

Chord Dictionary (cont'd)

All of the "F" type chords require a "bar" fingering which can pose a challenge for most beginners.

The diagram illustrates three guitar chord fingerings on a fretboard:

- F (Major):** Root on the 1st fret. Fingering: 1 (1st fret, 1st string), 2 (2nd fret, 2nd string), 3 (3rd fret, 3rd string), 4 (3rd fret, 4th string), 1 (1st fret, 5th string), 1 (1st fret, 6th string). Alternative fingering: 3 (3rd fret, 3rd string), 4 (3rd fret, 4th string).
- F7 (Dominant Seventh):** Root on the 1st fret. Fingering: 1 (1st fret, 1st string), 1 (1st fret, 2nd string), 2 (2nd fret, 2nd string), 1 (1st fret, 3rd string), 1 (1st fret, 4th string), 1 (1st fret, 5th string), 1 (1st fret, 6th string). Alternative fingering: 3 (3rd fret, 3rd string).
- Fm (Minor Seventh):** Root on the 1st fret. Fingering: 1 (1st fret, 1st string), 1 (1st fret, 2nd string), 1 (1st fret, 3rd string), 1 (1st fret, 4th string), 1 (1st fret, 5th string), 1 (1st fret, 6th string). Alternative fingering: 3 (3rd fret, 3rd string), 4 (3rd fret, 4th string).

Below the diagrams is a musical staff showing the notes for each chord: F (F2, C3, F3, A3, C4, F4), F7 (F2, C3, F3, A3, C4, F4, Bb4), and Fm (F2, C3, F3, Ab3, C4, F4).

All chords should eventually be memorized but don't try to do it all in one quick session. Over a course of time when you have used the chord fingerings for developing accompaniments to a good number of songs, you should find that the patterns will stick to your mind.

The chords in this basic chord dictionary are by no means the only chords possible on the guitar. There are hundreds of possibilities. Chord theory and usage will be discussed in detail in Books 2 through 5. Ultimately, you will be capable of developing the chord fingerings through a thought process rather than relying on diagrams.

With a bit of practice, most students will be able to play a variety of chords with some confidence. The biggest problem which tends to occur is the "chord change." (In other words, being able to move from one chord to the next without a rhythmic break.)

Practice Routine:

Isolate a pair of chords. For example, we'll start with the G and D7 chords.

1. Play each chord once and hold for 4 beats.

"G" "D7" "G" "D7"
 count: 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & etc.

Begin changing to the next chord on the 4th beat. Continue this process slowly until the chord change happens without too much thinking.

2. Play each chord twice (as half notes)

"G" "G" "D7" "D7" "G" "G" "D7" "D7"
 count: 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & etc.

This time, begin changing to the D7 chord on the "&" of the 4th beat.

In order to arrive at the subsequent chord at the correct rhythmic point, the chord change is always begun slightly in advance. It is very important to play the next chord at exactly the right time. Being late in rhythm is a huge mistake. Practice all chord "changes" in this manner until the fingers perform reflexively. (without thought)