

Sixty Guitar Chords for All-Fourths Tuning

**An introductory tutorial about chords
on a guitar tuned to all fourths**

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**to the glory of God
through His son Jesus Christ**

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Introduction

This tutorial discusses a novel tuning for a 6-string guitar called “all fourths”, or “perfect fourths (P4)”, or simply “fourths”. It discusses some pros and cons of this approach vis-a-vis conventional standard tuning. It then proceeds to show about sixty chord shapes to use with this P4 tuning.

The standard tuning of a guitar tunes the six strings to the notes E, A, D, G, B, and E for the strings numbered from 6 to 1. Notice that the bottom four strings are tuned a “perfect fourth” apart. That is, musically speaking, A is a perfect fourth interval above an E tonic. Similarly D is a fourth above A, and G is a fourth above D. However, the interval between G and B is only a third (one semitone less than a perfect fourth). The interval between the second and first strings is back to a perfect fourth (i.e., E is a fourth above the tonic B). The fretboard positions of the notes of the C major scale (i.e., the white piano keys) are shown for standard tuning in the left diagram below.

In P4 tuning, all six strings of the guitar are tuned a perfect fourth apart. The strings are tuned to E, A, D, G, C, and F for the strings numbered from 6 to 1. The diagram on the right below shows all of the frets where notes of the C major scale can be fingered on the fretboard of a P4-tuned guitar. Notice that the bottom four strings are the same as for standard tuning, and the top two strings are simply tuned a semitone higher.

I conjecture that most people reading this tutorial have some experience in playing a standard-tuned guitar. So, for the benefit of those considering the switch to P4 tuning, let me make two simple observations: (1) All fingerings that you have played on the bottom 4 strings before will remain the same, and (2) All fingerings on the top 2 strings should be played one fret lower.

The three fretboard diagrams below show the three four-fret clusters where arpeggios of the C major scale can be easily played.

Note in the left-most diagram that starting with the 2nd finger on the C of the 5th string allows all of the C major scale to be played without any stretches. Whereas, as shown in middle diagram, starting with the 2nd finger on the C of the 6th string allows all of the C major scale to be played with only one out-of-position stretch to the B. And finally, as shown in right-most diagram, starting with the 2nd finger on the C of the 4th string allows all of the C major scale to be played with only one out-of-position stretch to the F.

There are many other positions along the fretboard where the C major scale can be played but all involve two-or-more out-of-position fifth-fret stretches.

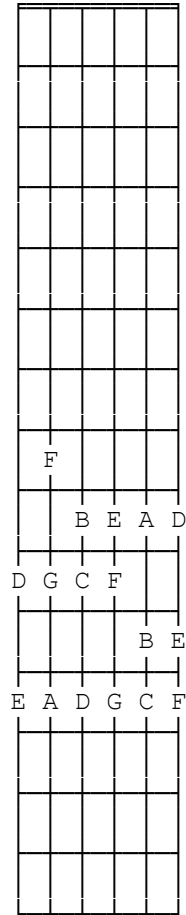
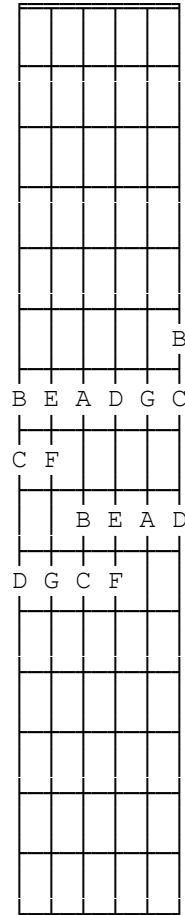
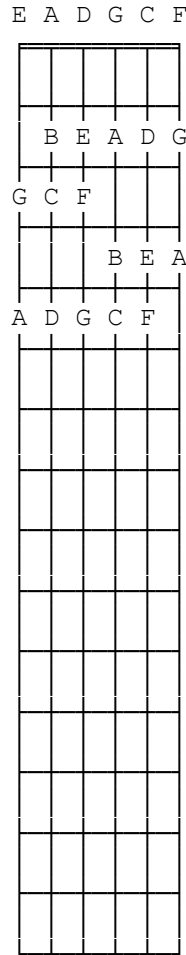
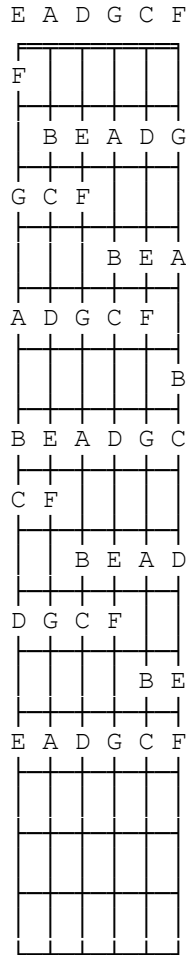
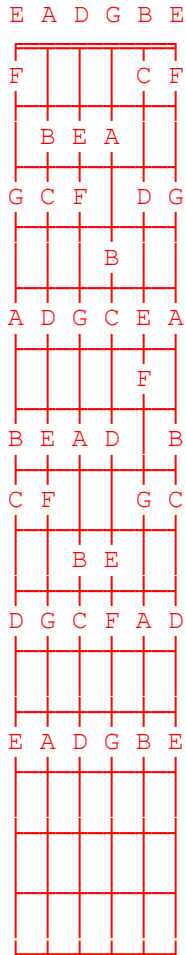
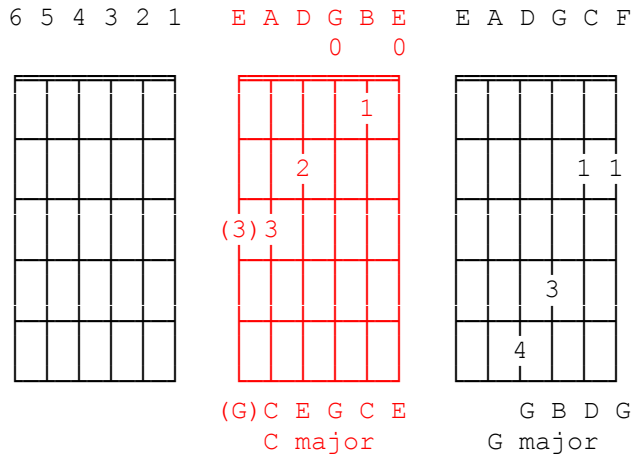


Diagram Conventions

Before we get into the meat of this tutorial, let me say a few words about the conventions that I will be using in my chord diagrams. The guitar strings are numbered from 6 (the lowest-pitched string) on the left to 1 (the highest-pitched string) on the right. The guitar nut is at the top of these diagrams and the frets proceed downward. The following diagrams each show 5 frets. The numbers in the diagrams indicate which fingers should be placed on that fret on that string to produce the desired note. (1 is the index finger; 2 is the middle finger; 3 is the ring finger; and 4 is the little finger.) Below each diagram are the notes produced on that string by fingering at that particular fret. And below that are the names of the chord produced by that sequence of notes.



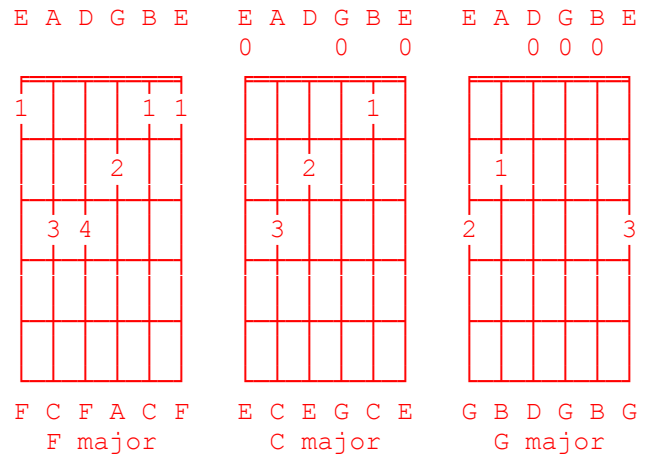
Most of the diagrams in this tutorial will utilize the perfect-fourths E-A-D-G-C-F tuning shown on the right-hand diagram above. But, in a few illustrative cases, we will be using the standard E-A-D-G-B-E tuning shown in the middle diagram above. For clarity, I will always show standard-tuning diagrams in red with the EADGBE letters above.

In the middle diagram above, the number in parentheses shows an additional chord note that can be (optionally) played by toggling the appropriate finger over to that string. This is very useful in playing alternating bass lines.

In this tutorial, we will mostly not be playing any open strings. That is, almost all chords shown will be “movable”. Any string without a number showing a finger-press should not be played. I will omit the usual “X” indicator for unplayed strings. In those few situations where I do wish to play an open string, I will put a “0” above the nut in the diagram.

What's Right with Standard Tuning ?

The reasoning behind why standard guitar tuning (with its non-uniform interval between the 2nd and 3rd strings) has been historically adopted so pervasively has to do with the ease with which it provides musically-meaningful chords that can be strummed across all six strings (particularly utilizing some open strings). For example, the following simple chords (which most guitar players learn very early in their lessons) sound lush and rich. Many guitar players do quite nicely by learning just several simple chords like this and then strumming (or finger-picking) them as an accompaniment to their singing.



