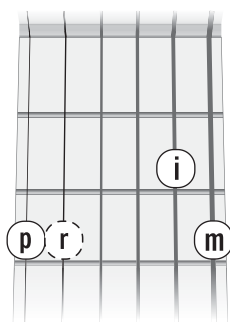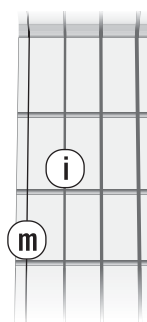# Get Started Supplement for Left-Handed Instruments

Got your instrument strung the other direction for playing left-handed? Great! The illustrations here can be used in place of the ones in your copy of *Get Started* or *Jammables/Core Songs Edition* (denoted here as "CS Edition").
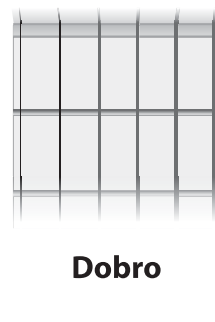
The G chord (**i**, **m**, **r**, & **p** indicate the finger to use: index, middle, ring, or pinky)
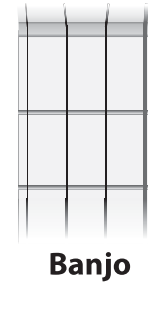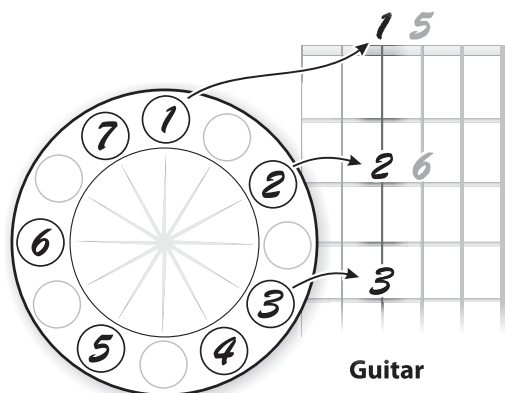
Guitar

Mandolin/ Fiddle

Dobro

Banjo

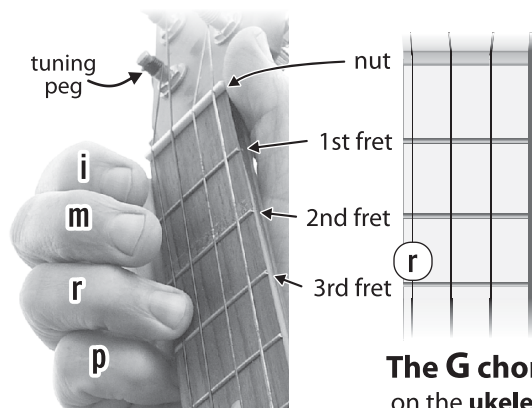**Bass**: alternate between the two thinnest strings

▲ Get Started p. 9 – CS Edition p. 109

Guitar

▲ Get Started p. 11 – CS Edition p. 111

tuning peg

nut

1st fret

2nd fret
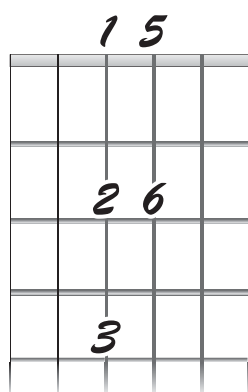
3rd fret

i
m
r
p

The G chord on the **ukelele**
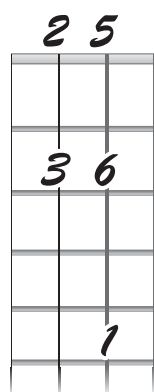
▲ Get Started p. 9 – CS Edition p. 109

The tone-numbers at the top mean: "Play this string open (that is, not pressing it down anywhere)."

The tone-numbers down here mean: "Press the string down at that point and play it." (Press the string down just behind the fret, if you have one.)

