

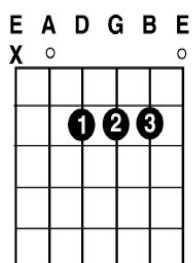
First Guitar Chords

Burton Jamison | Island Guitar Studios

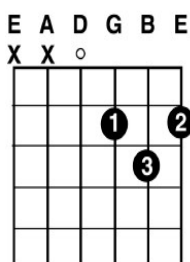
Updated: June 2, 2025

Please Print This Lesson. You will be learning the First Guitar Chords in the Chart Below.

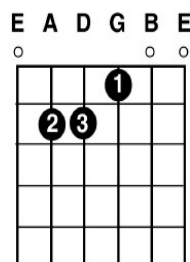
FIRST **GUITAR CHORDS**



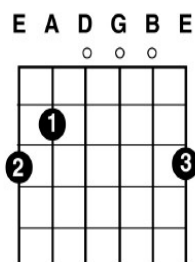
A



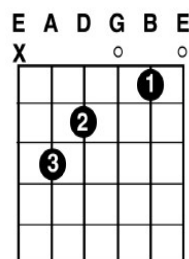
D



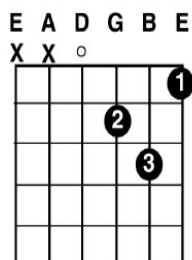
E



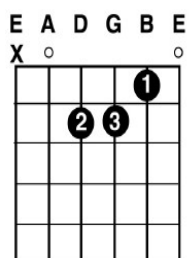
G



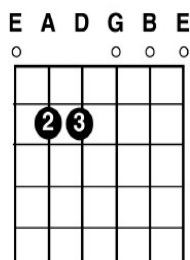
C



Dm



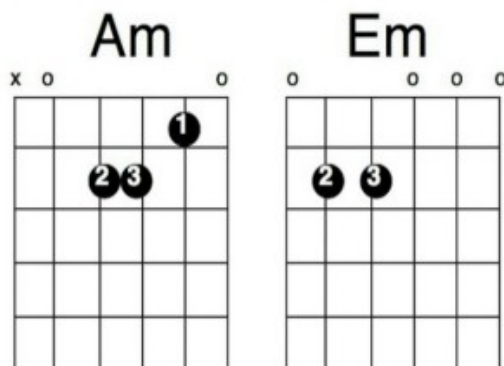
Am



Em

First/ Beginner Guitar Chord Charts/ Grids & How To Read Them

We will start with the A minor (Am) and E minor (Em) guitar chords. Please hold your guitar vertical so it matched the chord grids. The guitar strings left to right are 6E, 5A, 4D, 3G, 2B, & 1E. We will use string numbers for the two chords below.



Why is that X over string 6 ?

An X over a string indicates that string is not played. Am above we do not play string 6.

What are the O's, Black Dots, and White Numbers?

An O over a string indicates that string is not fretted but rather played Open. The Am chord has two Open strings. Strings 5 and 1. The Em chord has four Open strings, Strings 6, 3, 2, and 1,

A Black Dot on a string indicates which Fret or Frets are used on that string to finger the chord. For the Am chord it is Frets 1 and 2. The Em chord uses Fret 2.

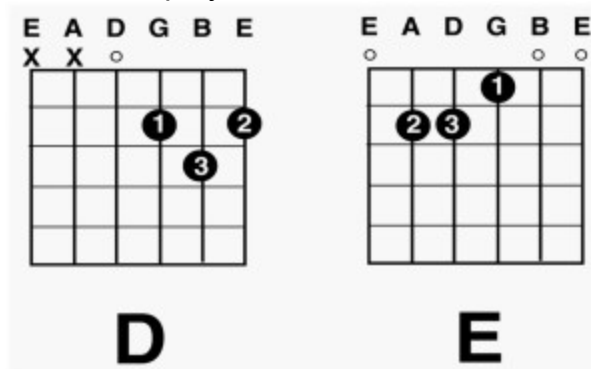
A White Number on a Black Dot indicates which left hand finger to use on that string to properly finger the chord. Finger 1 is index, 2 is middle, 3 is ring, and 4 is pinky.

The chords below have the note number for each of the 6 strings.

Remember, from left to right the string numbers are 6E, 5A, 4D, 3G, 2B, 1E.

Look at the D chord below. Use numbers and notes. Example 6E.

