DANIEL SERIFF MUSIC · LESSON SUMMARY

Every Triad in One Five-Fret Position

All seven chords in the key of C on the D, G, and B strings, between frets 5 and 9

🎯 The Big Idea

Instead of jumping up and down the neck with big barre chord moves, you can play every chord in a key inside one five-fret stretch. Keeping the chords close together is called **voice leading**, and it makes your changes smoother and your parts sound more connected.

These shapes use the D, G, and B strings (strings 4, 3, and 2). They sit in the middle of the guitar and stay out of the way of the bass, keys, and other guitars, which makes them perfect for playing in a band or jamming with other people. If you play solo acoustic, they won't sound as full and big as open chords or barre chords.

🧮 The Chord Formula for Any Major Key

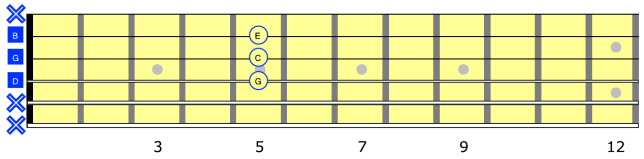
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Major	Minor	Minor	Major	Major	Minor	Diminished

In the key of C, that gives you **C, Dm, Em, F, G, Am, B°**, and then back to C. The diminished 7 chord isn't used much in popular music, but it's a nice one to know for later.

🎸 The Seven Triads (Frets 5 to 9)

Fingerings are written low string to high string (6 5 4 3 2 1). X means don't play that string.

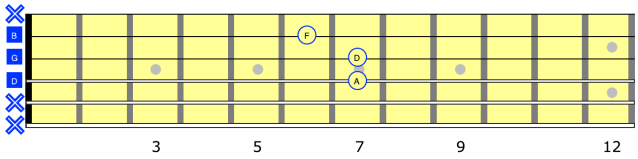
C major — 1 CHORD



X X 5 5 5 X · Notes: G, C, E

Home base

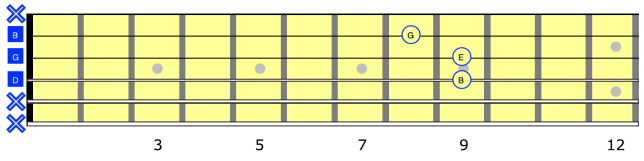
D minor — 2 CHORD



X X 7 7 6 X · Notes: A, D, F

Ring, pinky, and middle (one of several ways)

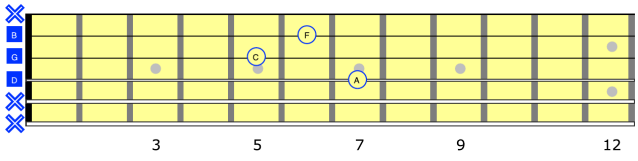
E minor — 3 CHORD



X X 9 9 8 X · Notes: B, E, G

Same shape as D minor, a whole step up

F major — 4 CHORD

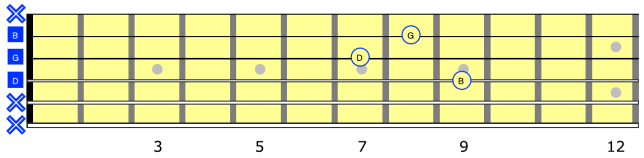


X X 7 5 6 X · Notes: A, C, F

Shift back down so you stay in position

G major

5 CHORD

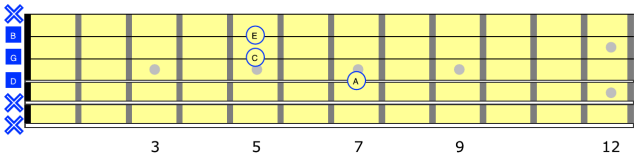


X X 9 7 8 X · Notes: B, D, G

Same shape as F major, a whole step up

A minor

6 CHORD

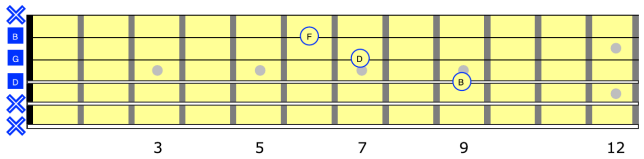


X X 7 5 5 X · Notes: A, C, E

Move back down to stay in position

B diminished

7 CHORD



X X 9 7 6 X · Notes: B, D, F

A little stretchy

🧠 How to Learn the Shapes

- **Take your time** and work with each chord on its own first, away from a track.
- **Quiz yourself with hands on, hands off.** Call out a chord (C, D minor...), take your hand off the neck, then grab the shape. It makes you work harder to get to the chord, which is good for your brain.
- **Use the additive approach.** Play C, then C to D minor, then C, D minor, E minor, then add F, building from the ground up.
- **Put on a drum beat as quickly as possible.** Pick any few chords (like C, Em, F, C) and change between them in time. Even simple strumming works. The beat holds you accountable for getting to the next chord on time.

