

BEYOND BASIC CHORDS

» AN INTRODUCTION TO BARRE CHORDS

Learn two new chord shapes that will let you play any chord you want!

AFTER THIS YOU WILL BE ABLE TO...

- ✓ Explain what a root note is
- ✓ Identify notes on the sixth string of your guitar
- ✓ Play your first barre chord

Root notes

Before you can get stuck into barre chords there are a couple of pieces of info you need to nail. The 'root note' is the note a chord get its name from. It's the most important note in a

chord. The root note of a 'G' chord is a 'G' note. You'll encounter the root note when you go on to name and think about the other notes in a chord, which are certain 'intervals' away from the root.

Your sixth string

You need to know the notes on your guitar's sixth string (the fattest one) so that you can play your barre chords at the correct fret. While it's important for guitarists to know all the

notes on a guitar in the long term, for now, you only need to know the notes on the sixth string. Use Example 14 as a guide, but take your time to learn them properly.

EXAMPLE 14: notes on the sixth string

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Here are all the notes on the sixth string (the fat one). Start off by learning where the notes without a sharp (#) symbol are – these are the most common ones.

Moving magic

The two barre chords you're going to learn come from chords you already know.

You're going to move an E chord and an E minor chord up a single fret and then use your first finger to 'barre' across all the strings, thus making barre chord shapes.



1 Play an E chord without using your first finger. **2** Move the E chord up one fret. **3** Lay your first finger across the first fret. This is an F chord. Repeat this process with an Em chord to get an Fm barre chord.

EXAMPLE 15: barre chord shapes

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lowest sounding note is the root note

Here are the two barre chord shapes: one is for major chords, the other is for minor chords.

Any chord, anywhere

Once you've got used to playing these shapes you can explore the rest of your guitar's neck – barre chord shapes have no open strings in them so they can be played anywhere on the

neck. Simply find the root note of the chord you want to play (eg, the 'B' of 'Bm') by looking at Example 14 above and then play the appropriate chord shape (in this case, the minor one) there. Easy! 🎸

EXAMPLE 16: simple barre chord progression

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There's no strumming pattern for this example so you can concentrate on playing your new chord shapes.