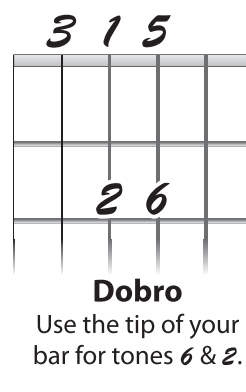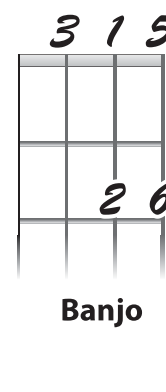## Picking Patterns for the key of **G**
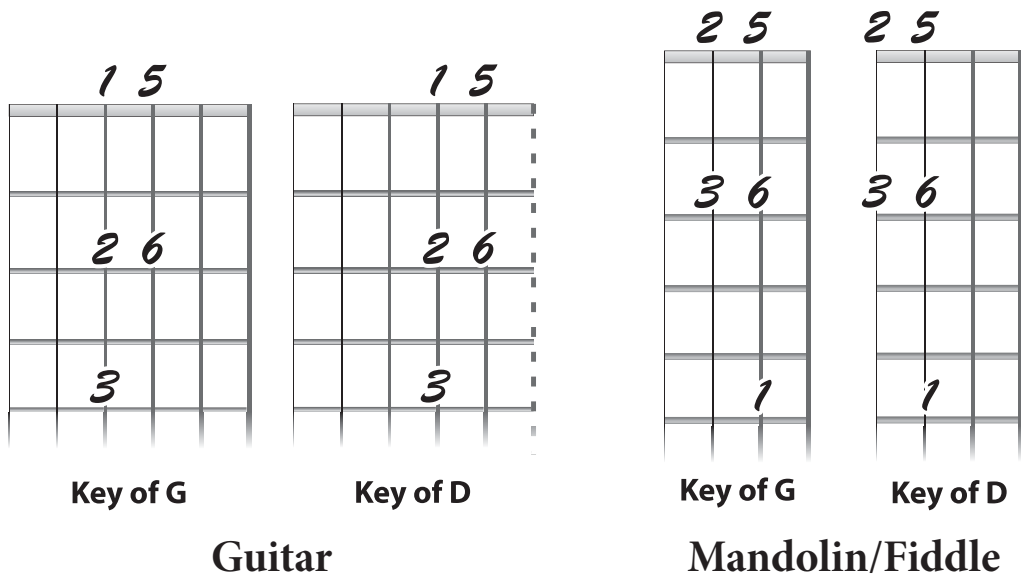
Guitar

Mandolin/Fiddle

Dobro
Use the tip of your bar for tones *6* & *2*.

Banjo

Bass: see the 'Bass' chapter

▲ Get Started p. 11 – CS Edition p. 111 (as well as GS p. 36, CSE p. 126)

Key of G   **Key of D**

Guitar

Key of G   **Key of D**

Mandolin/Fiddle

▲ Get Started p. 16 – CS Edition p. 116

The seventh fret.

The 7th fret
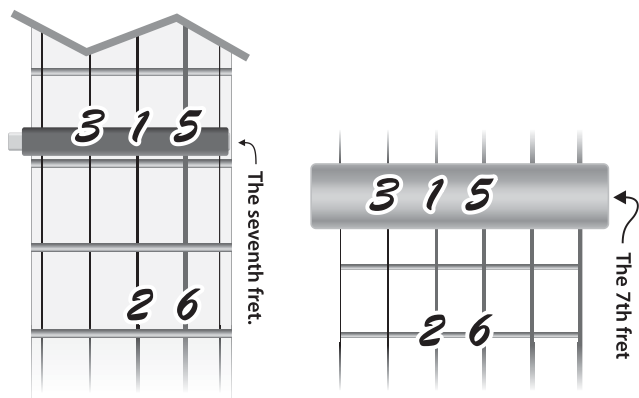
▲ Get Started p. 17 – CS Edition p. 117

