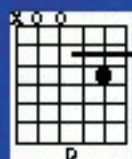
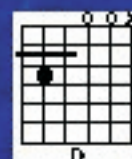


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A Season of Happiness**

**LEARN TO PLAY GUITAR
THE
EASY WAY**



**ILLUSTRATED
for
Left and Right-handed
fingering**



**with the songs of
Buddy Holly John Lennon
Elvis Johnny Cash AC/DC
Creedence Clearwater Revival
The Rolling Stones The Animals
Eddie Cochran Bob Dylan
Roy Orbison Kenny Rogers
and Louis Armstrong**

Learn to Play Guitar the Easy Way

by

Dave Hawkins

Exclusive to A Season of Happiness

Turning dreams into reality

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Cover design and painting by Dave Hawkins

Learn to Play Guitar the Easy Way

Module 1

In these brief instruction modules, you'll be learning to play guitar to some classic songs right from the get-go. The sections of Module 1 are listed below and you can start wherever you fancy. Maybe you see a song you know and would like to try. That's okay; but I'd urge you to at least skim through some of the early stuff so that you know what I'm talking about down the track.

Why have I used old songs? Because, without them you wouldn't have the music you love today. Buddy Holly, Eddie Cochran and Elvis helped kick off rock and roll; The Beatles took it to another level; and AC/DC brought it back home for some really hard rock.

The songs I've chosen are, I believe, good examples of style and technique; and if you have a look at "**Playing Chords**" you'll see that you won't have to wade through pages and pages before getting onto the good gear. You'll be straight into playing the first song, Buddy Holly's "Heartbeat". Shortly after, you can give Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Bad Moon Rising" a go. No messing - jump right in to some good old fashioned rock and roll.

Here's what you've got to look forward to, including your first two-song set:

- 1 About Your Guitar**
- 2 Before You Start**
- 3-5 Strumming the Strings**
- 6 Playing Chords**
- 7 Chord Diagrams and Illustrations for Right-handed Fingering**
- 8 Playing Buddy Holly's "Heartbeat"**
- 9 Playing in a Different Key**
- 10 Right-hand Fingering for Chords C, G and F**
- 11 Playing ANY Song in a Different Key with "Bad Moon Rising"**
- 11b Strumming for "Bad Moon Rising" and Intro chords for "Heartbeat"**

And just in case you think I've been a bit slack with the printing, some sections are purposely in a smaller font size. That's so that everything you might need for a particular song is on the same page.

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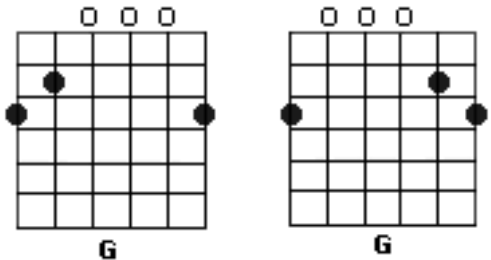
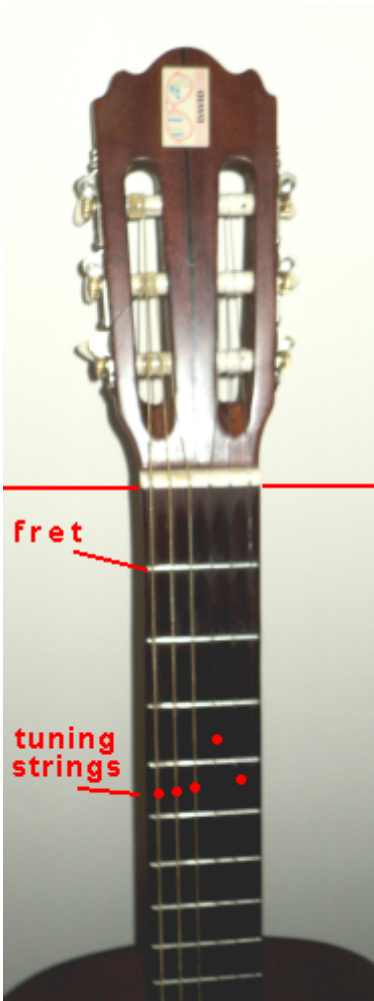
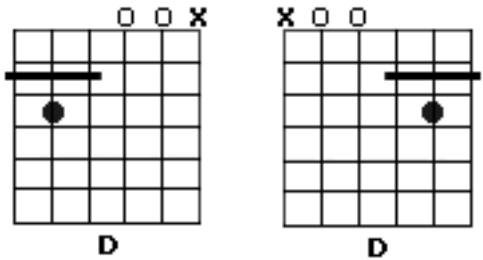
About Your Guitar

