#. In this section we will cover the wonderful key of D flat. Let's start with the basic chords in the key of D flat.

### *The Basic chords in the key of D flat*

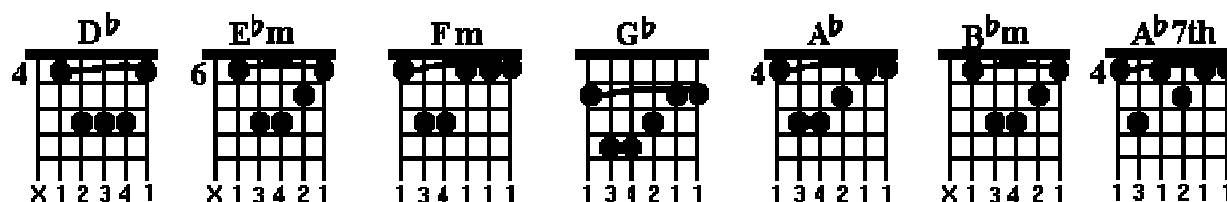


Chart 34

Now let me explain the chord charts in case you don't understand them. They represent the guitar neck, as you would look at it sideways. From right to left are the six strings of the guitar and the horizontal lines represent the frets. Got it? Good. Each finger is represented by a number from 1-4, with 1 being the index finger, 2 being the middle finger, 3 being the ring finger and 4 being the pinky. The "x" means that the string isn't played, plucked, strummed or touched. Leave it alone! Whenever you see a line connecting the dots, it means that all of the dots are pressed down by the same finger. This is called "barring" the chord. Simplified: One finger lays across the strings. You may have noticed that most of the chord diagrams in chart 1 have a number to the left of them. Let's use the E flat Minor as an example. The 6 to the left of the diagram means that the first fret displayed is to be regarded as the sixth fret on your guitar. Okay? Above, I've shown the basic chords for the key of D flat. Below are some additional chords that I refer to as substitute chords.

### Some substitute chords for the key of D flat

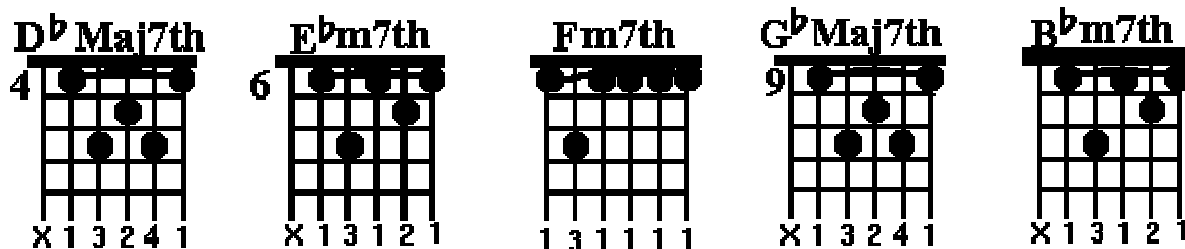


Chart 35

The chart above lists what are called substitute chords. Let's say you played the first chords listed in chart 1, in the order that they were listed. For the A major chord, you can substitute an A major 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The E flat minor chord can be replaced by the E flat minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord. The same is true for each of the remaining. Play them. Has a jazzy ring to it, doesn't it? Some people refer to substitute chords as orchestral chords but it doesn't matter. A rose by any other name still has a thorn. I've included additional substitute chords so that you can improve your chord vocabulary. Let's move on to some more substitute chords.