Numberless Picking Patterns for the key of **G**

Guitar

Mandolin/ Fiddle

Dobro
(Yes, a metal bar is used instead of fingers, but we're going to ignore that inconsistency for this example.
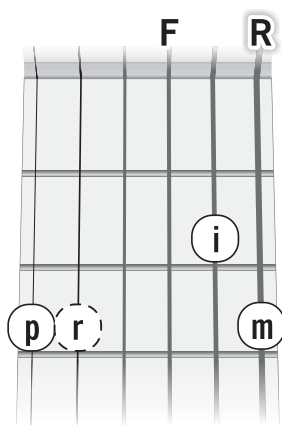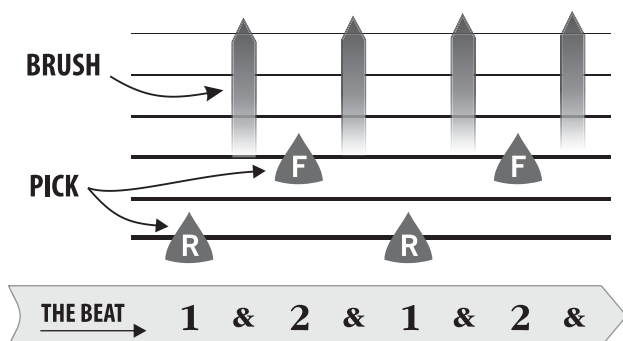
Banjo
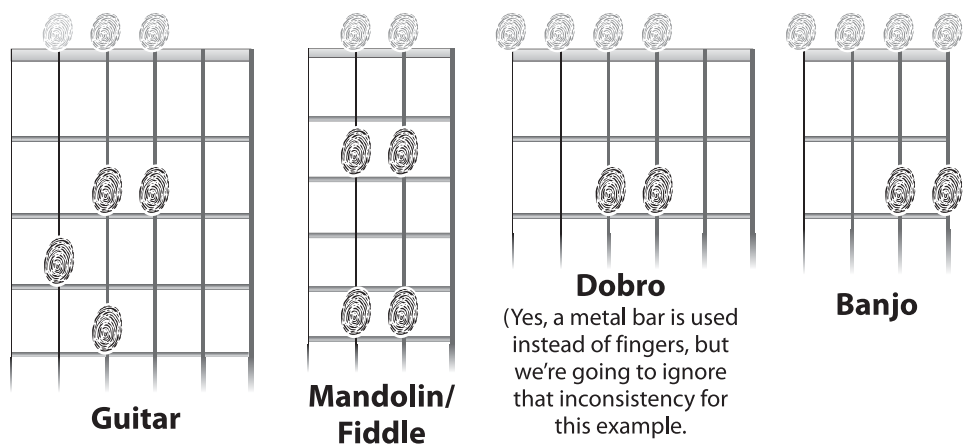
▲ Get Started p. 38 – CS Edition p. 128
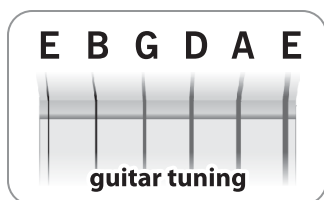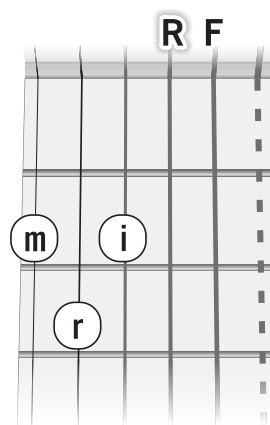
Guitar (left-handed)

A Fancier Strum

Once you get the basic 'boom-chuck' rhythm down, try alternating bass notes on the downbeats. Pick the string with an '**R**' above it on the first downbeat, then pick the string with an '**F**' on the second downbeat. (See your copy of *Get Started* for page numbers to refer to.)
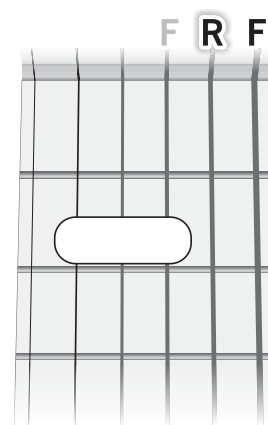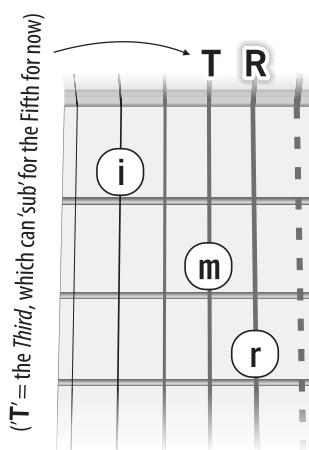
G chord
(the 'B' string may be played open)

D chord
(don't play the thick string)

A chord
(use whichever fingers are most comfortable to you)

Standard 'root-fifth' strum pattern for the G chord

BRUSH

PICK

F

F

R

R

THE BEAT → 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 &

('**T**' = the *Third*, which can 'sub' for the Fifth for now)

C chord
(don't play the thick string... for now...)
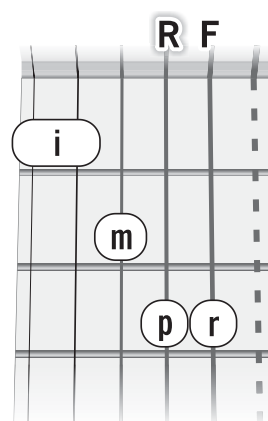
F chord
(you won't need this one for a while, but it'll be useful later)

Key of **G**

3 1 5

4

2 6

5

3 7

Fingers to use
(general guidelines for G and D)