It doesn't matter whether you have a Spanish, an acoustic or a solid electric, your guitar is precious. It may prove to be your best, maybe your only friend; so treat it with respect. Then it will last you a lifetime and give you and others much pleasure. The strings, however, will need replacing on occasions and it's best you get the right ones for your particular instrument. Steel is fine for electric and some acoustics, but only some. Guitars originally intended for classical and mellow music are often constructed for nylon strings only: re-stringing with steel could crack the neck or head because they aren't reinforced with a steel strip – in plain speak they just can't take the strain!

Most of the time, before you start playing you'll have to re-tune one or more strings – you've probably seen the professionals doing this during a performance. As you'll learn along the way, if a single string is out by just a fraction, it doesn't sound good and neither does the chord it is part of. So, you need somewhere to start from. Initially, you may have to refer to an on-line App, or get yourself a tuner from a music store. A piano or keyboard would be ideal. What you really need to know is how the E string sounds. Get it sounding right and everything can be tuned to this string. Below is a diagram showing how to tune one string to another.

If you have to re-string, or replace the top E string – that's the one far right in the picture – don't over-tighten it because it can easily break.

The chord diagrams either side of the guitar show you that they always start right from the top of the neck. Those closest to the picture are for left-hand fingering, with the opposites on the outside.



tuning your strings:
Finger each string under the red dots and play this string plus the next open one above – they should sound the same.

If your guitar is strung differently to the one in the picture - that is, from base E on the right to top E on the left - simply reverse the tuning procedure.

When you've re-tuned the six strings, play the individual notes of the D chord.
If it doesn't sound right, adjust whichever string seems out and play again.
Once you have this chord sounding okay, try it with the G chord, fine-tuning as before.
Then, to make sure, play D again, adjusting if still necessary – it pays to get it right.

Before You Start

Hi there, I'm Dave.

I guess you've downloaded this because, maybe, you fancy playing guitar? Believe me, if you can stick at it, you will have the time of your life. It's one of those instruments that you can fiddle with in the privacy of your own space, quite possibly stuffing up at first, then later on producing some really cool music. The beauty is, you don't need anyone else to make it sound good, particularly if you can learn some chords. With just a few, you can play the backing while you or someone else sings along. Wouldn't that be magic?

This brief tutorial (don't panic – you won't be sitting any exams!) – is merely about teaching you the basics of playing chords. Have a look at Ed Sheeran in concert and you'll see how essential they are to his songs. But maybe you want to be a lead guitarist, right? Okay, watch professionals like Brian May (Queen) or Mark Knopfler (ex Dire Straits) in action. Although they play some amazing solos and riffs, their fingers aren't always flying up and down the neck of the guitar. Quite often they are trapping chords and just picking out certain strings to make the tune. The point is: if you can learn to play chords as a rhythm guitarist, not only will you be able to jam with any band, but it will also make playing lead guitar so much easier.

I reckon many learning-guitar books lose the beginner in the first pages simply because they teach techniques and music theory in a tedious, almost academic way. I propose a better, quicker way to learn – by getting straight into a song. The opening part is about strumming chords; but if you already know how, or you want to get to the nitty-gritty, just skip this bit. You can always come back to it later.

One thing you can try, however, is to explore the sounds your guitar can produce. Don't worry about chords for now: just try a single stroke across the open strings in different places over the instrument from anywhere on the neck down to the bridge - that's the strip, usually plastic, just above where the strings are tied. You can use your thumb, a pick (plectrum), or even a plastic bread-wrapper tie. You should notice a distinct difference. Played hard and close to the bridge, you'll get that coarse, raspy sound of funk and hard rock; back up the neck it will sound softer and more mellow. Muffle the strings lightly with the heel of your strumming hand and it will deaden the chord to sound like: chunk, chunk.