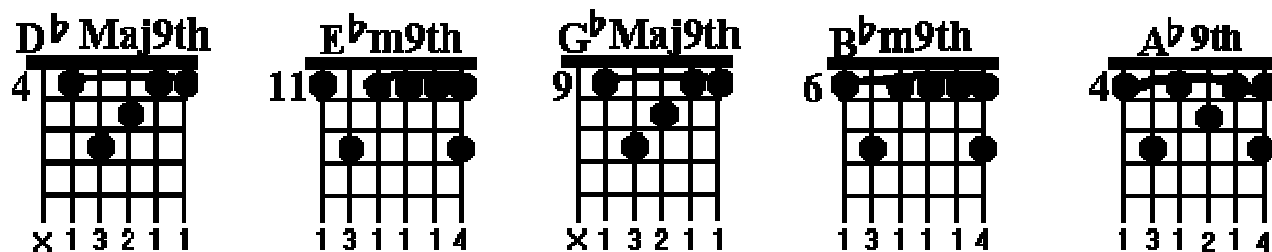


Chart 36

## Guitar Chord Progression

Key	Sharps	Major 1st	minor 2nd	minor 3rd	Major 4th	Major 5th	minor 6th	dim 7th
<b>C</b>		C	Dm	Em	F	G	Am	Bdim
<b>G</b>	F#	G	Am	Bm	C	D	Em	F#dim
<b>D</b>	F#, C#	D	Em	F#m	G	A	Bm	C#dim
<b>A</b>	F#, C#, G#	A	Bm	C#m	D	E	F#m	G#dim
<b>E</b>	F, C, G, D#	E	F#m	G#m	A	B	C#m	D#dim
<b>F</b>	Bb	F	Gm	Am	Bb	C	Dm	Edim

### Chords in the key of:

Key	Major 1 <sup>st</sup>	Minor 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Minor 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Major 4 <sup>th</sup>	Major 5 <sup>th</sup>	Minor 6 <sup>th</sup>	Diminish 7 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Ab or G#</b>	Ab	Bbm	Cm	Db	Eb	Fm	Gdim
<b>A</b>	A	Bm	Dbm	D	E	Gbm	Abdim
<b>Bb or A#</b>	Bb	Cm	Dm	Eb	F	Gm	Adim
<b>B</b>	B	Dbm	Ebm	E	Gb	Abm	Bbdim
<b>C</b>	C	Dm	Em	F	G	Am	Bdim
<b>Db or C#</b>	Db	Ebm	Fm	Gb	Ab	Bbm	Cdim
<b>D</b>	D	Em	Gbm	G	A	Bm	Dbdim
<b>Eb or D#</b>	Eb	Fm	Gm	Ab	Bb	Cm	Ddim
<b>E</b>	E	Gbm	Abm	A	B	Dbm	Ebdim
<b>F</b>	F	Gm	Am	Bb	C	Dm	Edim
<b>Gb or F#</b>	Gb	Abm	Bbm	B	Db	Ebm	Fdim
<b>G</b>	G	Am	Bm	C	D	Em	Gbdim

## Music Theory: Keys, Scales and Triads

The table below summarizes the basic ideas of music theory that relate to keys, key signatures, scales and triads. The key signature, major triad, minor triad and degrees of the scale are listed for all of the common major keys. Just find the key that you want to look up in the left hand column, then read across to find the triads, key signature etc.

Note that some degrees of the scale (e.g. 2nd & 9th) correspond to the same note. The difference is that one (in this case, the 2nd) will be a note within the *first octave* of the scale, and the other (the 9th) will be in the *second octave* of the scale.

Major Key	Key Signature	Major Triad	Minor Triad	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup> 9 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup> 10 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> 11 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup> 13 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	Octave
C		C E G	C Eb G	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
Db	b b b b b	Db F Ab	Db Fb Ab	Db	Eb	F	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	Db
D	# #	D F# A	D F A	D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D
Eb	b b b	Eb G Bb	Eb Gb Bb	Eb	F	G	Ab	Bb	C	D	Eb
E	# # # #	E G# B	E G B	E	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#	E
F	b	F A C	F Ab C	F	G	A	Bb	C	D	E	F
F#	# # # # #	F# A# C#	F# A C#	F#	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E#	F#
Gb	b b b b b b	Gb Bb Db	Gb Bbb Db	Gb	Ab	Bb	Cb	Db	Eb	F	Gb
G	#	G B D	G Bb D	G	A	B	C	D	E	F#	G
Ab	b b b b	Ab C Eb	Ab Cb Eb	Ab	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	G	Ab
A	# # #	A C# E	A C E	A	B	C#	D	E	F#	G#	A
Bb	b b	Bb D F	Bb Db F	Bb	C	D	Eb	F	G	A	Bb
B	# # # #	B D# F#	B D F#	B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B