The downside to the P4 tuning introduced in this tutorial is that there are very few 6-string chords as we have above. (We will show some of them later.)

I have been told that most modern jazz musicians avoid 6-string and 5-string chords as being too grandiose – except for an occasional special effect. They much prefer 4-string chords (perhaps spanned across 5 or 6 strings) as being more tight and lively.

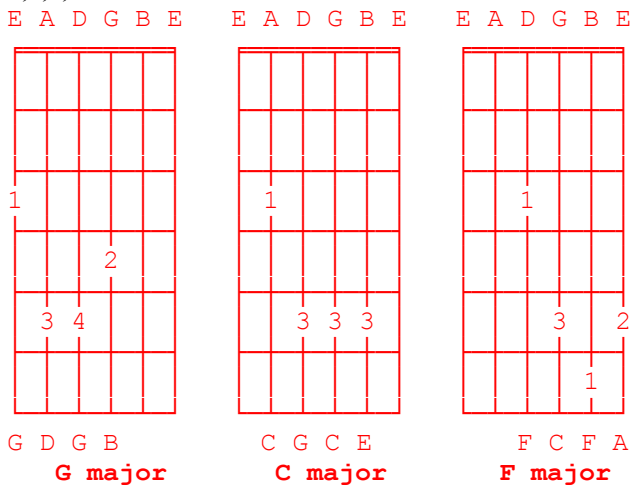
I do not wish to disparage standard tuning or guitarists who use it. There are legitimate reasons why it evolved and why it is used so widely. With standard tuning, if you use your index finger to “bar” across all six strings, then you will have the same note on the 1st and 6th strings (except two octaves apart). If you consider this note to be the (temporary) tonal center, then you will have the tonic note on the 1st and 6th strings, the dominant note (the 5th) on the 2nd string, and the sub-dominant note (the 4th) on the 5th string. These are nicely harmonically related within the Cycle of Fifths/Fourths. This ability to get consonant notes with a simple bar makes 5-string and 6-string chords much easier to finger (particularly for simple major and minor chords) than with P4 tuning. However, as this document attests, there are lots of easily-playable chords available in P4 tuning. The student can be the judge as to whether the advantages (to be shown in the next section) outweigh this disadvantage.

What's Wrong with Standard Tuning ?

One problem with the standard guitar tuning is that chord shapes vary as the fingers move across the guitar neck. To illustrate this, consider a four-note chord consisting of the major triad with the root note repeated. For the root note G, the notes of the triad would be G, B, and D. (For convenience, the voicing we choose is the note order 1-5-1-3 or G-D-G-B.) This chord when fingered on the bottom 4 strings of a guitar with standard tuning would look like the left diagram below.

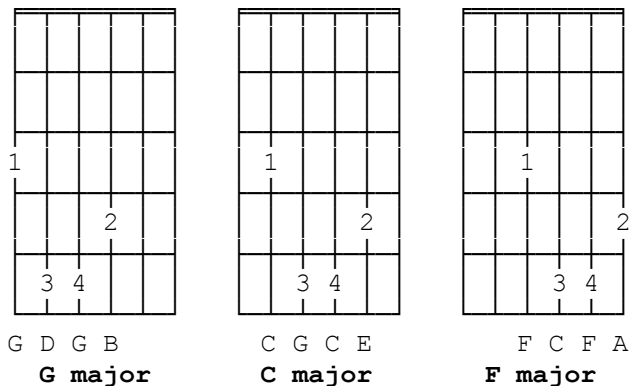
If we now move up one string and form the 1-5-1-3 chord beginning with the 3rd fret on the fifth string, we would get a C major chord consisting of the notes C-G-C-E as fingered in the second diagram below. Notice that the fingering pattern has changed. A major chord fingered on string 5,4,3,2 is not the same pattern as the major chord fingered on strings 6,5,4,3.

Now let's move up one more string and form the 1-5-1-3 chord beginning with the 3rd fret on the fourth string. We get an F major chord consisting of the notes F-C-F-A. It is fingered as shown in the third diagram below. Notice that the shape has changed again. A major chord fingered on string 4,3,2,1 is not the same pattern as a major chord fingered on strings 6,5,4,3 or on 5,4,3,2.



Those of you familiar with the CAGED system of identifying chord shapes, will recognize that the left diagram above shows the “E” shape, the middle shows the “A” shape, and the right shows the “D” shape.

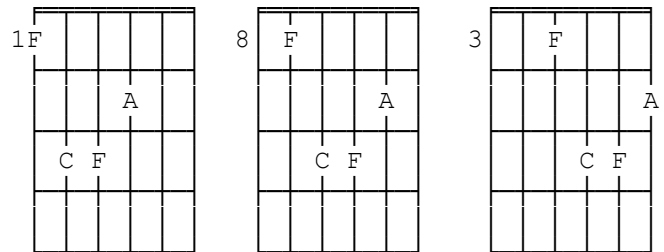
Now, contrast this with forming the same 4-note major chords across the strings of a guitar tuned to E,A,D,G,C,F.



These three diagrams show that the fingering pattern remains the same in all three positions. That is, the same finger pattern (whether played on the 6,5,4,3 strings, on the 5,4,3,2 strings, or on the 4,3,2,1 strings) produces a major chord. Thus, with P4 tuning, the E-shape, A-shape, and D-shape chords all become the same shape.

With standard tuning, as we modify the E-shape, A-shape, and D-shape basic major chords to produce minor chords, seventh chords, augmented chords, diminished chords, etc., we have to learn the modifications for all three shapes. Whereas, with P4 tuning, we have to learn these modifications for only one shape. Thus, we reduce our “learning curve” by about 2/3.

The same problem occurs, not just for chords, but for playing any sequence of notes. Suppose you learn the fingering for a particular riff and then decide to move the riff elsewhere on the fretboard. Then, with standard tuning, those finger patterns for notes on strings 1 and 2 will be different when played on strings 2 and 3, and will be different again if played on strings 3 and 4. Whereas, with P4-tuning, the riff fingerings remain the same no matter which strings the notes fall on. The 3 diagrams below show the note sequence F-C-F-A (admittedly not a very inspired riff) played with the low F on the 1st fret on the 6th string, then moved to the 8th fret on the 5th string, and then moved to the 3rd fret on the 4th string. The riff fingering remains the same.



Movable Chords

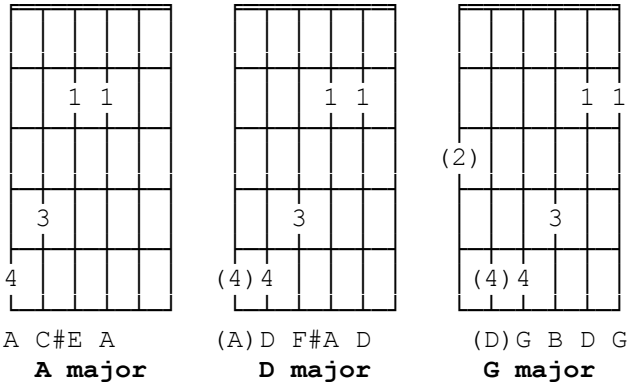
We are interested in “movable” chords – that is, chords which can be moved (or translated) along the fretboard. These do NOT use any open-strings. Chords utilizing open strings can be very useful musically at times, but in chord-solo playing (particularly for jazz), it is highly desirable for the guitarist to have control of the vibration of the strings at all times. A nice staccato effect can be obtained by simply lifting the left-hand fingers off of the vibrating strings – which is not possible when open-string notes are ringing. Hence his basic tool consists mostly of movable chords. Most of these chord shapes span four adjacent strings, but some will span non-adjacent strings.

There are hundreds of chord shapes possible on a guitar - and this tutorial is not meant to show all of them. I have attempted to select only easily-playable important ones. This narrows the hundreds down to about sixty. Almost all of the chords in this tutorial occupy just 3 adjacent frets. I have only included ones requiring 4-fret stretches for important “power” chords (i.e. ones with the root in the bass). The very first chord we will look at (beginning the next section) is one such example.

First we look at fingering patterns (shapes) for simple major and dominant-seventh chords.

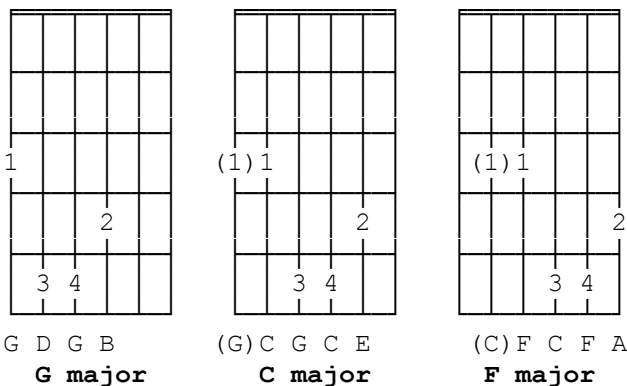
Major Chords (1-3-5)

The following three major chords are in the root inversion (i.e., they have their root note at the bottom). They consist of the three notes of the major triad, and the root note is repeated. If desired, the notes in parentheses can conveniently be used for an alternating-bass line by toggling the fourth finger between the root and the fifth of the chord. Observe that the same finger pattern (whether played on the 6,5,4,3 strings or on the 5,4,3,2 strings or on the 4,3,2,1 strings) produces a major chord.