Back to the good stuff. Maybe there's a particular song you'd like to play. Getting the "suggested" lyrics and chords is a breeze – just Google the name. The trouble I've found is that the chords aren't always the same as those on my CD's, and a few times the words are wrong. A couple of examples:

A line from Eddie Cochran's "Weekend": Off we went to make a big tent on the weekend.

A big TENT? Were they going on a camping weekend? I think not. Substitute "dent" and it makes more sense; listen to the original recording and you'll know what's right.

A line from The Beatles' "Come Together": Hold you in his armchair you can feel his disease. What John actually sings is: Hold you in his arms, yeah, you can feel his disease.

Sometimes the chords and chord-changes from Googled songs don't sound right. For now, accept that they aren't. Plod through the following pages, learn to play chords, how to figure out what's right or wrong, and you'll know enough to fix these mistakes yourself.

Whether you finger the chords with the left or right hand, there are sets of illustrations for both.

That's it for the waffle. Let's jump in, boots an' all, to play some serious rock an' roll!

Strumming the Strings

As I've said, you can skip this part and get straight into the first song – your choice.

To fully understand what I'm about to say, picture the guitar sitting on your lap. The base E string, that's the lowest-sounding note, is uppermost closer to your chin, whereas the top E string, the highest note, is closer to your knee. So, when I call for a down strum, I simply mean that you will be hitting the strings in a smooth stroke in a downward motion from the base E string to the top E string.

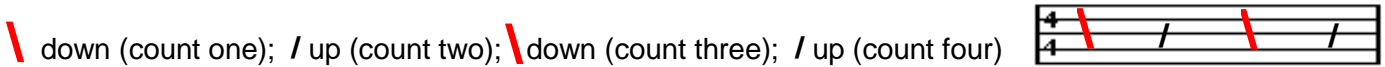
To strum the strings you can use whatever sounds right for the type of song. The thumb works well for softer-sounding chords, especially on acoustic guitars with nylon strings. If using a pick (plectrum), hold it between thumb and index finger and practise strumming until you figure out how tightly to grip it so that the pick can move a little and doesn't hook or catch single strings on the way through.

For the following exercises you'll be counting the beats in the bar - that's the tempo of the tune on these examples of sheet music. In "Heartbeat" there are 4 beats to the bar (known as 4/4 time), and many songs have the same tempo. So, you will be counting: one two three four

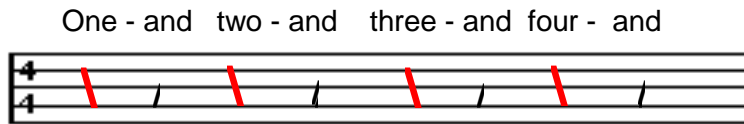


In this example, there is just one bar containing 4 separate beats represented by a single strum: down from the base note to the top note. Each down strum is indicated in red:

To add a bit of variety, try strumming first down (base to top note) then back up the strings (top to base): indicated by the symbol: / So, you will be playing and counting: one two three four



Although different, this down-up routine can still be a bit uninteresting. Let's try adding some more beats into the bar. Obviously there can only be four beats in a bar written in 4/4 time; but if you think half beats it works. This means there will now be eight beats in the bar, but they are only half beats. Rather than counting from one to eight, however, still count the four beats to a bar for the down stroke; but for each up stroke count "and". So, you will be counting:



The up strum (or "and") has now become what is known as the back beat. In terms of musical notes or pitch, these strums will sound like low-high low-high, etc. Hopefully, to explain this in simplified terms I'm going to show you how it might look on sheet music. **No, don't panic!** You won't need to remember any of this: it's just to give you an idea of how your strums should sound. To make sense of it, however, you ought to know the value of individual notes as they are written on the stave (that's the five-line strip).

As we now know, 4/4 time has four beats in the bar. On sheet music, each of these beats would be represented by a crochet which looks like this: Remember, that's one beat. A half beat is called a quaver and looks like this:

In effect, one single beat = = So, in a four-beat bar, you could have 4 crochets , eight quavers , or a mix of the two, **as long as the total of half plus full beats doesn't exceed four beats to the bar.**

Using the above example of down/up beats as strums, let's see how that same rhythm might appear on sheet music. The strum strokes will look the same, but I'd like you to listen for the change in pitch between the down-strum and the up-strum. To explain this, I've used musical notes as they would be written, and underneath them is the letter given to them. Means nothing? Okay, let's simplify it by using the tonic sol-fa. That's the old Doh, Ray, Me, etc in The Sound of Music. You know: "Doh, a deer, a female deer; Ray, a drop of golden Sun..."