## Minor keys

The keys listed include all the most commonly used major keys. To find the key signature and notes of the scale for a minor key, use the second table to find the relative major key, then look up the key signature of the relative major key. For example, to find the key signature for B minor, find the relative major (D major) then find it's key signature (2 sharps). This means B minor also uses 2 sharps.

To find the notes of the scale for the minor key, look up the scale for the relative major key but start from the root of the minor scale (which will be the 6th of the major scale). In the above example, the scale of B minor is found by reading from the scale of the relative major (D major). Start on the 6th (B), then read across, looping back from the octave to the 2nd.. This gives us B C# D E F# G A as the B minor scale.

## Enharmonic equivalents

Note that the key signature (and scale and triads) are not the same for F# and Gb major, even though these two notes are **enharmonically equivalent**, meaning they are played using the same key on a piano. You would play these two scales in exactly the same way on a piano, and they would sound the same, but the notes are still *written down differently*. So you would always write an F# major triad as F# A# C# and a Gb major triad as Gb Bb Db. This is true for all enharmonic equivalents, so a C# major scale is written differently from a Db major scale, and so on.

Also, it might seem a little odd to come across notes such as Fb, for example in a Db minor triad. Although you might be tempted to substitute E instead of Fb, as they are enharmonic equivalents, it is wrong to write a Db minor triad as Db E Ab - you **must** write the triad as Db Fb Ab.

### ***Other keys***

The table above lists the most common keys, but you might want to find out information about a key that is not listed (for example G# major). To work out the major scale or key signature for the more unusual keys, simply find the key with the same letter name (in this case, G major), then add the appropriate accidental (sharp or flat) to **all** notes in the scale. This often means that one of the notes becomes a double sharp (or double flat). In our case, to find the G# major scale, we find G major (G A B C D E F#) then add sharps, giving us G# major: G# A# B# C# D# E# F##.

The key signature of the "unusual" key will have seven more sharps or flats than the key with the same letter name. In our example, the key signature for G# major will have seven more sharps than G major. The table lists G major as having one sharp (F#) so G# major will have 8 sharps (F will be double sharp).

The idea of having double sharps or double flats is a little strange when you first come across it, but it's a well established idea in music theory and means you can use consistent rules for scales and keys.

### ***Relative minor and relative major keys***

Each major key has a special relationship with a particular minor key. When the two keys share the same key signature we say that one key is the **relative minor** (or **relative major**) of the other.

The table below shows the relationships between the major and minor keys. To find the relative major or minor for another key just look up the corresponding entry in the table. For example, to find the relative minor of D major, find D in the major key column - this gives you B minor in minor key column so B minor is the relative minor of D major.



Relative Major Key	Relative Minor Key
C	A minor
Db	Bb minor
D	B minor
Eb	C minor
E	C# minor
F	D minor
F#	D# minor
Gb	Eb minor
G	E minor
Ab	F minor
A	F# minor
Bb	G minor
B	G# minor

