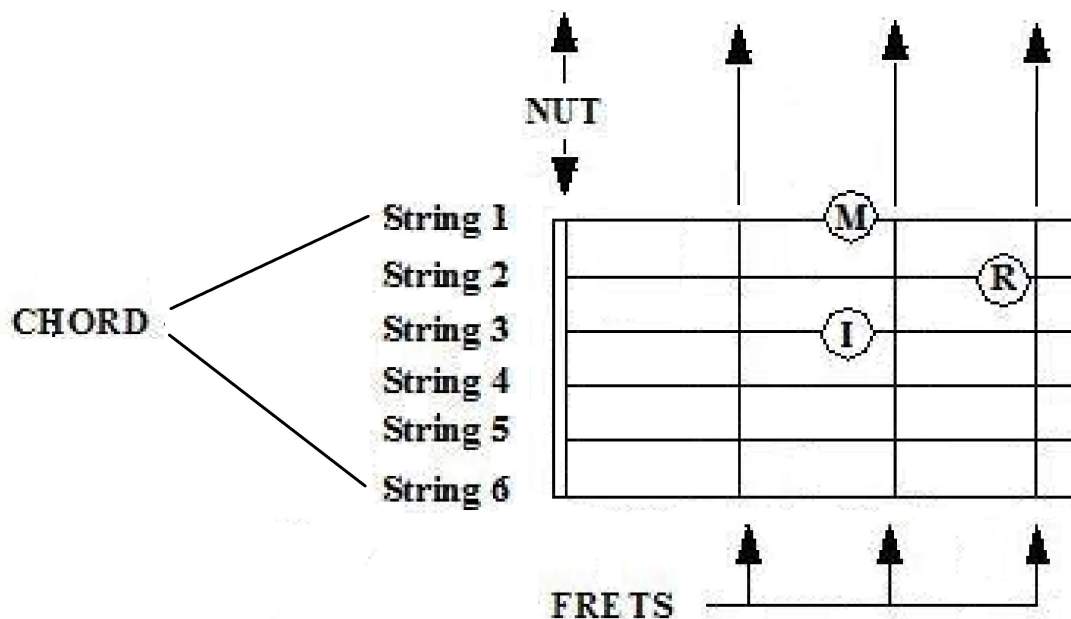


LESSON 2 D, A7 AND G CHORDS

This lesson will introduce three "chords" (D, A7 and G chords), and some songs to use them in. Chords are left hand positions on the strings of the guitar. Each chord is illustrated by a chord diagram, which is a picture of the guitar neck showing which fret to press for each string and which left hand finger to use on the string. The strings are numbered from one (thinnest and highest pitch) to six (thickest and lowest pitch).

An example is the D chord. The picture shows the guitar neck.



The chord diagram is on the right and is a representation of the guitar neck (as seen on the left above). The section shown by the arrows on the left is the same as the real chord diagram on the right. The letters refer to left hand fingers (I = index, M = middle, R = ring, L = little) used to hold down the strings. The metal pieces inlaid into the neck are called "frets". The letter "I" on string number 3 means that the index finger holds string 3 on the second fret. The finger should not actually touch the fret, but be slightly behind it. See the picture below on the left.

Here are some tips that may help.

The tips of your fingers should come straight down on the strings. The shape of your hand should look like a claw. The knuckles should be bent. Your thumb should be touching the neck of the guitar behind the frets. The string should be as close to the nail as possible.



Note that to get the string as close to the nail as possible, you may want to consider cutting your left hand nails very short. If they are too long, they will get in the way of holding down the strings. This is recommended, but not absolutely necessary.

In addition, be careful not to touch the fret with your finger. The finger should be as close to the fret as possible, but slightly behind it. Because of the way your hand is constructed, this is not always possible for every finger. The pressure on the strings should come from the fingers, with low thumb pressure. Your thumb should serve more as a guide.

Your left-hand wrist should not be bent and there should be no tension in your arms. It helps if the position of your guitar is correct. If you are standing, a guitar strap should be used. You should not support the weight of the guitar with your hands and arms.. The guitar should rest on your abdomen, such that it is in the same position whether you are sitting or standing. The neck should be at a 45 degree angle up. See the first picture below. If you do not have a strap, or prefer not to use it, you can hold the guitar as shown in the second picture below.



Another thing that can make it more difficult to play is the thickness or gauge of your strings. It might help to change the strings to a lighter (thinner) gauge.

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