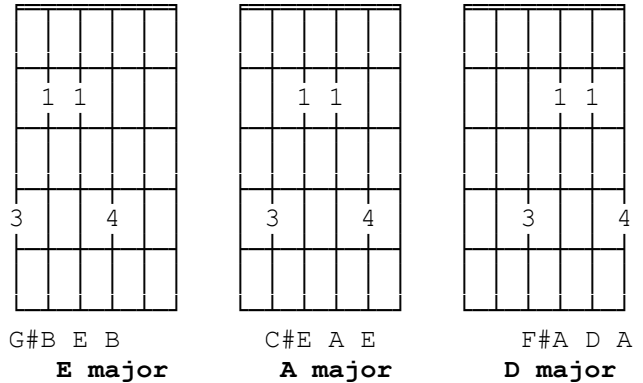


Again, for those of you familiar with the CAGED chord naming system, the left diagram above is the P4-equivalent of the G-shaped chord and the middle diagram is the P4-equivalent of the C-shaped chord. So the two patterns used for G- and C-shaped chords reduce to one. Combining this with the observation made in the last section, we see that the five basic chord shapes of standard tuning reduce to only two with P4 tuning. This provides dramatic simplification in chord playing.

The following three major chords are also in the root inversion. They consist of the three notes of the major triad, with the root repeated, but in a different order than above. Again, the notes in parentheses can conveniently be used for an alternating-bass line by toggling the first finger between the root and the fifth of the chord.



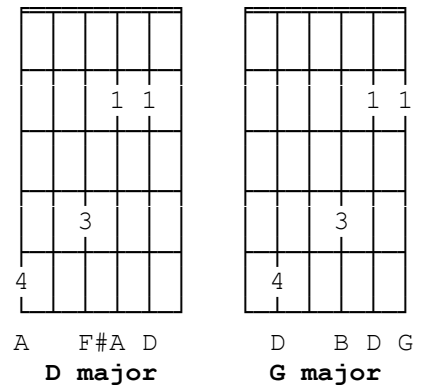
The following three major chords are in the first inversion (i.e., they have their third at the bottom). They consist of the three notes of the major triad, and the fifth is repeated.



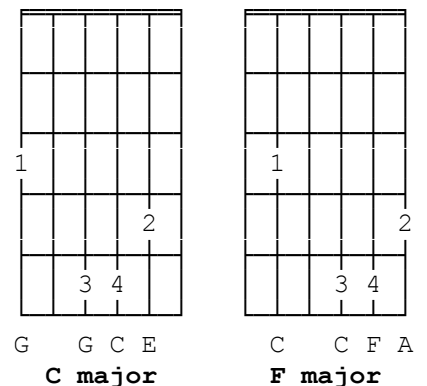
Again, observe that the same finger pattern (whether played on the 6,5,4,3 strings or on the 5,4,3,2 strings or on the 4,3,2,1 strings) produces a major chord.

The most convenient second-inversion form of simple major chords is to use the root inversion (shown to the left) but with the fifth at the bottom instead of the root. That is, use the toggle notes that were in parentheses. These four notes now stretch across five strings so we can only move the shape over once. So we can only get two chords from shifting the one pattern.

Here are the two second-inversion major chords obtained from the first form of the root-inversion shape:

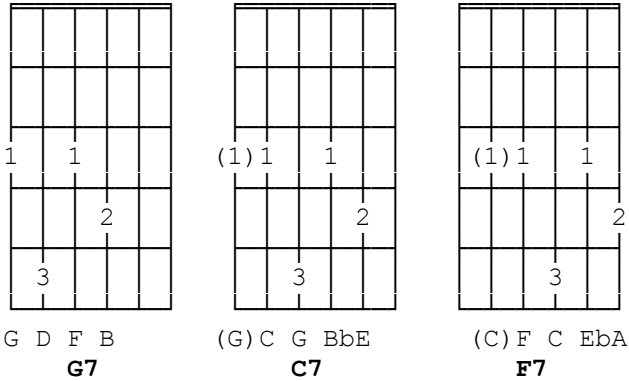


Here are the two second-inversion major chords obtained from the second form of the root-inversion shape:

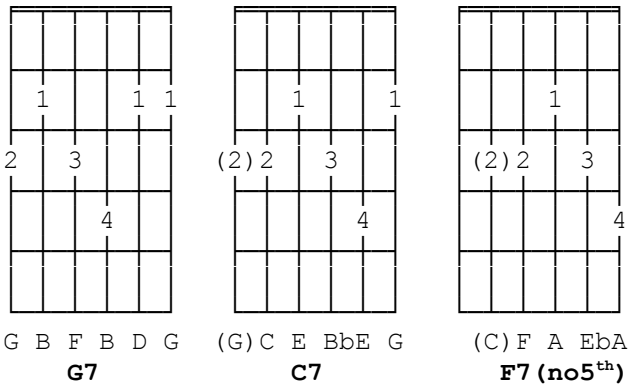


Dominant-Seventh Chords (1-3-5-b7)

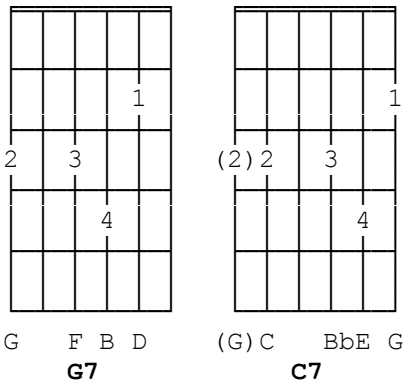
The following three dominant-seventh chords are in the root inversion. They consist of the three notes of the major triad plus the flatted seventh.



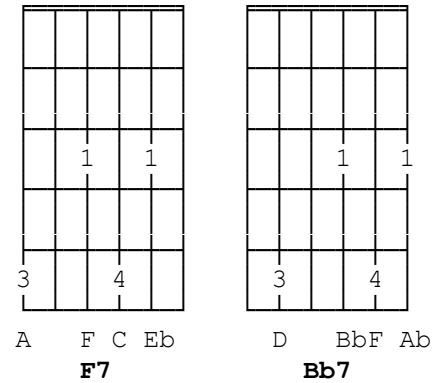
The following three dominant-seventh chords are also in the root inversion. They are the same as the chords above except that the second note is the 3rd instead of the 5th. This allows the first finger to bar across the frets to add optional higher notes.



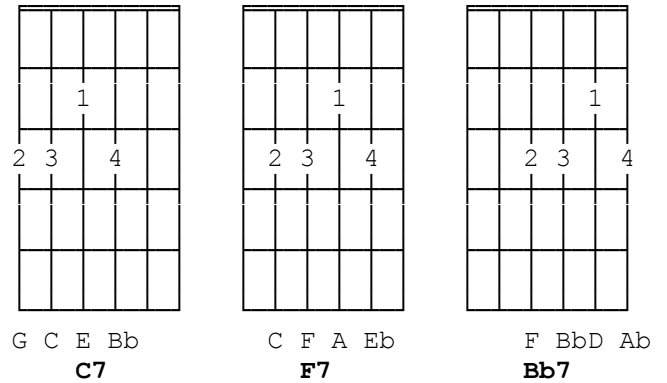
The leftmost pattern above deserves special mention. It is one of the few moveable full 6-string chords playable in P4 tuning. The middle diagram is a nice 5-string chord. I personally find the above three chords to be rather cumbersome, so I much prefer playing the abbreviated versions below. Since the four notes span five strings, we can only move the shape over once.



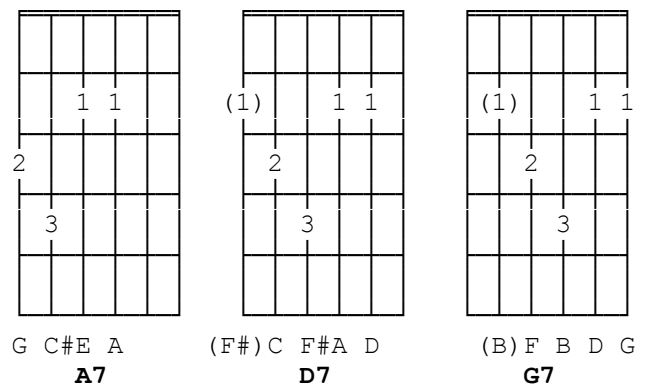
The following two dominant-seventh chords are in their first inversion (i.e., they have their third at the bottom). Again, since the four notes span five strings, we can only move the shape over once.



The following three dominant-seventh chords are in their second inversion (i.e., they have their fifth at the bottom).