← index →

← middle →

← ring →

Key of **D**

4 1 5

5 2 6

3 7

Key of **C**

5 2 6

3 7

4 1 5
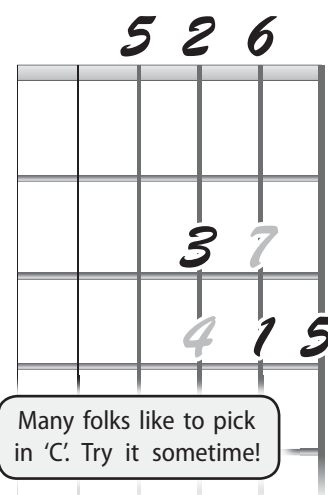
Many folks like to pick in 'C'. Try it sometime!

Mandolin and Fiddle (left-handed)

E A D G
mandolin tuning

E A D G
fiddle tuning
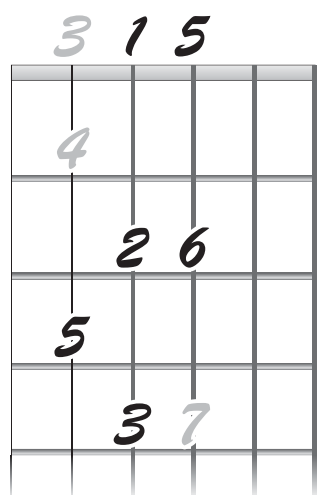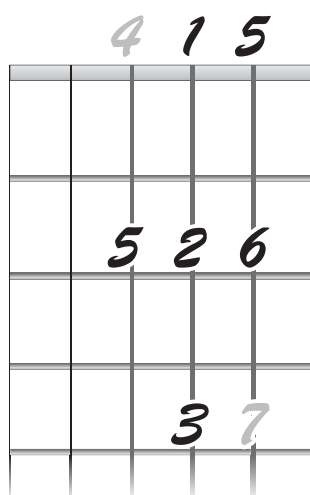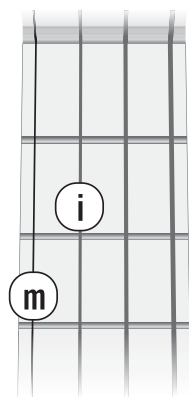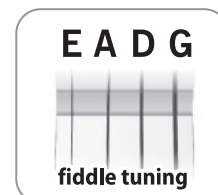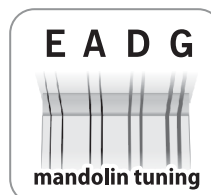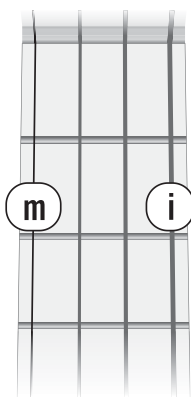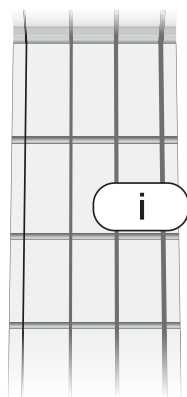
G chord   **D** chord   **A** chord   **C** chord   **F** chord

▲ Get Started p. 30 – CS Edition p. 120

Fingers to use
(in general)

index ⟶

middle

ring ⟶

2 5   *2 5*   *2 5*

3 6   *3 6*   *3 6*

4   *4*   *4*

7   *7*   *7*

5 1   *5 1*   *5 1*

Key of D   **Key of G**   **Key of C**

▲ Get Started p. 30 – CS Edition p. 120

Mandolin Closed Chords

The five chords on page 30/120 give you the **1**, **4**, **5** chords for three keys: G, D, C. These are called "open chords" because some of the strings are not pressed down (i.e., they're left "open"). Stick with those until you're comfortable with them and ready to learn the "closed chords" you'll need to play in any key. The procedure below offers an easy three-finger way to play any set of **1**, **4**, **5** chords in any key.

