

# Chord Voicings and Rhythms for Rock and Pop Guitar

## Contents

### Part One

Guitar Fingerboard Note Names.....	p.3
E Shape Major Chord.....	p.5
Quarter Note.....	p.6
Rhythm Concept: Rhythm Is Motion.....	p.6
Eighth Note.....	p.8
Rhythm Concept: Subdivide.....	p.8
Whole Note.....	p.10
'A' Shape Major Chord.....	p.11
Half Note.....	p.12
Rhythm Concept: The Pulse Is a Quarter Note.....	p.12
Power Chords.....	p.16
Quarter Rest, Eighth Rest, Half Rest, Whole Rest.....	p.17
Tie.....	p.20
Rhythm Concept: Some Notes Are Felt, Not Played.....	p.20
D Shape Major Chord.....	p.22
Minor Chords.....	p.28
Two Parts To A Chord Symbol.....	p.28
Accent.....	p.29
7 Chords.....	p.37
Guitar Chord Voicing Reference.....	p.46
Rhythm Reference.....	p.48

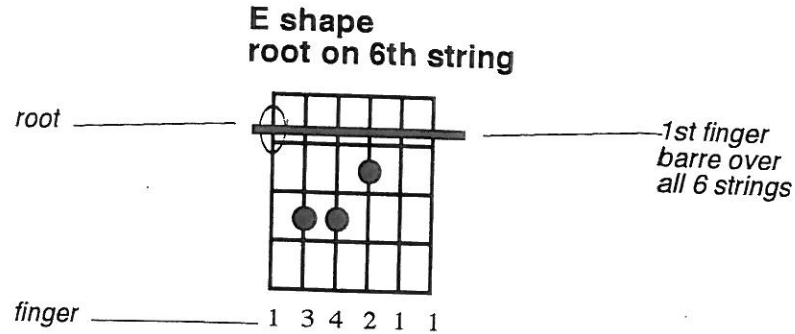
### Part Two

C Shape Chords.....	p.51
Dotted Quarter Note.....	p.52
Dotted Half Note.....	p.52, 56
Eighth Note Triplet.....	p.57
Major 7 Chords.....	p.62
Scratch.....	p.67
Minor 7 Chords.....	p.70
Sixteenth Notes.....	p.71
Dotted Eighth Note.....	p.73, 74
Sixteenth Rest.....	p.78
Guitar Chord Voicing Reference.....	p.84
Rhythm Reference.....	p.86
How many chords are there?.....	p.88

### Part Three

1st Position Guitar Chord Voicing Reference.....	p.91
Guitar Chord Voicing Reference.....	p.92

# E Shape Major Chord



- Notice the 'E shape' within this chord: it's a 1st position E chord plus a barre.  
*1st position chords, see p.91.*
- This E shape chord (also known as a barre chord), is a moveable chord that can be played at any fret of the guitar fingerboard.
- **E shape chords have their *root* note (naming note) on the E string -- the 6th string.**
- The E shape chord is a particular type of chord known as a *major chord* or *major triad*.  
In chord symbol notation, major chords are a 'plain' letter.  
Examples: G = G major, A = A major, D = D major.

E string / 6th string note names:

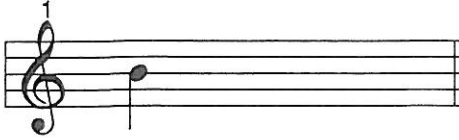
open	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
E	F	F#	G	G#	A	A#	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G
		Gb		Ab		Bb			Db		Eb			Gb	

First, memorize the 'dots' -- the position markers on the guitar fingerboard at the 3rd, 5th, 7th and 12th frets. Use the 'dots' as visual landmarks and reference points for naming the other notes:

•	•	•	••
3	5	7	12
G	A	B	E

## Reading Rhythmic Notation

### Quarter Note

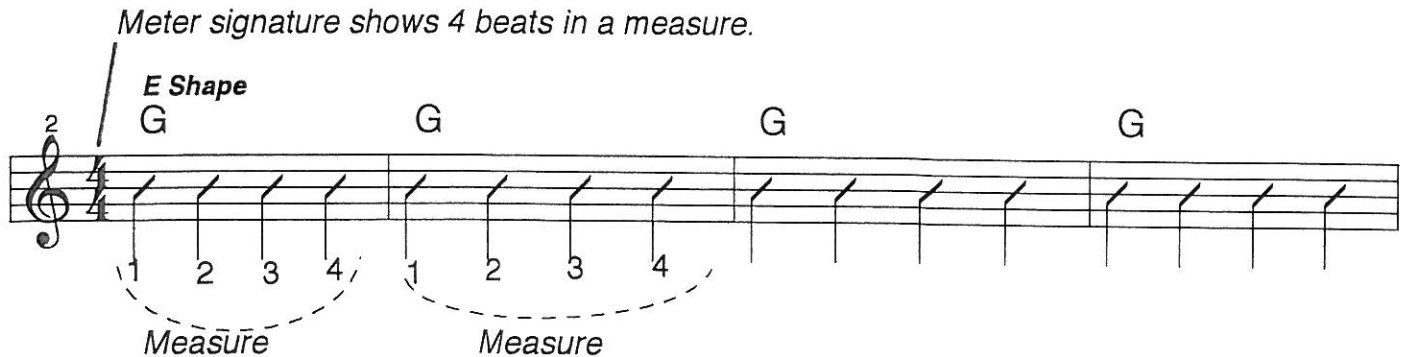


A quarter note gets one beat.

Most rock and pop music is in 4/4 time. (In this book, all the exercises and songs are in 4/4 time.) This means, within each measure there are four beats; each quarter note gets one of the beats.

Example:

Meter signature shows 4 beats in a measure.



**E Shape**  
G G G G

Measure Measure

*Tap your foot in an even, steady pulse. Then, play a G chord in quarter notes; say the counting, "one, two, three, four."*

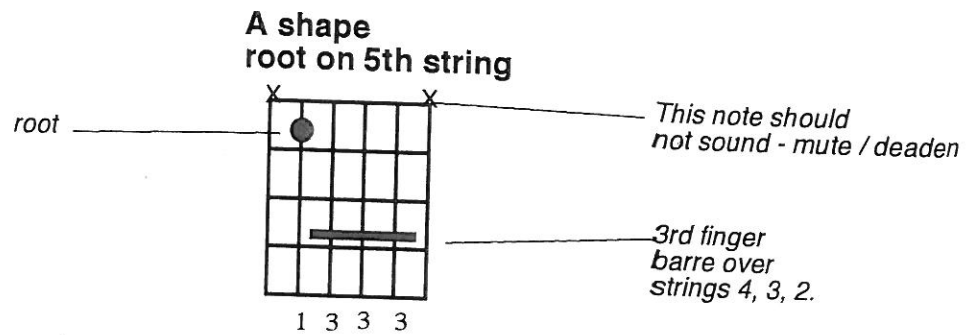
### **Rhythm Concept: Rhythm Is Motion.**

Counting rhythms -- the math side of rhythm -- is important. But rhythm isn't just about math, rhythm is more deeply about feeling and motion. Rhythm isn't just counted, rhythm is felt. Moving your body makes you feel the rhythm more deeply. On a fundamental level, rhythm is felt in the tapping of your foot.

Quarter notes feel: down, down, down, down. Each quarter note meets the down tap of your foot. Also, each quarter note is played with a down motion of your right hand.