The following three dominant-seventh chords are in their third inversion (i.e., they have their flatted-seventh note at the bottom).



So far, we have learned just ten fingering patterns (5 major chord shapes and 5 dominant-seventh chord shapes), but each of these patterns can be played in 2 or 3 positions across the neck and in 12 positions along the neck. The student should practice fingering and naming these chords in all playable positions. It is vitally important as we proceed with learning more chord patterns that the student practice them and learn to be fluid in identifying and playing them up and down the fretboard and across the 6 strings.

Let me switch over to conventional tablature notation and provide some more practice exercises. Dominant-seventh chords almost always “resolve” to their associated tonic chord. We should practice these “resolutions” until they feel natural.

G7 C F#7 B F7 Bb E7 A D#7 G# D7 G C#7 F# C7 F

11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4								
10	9	9	8	8	7	7	6	6	5	5	4	4	3	3	2
12	10	11	9	10	8	9	7	8	6	7	5	6	4	5	3
10	10	9	9	8	8	7	7	6	6	5	5	4	4	3	3
8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1								

C7 F B7 E A#7 D# A7 D G#7 C# G7 C F#7 B F7 Bb

9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2								
9	10	8	9	7	8	6	7	5	6	4	5	3	4	2	3
8	10	7	9	6	8	5	7	4	6	3	5	2	4	1	3
10	8	9	7	8	6	7	5	6	4	5	3	4	2	3	1
8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1								

F7 Bb E7 A Eb7 Ab D7 G Db7 Gb C7 F

10	5	9	4	8	3	7	2	6	1	5	0	5	0	0
9	5	8	4	7	3	6	2	5	1	4	0	4	0	0
10	7	9	6	8	5	7	4	6	3	5	2	5	2	2
10	8	9	7	8	6	7	5	6	4	5	3	5	3	3

G7 C F#7 B F7 Bb E7 A Eb7 Ab D7 G

5	4	3	2	1	0						
7	5	6	4	5	3	4	2	3	1	2	0
5	5	4	4	3	3	2	2	1	1	0	0
7	6	6	5	4	4	3	3	2			
7	8	6	7	5	6	4	5	3	4	2	3

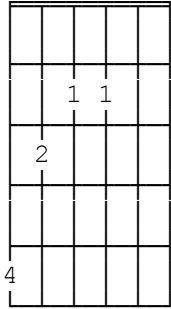
Let's practice around the “Circle of Fifths”:

F7 Bb Bb7EB Eb7Ab Ab7Db Db7Gb Gb7B B7 E E7 A A7 D D7 G G7 C

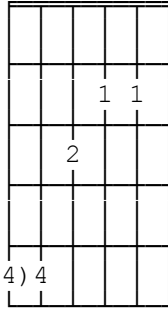
2	2	5	5	8	8	11															
2	2	3	1	5	5	6	4	8	8	9	7	11	11	12							
2	3	1	3	3	5	5	6	4	6	6	8	8	9	7	9	9	11	11	12	10	12
1	3	3	1	1	6	4	6	6	4	4	9	7	9	9	7	7	12	10	12	12	10
3	1	1	6	6	4	4	9	9	7	7	12	12	10	10							
1	4	4	7	7	10	10															

Minor Chords (1-b3-5)

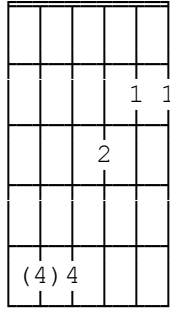
The following three minor chords are in the root inversion. They consist of the minor triad with the root repeated.



A C E A
A minor

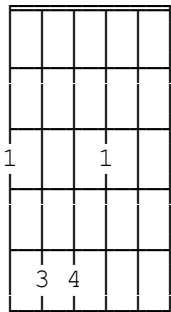


(A) D F A D
D minor

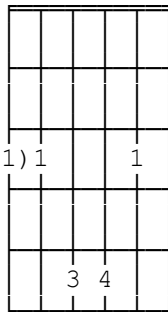


(D) G B \flat D G
G minor

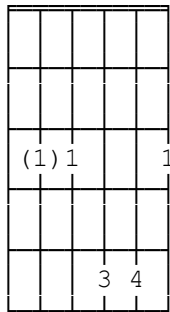
These three minor chords are also in the root inversion.



G D G B \flat
G minor

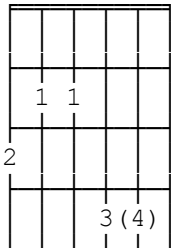


(G) C G C E \flat
C minor

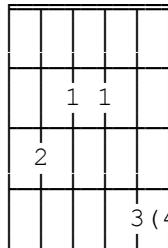


(C) F C F A \flat
F minor

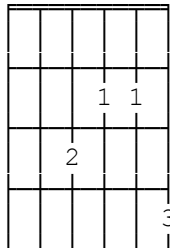
These three minor chords are in the first inversion. The bottom note is the flattened third. The note in parentheses is optional.



G B E B(E)
E minor

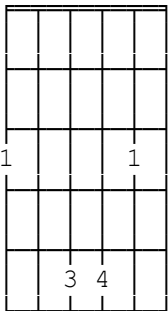


C E A E(A)
A minor

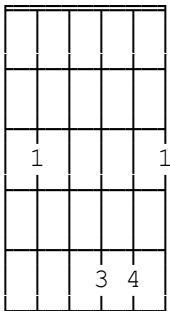


F A D A
D minor

The most convenient second-inversion form of simple minor chords is to use the root inversion (shown above) but with the fifth at the bottom instead of the root. That is, use the toggle notes that were in parentheses above.



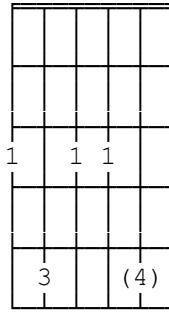
G G C E \flat
C minor



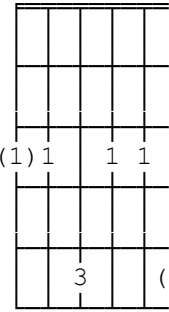
C C F A \flat
F minor

Minor-Seventh Chords (1-b3-5-b7)

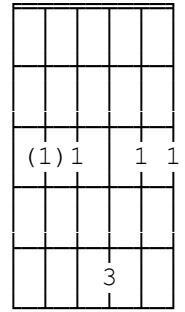
These minor-seventh chords are in the root inversion. They consist of the minor triad plus the flattened seventh.



G D F B \flat (F)
Gm7

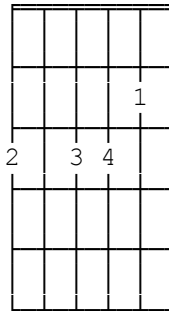


(G) C G B \flat E \flat B \flat
Cm7

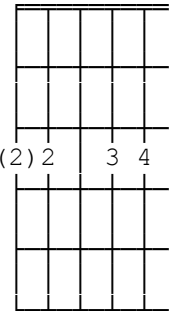


(C) F C E \flat A \flat
Fm7

The following two minor-seventh chords are also in the root inversion.

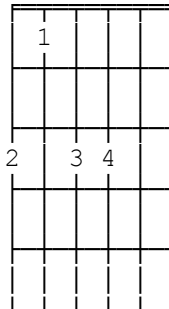


G F B \flat D
Gm7

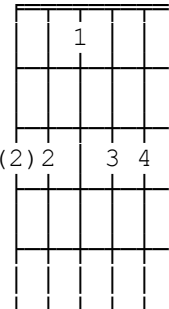


(G) C B \flat E \flat G
Cm7

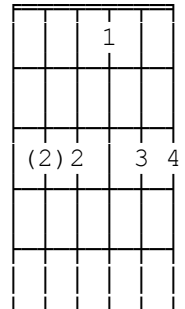
These three minor-seventh chords are in their first inversion:



G B \flat F B \flat
Gm7 (no 5th)

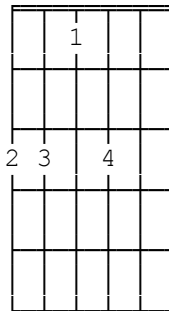


(G) C E \flat B \flat E \flat
Cm7 (no 5th)

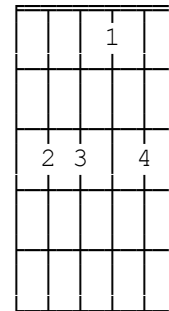


(C) F A \flat E \flat A \flat
Fm7 (no 5th)

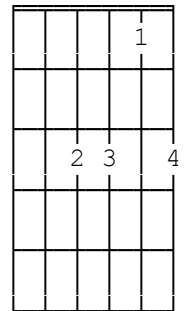
These three minor-seventh chords are in their second inversion:



G C E \flat B \flat
Cm7



C F A \flat E \flat
Fm7



F B \flat D \flat A \flat
B \flat m7

So far, we have learned 5 major chord shapes, 5 dominant-seventh shapes, 4 minor chord shapes, and 4 minor-seventh shapes. Let me switch over to conventional tablature notation and provide some practice finger-dexterity-building exercises to consolidate our mastery of these 18 shapes. The following exercises ask the student to play all possible positions and inversions of the various named chords across and along the fretboard. Open-string notes are allowed. The name of the bass note is provided below each chord. The tablature is provided only to assist in getting started. The student should practice this for all possible chords until becoming fluent.

