

# Beginning 7th Chords

## Root Position on 6th and 5th Strings

Zack Caplinger

**GMaj7**

**GMaj7**

3 2 8  
4 3 #  
1 8

10  
4  
3 #  
1

T 3 | 10  
A 4 | 12  
B 4 | 11  
3 | 12  
3 | 10

**G7**

**G7**

3 3 8  
4 2  
1 8

8  
4  
3  
1

T 3 | 8  
A 4 | 10  
B 3 | 9  
3 | 10

**G-7**

**G-7**

5 3 8  
3 3 b  
3 3  
2 8

8  
4 b  
3  
1 b

T 3 | 11  
A 3 | 10  
B 3 | 8  
3 | 10

**Gø7**

**Gø7**

7 4 b 8  
3 3 b  
2 8

10  
4 b  
3  
1

T 2 | 11  
A 3 | 10  
B 3 | 11  
3 | 10

9

Go7

Go7

8 2

4 1 1 2 3 2

3 2 2 3 3 2

T 2 11

A 3 9

B 2 11

3 10

# CAGED System

## Major Scales

Zack Caplinger

Diagram showing the first five positions of the CAGED system for major scales. Each position includes a guitar chord diagram, a treble clef staff with a 4/4 time signature, and a bass clef staff with fret numbers for strings T, A, and B.

- C Shape:** Chord diagram shows x02321. Treble clef shows notes C4, E4, G4, C5, E5, G5. Bass clef shows 0, 1, 2, 3.
- A Shape:** Chord diagram shows x02023. Treble clef shows notes A3, C4, E4, A4, C5, E5. Bass clef shows 0, 2, 2, 0.
- G Shape:** Chord diagram shows 000323. Treble clef shows notes G3, B3, D4, G4, B4, D5. Bass clef shows 3, 0, 2, 3.
- E Shape:** Chord diagram shows 022100. Treble clef shows notes E4, G4, B4, E5, G5, B5. Bass clef shows 0, 1, 2, 0.
- D Shape:** Chord diagram shows xx0232. Treble clef shows notes D4, F#4, A4, D5, F#5, A5. Bass clef shows 2, 3, 2, 0.

Diagram showing the D major chord shapes in positions 6 through 10. Each position includes a guitar chord diagram, a treble clef staff with a 4/4 time signature, and a bass clef staff with fret numbers for strings T, A, and B.

- 6 C Shape:** Chord diagram shows x02321. Treble clef shows notes D4, F#4, A4, D5, F#5, A5. Bass clef shows 2, 3, 2, 1.
- 7 A Shape:** Chord diagram shows x02023. Treble clef shows notes D4, F#4, A4, D5, F#5, A5. Bass clef shows 7, 7, 7, 5.
- 8 G Shape:** Chord diagram shows 000323. Treble clef shows notes D4, F#4, A4, D5, F#5, A5. Bass clef shows 7, 7, 7, 9.
- 9 E Shape:** Chord diagram shows 022100. Treble clef shows notes D4, F#4, A4, D5, F#5, A5. Bass clef shows 10, 10, 11, 12.
- 10 D Shape:** Chord diagram shows xx0232. Treble clef shows notes D4, F#4, A4, D5, F#5, A5. Bass clef shows 14, 15, 14, 12.

Below we see a D major chord in each position of the CAGED system, followed by the major scale fingering and Maj 7th arpeggio in that position. It is important to practice our major scales in all twelve keys in these positions. These shapes are closed (no open strings), so they can be moved around the neck very easily. Any new scale, mode, arpeggio, exercise, etc should be related to these positions as well. For example, practice our mixolydian modes by playing these major scale fingerings, and simply lowering each 7th a half step. Fingerings will change, but this system can be a wonderful foundation to better learn the entire fretboard, and is essential to learning to read and improvise fluidly. Be sure to memorize each shape, but ALWAYS be aware of the notes you are playing, and don't only rely on muscle memory. Practice saying them out loud as you learn the scales, and eventually you will memorize the entire fretboard.

Diagram showing the D major chord in the C shape (position 6). It includes a guitar chord diagram, a treble clef staff with a 4/4 time signature, and a bass clef staff with fret numbers for strings T, A, and B.

- 11 C Shape:** Chord diagram shows x02321. Treble clef shows notes D4, F#4, A4, D5, F#5, A5. Bass clef shows 2, 3, 2, 1.



