

## TRANSPOSING

Transposing is the term for changing a song to a different key, say you have a song in C but it would be easier to play and sing in G. You only have it in C so you will need to transpose the chords, this is a brief introduction to how to transpose a song.

Transposing a song is an essential skill to have. Transposing allows you to change the key of a song. It also gives you the option if you ever want to arrange 2 individual songs in the same key to create a medley. With the power of the internet you can find a song in a different key but it is better to know how to do it.

### **Using roman numeral analysis**

The fastest way to transpose a song is to use a technique called roman numeral analysis. Sounds fancy but don't worry we will break it down.

One of the secrets to roman numeral analysis is this:

Every key has just seven main chords which are derived from the notes of the major scale.

For example, the key of C major has seven main chords built from the seven notes of the major scale (C,D,F,G,A,B):

These are the chords in the key of C

- . C
- . Dm
- . Em
- . F
- . G
- . Am
- . Bdim

Chords with a single letter are major chords. Chords followed by the letter "m" are minor chords. The letters dim indicate a diminished chord.

Each of these chords can be represented by a roman numeral.

Roman Numeral	Chord
I	C
ii	Dm
iii	Em
IV	F
V	G
vi	Am
vii	Bdim

Upper case roman numerals indicate major chords. Lower case roman numerals indicate minor chords.

As you can see in the key of C major, there are a total of three major chords, three minor chords and one diminished chord.

### **Putting it together**

Whilst it can be challenging at first to think of the chords of a song in roman numerals, by doing so you are able to quickly change the key of a song.

For example, lets say we have the song **Somewhere Over the Rainbow** in the Key of C major and we want to transpose it to the key of G major. The first four chords of the verse are C, Em, F, and C. How do we transpose these chords to the key of G?

First, represent those four chords in the key of C major as roman numerals by referring to the above chart.

Roman Numeral	Chord
I	C
iii	Em
IV	F

This means the first four chords in the verse of **Somewhere Over The Rainbow** are a I, iii, and IV chord.

To transpose to G major, use the seven notes of the scale (G, A, C, D, E, F#) to represent the chords in the key of G as roman numerals.

Roman Numeral	Chord
I	G
ii	Am
iii	Bm
IV	C
V	D
vi	Em
vii	F#dim

As we can see the I, iii, and IV chords in the key of g major are G, Bm, and C. This means to play the song in the key of G major you play these chords instead.

For example, to transpose from the key of C to G to play **Somewhere Over the Rainbow**, instead of playing a C chord, you play a G chord (I chord). Instead of playing an Em chord, you play a Bm chord (iii chord), and instead of playing an F chord, you play a C chord (IV).

Apply this same idea to the rest of the chords to the song and you've successfully transposed the song!

**Here is a cheat sheet for you.**

Reference the following table quickly to transpose a song from an original key to a new key using the following steps:

1. List out the chords in the original key
2. In the left column, find the original key of the song you want to transpose.
3. Moving left to right find the chord from your list to find the roman numeral. Do this for each chord. Your list now contains a list of chords in the original key with roman numerals.
4. Go back to the left column, select the key you wish to transpose to and moving left to right match the roman numerals with the chords in the new key.

key	I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi	vii
C major	C	Dm	Em	F	G	Am	Bdim
Db major	Dbm	Ebm	Fm	Gb	Ab	Bbm	Cdim
D major	D	Em	F#m	G	A	Bm	C#dim
Eb major	Eb	Fm	Gm	Ab	Bb	Cm	Ddim
E major	E	F#m	G#m	A	B	C#m	D#dim
F major	F	Gm	Am	Bb	C	Dm	Edim
G major	G	Am	Bm	C	D	Em	F#dim
Ab major	Ab	Bbm	Cm	Db	Eb	Fm	Gdim
A major	A	Bm	C#m	D	E	F#m	G#dim
Bb major	Bb	Cm	Dm	Eb	F	Gm	Adim
B major	B	C#m	D#m	E	F#	G#m	A#dim

Notes: If the chord you are transposing has a 7 after it just simply add this 7 to the new chord.

You will see that some of the keys have difficult chords in them this is a good reason why we transpose to a simpler key.

The main Chords you will transpose for the sort of songs we play are the I, IV, V ii, iii and the vi.