F minor ascending	C minor ascending
<pre> 0-3-----0-3-7-----7-10-2-7-10 -----5-8-----0-5-5-8-12-0-5-5-----0-3-----0-3-7-7-12-0-7-12 -----1-5-5-10-10-1-5-5-10-10-1-5-5-----0-5-5-8-12-0-5-5-8-12-0-8-12 -----3-3-6-10-10-----6-10-10-3-3-6-----1-5-5-10-10-1-5-5-----1-10-10 -----3-3-----11-3-3-8-8-11-----6-10-10-3-3-6-10-10 -----1-4-8-8-13-----3-3-8-8-11 </pre>	
<p>F AbC C F C C F F AbF F Ab</p>	<p>G G C C EbC C Eb G G Eb C C</p>

G minor descending	Bb minor descending
<pre> 9-5-2-----5-2-----12-8-5-8-5 -----7-7-2-10-7-7-2-2-10-7-----10-10-5-10-5-5-1-----1 -----7-7-3-12-7-7-3-0-12-7-7-3-0-----10-10-6-10-6-3-3-10-6-3-3 -----8-5-5-12-8-----0-12-8-5-5-0-----11-8-8-----3-3-8-8-3-3 -----10-10-5-5-1-----5-5-1-----8-8-4-1-8-8-4 -----10-10-6-3-3-----9-6-6-1 </pre>	
<p>BbG G G G D D Bb D D Bb G G</p>	<p>DbBb Bb F F DbBb DbBb Bb F</p>

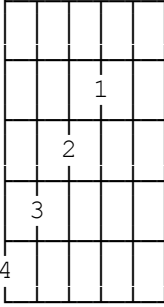
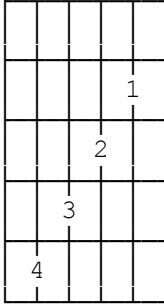
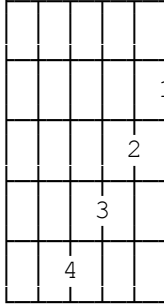
The following exercises use the familiar I – VI – II – V – I progression:

C	Am Dm7G7 C	F Dm Gm7C7 F	G Em Am7D7 G	D Bm Em7A7 D
<pre> 4-----2-0-----2-2-----4-2-----2----- -----4-----5-----4-----5-2-2-4-0-----2-4-4-6-2-----2-2-2-4-2----- -----5-2-5-4-5-----5-2-3-3-2-----4-4-5-5-4-----2-4-4-6-2----- -----5-2-7-3-5-----3-3-3-3-----5-2-5-----5-----4-4-2-5-4----- -----3-3-5-5-3-----5-----3-----5-----5-2-----5----- -----5-----3-----3-----5-----5----- </pre>				

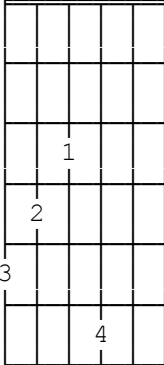
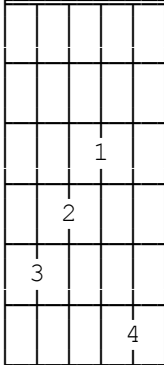
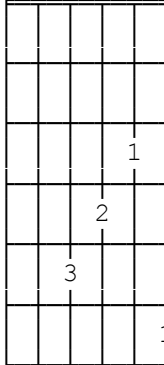
So far we have studied major, minor, dominant-seventh, and minor-seventh chords. These are the workhorses of the guitarist's stable. Now we come to the "color" chords that add "coloring" and "flavor" to the music. It is beyond the scope of this tutorial to describe how and when to use these chords. I recommend that you read and play the following chord patterns to become familiar with them, and then start playing chord sequences from popular songs. (There are many web sites providing chords and lyrics for lots of songs.) As you come to one of these color chords in your song, come back to this tutorial and figure out the best pattern for you to use. This will be a lot more fun than just rote practicing of the chord diagrams.

Augmented Chords (1-3-#5)

The following three augmented chords are in their root inversion. They consist of the three notes of the augmented triad and the root is repeated.

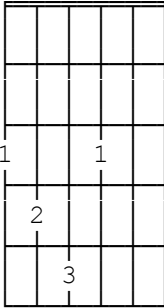
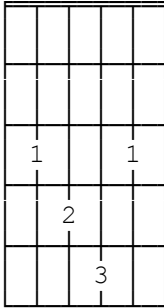
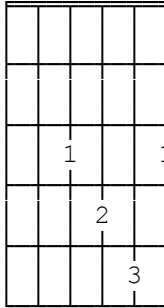
		
A C#F A A aug	D F#A#D D aug	G B D#G G aug

The following three augmented chords are also in their root inversion. They consist of the three notes of the augmented triad and the third is repeated.

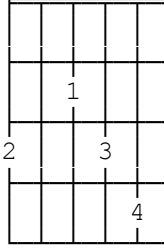
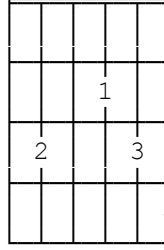
		
A C#F C# A aug	D F#A#D D aug	G B D#G G aug

Diminished Chords (1-b3-b5):

These three diminished chords are in their root inversion. They consist of the diminished triad and the root is repeated.

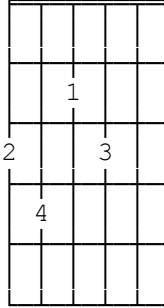
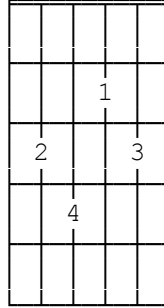
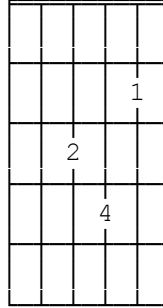
		
G DbG Bb G dim	C GbC Eb C dim	F B F Ab F dim

These two diminished chords are in the first inversion.

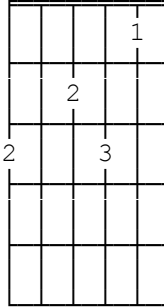
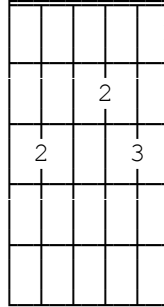
	
G E BbE E dim	C A EbA A dim

Diminished-Seventh Chords (1-b3-b5-bb7)

The following three diminished-seventh chords consist of the three notes of the diminished triad plus the doubly-flatted seventh. Because of the unique symmetry of diminished-seventh chords, any of the four component notes can be considered to be the root.

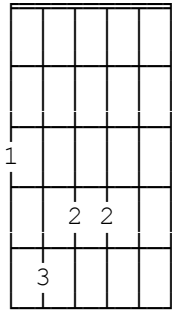
		
G DbE Bb Gdim7 Bbdim7 Dbdim7 Edim7	C GbA Eb Cdim7 Ebdim7 Gbdim7 Adim7	F B D Ab Fdim7 Abdim7 Bdim7 Ddim7

The following two diminished-seventh chords differ from the above chords by just one note.

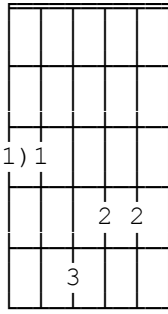
	
G E BbDb Gdim7 Bbdim7 Dbdim7 Edim7	C A EbGb Cdim7 Ebdim7 Gbdim7 Adim7

Major Seventh Chords (1-3-5-7)

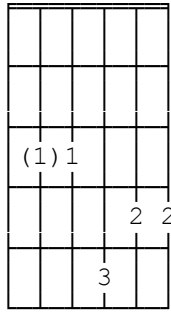
The following three major-seventh chords are in the root inversion. They consist of the major triad plus the seventh.



G D F#B
Gmaj7

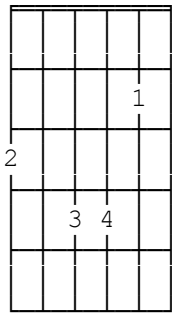


(G) C G B E
Cmaj7

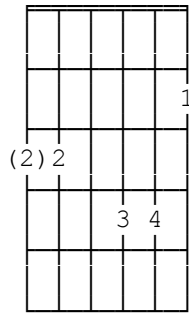


(C) F C E A
Fmaj7

The following two major-seventh chords are also in the root inversion.

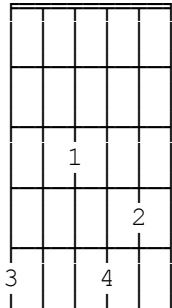


G F#B D
Gmaj7

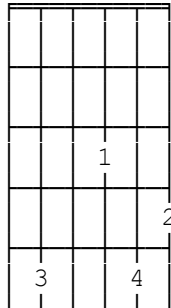


(G) C B E G
Cmaj7

The following two major-seventh chords are in their first inversion.