**D**

29

**E Shape**

TAB: 10, 10, 11, 12, 12, 10. | 10-12, 9-10, 12, 9-11, 12, 9-11, 12, 10-12, 9-10.

32

TAB: 10, 9, 12, 11, 12, 11, 10, 9, 10.

**D**

34

**D Shape**  
(3 notes per string)

TAB: 14, 15, 14, 12. | 10-12-14, 10-12-14, 11-12, 14, 11-12-14, 12-14-15.

37

TAB: 10, 14, 12, 11, 12, 11, 14, 14, 15.

4

I have found that many students master the E and A shapes fairly early on because they are related to barre chords that guitarists must learn in pop, rock, folk, etc. However, if those are all we play, we will develop holes across the neck where we aren't aware of the notes. It is important to challenge ourselves to move through different keys within certain positions on the neck, rather than jumping from one area to another. Learning to do this effectively actually makes playing the guitar easier, and can help us develop better voice-leading when we improvise. For example, check out the G-C-D progression below:

A guitarist who only knows the E and A shapes might only use these fingerings

	G	C	D
	3	3 <sup>x</sup>	5 <sup>x</sup>
39			
T	3	5	7
A	3	5	7
B	5	5	7
3	3	3	5

However, consider replacing the A shape D chord with it's C Shape. This allows us to stay in the same 4 fret position. When improvising, try using the related major scale shapes. This way you do not have to shift your hand around the neck as much. There is a time and place for that, but we want to make sure we are aware of all the options available to us, so we can better understand the fretboard.

	G	C	D
	3	3 <sup>x</sup>	2 <sup>x</sup>
42			
T	3	5	2
A	3	5	2
B	5	5	4
3	3	3	5

# Freddie Green Voicings

Zack Caplinger

**GMaj<sup>6</sup>**      **GMaj<sup>6</sup>/B**      **GMaj<sup>6</sup>/D**      **GMaj<sup>6</sup>/E**

Electric Guitar

Electric Guitar

T	4	7	9	12
A	2	5	9	12
B	3	7	10	10

**GMaj<sup>7</sup>**      **GMaj<sup>7</sup>/B**      **GMaj<sup>7</sup>/D**      **GMaj<sup>7</sup>/F#**

5 El. Guit.

El. Guit.

T	4	7	11	12
A	4	5	9	9
B	3	7	10	10

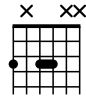
**G<sup>7</sup>**      **G<sup>7</sup>/B**      **G<sup>7</sup>/D**      **G<sup>7</sup>/F**

9 El. Guit.

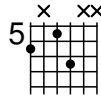
El. Guit.

T	4	7	10	12
A	3	5	9	9
B	3	7	10	10

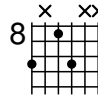
G-7



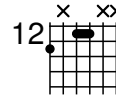
G-7/Bb



G-7/D



G-7/F



13

El. Guit.

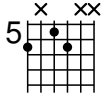
El. Guit.

T			
A	3	7	10
B	3	5	8
	3	6	10
			13

G<sup>o</sup>7



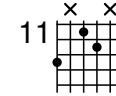
G<sup>o</sup>7/Bb



G<sup>o</sup>7/Db



G<sup>o</sup>7/F



17

El. Guit.

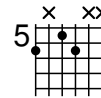
El. Guit.

T			
A	3	6	10
B	3	5	8
	3	6	9
			13

G<sup>o</sup>7



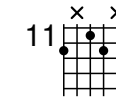
G<sup>o</sup>7/Bb



G<sup>o</sup>7/Db



G<sup>o</sup>7/Fb



21

El. Guit.

El. Guit.

T			
A	3	6	9
B	2	5	8
	3	6	9
			12



# Autumn Leaves

When you have memorized the voicings on the previous pages, try applying them with the etude below.

25

**C-7** **F7** **F7/A** **BbMaj7** **Ebmaj7**

El. Guit.

El. Guit.

T	3	3	3	3	2	2	5	5	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
A	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	7	7	7	7	5	5	5	5
B	3	3	3	3	1	1	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

29

**Aø7** **D7/A** **G-6** **G-7/Bb**

El. Guit.

El. Guit.

T	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	7	7
A	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	5	5
B	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	6	6

33

**C-7** **F7/C** **Bb6** **Bb/D** **Ebmaj7**

El. Guit.

