



## *The 5 Major Chord Forms*

The five chord forms of the guitar are all named from the five major chords in open position. They are E, D, C, A, G,. This particular order taken from open position and extended up the neck allows you to interconnect all of the scale studies octave point to octave point. This allows free movement up and down the entire length of the neck without any gaps. Diagram #1 on the following page is the moveable template for the neck. The 5 forms are always connected this way. E and G forms share a common bass note. A and C forms connect with a common bass note as well. D form falls in between E and C form and the whole neck is connected as shown by the diagram.

Start this exercise by strumming the first chord at the top of the neck (E as an E form) and at 70 BPM on the metronome. Count 1, 2, 3, 4. On beat four make your move up the neck to the next chord form (E as a D form) by barring at the 2<sup>nd</sup> fret (as shown in diagram) and placing your last three fingers in a D form position. (diagram) Again count to 4 and on the 4<sup>th</sup> beat move to the next chord form up the neck which is (E as a C form) again 4 metronome clicks moving up once more on beat 4 to the (E as an A form) count and move on 4 to the last form (E as a G form) which brings us to the end of the octave. Count 4 and move down the neck to the previous form and so on until you get back to E in the open or first position. As you do this take note of which are the common notes from position to position. Get used to putting your left hand smoothly into each form up and back and "in time". Now, start the next sequence by moving up a half step and repeating what you just did. When moving everything up a half step you

should be barring the first fret with your index finger and playing the E form chord with your last three fingers. Now the E form chord you are playing is an F and all subsequent forms you will play D, C, A, and G will all be F Major chords. This is why we call them chord FORMS when each of the 5 fundamental chords are not in open position. The 5 forms are named for what they are in open position.

They are named for their root bass notes. The root bass note for E form and G form is on the low E string. When moved out of their first position they retain the shape of E or G but their new name is the letter name of the bass note. The root bass note for A form and C form is on the 5<sup>th</sup> or "A" string. For D form the root note is on the fourth or "D" string. It only makes sense to memorize the notes on "E" and "A" and "D" strings in that the root base notes for the five forms is located on one of those three strings.

Example: Bar at the 1<sup>st</sup> fret and form an E form chord. The new name is F major because the root bass note on the low E string is now F. Move all your fingers up one more fret and the new chord name is F# major because the root note (on your bar finger)

on the low E string is now F# (or Gb) This rule holds true for all the other forms. As you move up the neck you get different chords without changing finger positions. All you have to change is where you bar. Easier said than done. This requires lots of practice. Once mastered though, you will never be at a loss for knowing where to get hold of any chord you want with a minimal amount of motion.

Keep moving up the neck until all 5 fundamental forms show up in the open position. Each time a fundamental form is fully on the neck start the exercise with that form. When you have moved up to the third fret with your bar finger playing the E form you should

actually start by strumming G in the open position. That sequence will be G open, G with an E form at the 3<sup>rd</sup> fret followed by D, C, and A forms then descending back through the forms to G open position. Keep moving up in half steps until all of the 5 forms have appeared in the open position slot and you are back to starting the exercise with E as an E form in open position. This takes a minimum of 12 repetitions.

So, practice the whole exercise at least FIVE TIMES DAILY until mastered. Diligence, at this point, is imperative to gain fluid playing skills.

Once this chord exercise is mastered you can add the scale exercises to it. (See diagram #2)

One of the key things to remember is where your left hand belongs as it moves up and down the neck. Pay close attention to the shape of each form and how it feels. Take particular note of the octave points and where they connect within the forms. When you have mastered this motion you can add the scale studies in a "spelling bee" fashion. Chord-Scale-Chord then move up to the next chord form and (strum) Chord, (play) Scale, (strum) Chord and so on. This is the next level and condensed exercises segment of the videos. So keep up the reps and good practicing.