Tonic sol-fa:	Doh	Ray	Me	Fah	Soh	Lah	Te	Doh
Musical notes:	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C

Try strumming using the 4-beat bar (on the left below) by following the red and black symbols (down and up). Then do it again while looking at the music on the right, but this time for the down-strum just hit the bottom three strings (the low notes), and for the up-strum just the top three strings (the high notes). The overall chord hasn't changed, but you should be able to hear the different parts that make it up – low notes and high notes.

One-and two- and three-and four-and sounding like: Me Te Me Te Me Te Me Te

The actual notes being: e b e b e b e b

So, who cares? Well, your audience might, if you have one, because it adds variety to the backing, particularly when introducing the up-strum or back-beat where it sounds right. So, sometimes you might be down-strumming to a full beat, or sometimes down-up for two individual half beats. Can't grasp that? Okay, let's see how this works in a song.

Look at the words in the middle of the first line of "Heartbeat": ...MISS WHEN MY BABY KISSES..., then think about the beat. There are four beats in every bar of this song (4/4 time); so, "miss" is one beat, "when my" is the second beat (one half beat or quaver for each word), "baby" is the third, and "kisses" is the fourth. Using a diagram, it might look like this:

D E

Miss when my baby kisses

This might still sound a bit ordinary, so let's try something else using the same words:

D E

Miss when my ba - by kiss - es

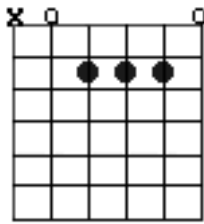
Playing like this you'll be counting one (down stroke) for "miss", then two-and, three-and, four-and for the rest of the words which have been broken into single syllables.

This is quite a good way of working out how long to sing or play individual notes: by checking whether there are any half-notes in the bar. In particular, it makes it easier to know exactly where in the words a chord change is needed, because this won't always be at the beginning of a word: quite often it happens in the middle. Obviously, in this example there is one full beat and six half-beats. If we then just think in terms of there being eight quavers (half-beats) in this single bar, "miss" can be thought of as two of these half-beats tied together for the whole word.

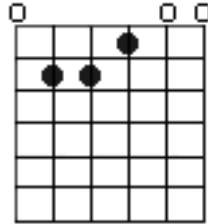
Playing Chords (see Page 7 for right-hand fingering)

When playing chords on the guitar, it is essential to keep the nails of the fingers which trap the strings trimmed short, otherwise the notes will not sound clean. Try to trap the strings as close as possible to the centre between the frets (brass strips set across the neck at intervals). Make sure you depress each string properly – soft is no good - and ensure you don't touch those either side. The following illustrations show how I play chords, but you may find a way that suits you better. To start off, practice the three chords below, moving from one to any other and back until you can play them reasonably fluidly and in time to a rhythmical beat. Count 1, 2, 3, 4; then change the chord for another four beats, and so on.

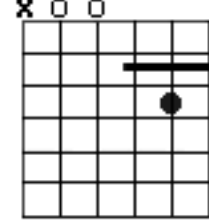
○ play string open
● finger string
X don't play
— bar with one finger



A



E



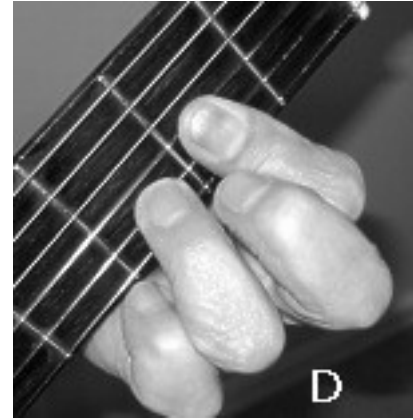
D



A



E



D

These three chords aren't unique to "Heartbeat", the example I've chosen, but are fairly standard for many of the simpler songs, in particular Rock and Roll, plus folk, country and some ballads. Now, try playing them to Buddy Holly's song. Below is the first verse and the chorus. If you don't know the song, get onto Google for a recording; and listen for the rise or lowering of pitch where the chords change. They will happen in the same places as this example; but may not sound the same as the chords you will be playing. This is because Buddy, or whoever sung the version you are listening to, may have recorded the song in a different key. We'll go into this later. For the moment, just try this part of the song the way I have written it:

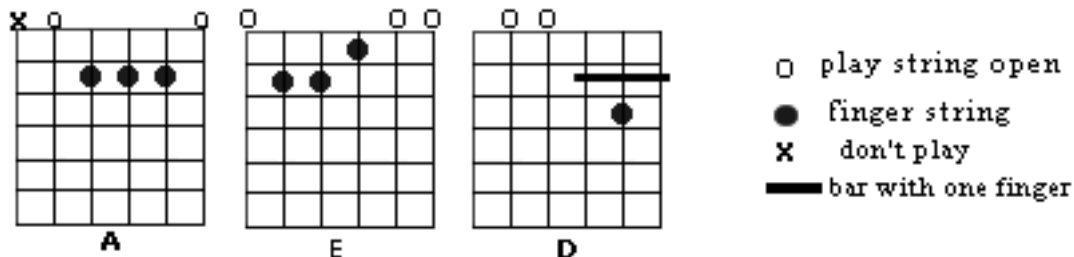
A D E A
Heartbeat, why do you miss when my baby kisses me?
A D E A
Heartbeat, why does a love kiss stay in my memo-ry?

D
Piddly-pat.
D A
I know that new love thrills me.
E A E
I know that true love will be-ee-e-ee.

See how one chord change (A) isn't at the beginning of a word, but comes in for the last syllable. Once you are okay with this short version, add the rest using the song sheet on page 8.

Heartbeat (Montgomery/Petty)

Initially, leave out the chords in brackets – these are instrumental bits you can fiddle with later. Just remember that these lead-ins to the following line take up time: one bar, or a count of four on this song sheet. To understand this continuing rhythm, tap the beat on the table (4 to the bar) while listening to the song playing, and go right through to the end. In particular, notice that the beat (tempo) never changes, even at the end of each line where the backing rhythm carries on, despite there being no more words sung until the next one.



(Intro: A E A E)

A D E A (E A E)
Heartbeat, why do you miss when my baby kisses me?
A D E A (E A D E)
Heartbeat, why does a love kiss stay in my memo-ry?

D
Piddly-pat.
D A (A E A E)
I know that new love thrills me.
E A E
I know that true love will be-ee-e-ee-e-e.

A D E A (E A E)
Heartbeat, why do you miss when my baby kisses me?

(Instrumental: Middle 8 [8 bars] (A D E A A E A E))

A D E A (E A E)
Heartbeat, why do you skip when my baby's lips meet mine?
A D E A (E A D E)
Heartbeat, why do you flip then give me a skip each time?

D
Piddly-pat.
D A (A E A E)
And sing to me love's story
E A E
And bring to me love's glor-ye-e-ee-e-e.

A D E A (E A E)
Heartbeat, why do you miss when my baby kisses me?

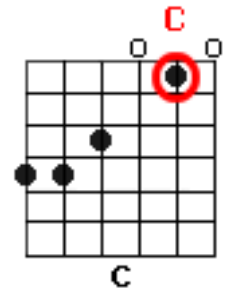
(Instrumental finish: A E A E A E E A)

When you can play and sing along with "Heartbeat" – or you can accompany someone else with a better voice! – you can move on to playing in a different Key.

Let's try this with the Creedence Clearwater Revival song: "Bad Moon Rising".

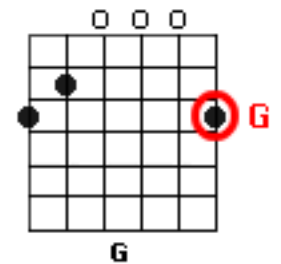
Playing in a Different Key

You may be getting a bit confused with me talking about Chords, Keys and Pitch. What's the difference? Actually, in terms of how they sound they are pretty much the same. The Chord of C is playing in the Key of C; and the Pitch is that of the note C: in other words, how high or low it sounds. To confirm that the Chord and note sound the same, finger the Chord C; strum it, then just pick the single string circled in red – that's the C note. Play them again, one then the other. You'll hear that they sound the same.