Fig 1:
Basic Closed Chord Shape

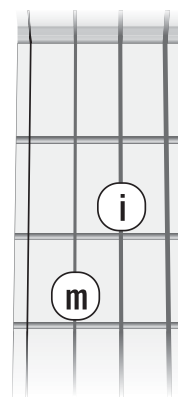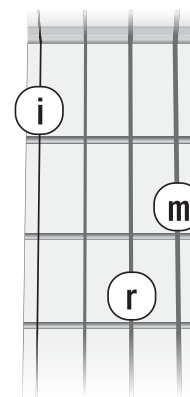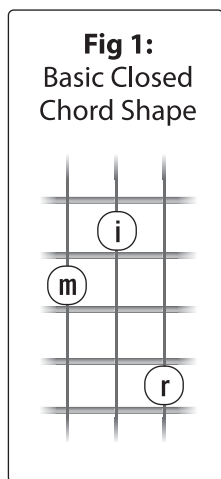Fig. 1 shows the finger arrangement you'll be using to make every chord. Where you put the ring finger (r) determines the Root note of the chord. Put your ring finger on a G note and you get a G chord, and so on.

Make sure not to sound any open string! You can use part of your hand or your pinky to dampen the unused string. (Eventually you'll press your pinky as shown in Fig 1a; but not yet.)

Fig 1a:
Ring finger is on "D" string

Fig 1b:
Ring finger is on "G" string

optional

Step #1: First you need to find the **1** chord—which is, as you know, equal to the key you're in. Use either Fig. 2a or Fig 2b (depending on the key) to find the Root 'note' of the key.

Step #2: From here, you can easily find the **4** and **5** chords by shifting your finger arrangement across strings and/or up or down frets. Refer to either Fig. 3a or 3b, depending on where your ring finger is for the **1** chord. The arrows show where you need to move your 'anchor' (ring finger) to get the **4** and **5** chords. You'll be using the finger positions in both Figs. 1a and 1b, depending on where the ring finger is being placed. Note: This is similar to the process shown for the Bass; see Steps 1 & 2 on page 45/136.

Once you've got your closed chords, you can give some added 'punch' to your rhythm by "chopping." With a loose wrist, you snappily strum the strings on the upbeat; then, you immediately lift your chord fingers slightly which dampens the sound. Watch the video on our web site to see how this is done.
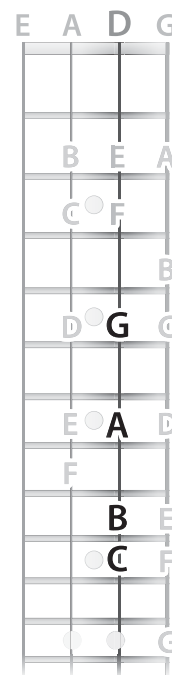
Keys G–C

E   A   **D**   G

Fig. 2a
Notes on D string

Keys C–F

E   A   D   **G**
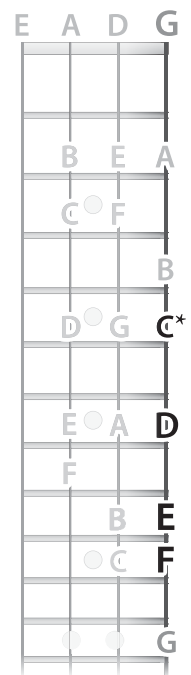
Fig. 2b
Notes on G string
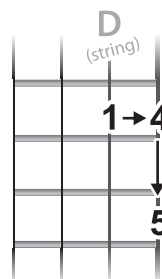
D
(string)

1→4

5

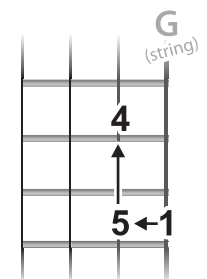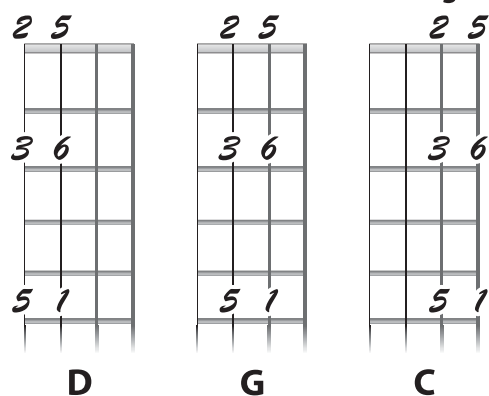**Fig. 3a**
Root tones

G
(string)

4

5←1

Fig. 3b
Root tones

＊ If you put your **1** chord here, you'll have problems playing the **4** chord. One solution is to play that **4** (F) chord five frets up from the **1** chord. Go ahead, try it.