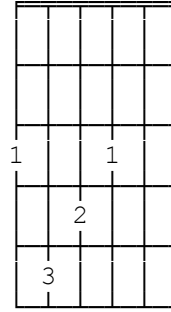
A F C E
Fmaj7



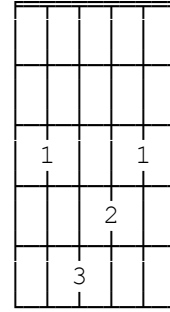
D BbF A
Bbmaj7

Minor Major Seventh Chords (1-b3-5-7)

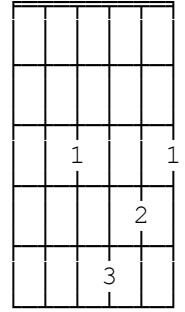
The following three minor major-seventh chords are in their root inversion. They consist of the minor triad plus the seventh.



G D F#Bb
Gm(maj7)

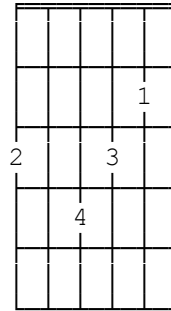


C G B Eb
Cm(maj7)

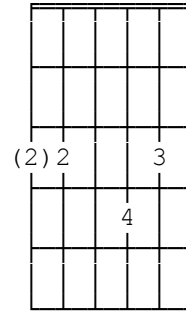


F C E Ab
Fm(maj7)

The following two minor major-seventh chords are also in their root inversion. They differ from the above by picking the fifth as the 4th note instead of the 2nd.

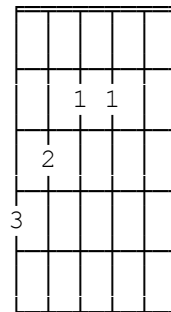


G F#BbD
Gm(maj7)

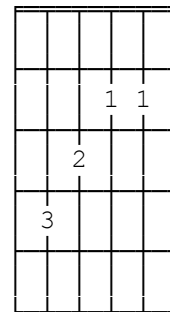


(G) C B EbG
Cm(maj7)

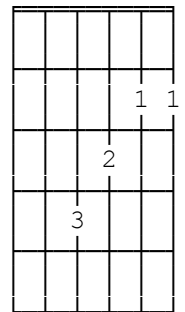
The following three minor major-seventh chords are in their third inversion. The bass note is the seventh.



G#C E A
Am(maj7)



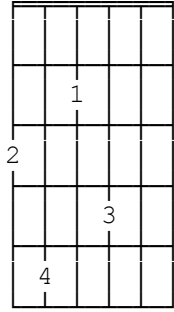
C#F A D
Dm(maj7)



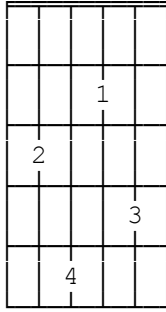
F#BbD G
Gm(maj7)

Sixth Chords (1-3-5-6)

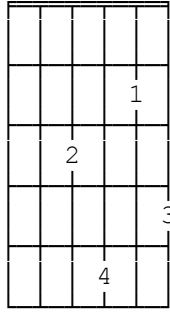
The following three sixth chords are in the root inversion. They consist of the three notes of the major triad plus an added sixth.



G D E B
G6

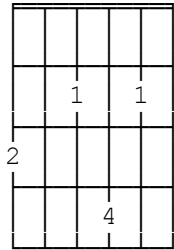


C G A E
C6

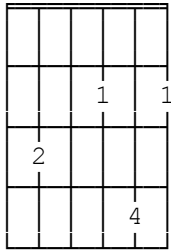


F C D A
F6

The following two sixth chords are also in their root inversion. They differ from the above chords by playing the fifth as the 4th note instead of the 2nd.

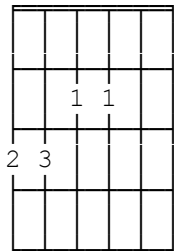


G E B D
G6

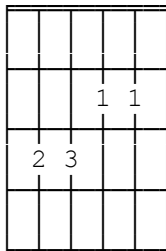


C A E G
C6

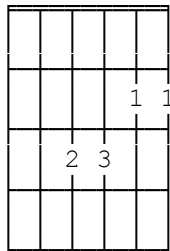
The following three sixth chords are in the first inversion.



G C E A
C6

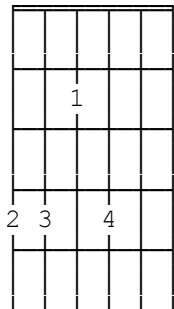


C F A D
F6

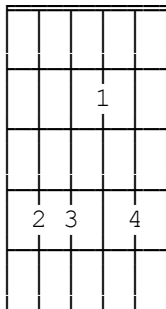


F B D A
D6

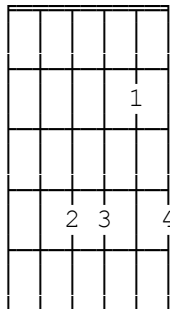
The following three sixth chords are in the first inversion.



G#C#E B
E6

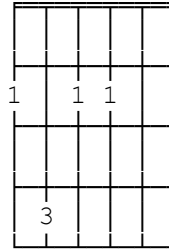


C#F#A E
A6

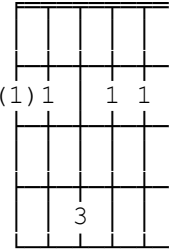


F#B D A
D6

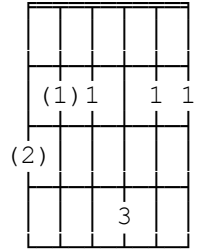
The following three sixth chords are in their third inversion.



F#C#E A
A6



(F#)B F#A D
D6

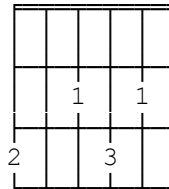


(G) (B)E B D G
G6

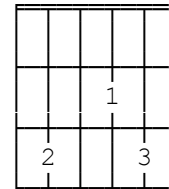
The rightmost pattern above deserves special mention as one of the few moveable full 6-string chords playable in P4 tuning.

Minor Sixth Chords (1-b3-5-6)

The following two minor sixth chords are in the root inversion. They consist of the three notes of the minor triad plus an added sixth.

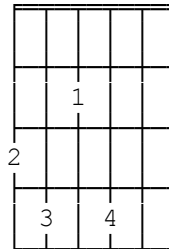


G E BbD
Gm6

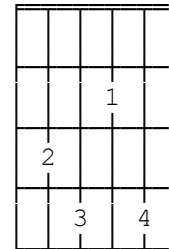


C A EbG
Cm6

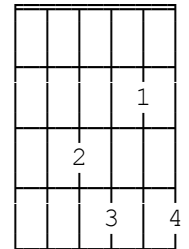
These three minor sixth chords are in their first inversion:



G C#E B
Em6

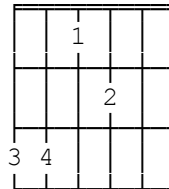


C F#A E
Am6

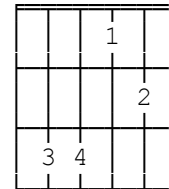


F B D A
Dm6

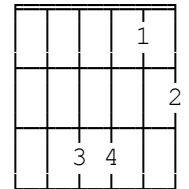
These three minor sixth chords are in their second inversion:



G C EbA
Cm6

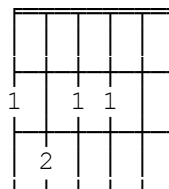


C F AbD
Fm6

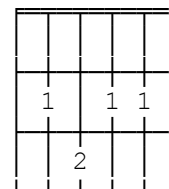


F BbD G
Bbm6

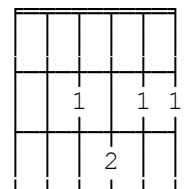
These three minor sixth chords are in their third inversion:



F#C E A
Am6



B F A D
Dm6



E BbD G
Gm6

Ninth Chords (1-3-5-b7-9)

The following three ninth chords are in the root inversion. They consist of the three notes of the major triad plus the flatted seventh plus the ninth. (Again, the notes in parentheses are optional additions.) It is common for some of the five notes comprising this chord to be missing.)

G B F A (D G) G9 (no5th)	(G) C E BbD (G) C9 (no5th)	(C) F A EbG F9 (no5th)

The following two ninth chords are in the first inversion. The flat-seventh is missing. Each chord is a subset of the chords above.

F# E A D D9	B A D G G9

Minor Ninth Chords (1-b3-5-b7-9)

The following three minor ninth chords are in the root inversion. They consist of the three notes of the minor triad plus the flatted seventh plus the ninth. Again, it is common for some of these five notes to be missing.

G BbF A Gm9 (no5th)	(G) C EbBbD Cm9 (no5th)	(C) F AbEbG Fm9 (no5th)

The following two minor ninth chords are in the first inversion. The flat-seventh is missing.

F E A D Dm9	Bb A D G Gm9

Sixth Ninth Chords (1-3-5-6-9)

The following three sixth ninth chords are in the root inversion. They consist of the three notes of the major triad plus the sixth plus the ninth.

