

Using 7th Chord Patterns to play Bar Chords, cont'd.

Today I want to explore the A7 chord and how we might use another barred shape to play other chords. This will be the 2nd shape we will explore after last week when we looked at the shape arising from C7.

We start by making an A7 but we use our 2nd finger. Our first finger will rest across all the strings on the nut, just as we did for C7. Remember, this will not affect the A7 chord but will put our barring finger in to position to start moving the shape up the neck.

Move our A7 one fret up and let your first finger bar all of the strings on the first fret. **This is the new shape we are using.** The chord you have now formed is a **Bb7**, not a commonly used chord I admit but stick with me.

Move the shape up one more fret. Now you do have a useful chord, its **B7**, one of the main **7th chords** we will use. Slide the shape once more and hey presto you have discovered another way to play a **C7**. So we are finding ways to add colour and interest to our playing. This is especially effective when playing with others as some play first position chords and others play Barred variations. Very often it is a question of scanning the chord progression in a particular song to see what chords precede or follow each other and whether it is logical to play the barred chord without tying yourself in knots!

We have been dipping our toe into Barred chords by learning to think in terms of shapes rather than just 1st position chords. Learning to Bar chords takes practice, it will come don't get deterred and give up!

Note: where you place your thumb on the back of the neck is important if you are to avoid the danger of straining muscles. I have found angling the thumb towards the nut takes less pressure. I will show you in the lesson.

Making a Bar: What you are doing when you bar across all 4 strings is effectively replacing the nut. You are raising the pitch of all the strings in a uniform way by what is called a semitone each time you move your bar one fret up. This is needed once we start playing chords made up of 4 notes, these are called closed chords because all of the strings now need to have a finger to make the chord. Using a barred finger is the easiest way of achieving this.