You are playing the Chord of C in the Key of C; and the note C is not only one of the notes in that Key, but is the main building block it is based on.

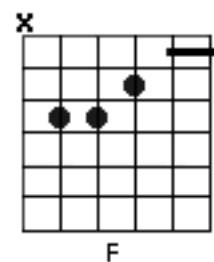
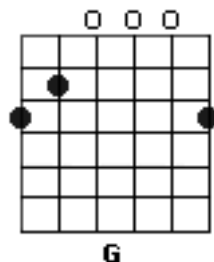
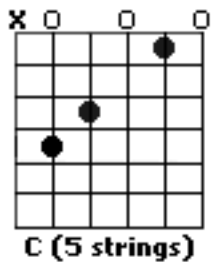
Now, try this with G – finger the chord, strum it, and this time pick the single string trapped by your ring finger. That string is playing the note of G which is the basis for the Key of G. If you now play the note C followed by the note G, you should hear that the G has a higher sound than C – it has a higher pitch. For an explanation of how Pitch fits into all this, look at the Doh, Ray, Me comparison below taken from the Strumming the Strings section.



Tonic sol-fa:	Doh	Ray	Me	Fah	Soh	Lah	Te	Doh
Musical notes:	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C

Right, onto those new chords and the new Key of C. You could find them too hard at first. To begin with, just try fingering and playing the top 4 strings; but be determined to master the full chords later.

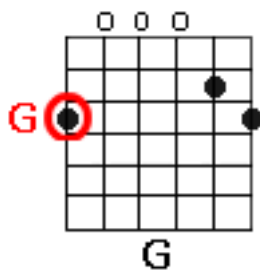
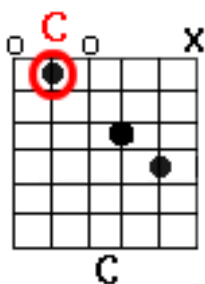
- play string open
- finger string
- ✕ don't play
- bar with one finger



Practise the above chords the way you did the A, E and D chords, then give the next song “Bad Moon Rising” a go.

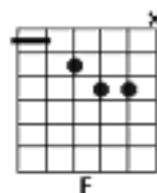
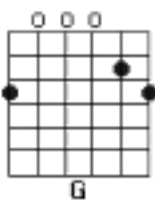
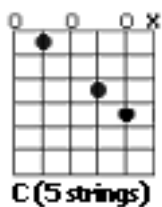
Right-hand Fingering for Chords C, G and F

To confirm that the Chord C and the note C are the same pitch, finger the Chord C; strum it, then just pick the single string circled in red – that’s the C note. Play them again, one then the other. You’ll hear that they sound the same.



Do the same with G – finger the chord, strum it, and this time pick the single string trapped by your ring finger. That string is playing the note of G which is the basis for the Key of G. If you now play the note C followed by the note G, you should hear that the G has a higher sound than C – it has a higher pitch.

Below are three new chords which you can try with the Creedence Clearwater Revival number “Bad Moon Rising” on page 11.



Play them a few times first, changing from one to another until you can do it without missing a beat.

You can also play this, or any other song, in any Key you choose. See how on the next page.

Playing Any Song in a Different Key

Bad Moon Rising (John Fogerty)

Intro: A E D A (alternative C G F C)
 A E D A (chords C G F C)

A(C) E(G) A(C)
 I see the ba-ad moon a-rising
 A(C) E(G) A(C)
 I see trouble on the way
 A(C) E(G) A(C)
 I se-e e-earthquakes and lightning
 A(C) E(G) A(C)
 I se-e ba-ad times today

Chorus: (repeat below where indicated)

D(F)
 Don't go around tonight
 D(F) A(C)
 Well, it's bound to take your life
 E(G) D(F) A(C)
 There's a bad moon on the rise

A(C) E(G) A(C)
 I hear hurricanes a-blowing
 A(C) E(G) A(C)
 I know the end is coming soon
 A(C) E(G) A(C)
 I fear rivers over-flowing
 A(C) E(G) A(C)
 I hear the voice of rage and ruin

Chorus:

A(C) E(G) A(C)
 Hope you got your things to-gether
 A(C) E(G) A(C)
 Hope you are quite prepared to die
 A(C) E(G) A(C)
 Looks like we're in for nasty weather.
 A(C) E(G) A(C)
 One eye is taken for an eye.

