

Open Chord Cheat Sheet

18 chords every beginner needs in their first six months · print and tape to your wall

OPEN MAJOR CHORDS

X	C	o o	X	A	o	o o	G	o o	o	E	o o	X X	D		F
3 · 2 · 1	1 · 2 · 3	2 · 1 · 3	2 · 3 · 1	1 · 3 · 2	barre 1 · 2 · 3 4										

OPEN MINORS + DOMINANT 7THS

X	Am	o	o	Em	o o o	X X	Dm		o	E7	o o	X	A7	o	X X	D7
2 · 3 · 1	2 · 3	2 · 3 · 1	2 · 1	2 · 3	2 · 1 · 3											

MORE DOMINANT 7THS + SUS CHORDS

G7	X	B7	X	Dsus2	o	X	Dsus4	o	X	Asus2	o	X	Asus4	o
3 · 2 · 1	2 · 1 · 3 · 4	1 · 3	1 · 3 · 4	1 · 2	1 · 2 · 3									

HOW TO READ IT

o open string (play it). X muted string (don't play). • fingered note (numbers below show fingering: 1=index, 2=middle, 3=ring, 4=pinky).
Strings read left to right: low E (6th, thickest) · A · D · G · B · high e (1st, thinnest). Top horizontal bar = the nut. Frets count down from there.

FIRST CHORD CHANGES TO PRACTISE

Beginner combos

Em → Am → D
G → C → D
A → D → E

Three-chord songs

D → G → A (House of the Rising Sun-style I IV V)
G → C → D (Knockin' on Heaven's Door)
C → Am → F → G (50s doo-wop loop)

PRACTICE TIPS

1. Form the shape. 2. Strum once and check every string rings. 3. Lift entire hand off, replace shape, strum again — 30 reps. 4. Repeat with