

INVERSIONS

Here is a little more detail about Inversions. First of all think of Inversions as some of our favourite chords played on the fretboard in different places than we usually play them. When playing our chords we are playing what are called open chords, but simply we use some open strings when playing the chord, an open string is one we don't put any fingers on but we do play the string. The example is a C chord, only one string has a finger (the A string at 3rd fret) yet we play all the strings when playing C.

So why is that? Well when we play C chord we are playing the notes that go to make a C chord, they are the notes C E G. Chords like C are called Triads. If you check out a Ukulele fretboard chart when playing C you will see that you have an open G string an open C string and an open E string. Our finger at the 3rd fret changes the A string into a C. So we have all the requirements for a C chord. This principle of open strings and fingers at certain places works for all chords. Each Chord we make needs a different combination of notes, here are the three notes we need for each of the major chords:-

Chord	Notes
A =	A C E
B =	B D F
C =	C E G
D =	D F A
E =	E G B
F =	F A C
G =	G B D

** NOTE: some of the chords need sharps or flats in them but don't worry about this at the moment

(if you want to know why it is these particular notes in each chord I can explain this to you).

So to make a G chord we need our fingers to make G B D, we can do this with a combination of open strings and our fingers. The same principle applies to all chords.

When you play down strums on a chord, the sound you get is shaped by the first string you hit and the lowest sounding string. For a G chord that will be the G string then D and then B. Now when you strum up the first note will be a B note then the G then the D and finally a G. This is why although you are playing the same notes on a down and up strum they sound different because you are not playing them in the same order but most important to grasp they are both G chords. This is the principle of playing Inversions, that is playing the notes that make a chord but in a different order. We are playing them higher up the neck so that is also going to alter the sound of the chord but its still called the name of the chord. So anywhere where we can play the three notes in a chord is going to make an Inversion of the chord. The order the notes of the chord are played in doesn't matter, it will just alter the sound of the chord. We try to have as many notes of the name of the chord as we can otherwise the chord will be dominated by another note. Take a look at C played at the 7th fret, the 7th fret of the A string is an E note when we place our finger on it, the 8th fret on the E string is a C note with our finger on it, the 7th fret of the C string is a G note with our finger on it. We play the G string open (no fingers). This means we have all the ingredients of a C chord but it sounds different, we are now playing two G notes rather than two C notes as normal so this changes the sound of the C chord but, it is still a C chord.

Inversions come into their own when playing with others all playing the same chords at the same place. By playing an inversion we add colour and interest to the overall sound, just like all the violins in an orchestra do not play exactly the same. One common use of Inversions is at the end of a line or verse before coming back in singing.