## ***Key Signatures***

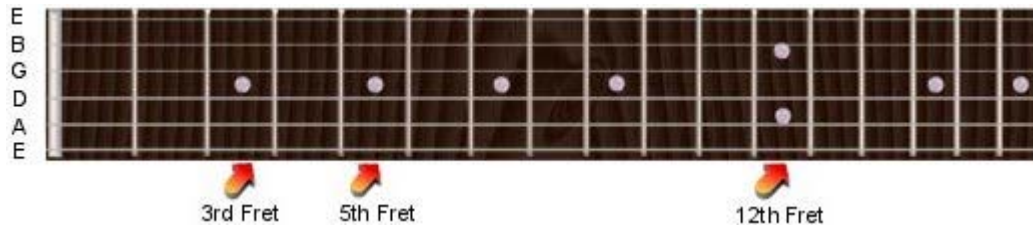
Major and natural minor scales built on C and A respectively do not contain any altered note. In order to build these scales starting from any other note, it is necessary to alter one or more notes. For instance, in the scale of G major, note F is sharp. If you wished to write a melody in G major, you would need to alter all F notes. Key signatures are used to avoid writing so many accidentals.

Key signatures are placed at the beginning of each staff, between the clef and the meter signature:

**key signature**

## Guitar Basics

For those of you who are not used to reading these types of illustrations or diagrams I thought I would include some explanation on them. I usually draw a standard guitar neck diagram that would appear the same as it would when you look down at your guitar or bass neck. What you will see when looking at the diagram below is the "low E" string (the fattest one) on the bottom, and the "high E" (the thinnest one) on top. This should be easy to tell as the string sizes are visible on the neck. If you have not yet memorized the string names, they are listed right here and now would be an excellent time to do so.



In the actual diagrams in the lessons, you will see dots on the fret board marking where the notes should be played. They will be in various colors and will mean various things so I will leave those explanations until the lessons.

Also, if you see note markers that are all the way at the end of the neck, and are not in between frets where you would put your finger, but rather right on the "nut" at the end, these are "open" notes and do not need to be fretted at all.

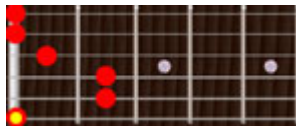
The diagram below lists the notes on the fret board from the "nut" to the 12<sup>th</sup> fret position.

<b>E</b>	F	F#	G	G#	A	A#	B	C	C#	D	D#	E
<b>B</b>	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	A#	B
<b>G</b>	G#	A	A#	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G
<b>D</b>	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	A#	B	C	C#	D
<b>A</b>	A#	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A
<b>E</b>	F	F#	G	G#	A	A#	B	C	C#	D	D#	E
				•			•			•		• •

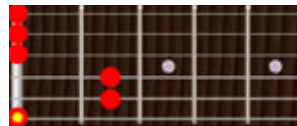
## Basic Chord Chart - Guitar Chords and Finger Positions

Here are some basic open chords for you to play. This chart is by no means a complete chord chart, just some common chords to get the beginner guitar players playing something. I will be adding new chords to this page as I have time. Learning how to create and understand chords will be covered in the advanced section of the lessons and is recommended to come after learning scales.

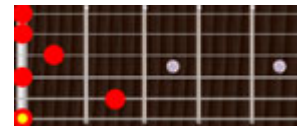
The yellow dot denotes the root note of the chord. Strings without a dot are not played.



