APPROACH TO LEARNING THE BASIC CHORDS

This approach depends upon recognizing forms of the chord types. For example, A major, Bb major, and B major are all similar in chord shape. D major, Eb major, and E major are likewise similar to each other. One should slowly play the chords (of one type, e.g. major) in order. Note that you play a major form until another simpler form is encountered. Then play that form until a simpler one is possible, and take that one as far as necessary.

If you can, figure out where the root of the chord is for each form, and notice the patterns that emerge. After you can play all of the major chords in order (slowly), go on to the minor chords, then the dominant 7th chords, etc. Your understanding of the chords will be enhanced by learning the notes on the fingerboard, at least up to the 5th fret.



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MINOR 7TH



Notes:

- **1.** For diminished chords, any note upon which a finger is placed (or open strings) can serve as the root of the chord.
- 2. For a dominant 7 flat 9 chord (e.g. C7b9), play the diminished of the flat 9, that is the dimished onehalf step higher. For example, for a C7b9, play a C#dim.

AUGMENTED



Notes:

1. For augmented chords, any note upon which a finger is placed (or open strings) can serve as the root of the chord.

APPROACH TO LEARNING THE BASIC CHORDS (WITHOUT CHORD DIAGRAMS)

This approach depends upon recognizing forms of the chord types. For example, A major, Bb major, and B major are all similar in chord shape. D major, Eb major, and E major are likewise similar to each other. One should slowly play the chords (of one type, e.g. major) in order. Note that you play a major form until another simpler form is encountered. Then play that form until a simpler one is possible, and take that one as far as necessary.

If you can, figure out where the root of the chord is for each form, and notice the patterns that emerge. After you can play all of the major chords in order (slowly), go on to the minor chords, then the dominant 7th chords, etc. Your understanding of the chords will be enhanced by learning the notes on the fingerboard, at least up to the 5th fret.

MAJOR

A Bb B C C# D Eb E F F# G Ab

MINOR

Am Bbm Bm Cm C#m Dm Ebm Em Fm F#m Gm Abm

DOMINANT 7TH A7 Bb7 B7 C7 C#7 D7 Eb7 E7 F7 F#7 G7 Ab7

MINOR 7TH

Am7 Bbm7 Bm7 Cm7 C#m7 Dm7 Ebm7 Em7 Fm7 F#m7 Gm7 Abm7

DIMINISHED 7TH

Adim7 Bbdim7 Bdim7 Cdim7 C#dim7 Ddim7 Ebdim7 Edim7 Fdim7 F#dim7 Gdim7 Abdim7

Notes:

- 3. For diminished chords, any note upon which a finger is placed can serve as the root of the chord.
- 4. For a dominant 7 flat 9 chord (e.g. C7b9), play the diminished of the flat 9, that is the dimished onehalf step higher. For example, for a C7b9, play a C#dim.

AUGMENTED

A+ Bb+ B+ C+ C#+ D+ Eb+ E+ F+ F#+ G+ Ab+

Notes:

2. For augmented chords, any note upon which a finger is placed can serve as the root of the chord.