

OPEN CHORDS 1

CHORDS: G C D Am (A minor) & Am7 (A Minor 7)

Refer page 99 for a diagram of a guitar and its parts.

Chords.

Chords are shapes that are formed by the hand that holds the neck of the guitar. Our other hand will strum the strings to produce musical sounds.

Open chords are so called because they are generally played at the nut end of the neck and they also have some open (unfretted) strings.

- An open string does not have a finger placed on it and a fretted string does have a finger on it pressing it to the fret board.
- The finger tip is used to fret the strings, not the soft pad of the finger. Using the finger tip on the string helps the first section of the finger stand perpendicular to the string which helps it stand clear of other strings.
- The finger is placed on the string just behind the fret.
- Firm pressure is needed to press the string to the fret board.

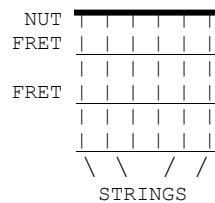
There are 3 different ways that chords can be represented.

Method 1. Block Diagram

The vertical lines are the strings. The first horizontal line is always assumed to be the nut unless otherwise indicated and the other horizontal lines are the frets.

It's as though we have the guitar standing in front of us and we are looking at the fret board.

Block Diagram



The Numbers represent the fingers we use to form the chord.

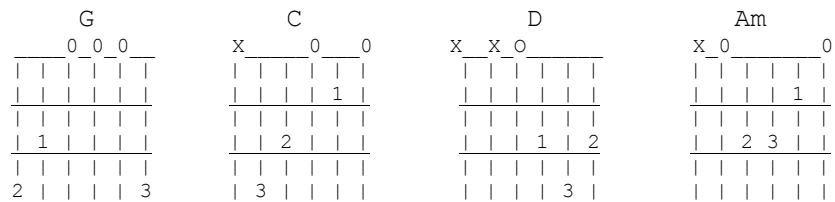
1 = Index finger, 2 = Middle finger, 3 = Ring finger, 4 = Little finger.

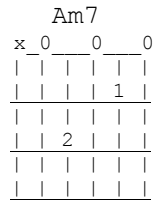
0 = Open string

X = Do not sound (mute)

The name of the chord is written at the top of each block.

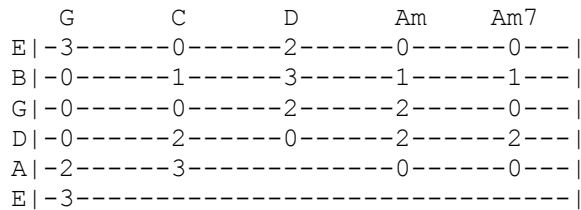
We will use the chords of this lesson as examples. They are G C D & Am (A minor). A minor is written as Am and spoken as A minor.





Method 2. Tab

This method shows the 6 strings and the fret positions for each string. When fret positions/notes are stacked on top of each other they are played together i.e. strummed.



Method 3. Text

This is a simplified system. There are 6 entries, one for each string starting from the 6th (lowest sounding) string and working through the 1st (highest sounding) string.

The numbers represent the fret position on each string where we place a finger.
 O = Open String
 X = Do not sound (mute)