*Tap your foot in an even, steady pulse. Then, play the G chord in quarter notes feeling down, down, down, down.*

# A Shape Major Chord



- Notice the 'A' shape within this chord: it looks like a 1st position A chord, plus a note on the 5th string. *1st position chords, see p.91.*
- **'A' shape chords have their root note on the A string -- the 5th string.**

A string / 5th string note names:

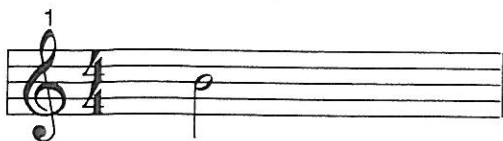
open	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
A	A#	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	A#	B	C
	Bb			Db		Eb			Gb		Ab		Bb		

First, memorize the notes at the 'dots' -- the position markers on the guitar fingerboard. Use them as landmarks to find the other notes.



## Reading Rhythmic Notation

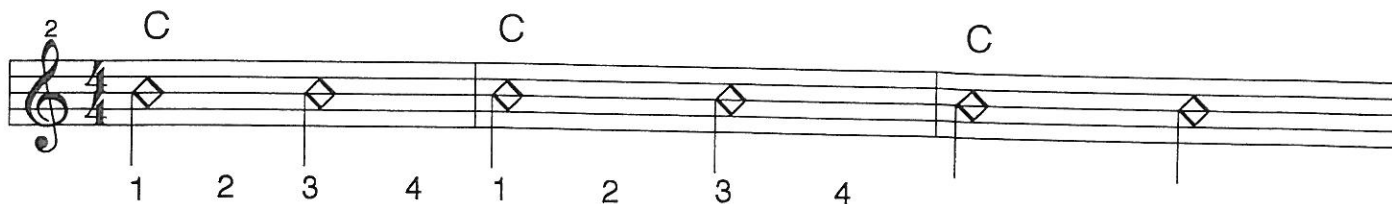
### Half Note



A half note gets two beats (i.e., a half note sounds for two beats).

*Tap your foot in an even, steady pulse. Then, play a C chord in half notes; say the counting, "one, two, three, four."*

#### A Shape



*Strike on beat 1,  
let the note sound  
for beats 1 and 2.*

*Strike on beat 3,  
let the note sound  
for beats 3 and 4.*

### Rhythm Concept: Rhythm Is Motion.

Half notes feel: down, down. Each half note meets the down tap of your foot. Also, each half note is played with a down motion of your right hand.

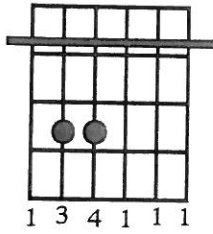
*Tap your foot in an even, steady pulse. Then, play the C chord in half notes feeling down, down. Tap your foot twice per note.*

### Rhythm Concept: The Pulse Is a Quarter Note.

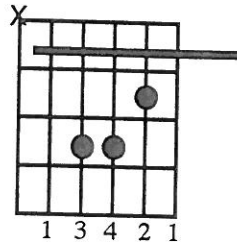
Notice that to "tap your foot in an even, steady pulse" is to tap quarter notes. The quarter note pulse (or 'groove') is the most common rhythmic feel in rock, pop and jazz music. (All of the exercises and songs in this book are based on a quarter note pulse.)

The quarter note pulse, based on the motion of tapping your foot, is the constant, the standard to which all other rhythms are compared. Examples: To say an eighth note gets 1/2 beat is to say it's half of a quarter note (and to have an awareness of dividing the foot tapping motion into a down and an up). To say a half note gets 2 beats is to say it gets 2 quarter notes (i.e., 2 taps of your foot).