Mandolin and Fiddle: The Floating Pattern

GS p. 46 – CSE p. 137

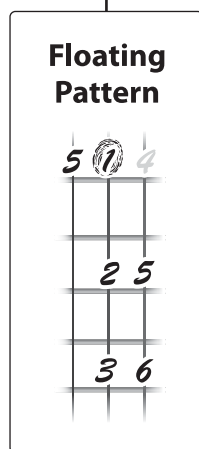**"At-the-Nut" Pattern for 5-to-5 songs**

D **G** **C**

Note: **This is advanced stuff.** Don't tackle this until you have a firm grasp of the basic Picking Patterns on page 30/120, which you first learned in Roots of the ToneWay Method.

The "At-the-Nut" Pattern (at left) you learned first is well-suited for playing *5*-to-*5* songs in the keys of G, C, and D… and little else. To play in the other keys, you'll need to learn what we call the "Floating Pattern" (below). The best way to learn this Pattern is to use it to play a song in every key.
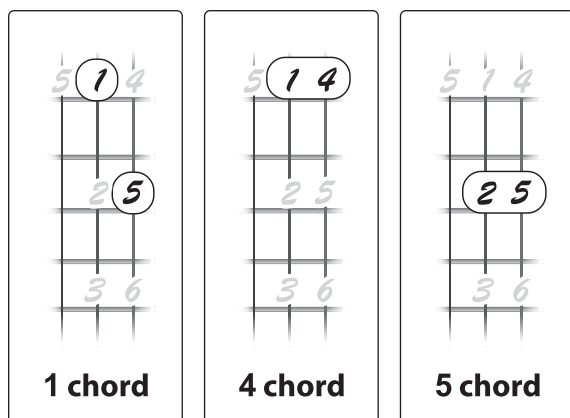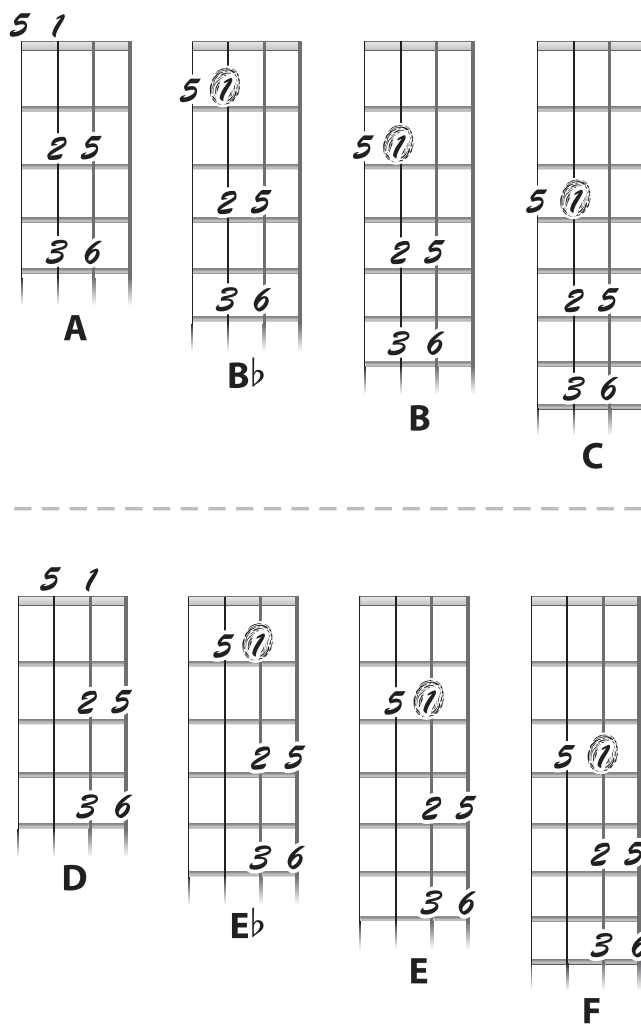
For the keys of A and D, you'll use open strings along with your index and middle fingers to play the tones shown in the Pattern. For the other keys, you use your index, middle, and ring fingers. Keep your index finger anchored on the *1* tone, or at least on the *1* tone's fret. This is how mandolin and fiddle players "keep their bearings."