El. Guit.

T	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	7	7	10	10	12	12	12	12
A	8	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	5	5	8	8	12	12	12	12
B	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	6	6	10	10	11	11	11	11

37

**A $\phi$ 7** **D7/C** **G-7/B $\flat$**  **G-7** **G $\sharp$ 07**

El. Guit.

El. Guit.

T A B

8 8 8 8 | 7 7 7 7 | 7 7 7 7 | 3 3 4 4

7 7 7 7 | 7 7 7 7 | 5 5 5 5 | 3 3 3 3

8 8 8 8 | 8 8 8 8 | 6 6 6 6 | 3 3 4 4

41

**A $\phi$ 7** **D7/A** **G-6** **G-7/B $\flat$**

El. Guit.

El. Guit.

T A B

5 5 5 5 | 5 5 5 5 | 3 3 3 3 | 3 3 7 7

5 5 5 5 | 4 4 4 4 | 2 2 2 2 | 2 2 5 5

5 5 5 5 | 5 5 5 5 | 3 3 3 3 | 3 3 6 6

45

**C-7** **F7/C** **B $\flat$ 6** **B $\flat$ /D** **E $\flat$ Maj7**

El. Guit.

El. Guit.

T A B

8 8 8 8 | 8 8 8 8 | 7 7 10 10 | 12 12 12 12

8 8 8 8 | 7 7 7 7 | 5 5 8 8 | 12 12 12 12

8 8 8 8 | 8 8 8 8 | 6 6 10 10 | 11 11 11 11

49

**A $\phi$ 7** **D7/C** **D7** **G-7/D** **G $\flat$ 7/D $\flat$**  **F-7/C** **E7/B**

El. Guit.

El. Guit.

T  
A  
B

8 8 8 8 | 7 7 11 11 | 10 10 9 9 | 8 8 7 7 |  
7 7 7 7 | 7 7 10 10 | 8 8 8 8 | 6 6 6 6 |  
8 8 8 8 | 8 8 10 10 | 10 10 9 9 | 8 8 7 7 |

53

**A $\phi$ 7** **D7/A** **G-6**

El. Guit.

El. Guit.

T  
A  
B

5 5 5 5 | 5 5 5 5 | 3 3 | 3 3 |  
5 5 5 5 | 4 4 4 4 | 2 2 | 2 2 |  
5 5 5 5 | 5 5 5 5 | 3 3 | 3 3 |

Sometimes, bass notes on the low E string and A string are not needed. Especially, when playing on solid body electric guitars, or semi-hollow guitars, the bass can be boomy, and overpower the clarity of the inner voices. In these situations, you simply remove the bottom note. Check out the first four measures of "Autumn Leaves" below. You can simply lift your index or middle finger, and play the inner voices of the chord with the same fingering. Be sure to mute the bottom string by lightly touching with your index or middle finger.

57

El. Guit.

El. Guit.

8

C-7 F7 F7/A BbMaj7 EbMaj7

You can also hear Freddie frequently use one note when playing. To accomplish this sound, simply remove both the top and bottom note in our three note voicings. This often leaves the single note on the fourth string (D string). I use my first finger to play the single note, while my other fingers lightly touch the other five strings, muting them. This allows me to strike the strings, and accomplish the percussive sound we associate with Freddie Green rhythm. This technique can help us play at quicker tempos, since there is only one note to worry about. Also, it allows us to come up with lines that are built on nice voice-leading to connect chords. Somewhat like a bass player. Check out the example below. In measure three, I play the root (Bb), and then descend chromatically to the third of Eb in measure 4.

61

El. Guit.

El. Guit.

8

C-7 F7 F7/A BbMaj7 BbMaj7 Bb7 EbMaj7

### Notes on Freddie Green rhythm technique:

*In our left hand, we want to push down the strings as we strike with our right hand, and then lift them slightly to cut the sound off between quarter notes. The length with which we play our quarter notes is very important. Similar to a bass player. Listening and playing with recordings is really the best way to learn this feel.*