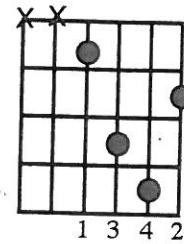
Minor E shape



Minor A shape



Minor D shape



E shape

Gmi

A shape

Cmi

E shape

Gmi

E shape

Gmi

A shape

Cmi

A shape

Cmi

D shape

Gmi

D shape

Gmi

A shape

Dmi

A shape

Dmi

E shape

Gmi

E shape

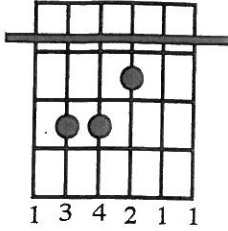
Gmi

repeat to bar 1

# Guitar Chord Voicing Reference

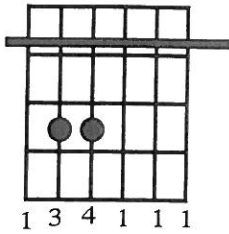
root on  
6th string  
E shape

Major



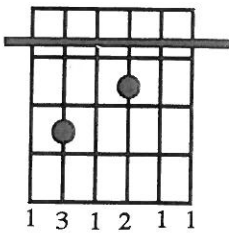
1 3 4 2 1 1

minor



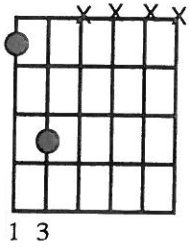
1 3 4 1 1 1

7



1 3 1 2 1 1

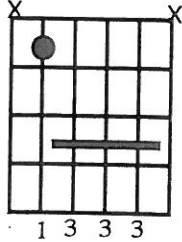
Power chord



1 3

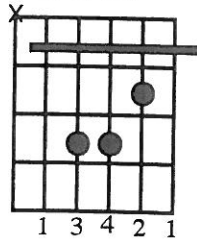
root on  
5th string  
A shape

Major



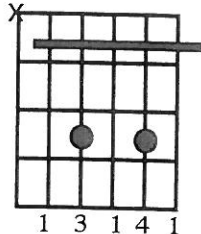
1 3 3 3

minor



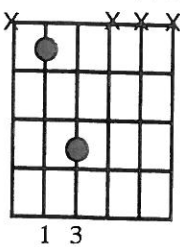
1 3 4 2 1

7



1 3 1 4 1

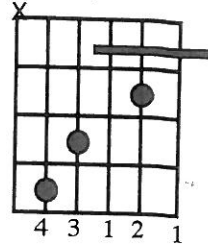
Power chord



1 3

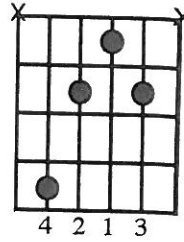
root on  
5th string  
C shape

Major



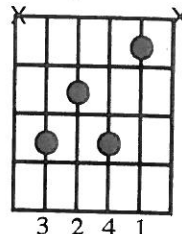
4 3 1 2 1

minor



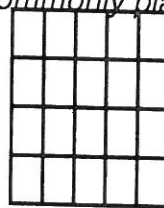
4 2 1 3

7



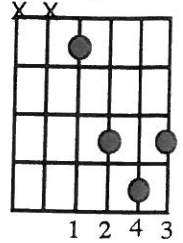
3 2 4 1

Power chord  
*Not commonly played*



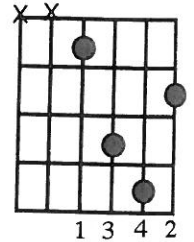
root on  
4th string  
D shape

Major



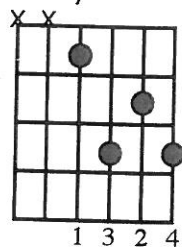
1 2 4 3

minor



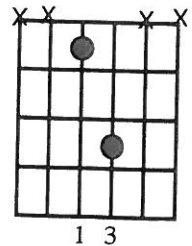
1 3 4 2

7



1 3 2 4

Power chord



1 3

## Reading Rhythmic Notation

### Eighth Note Triplet



An eighth note triplet gets one beat (each eighth note equals  $1/3$  of the beat).

In an eighth note triplet ('tri' means three), three eighth notes are evenly spaced within one beat.

*Question: How many eighth notes in one beat? (Answer: Two).*

Notice that in an eighth note triplet, each note is a little shorter, allowing three eighth notes to fit into the space of two eighth notes.