Tip: You can play two strings at a time as well. The additional tone that you play should be one in the chord; see page 42/133.

with the *1* tone on the '**A**' string, you get…

Floating Pattern

with the *1* tone on the '**D**' string, you get…

A **B♭** **B** **C**

D **E♭** **E** **F**

(**G** is two more frets "up")
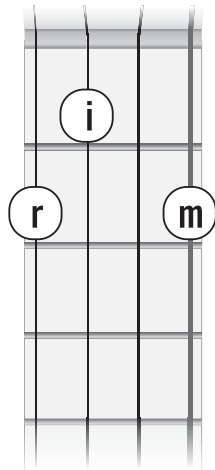

1 chord **4 chord** **5 chord**

To chop chords on the fiddle, all you need are two tones from the chord. From page 42/133, we learned what those were. The good news is, with our handy-dandy Floating Pattern, those tones (and thus, those chords) are always in the same places! The three illustrations at left show you one way to get the **1**, **4**, **5** chords in any key—assuming you've already put your Floating Pattern in the right place.
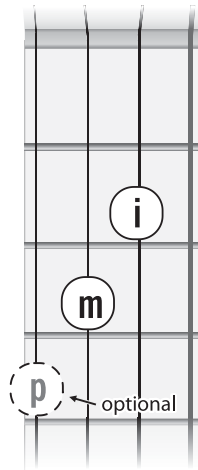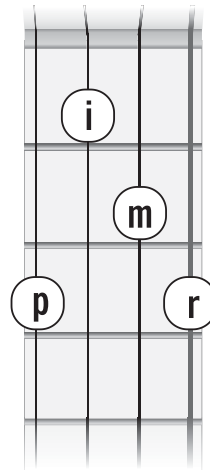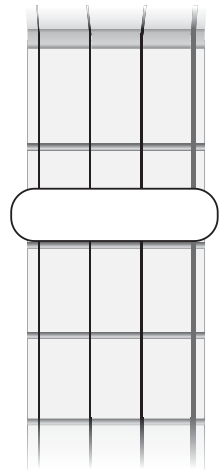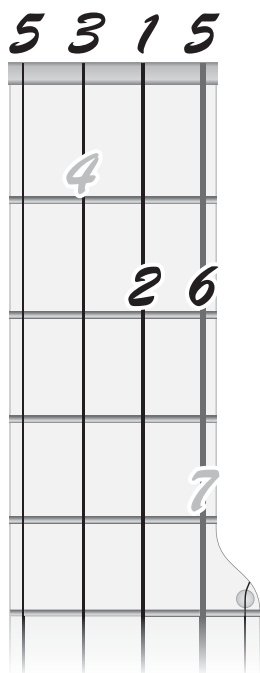
Banjo (left-handed)

D B G D

banjo tuning · **G** ↓
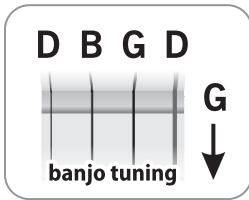
G chord **C** chord **D** chord **F** chord **A** chord

D chord notes: i, m, p (optional)

5 3 1 5

2 7 5
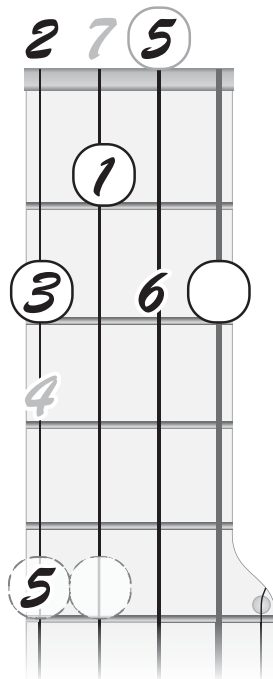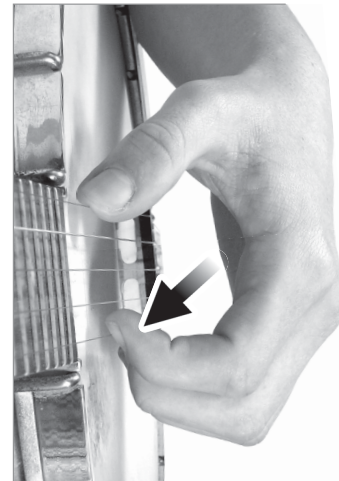
Key of **G** Key of **C**

Dobro (left-handed)

A	G	F	E	D	C	B	A	G	

D
B
G
D
B
G
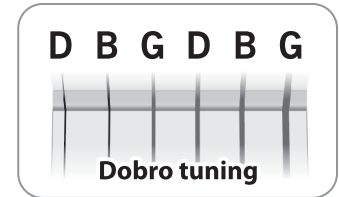
2	1	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Key of **G**
5	4	3	2	1	7	6	5	4	Key of **D**
6	5	4	3	2	1	7	6	5	Key of **C**

▲ Get Started p. 34 – CS Edition p. 124

5 chord   **4 chord**   **1 chord**

▲ Get Started p. 34 – CS Edition p. 124

|← two frets →|←——— five frets ———→|←——— five frets ———→|← two frets →|

5   **4**   **1**   **5**   **4**

These relationships always hold true. That is, a **4** chord can *always* be found five frets above the **1** chord, etc.