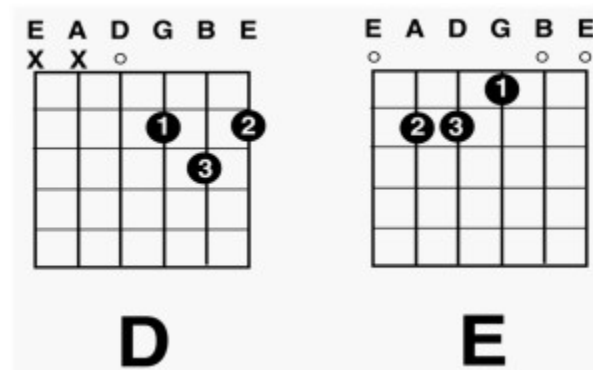
Which strings have an X and are not played?



First Guitar Chords

Burton Jamison | Island Guitar Studios

D Chord Questions Continued



Which string has an Open string?

What Frets are used to finger the chord?

What finger is on string 1? string 2? String 3?

D Chord Answers: Which strings have an X and are not played? 6 and 5

Which string has an Open string? 4

What Frets are used to finger the chord? 2 and 3

What finger is on String 1? Finger 2 | String 2? Finger 3 | String 3? Finger 1

Now look at the E chord: Use numbers and notes. Example 2B

Which strings have an X and are not played?

Which strings are Open strings?

What Frets are used to finger the chord?

What finger is on string 3? string 4? String 5?

E Chord Answers: Which strings have an X and are not played? This was a trick question. 0 or none, there is not an X on an E Chord chart, because all 6 strings are played.

Which strings are Open strings? 6, 2, 1

What Frets are used to finger the chord? 1 and 2

What finger is on String 3? Finger 1 | String 4? Finger 3 | String 5? Finger 2

A reminder of where strings 6 through 1 are found. Hold your guitar vertically along with the printed Guitar Chord Chart next to it at the first fret. The 6 strings on the guitar match the chord chart left to right, string 6 to string 1. The 6th string is the thickest and on your left.

First Guitar Chords

Burton Jamison | Island Guitar Studios

On some guitar chord charts the "Open" string notes on the Chord Chart are shown above each string: E, A, D, G, B, E. Sometimes the Chord Name is Above the chord chart instead, but sometimes it will be found Below it. See above.

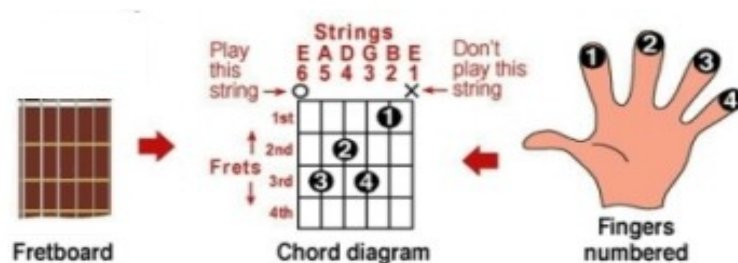
To recap:

An X over a string indicates that string is not played

An O over a string indicates that string is not fretted but rather played Open

A Black Dot on a string indicates which fret is used on that string to finger the chord. The First, Second or Third fret

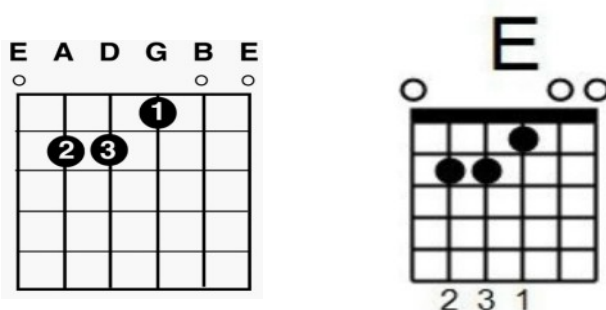
A White Number on a Black Dot indicates which left hand finger to use on that string to properly finger the chord.



Finger 1 is index, 2 is middle, 3 is ring, and 4 is pinky

Some Chord Charts have Numbers at the Bottom of the string to indicate which finger to use on that string instead of a number on a black dot.

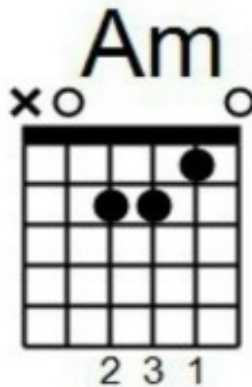
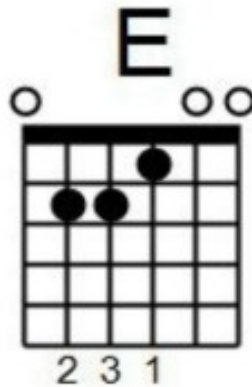
Compare the two E chords below.



First Guitar Chords

Burton Jamison | Island Guitar Studios

Some guitar chords use the same finger shape but on different strings. Such as the E and Am (m = minor).