🔁 Real Progression: 1, 4, 6 Minor, 5 in C

You've heard this progression in a thousand songs. Play it over the backing track using the shapes you already know.

C	F	Am	G
X X 5 5 5 X	X X 7 5 6 X	X X 7 5 5 X	X X 9 7 8 X

> **Voice leading at work:** notice how little your hand has to move. C to F changes only two notes. From F you just lift a finger to get to A minor. G is the furthest away, but it's still close by. That's the voice leading working for you, finding the closest chord option.

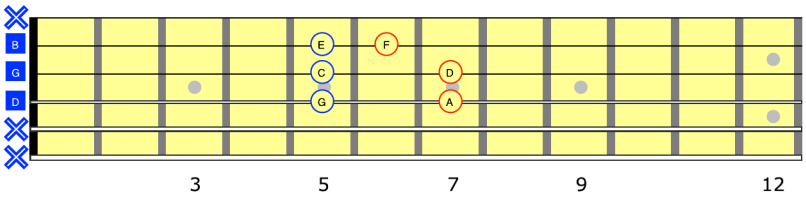
- **The Keith Richards move:** keep your index finger down across fret 5 and add the F shape's two extra notes on top of it. It's hard at first, so get it under your fingers.
- **Stay out of the way:** these small shapes leave room for the bass, drums, and other guitars. Think of it as the icing on the cake rhythm part.
- **Groove on 2 and 4** and slide or hammer into the notes when you can to make the part more interesting.

✨ Embellish the Shapes

The simplest way to make any triad more musical: **add a note from the scale right above or below one of the chord tones.** You can add one note at a time or several at once, and hammer on, pull off, or slide into them. Some will sound better than others, so let your ear decide. Added notes are shown in red.

C

ADD

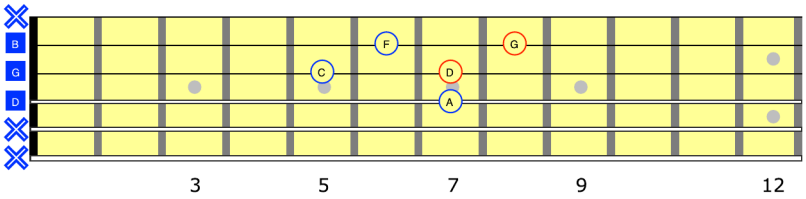


G up to A · C up to D · E up to F

Together, the added notes form the D minor chord right above C. Try all at once or one at a time.

F

ADD

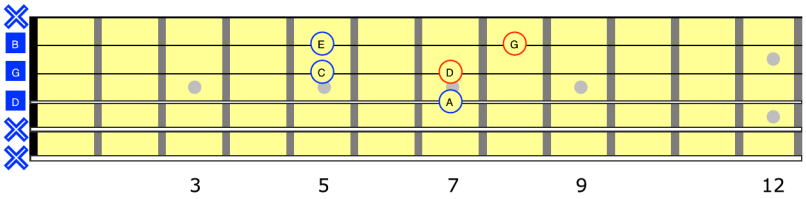


C up to D · F up to G

A up to B is a hard reach in this shape, so skip it.

A minor

ADD

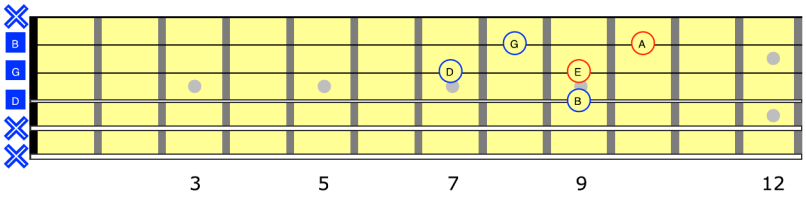


C up to D · E up to G

Stick with the easy ones. The F note works but can sound a little dissonant and intense.

G

ADD



D up to E · G up to A

The A and E notes sound especially good on this chord.

> **Remember:** you can't just watch a video into playing this stuff well. Take the shapes, put on the backing track, and play them yourself.