▲ Get Started p. 44 – CS Edition p. 135

Get Started Left-Handed Supplement © 2009 The Abbott Family – http://ToneWay.com

Bass (left-handed)

G chord   **D** chord   **A** chord   **C** chord   **F** chord
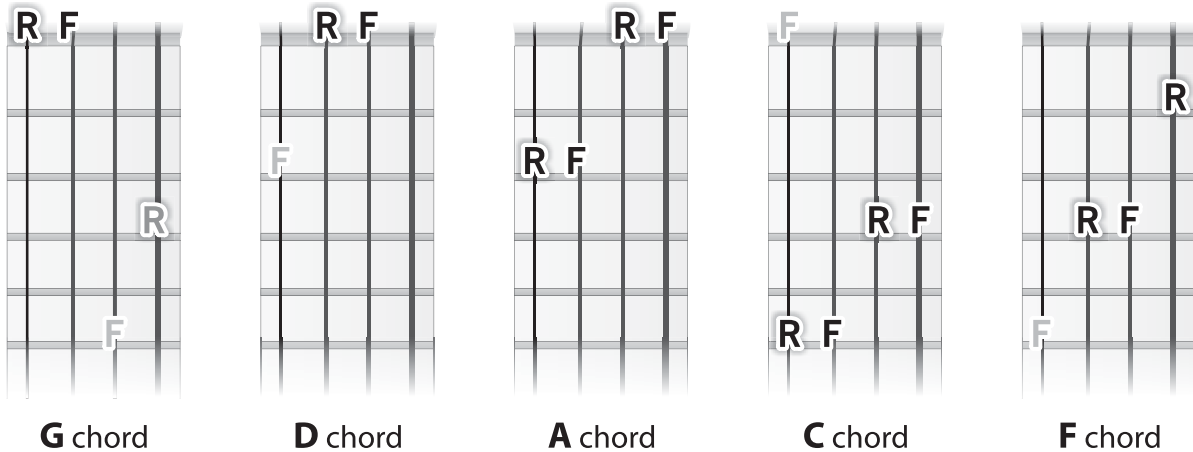
▲ Get Started p. 35 – CS Edition p. 125

Standard or reversed? Why you may want to learn the bass in standard tuning: ▼

E A D G
standard tuning

G D A E
'reversed' tuning
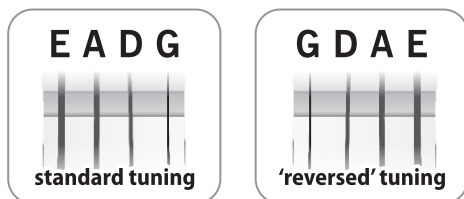
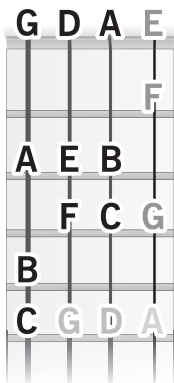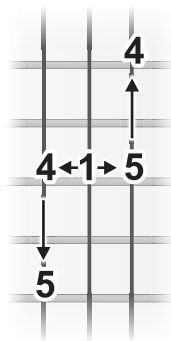▼ Get Started p. 45 – CS Edition p. 136
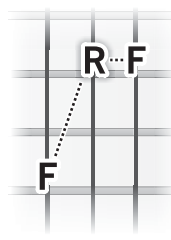

Fig. 1   **Fig. 2**   **Fig. 3**

As you know, we generally encourage left-handed people to play left-handed instruments, or to restring an instrument accordingly, in order to use their dominant hand as the picking/strumming/bowing hand. Usually, playing the instrument "upside-down", while possible, is discouraged. However, it *is* practical to play the *bass* "upside-down"—or rather, to stand on the opposite side of a "normal" bass and switch hands.

The advantage of this is that you don't have to re-string your bass, which is more of an ordeal than with any other instrument. Plus, you can play any standard bass.

On the other hand, if you've learned to play another instrument left-handed (or are planning to), it could be confusing to learn two paradigms; one in which the higher strings are on the 'left', and one in which they're on the 'right'.

So, standard or reversed? In the end, it's your call. Left-handed basses are few and far between, though…

Key of A   **Key of B♭**   **Key of B**   **Key of C**   **Key of D**   **Key of E**   **Key of F**   **Key of G**