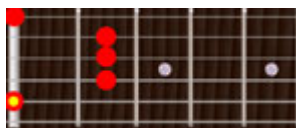
**E Major**



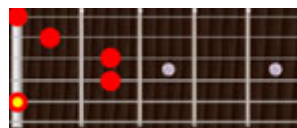
**E Minor**



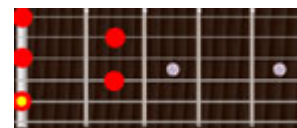
**E7**



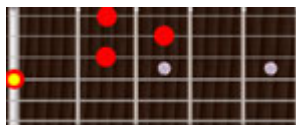
**A Major**



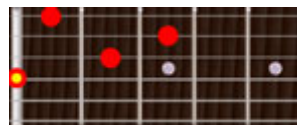
**A Minor**



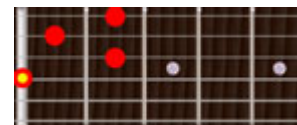
**A7**



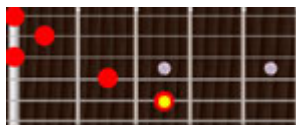
**D Major**



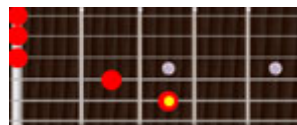
**D Minor**



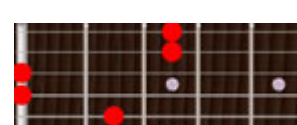
**D7**



**C Major**



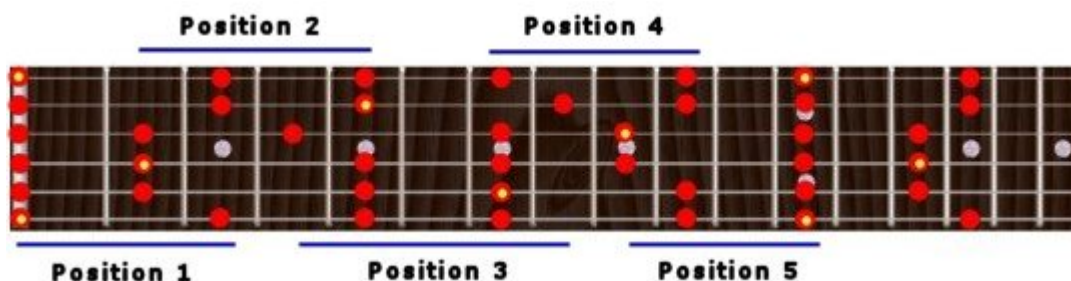
**C Major 7**



**G Major**

## Five Positions of the Pentatonic Minor Scale

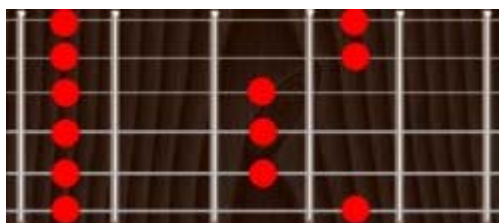
This lesson will cover learning the five positions of pentatonic minor. Below you will see the full version of the E pentatonic minor scale, showing where each position should be played in E pentatonic minor. You can also see where all of the root notes are on the full diagram of E pentatonic minor.



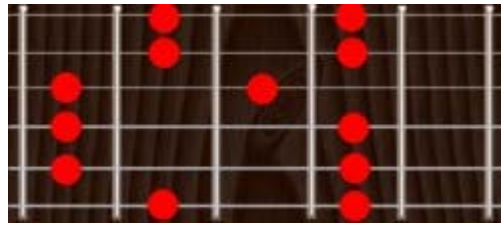
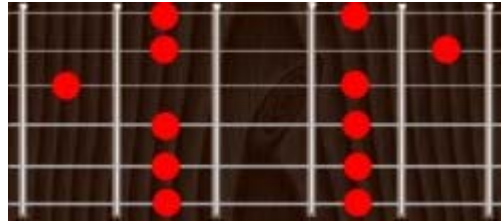
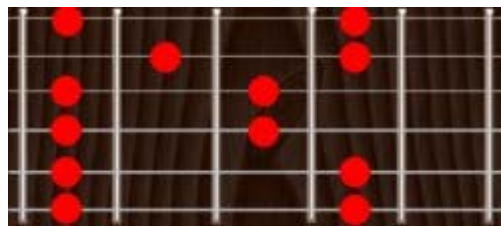
\* Note that the positions overlap, for instance position two is simply the top half of position one mated with the bottom half of position 3.

All of these positions fit together perfectly and will always be in the same order that they are here. That means that they must always be positioned together as they are and their relation to each other will never change. To play this pentatonic minor scale in any key other than E, you would have to slide the whole note diagram up or down the neck, moving all the positions together. This will be covered in the transposing scales lesson.