*In our right hand, we really need to strike all six strings. Even if we are only playing one note. This is why learning to mute with the unused fingers on the left hand is so important. We want to drive our pick through the strings, as though there is an imaginary stopping point below the first string. Don't bounce your hand in and out of the strings. Make a half circle motion in the right hand as you play, strumming slightly towards the neck on beat one, and then moving slightly back on beat two. Striking the strings closer to the neck can lead to a more resonant, acoustic tone. Be sure to remain relaxed as you play. Too much tension will not result in a better sound or tone. As the tempo speeds up, make your motions smaller. Lastly, there is a misconception that Freddie rhythm requires a large emphasis on beats two and four. This is incorrect. We actually want our quarter notes to be fairly balanced, and allow the drums to add any emphasis. Adding an emphasis to beats two and four is more common in gypsy jazz rhythm guitar, and older swing styles.*

### Getting the right tone:

*Freddie played a large, fully acoustic archtop guitar. He used a very thick pick, with round wound, bronze, acoustic strings, and had very high action on his guitar, which refers to the distance from the bottom of the strings to the neck. All that to say that his set-up was very specific to the style of guitar he played. He never soloed, and therefore never needed to use an amp, and often used a mic. We obviously need to have a more versatile set up to play the various styles required of us. The good news is there are some steps you can take.*

*If you can, play an acoustic-electric archtop guitar. Ibanez and Epiphone make very affordable models. These guitars will often have humbucker pickups, which are conducive to jazz. Stringing the guitar with round-wound electric guitar strings, which are heavy gauge (12s or 13s), will make a huge difference in the acoustic quality of the guitar. Flat wound strings create a great jazz tone, but often are darker and sometimes lack the acoustic sparkle that will cut through the band. An archtop with a floating pickup will generally have a more acoustic quality than one with a set-in pickup. A set-in pickup is cut into the top of the guitar, which diminishes vibration, and thus limits the acoustic tone. That being said, floating pickups can often suffer from feedback issues, and also, might not be the best to accomplish any distorted or true electric tone. In my opinion, a hollowbody archtop, with a laminate body, and set-in pickup (or often two pickups), is a very versatile choice for beginning jazz guitarists.*

*If a hollowbody archtop isn't possible, and you have a semi-hollow or solid-body electric, you should follow the same steps. A thick pick (Dunlop jazz 3, Fender heavy, etc), and round-wound heavy electric guitar strings.*

*How you eq your guitar and amp will also have a ton to do with your Freddie tone. You don't want either to be too bright, but also not too boomy. Your guitar should have a tone knob, and you should turn it up to add some brilliance to the guitar, but not to where it is shrill or brittle. I usually find that around 3 or 4 is a good starting point. Chances are your amp will have bass, mid, and treble knobs. In this case, I would start with treble on 3, mid on 5, and bass on 4. You might need to change from there depending on the type of guitar, amp, and room, but that is a good place to start. Lastly, the overall volume of the amp needs to be very low. Ideally, we want the acoustic, percussive sound of the guitar to make up the majority of the tone, and the amp is just there to give us a little volume. I usually strum a chord, and then turn up my guitar slightly till I hear the chord start to barely ring through the amp. That is where I will play. It is important to note that I controlled my volume on the guitar. This way, my amp can be at a volume that will be loud enough for my solo on the next tune, but I am still able to play with a good acoustic sound. You don't want to have to constantly be fiddling with the amp.*

*Without a true acoustic archtop, set up like Freddie, it is virtually impossible to get that exact sound, however, these steps can get you very close. I will end by saying that no amount of eq or set-up will help if we don't play with the proper attack and time feel. How we play our guitar is the most important part of getting a good Freddie sound. It is crucial that we are intentional with our time, and drive the band with our quarter note. It is not easy, and requires a lot of focus and drive. I hope you find that when it is done right though, nothing is more fun! Also, spending time working on rhythm guitar has many other benefits. Your time in general becomes more solid, and the voicings we learn help us visualize chord tones, and hear how they move from one chord to another. Visualizing those tones moving across the neck, can be invaluable when improvising! Lastly, it is crucial to listen to as much Freddie as we can, and play along with recordings, and record ourselves. This is the best way to practice playing Freddie rhythm. Below are some recordings that I recommend checking out:*

*Anything by Count Basie, but in particular:*

*The Atomic Mr. Basie*

*Sinatra/Basie: The Complete Reprise Studio Recordings*

*It Might As Well Be Swing*

*Get Together (This record is such a wonderful example, and is almost all blues, which makes it a great one to play along with!)*

*Herb Ellis and Freddie Green: Rhythm Willie*