

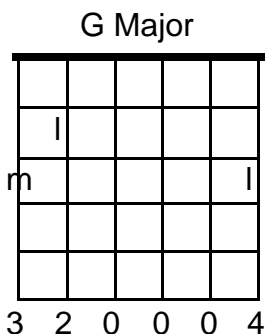
# The Common Open Position Guitar Chords:

There are less than twenty common guitar chords found in the open position. These chords are used in nearly every style of music. They all should be memorized. It is important to study these chords since they occur so often in so many styles. We will work on two primary concepts while memorizing these chords.

## 1). CHORD ROOT LOCATION:

The Root, (or naming note), of a chord is usually found as the lowest sounding note, (pitch). In the study of our set of open position chords, we will assign it's lowest string played to a category for the chords classification.

Example:



The "G Major" chord to the left, is considered, or categorized, as a **sixth string** root chord. It's lowest note, "G" is located on the sixth string 3rd fret. The other chord categories are; **fifth** and **fourth** string chords. The root will usually be in the bass, although there are some exceptions. Any exceptions to this rule will be noted.

**Note:** All root notes found in our charts are hollow dots. The other chord tones are shown as solid dots. Chord fingerings are found below each chord diagram.

## 2). CHORD QUALITY:

The "quality" of a chord refers to whether the chord is; major, minor, or dominant 7th. These three qualities make up the three primary sounds of harmony in music. There are other types of chords which can occur, but the basic harmony will always break down to be one of these three types.

MAJOR:

A major chord contains the 1st, 3rd, and 5th notes of the major scale.

Example (A):

**C major scale** = C D E F G A B C      **C major chord** = C E G

MINOR:

The minor chord is created by lowering the **3rd** step of a major chord.

Example (B):

C minor chord = C Eb G (notice the "E" note was lowered to "Eb")

DOMINANT CHORDS:

The dominant chord is a major chord with a lowered seventh scale step added to the three note major structure. The new "dominant" chord has four individual notes. The new note's interval is called a, "minor 7th interval."

Example (C):

C dominant seventh = C E G Bb (the new "Bb" is a minor seventh interval)

## MAJOR CHORDS - SIXTH STRING ROOT

E Major


0 2 3 1 0 0

G Major

m					

3 2 0 0 0 4

*alternate fingering:*  
2 1 0 0 0 3

## MAJOR CHORDS - FIFTH STRING ROOT

A Major


X 0 2 1 3 0

*alternate fingering:*  
X 0 1 1 1 X

C Major

m					

X 3 2 0 1 0

## MAJOR CHORDS - FOURTH STRING ROOT

D Major


X X 0 1 3 2

F Major

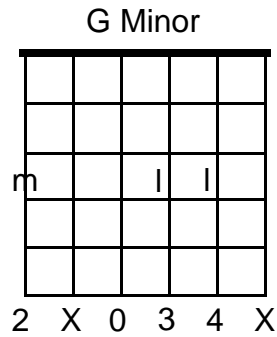
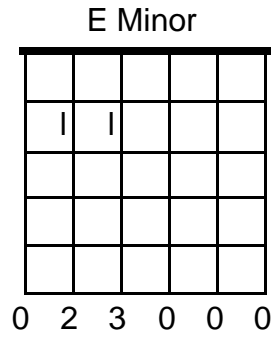
m					

X X 3 2 1 1

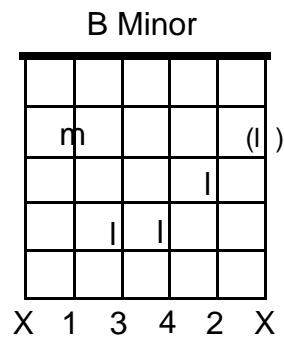
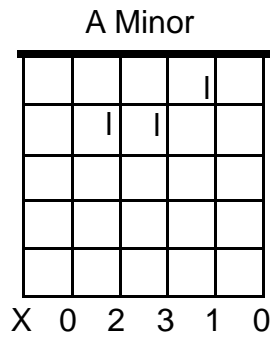
### Notes:

As you may have already noticed, there is no, "B Major," chord in the open position. The, "B major," is not a part of this group. It is a, "moveable chord shape." We will make a study of moveable chords in future handouts.

## MINOR CHORDS - SIXTH STRING ROOT



## MINOR CHORDS - FIFTH STRING ROOT

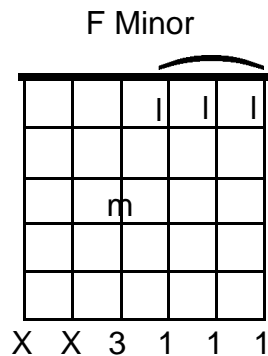
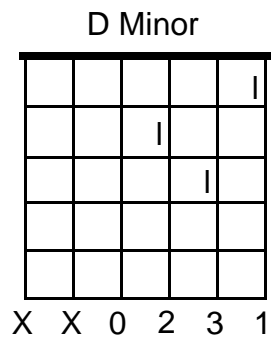


*alternate fingering:*

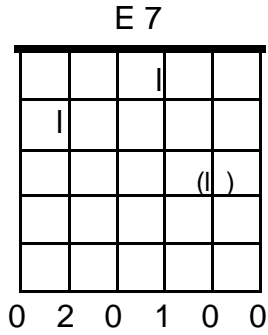
X 1 3 4 2 1

(|) = Optional note for alt. fingering

## MINOR CHORDS - FOURTH STRING ROOT



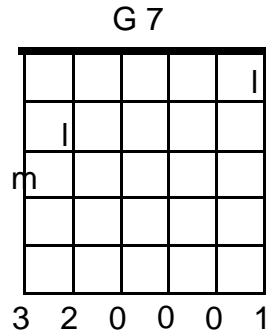
## DOMINANT 7th CHORDS - SIXTH STRING ROOT



alternate fingering:

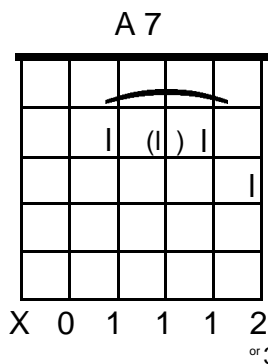
0 2 0 1 4 0

( l ) = Optional note for alt. fingering




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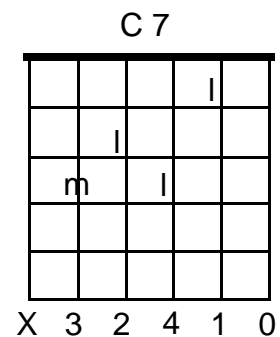
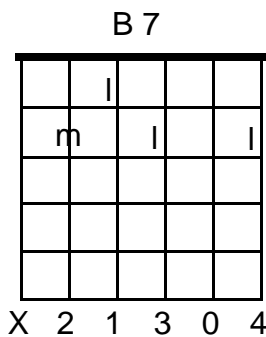
## DOMINANT 7th CHORDS - FIFTH STRING ROOT



alternate fingering:

X 0 2 0 3 4

( l ) = Remove for alt. fingering




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## DOMINANT 7th CHORDS - FOURTH STRING ROOT