G B E A (D G) G69 (no5th)	(G) C E A D (G) C69 (no5th)	(C) F A D G F69 (no5th)

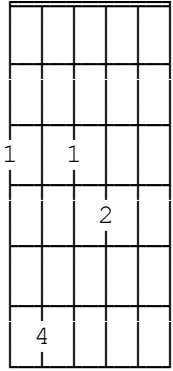
Dominant Thirteenth Chords (1-3-5-b7-9-13)

The following two thirteenth chords are in the root inversion. We simply took the root-position ninth chord and used our little finger to add the 13th.

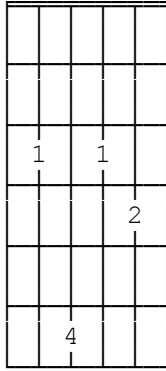
G B F A E (G) G13 (no5th)	(G) C E BbD A C13 (no5th)
G F B E (A) G13 (no5th)	(G) C BbE A C13 (no5th)

Augmented-Seventh Chords (1-3-#5-b7)

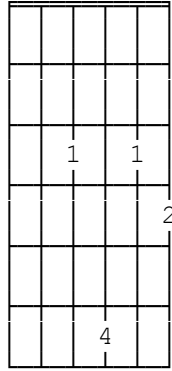
These three augmented-seventh chords are in the root inversion.



G D#F B
G7#5

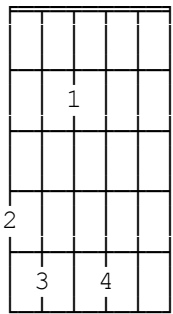


C G#BbE
C7#5

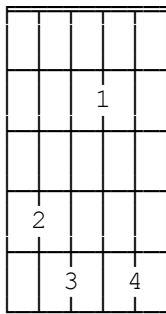


F C#EbA
F7#5

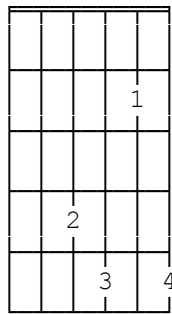
These three augmented-seventh chords are in the first inversion.



G#D E C
E7#5

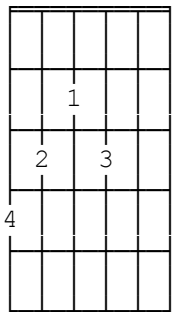


C#G A F
A7#5

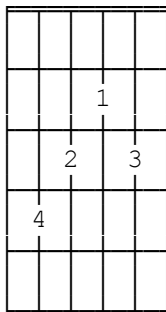


F#C D A#
D7#5

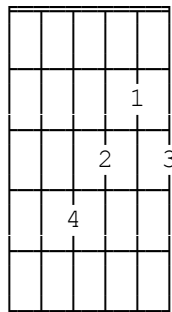
These three augmented-seventh chords are in their second inversion.



G#C E Bb
C7#5

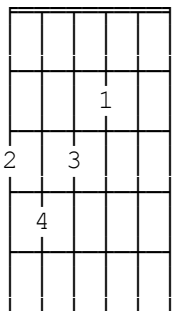


C#F A Eb
F7#5

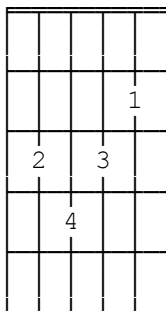


F#BbD Ab
Bb7#5

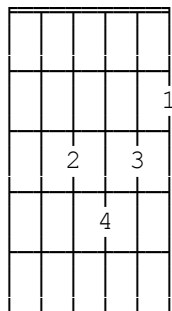
These three augmented-seventh chords are in their third inversion.



G C#F A
A7#5



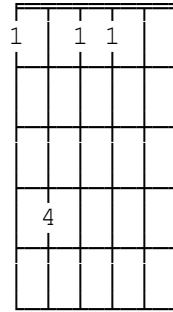
C F#A#D
D7#5



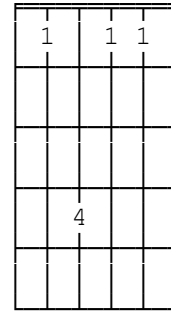
F B D#G
G7#5

Augmented Minor-Seventh Chords (1-b3-#5-b7)

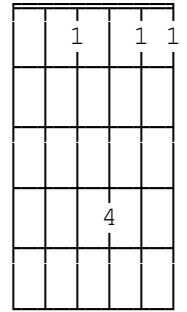
The following three augmented minor-seventh chords are in their root inversion. They consist of the minor-seventh chord but with the fifth note of the chord augmented (sharped).



F C#EbAb
Fm7#5

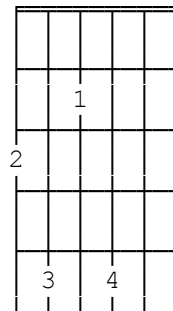


BbF#AbDb
Bbm7#5

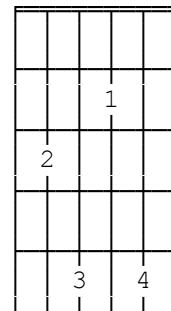


EbB DbGb
Ebm7#5

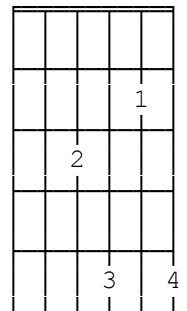
The following three chords are in their first inversion.



G D E C
Em7#5

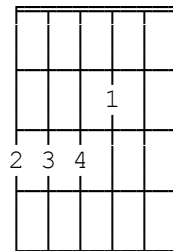


C G A F
Am7#5

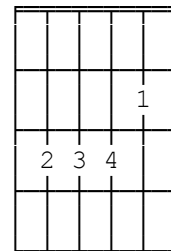


F C D A#
Dm7#5

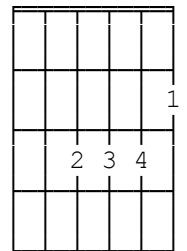
The following three chords are in their third inversion.



G C F A
Am7#5



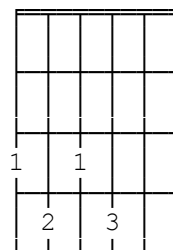
C F A#D
Dm7#5



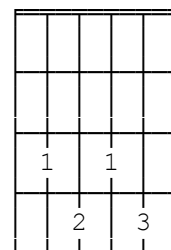
F BbD#G
Gm7#5

Seventh Flat-Fifth Chords (1-3-b5-b7)

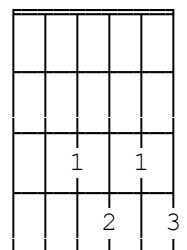
These three dominant-seventh flat-fifth chords are in their root inversion.



G DbF B
G7b5



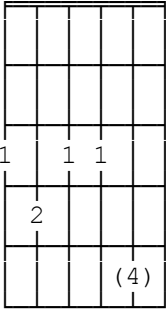
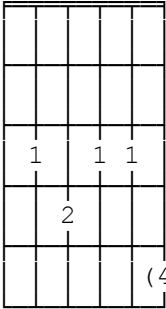
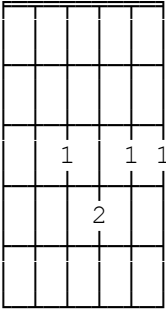
C GbBbE
C7b5



F B EbA
F7b5

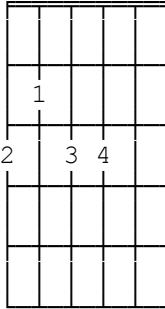
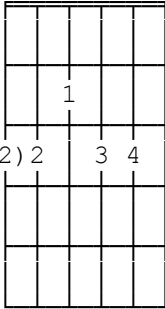
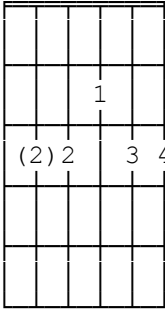
Minor-Seventh Flat-Fifth Chords (1-b3-b5-b7)

The following three chords are in the root inversion. They consist of the minor-seventh chord but with the fifth note of the chord flattened.

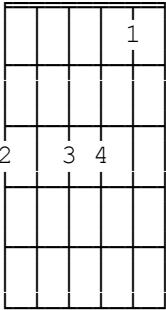
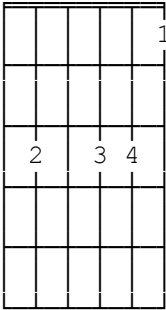
		
G DbF Bb (F) Gm7b5	C GbBbEb (Bb) Cm7b5	F B EbAb Fm7b5

Seventh Sharp-Ninth Chords (1-3-5-b7-#9)

These three chords are in their first inversion. They consist of a dominant-seventh chord plus a sharpened ninth note. It is common for some of these 5 notes to be missing.