Remember, the numbers below the string is the finger number to use on that string, not the string number.

For the E chord the fingers are on strings 5, 4 and 3.

For the Am chord the fingers move to string 4, 3 and 2 but stay in the same position.

Learn the chords on the Chord Chart Page that you printed earlier but save C and G for last.

The chord chart shown on the next page has some chords and some chord fingering that I believe are not for beginners.

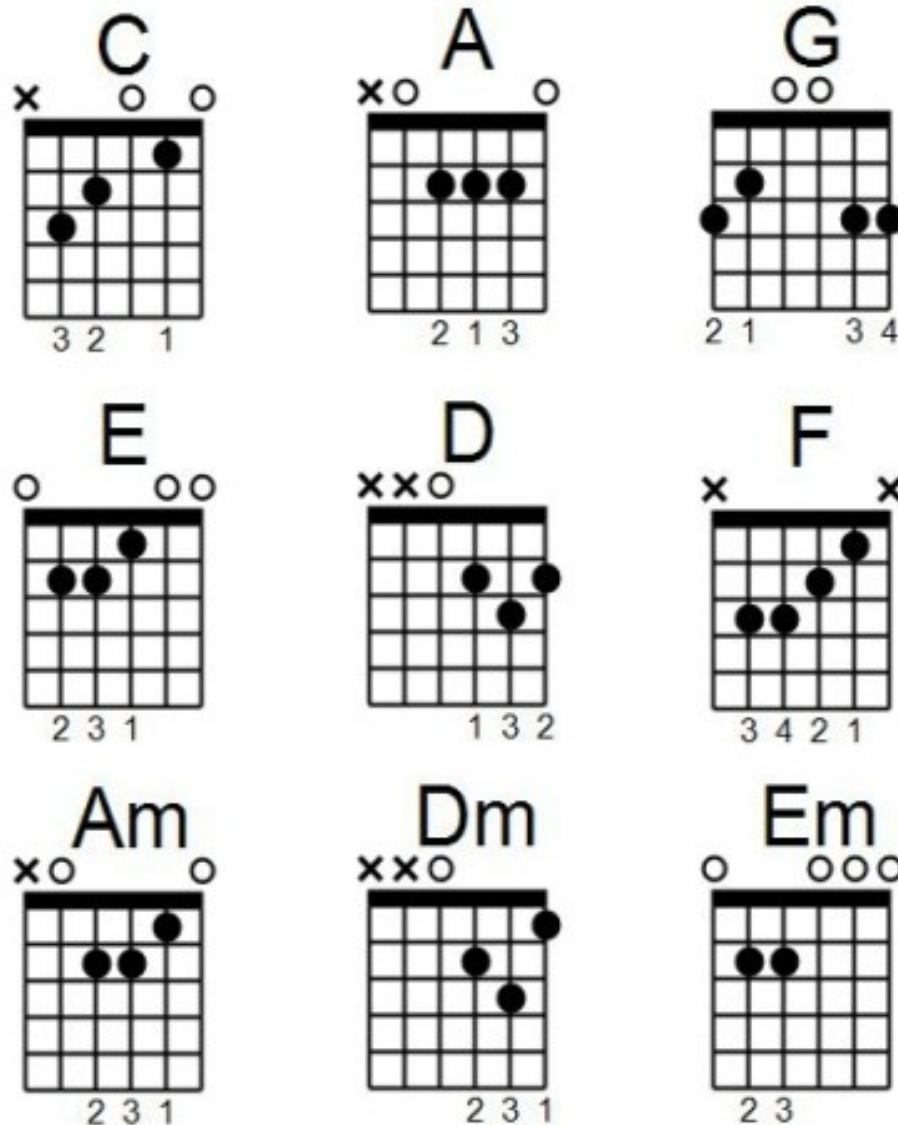
Specifically the G fingering and the F fingering.

Did you notice that the F chord is not found on the First Guitar Chords printout? Do you wonder why it is omitted?

It is not considered a First Guitar Chord.

First Guitar Chords

Burton Jamison | Island Guitar Studios

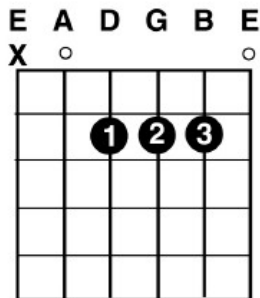


Some of the teaching materials available I just don't agree with (above) and that is why I do many myself. Skip the chords above. Start with the chords on page 7 one at a time and return to this page after you learn the chords on page 7. Some of the chords on this page have alternate fingerings.

