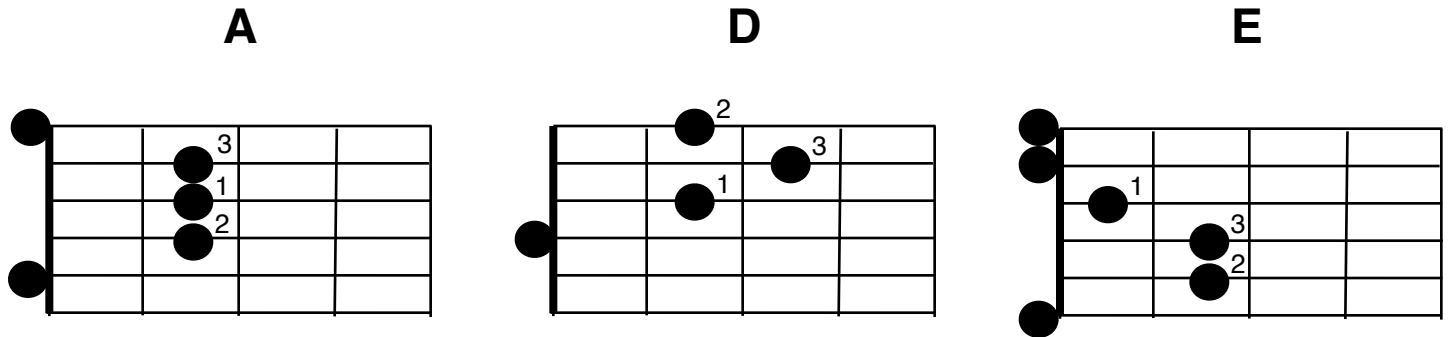


Playing Full Chords

Building upon the power chords we used to play the 12 Bar Blues, we will learn the full A, D and E chords. These chords are called open chords (i.e. open A) because they involve open strings, and are played at the lower positions of the guitar.



Notice the numbers next to the fretted notes on the diagrams. These are left hand fingerings. I believe these are the best fingerings for a beginner to use learning these chords. There are many possible fingerings for each of these chord forms.

Here are the steps you should take in learning these chords.

1. Finger then strum the chord.
2. Pluck each string individually, checking to make sure each string is sounding clearly.
3. Memorize the shape, fingering and strings for each chord.
4. Practice switching from chord to chord.

Switching is the hard part. Be sure to go slow at first. Building speed slowly as long as you are not making mistakes.

A couple of tricks that will make your switches between chords smoother and easier are the use of pivot fingers and guide fingers.

- A pivot finger is a finger that stays on the same note when moving from chord to chord. For example, your first finger stays on the 2nd fret, 3rd string when moving between the A and D chords.
- A guide finger is a finger that stays on the same string when switching chords, but changes fret. In this case you do not want to take this finger off the string. When switching from either A or D to E (or visa versa) keep your finger on the 3rd string and slide it between the 1st and 2nd frets.