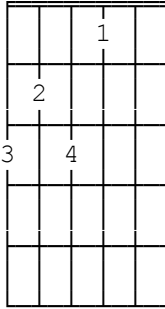
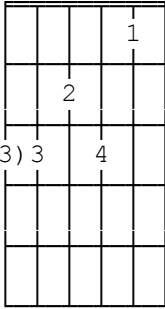
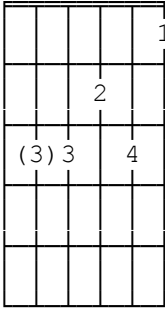
		
G B F A# G7#9 (no5th)	(G) C E BbD# C7#9 (no5th)	(C) F A EbG# F7#9 (no5th)

The following two chords are in the root inversion.

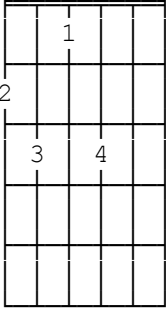
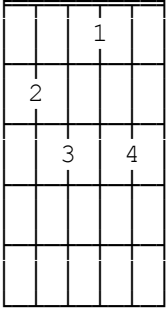
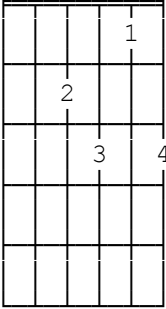
	
G F BbDb Gm7b5	C BbEbGb Cm7b5

Seventh Flat-Ninth Chords (1-3-5-b7-b9)

These three chords are in their root inversion. They consist of a dominant-seventh chord plus a flattened ninth note. It is common for some of these 5 notes to be missing.

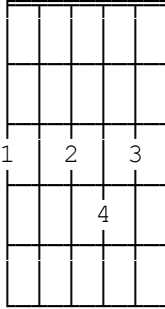
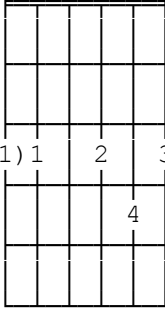
		
G B F Ab G7b9 (no5th)	(G) C E BbDb C7b9 (no5th)	(C) F A EbGb F7b9 (no5th)

The following three chords are in their second inversion.

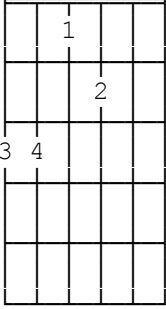
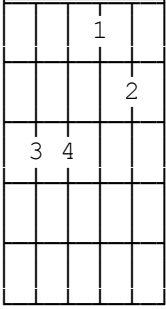
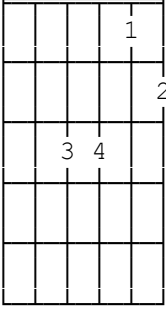
		
GbC EbBb Cm7b5	B F AbEb Fm7b5	E BbDdAb Bbm7b5

Seventh Flat-Thirteenth Chords (1-3-5-b7-b13)

These three chords are in their root inversion. They consist of a dominant-seventh chord plus a flattened thirteenth note. It is common for some of these 5 notes to be missing.

	
G F B Eb G7b13 (no5th)	(G) C BbE Ab C7b13 (no5th)

The following three chords are in their third inversion.

		
G C EbA Am7b5	C F AbD Dm7b5	F BbDbG Fm7b5

Some Special Chords

Here are some nice open-string chords. Note that the open strings are marked with a "O" above the nut. These are not moveable either along or across the guitar fretboard.

O O O O

E A E G C G
Am7

0 O O X

E C E G C
C major

0 0

G C E G C G
C major

O O O

F C F A C F
F major

O O

G B D G D G
G major

G B D G D G
G major

O O

E A E A E A
A major

O

E B E B E G#
E major

X 0 0

A D A D F#
D major

0 0 0

F A D A D F
D minor

Here are some moveable six-string chords.

G B F B D G
G7

G B E B E G
G6

G C G C EbA
Cm6

G B F A D G
G9

G B F A E G
G13 (no 5th)

I don't use any of these special chords in my playing – except for an occasional rich lush ending chord. I find them cumbersome and unwieldy.

Let me switch over to conventional tablature notation and provide some more practice finger-dexterity-building exercises:

Here's the chord sequence I use to accompany "Autumn Leaves" in the key of E minor:

Am7 D9 Gmaj7 Cmaj7 F#m7b5 B7 Em Em9 Eb9 Dm9 Db9 C6 B7 Em

1 2 1

4 4 2 4 0 3 4 6 5 4 3 4 3 4

5 5 4 4 2 2 4 7 6 5 4 2 2 4

5 4 4 5 2 2 5 5 3 3 2

5 5 3 2 2 7 6 5 4 3 2 2

5 3 2 0 0

Here's the chord sequence I use to accompany "Blue Bossa" in the key of C minor:

Cm7 Fm7 Dm7b5 G7 Cm7 Ebm7 Ab7 Dbmaj7 Dm7b5 G7 Cm7

3 0 5 3 6 5 5 3

3 1 5 2 3 6 5 5 5 2 3

5 1 6 3 5 8 4 6 6 3 5

3 5 5 3 6 6 4 5 5 3

1 3 4 3

Here's the chord accompaniment to "All the Things You Are": It contains the 6-2-5-1 progression in the key of Ab followed by the 2-5-1 progression in the key of C.

Fm7 Bbm7 Eb7 Abmaj7 Dbmaj7 G7 Cmaj7 Cm7 repeat

3 3 1 1 1 1 5 5 4 4 4 4 3 3

3 3 1 1 1 1 5 5 5 5 4 4 4 4 3 3

5 5 1 1 3 3 5 5 6 6 3 3 5 5 5 5

3 3 3 3 1 5 5 6 6 3 3 5 5 5 5

3 1 1 6 6 6 6 5 5 5 3 3

4 6 3 3 3

Links to Other Internet Sites Discussing Perfect Fourths Guitar Tuning

Wikipedia (the free encyclopedia) discussion of All Fourths Tuning:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All_fourths

“Guitar Tuning in 4ths” FaceBook page (curated by Ross Ingram):

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/183968224067/>

Alternate Tuning Guide by Bill Sethares:

<http://sethares.engr.wisc.edu/alternatetunings/alltunings.pdf>

EADGCF Guitar Chords from the Guitar Tunings Database:

<http://www.gtdb.org/tuner/eadgcf/chords/#.US-996V1P0d>

Justin Perdue's Notes on Tuning Guitar in Fourths:

<http://www.justinperdue.com/thoughts/4ths-guitar-tuning>

P4 Thread in the Jazz Guitar Forum:

<http://www.jazzguitar.be/forum/improvisation/19641-p4-players-only-thread.html>

“Defending the Fourth” Thread in the Ultimate Guitar Community Forum:

<http://www.ultimate-guitar.com/forum/showthread.php?t=1230089>

Zile Kondic's blog on P4 Tuning (See 22 June 2009 and 17 July 2009):

<http://zhille.blogspot.com>

Mike Rosmore's Patterns for EADGCF Playing:

http://mike.rosmore.org/xmu_eadgcf.shtml

“Perfect Fourths Cheat Sheet” Thread on the SevenString.org Forum:

<http://www.sevenstring.org/forum/music-theory-lessons-techniques/126775-perfect-fourths-cheat-sheet.html>

Brian Berge “Introduction to All Fourths Tuning”:

<http://web.archive.org/web/20061016013804/lilytears.com/arts/music/guitar/methods/intro/4ths.htm>

Finn Schatvet-Riisager: P4 Blog including guitar modifications:

<http://p4tuning.blogspot.com>

Acknowledgement

I have studied all of these web sites (and the YouTube videos on the next page) in selecting chords for this tutorial. I wish to thank the various authors for their generosity in openly freely publishing their valuable work.

Links to YouTube Videos on Perfect Fourths Tuning

Justin Perdue: “Diatonic 4ths Guitar Chord Voicings in Fourths Tuning”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FqlhhXXa7Ck&feature=youtu.be>

TomMusicLessons “Introduction to EADGCF Tuning”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgDxKs5j1zY>

TomMusicLessons “EADGCF Scales”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-jon3X4aIKc>

TomMusicLessons “EADGCF Chords”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tdnxqRCEAK0>

TomMusicLessons “EADGCF Arpeggios”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GE2VVo9Ggyw>

TomMusicLessons “EADGCF – Open Chords”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W73StQ7kP0A>

TomMusicLessons “EADGCF – Barre Chords”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXLqS8v7Sag>

TomMusicLessons “EADGCF – Pentatonic Shapes”:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-CJ_sV_L62A

TomMusicLessons “EADGCF – Pentatonic Licks”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ZaAwszCciE>

TomMusicLessons “EADGCF – Scale Fragments”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9I1P4Yh0HPA>

TomMusicLessons “Thoughts on EADGCF Tuning, 8 Months On”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kc2kNbnjKcY>

TomMusicLessons “Improvising in All Fourths Tuning”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WihbA3eD9rk>

Graham Young “P4 Guitar Tuning Explained”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJe4mfrDZnY>

Stevysound “Tuning Guitar in Fourths”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0D6WzutG8s>

BillyCmusic “Introduction to Fourth Tuning: Lesson 5”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtSA5SxvQAQ&list=PL586687C3049F2ED7>

Tom Quayle “4ths tuning”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNrgQ0yqQbU>