Chorus X 2

When you want to play a new song, get the recording or Google the chords and lyrics to find out which Key it is written in. Then use the paper-strip method to change (or transpose) it into a Key that suits you.

In Set Two we'll try out a slower John Lennon number to learn three new chords; then pick up the tempo with the Eddie Cochran classic "Weekend".

Why would you even want to change the Key?

Well, sometimes a song may be written in a Key (or pitch) that is too high or too low for the singer; and it needs to be changed.

Keys and notes on the music scale range from A to G alphabetically, including the appropriate flats; then start again from A, B and so on. When you want to change a song to a different key (or pitch), there's a simple way of figuring out the new chords. On a piece of paper write (evenly spaced):

Ab A Bb B C Db D Eb E F Gb G Ab A Bb B C

then repeat them below:

Ab A Bb B C Db D Eb E F Gb G Ab A Bb B C

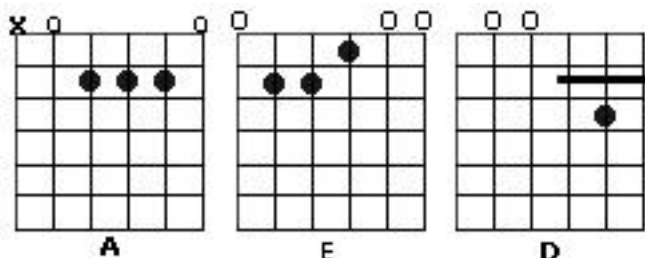
Now, cut these into two long strips. By positioning one above the other, slide the bottom strip so that the Key (or chord) you want to play in is directly beneath the original chord. For Bad Moon Rising it should look like this:

Ab A Bb B C Db D Eb E F Gb G Ab A Bb B C

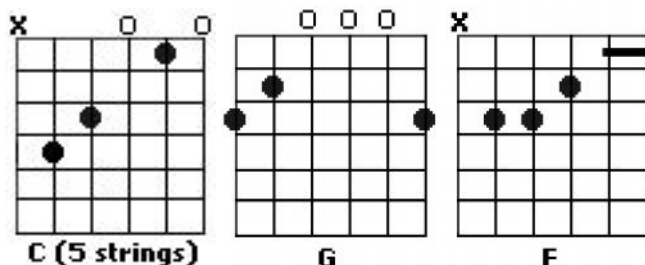
Ab A Bb B C Db D Eb E F Gb G Ab A Bb B C

Notice that each of the alternative chords in the Key of C are 2 steps from their equivalents in the Key of A. So, to play this song in the Key of C, simply substitute C for A, G for E and F for D.

Bad Moon Rising Key of A



Alternative chords (in brackets) for Key of C



In Set Two we'll try out a slower John Lennon number to learn three new chords; then pick up the tempo with the Eddie Cochran classic "Weekend".

Bad Moon Rising – basic strum suggestions (listen to a recording for the real McCoy!)

— (½ beat rest) \ (full beat down-strum) / (½ beat down-strum) / (½ beat up-strum)

Intro:

A E D A instrumental fill

A E A E D A E

I see the ba-ad moon a - ri - sing I se-ee trouble on the

A A E D A E A

way. I se-ee e-earth - quakes and light-ning

A E A A E A D

I se-e ba-ad times to - day. Don't go a-round to-night.

A E D

(Well it's) bound to take your li-ife. There - er's a bad moon on the

A A E D A E A

rise. I h e - ear hur - ri - canes a - blow - ing.....etc.....

Heartbeat Intro chords

This is simple if you can get your little finger working. Do the down/up strums as indicated; but on the 3rd and 4th counts of the bar, depress the string marked in red - **ON** for 3 and **OFF** for 4, but still playing the chord. Just bear in mind that this combo all takes place in ONE BAR, so the strum marks are only a guide and do not conform to the 4/4 time rule. Listen to a recording to hear how this should work in the correct time.

on off on off