*Tap your foot in an even, steady quarter note pulse. Then, play an E chord in eighth note triplets.*

**C Shape**  
**E**

Foot Tapping: ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

Triplet Subdivision: 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

Or: Tri- pl- et Tri- pl- et Tri- pl- et Tri- pl- et

Beats: 1 2 3 4

### Two Important Helps in Reading Rhythmic Notation:

1. **Notes are usually grouped in beats (i.e., physically connected by the same horizontal beam).** Above, each group of three notes equals 1 beat.
2. **The first note, of each group of notes, is the down beat (i.e., the down tap of your foot and a 'numbered' beat in counting).** Above, the first note, of each group of three notes, meets the down tap of your foot and falls on a numbered beat.

### Rhythm Concept: Subdivide

To *subdivide* is to divide a beat into smaller parts. Above, each beat is divided into three parts (i.e., three eighth notes). These smaller parts (eighth note triplets), form the characteristic rhythmic feel of the music.



- Subdivide into eighth note triplets by feeling an underlying triplet rhythm throughout the whole song.

## Over The Rainbow

*Eighth Note Triplet -- 3 eighth notes evenly spaced within 1 beat.*

E shape G (3) A shape C7 (short) (3) A shape Bmi (3) E shape G7 (3) A shape C (3) E shape F#7 (3) A shape Bmi (3) E shape G7

Feel this: 123 123 123 123

A shape C (3) E shape F7 (3) E shape G (3) C shape E7 (3) E shape Ami (3) C shape D7 (3) E shape G (3)

- In measure 8, the meter signature changes to 2/4 time. The quarter note pulse continues, uninterrupted, but there are only two beats in this measure. (Measure 9 returns to 4/4 time.)

## When The Thunder Rolls by Garth Brooks

A shape Dmi (short) (3) E shape Bb (3) E shape A7 (3) A shape Dmi (3)

Feel this: 123 123 123 123

Dmi (3) Bb (3) A7 (3) / A7 (3) Dmi (3)

1 2 3 4 1 2 1 2 3 4

A shape C (3) E shape A7 (3) A shape Dmi (3)

# How many chords are there?

Answer: There are eleven fundamental chord types:

## Triads (chords constructed with three notes):

1. Major
2. Minor
3. Augmented
4. Diminished

## 7th chords (triads plus a fourth note):

5. Major 7 -- major triad plus the natural 7
6. Minor 7 -- minor triad plus the b7
7. 7 -- major triad plus the b7
8. Minor(major 7) -- minor triad plus the natural 7
9. Major 7#5 -- augmented triad plus the natural 7
10. Diminished 7 -- diminished triad plus the double flat 7
11. Minor 7b5 -- diminished triad plus the b7

Each of the eleven fundamental chord types can be played (voiced) in many ways -- as many as 28 ways -- on the guitar fingerboard.

*(In this book, you have learned six chord types: major triad, minor triad, power chord, 7, major 7 and minor 7.)*

**Also, the fundamental chord types can be embellished by adding the 6th, 9th, 11th and/or 13th scale degrees.**

Examples: embellishing a major triad by adding the 6th and the 9th yields a 6/9 chord; embellishing a minor 7 chord by adding the 9th yields a minor 9 chord; embellishing a major 7 chord by adding the 9th and 13th yields a major 13 chord -- there are many possibilities. And, each embellished chord -- 6/9, minor 9, major 13, etc. -- can be played (voiced) in many ways on the guitar fingerboard.

**Also, chords can be altered.**

For example, there are suspended 2 and suspended 4 chords: altering a fundamental chord by replacing the 3rd with the 2nd or 4th scale degrees. Or, a 7 chord can be altered by raising or lowering the 5th, or raising or lowering the 9th. Chord symbol examples of altered 7 chords are: C7#5, C7b9, C7b5,b9, etc. Again, each altered chord can be played (voiced) in many ways on the guitar fingerboard.

*(In this book, you have not learned any embellished or altered chords.)*

As you can see, there is much more to learn about chord construction, harmony and voicing chords on the guitar! From p.1: "An in-depth explanation of chord construction and chord voicing will come later. For now, learn that a voicing is a shape on the fingerboard."