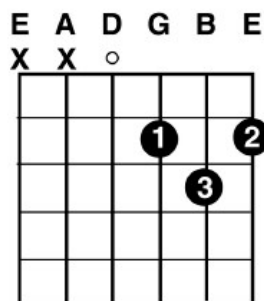
I had a very hard time with the F chord when I was first learning the guitar chords. (The F chord above is not the way to first learn it). I teach the F Major 7 fingering before the F shown above, For F Major 7, replace finger 4 with finger 3. Forget about finger 4. Leave finger 2 and 1 where they are. String 5A gets an X over it, and string 1E gets an 0 over it to play open. Now you are playing a beautiful F Major 7 chord. For C Major 7 simply remove finger 1 from the C chord leaving finger 3 and 2 in place. Another beautiful Major 7 chord, a C Major 7!

Again, learn the chords on page 7 one at a time, and save G and C for last. Come back to this page for an alternate fingering for F, and the widely used alternate fingering for G.

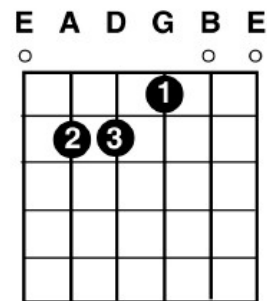
FIRST **GUITAR CHORDS**



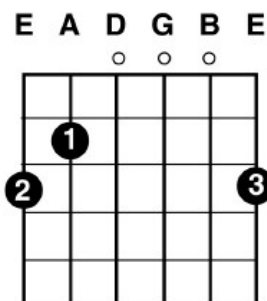
A



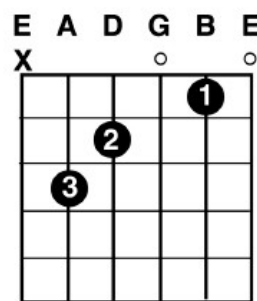
D



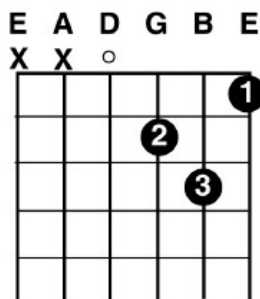
E



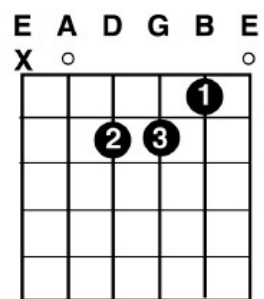
G



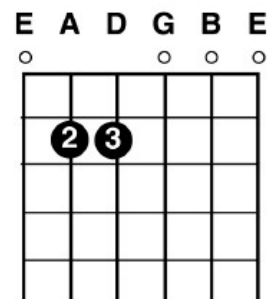
C



Dm



Am



Em

First Guitar Chords

Burton Jamison | Island Guitar Studios

Please wait until you have memorized the chords on page 7. Doing one chord at a time is a good way to memorize them. Then move on to the next one. Do one of the 3 lines of chords at a time. Example A, D, E. Then Dm, Am, and Em. Ending with G and C.

Would you like to have some fun creating and learning new chords from the ones you have learned on page 7? Put page 7 in front of you in case you are unsure of the chord fingering.

You will be removing one finger on the named chords, leaving the others in place to form another chord.

Removing Fingers:

A: Remove finger 2 for an A7. Or remove finger 3 for an A suspended (sus) 2

D: Remove finger 3 for a D sus 2.

E: Remove finger 3 for an E7. Or remove finger 1 for an Em, (or 1 and 3 for an Em7).

G: Remove finger 3 for a G6.

C: Remove finger 1 for a C Major (Maj) 7

Dm: Remove finger 1 for D sus 2nd.

Am: Remove finger 3 for Am7. Or remove finger 1 for A sus 2

Em: Remove finger 3 for Em7.

You will be adding finger 4 to these named chords leaving the other fingers in place to form another chord.

Adding Finger 4:

A: Place finger 4 on E1 fret 3 for an A7 alternate fingering. Or E1 fret 2 for an A6.

D: Place finger 4 on E1 fret 3 for a D sus 4.

E: Place finger 4 on B2 fret 3 for an E7 alternate fingering.

G: none at this point in your lessons without changing your other fingers.

C: Place finger 4 on G3 for a C7. Compare the difference of C7 and C Maj 7. Night and Day.

Dm: none at this point in your lessons without changing your other fingers.

Am: Place finger 4 on E1 for an Am7 alternate fingering.

Em: Place finger 4 on B2 for an Em7 alternate fingering.

I hope you have enjoyed learning the new chords! Did you notice on some it is only a change of 1 fret to form a different chord.