

ALTERNATE MAJOR CHORD POSITIONS

C CHORDS

I am sure you know that there are many ways of playing chords beyond the ones we originally learned. In these Lessons we are going to explore a few other ways of playing our favourite chords.

Lets start with good old "C".

In the last few lessons I have been encouraging you not to get too restricted by what finger we use and this principle will again help us. This is because we are now breaking out of first position chords and typically we will need our 2nd finger, 3rd finger and pinkie to make the chord shapes up the neck.

So we start with C but use our first finger to make it. Not too difficult I am sure. Play that chord get used to using your first finger.

Now we are going use a mini bar across the A and E strings at the 3rd fret using our first finger. That means our first finger is fretting 2 strings. Play this C chord strumming all 4 strings. You may have to experiment with adjusting your finger to get a clean sound if you are not used to barring strings.

Next we are going to add our 2nd finger to the C string at the 4th fret. This means we have the A string, the E string barred with our first finger and the C string fretted with our 2nd finger at the 4th fret. Play this C strumming across all 4 strings.

Finally, we are going to add our 3rd finger to the G string at the 5th fret. Keep all other fingers in place. Now play this chord strumming all 4 strings. Be patient it might take a while to get an acceptable sound. Check each string rings out and is not sounding dull.

Once you are comfortable playing these variations of C you will have a number of C chords you can introduce into your playing. You will see it is not always necessary to play the final C above. Typically if you wanted to add interest but only for a fleeting time you could play any of the other variations. Or use them if there is a prolonged time on the C chord in a particular song. Or to accent parts of songs, or within the instrumental part of a song.

Exercise chart: Play each chord for a count of 4, speeding up and using different strums when ready.

C	C1	C2	C3
C3	C2	C1	C

NOTE: For simplicity I have just referred to the new Chords by adding a number, normal C (but played with 1st finger) and the barred C as being C1 and so on.