Now that you can see all of the positions and how they work together to form E pentatonic minor, I will show you the individual positions. You will notice that there are no marks on the notes in the position diagrams to show where the root note is as this is not important for the positions. We will find out why this is when we get to the lesson on transposing.



Position One

**Position Two****Position Three****Position Four****Position Five**

Now we can move on to start learning how to use this in your playing. The next section is on "phrasing" and will teach you how to play this scale with feeling and start improvising with it.

## The Art of Phrasing with Pentatonic Scales

Phrasing is the way we will think of how we play the guitar or bass. Its almost like English class in school, in that we will think of it like the way we speak. After all, that is what you want to do with your instrument isn't it? We will learn to express ourselves and our playing using phrasing.

### Phrasing terms:

**phrase:** A phrase is a group of scale notes being played together to form a musical "idea"

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**period phrase:** A period phrase is a phrase that ends with the root note. This leaves the listener with a sense that the idea is done or complete. It has a "finished" sound.

**comma phrase:** A comma phrase is a phrase ending in a note other than the root note. This leaves the listener with the feeling there must be something more to come. The idea does not sound "finished" yet.

**phrasing:** This would simply be the art of phrasing and using both comma and period phrases together to form whole solos, etc.

Each lick, riff, or melody you play we will call a phrase. Some phrases are comma phrases and some are period phrases. When we link comma and period phrases together we get ideas that are more complete. So a whole entire solo would be just like a paragraph. Lots of smaller ideas linked together, using comma and period phrases that kind of make up sentences, and those all put together will kind of make a paragraph (or for you a solo).

It does not matter what scale note you start a phrase on, only what note the phrase ends with. This all rests on knowing what key you are playing in. To be able to hear this comma/period phrasing at work much better, you need to hear the root note often. Say, if you are playing E pentatonic minor scale notes it would help to hear an E minor chord (your root) fairly often. Also, playing with a CD or some song that you know uses your scale would help tremendously. This allows you to hear the way a phrase ending on a root note sounds finished, and a phrase ending on a note other than the root note leaves it sounding like more must be coming.

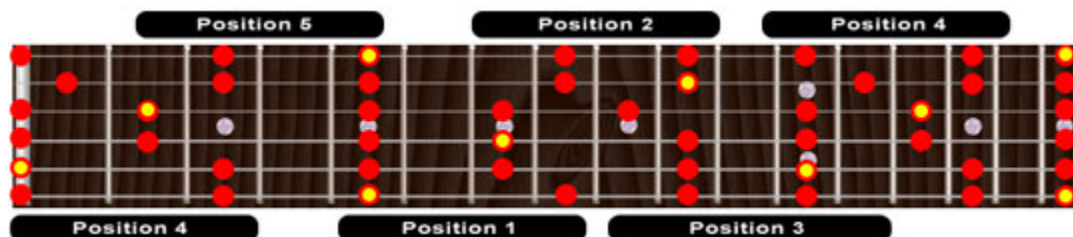
Try it out. If done properly you will hear what I am talking about.

## Transposing Scales into Other Musical Keys

Ok, so what happens if you don't want to play pentatonic minor in the key of E ? Well, now we would have to transpose the scale into another key. Transposing simply means to move our scale, moving all of the positions together, to another key or root note.

If you wanted to play A pentatonic minor instead of E pentatonic minor, you would have to move the first position that starts with the low E note up 5 frets so that the first note of position 1 is the A note. All other positions would have to slide up the neck 5 frets also, so that their relation to each other is still the same. Naturally, anything that slides up past the octave (12th fret) will also appear at the bottom of the neck, as they are the same notes.

If you have already learned E pentatonic minor (and you should have if you are here) you can study the diagram below and you can see exactly what I am talking about. Our root note will now be A, and that's where the first position will start.



Notice that even the root notes are in exactly the same place in the positions as they were before, the only thing that's changed is we slid the whole thing up 5 frets.

You would now be playing "A pentatonic minor".