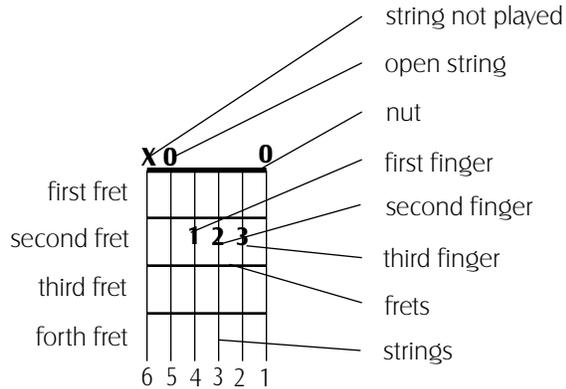


Chord Box Reading



A chord is created when multiple notes on the guitar are played at once. Each chord is named after one of the letters of the musical alphabet (A,B,C,D,E,F and G). There may also be additional letters or numbers after the chord. These indicate the quality of the chord (happy, sad, bluesy, etc.). While A7 has a bluesy character, Am has a sad sound.

A chord box communicates how to play a chord. It shows us what fingers to use and where to put them. In the above diagram, the vertical lines represent each of the six strings, and the horizontal lines represent frets. The numbers on the fingerboard indicate fingering. The example shows that the first finger is placed on the fourth string at the second fret. Also, the second finger is placed on the third string at the second fret, and the third finger is placed on the second string at the second fret. Additionally, the fifth and first strings are played open. An X is written over the sixth string in order to indicate that it is not played. The strings are plucked in a downward motion from the fifth string to the first. A chord will sound provided that there is enough finger and thumb pressure. Thumb and finger positioning are also critical.

Troubleshooting

If you are having problems getting the chord to sound completely, keep in mind the following:

1. Make sure that your thumb is centered on the back of the guitar neck and not hanging on the top of the neck in the "MTV" position.
2. Bring the guitar up higher on your body. This will change the angle of your hand and often stop string muting.
3. Arch your fingers, Arch your fingers, Arch your fingers!
4. Apply back pressure from your thumb.
5. Only the end of your thumb should be on the neck, not half of your hand.
6. Most of all, be patient. Some chords (especially F) will take more time than others.