



Mastering Open Chord Changes

Try practicing chords in stages

Playing full open chords is tough for most. A great way to chop this down is to use partial chords at first. The remaining chords will need two or more fingers to sound totally correct.

This method helps you practice the chord changes more efficiently and make more noticeable progress as a beginner!

Keeping your fingers in a unit

For chords like Am, Em, A and E, you should keep your 2nd and 3rd fingers tightly together when moving between them. Doing this means you'll be able to change between the chords much faster and with clearer sounding notes too!

Train your muscle memory

Getting chords to sound good is a real battle at first. Once a chord sounds correct when strummed, I suggest taking off one finger, then put it back on and check that the chord still sounds good; repeat this with other fingers. This will teach you the correct finger posture, increase stamina and help your chords sound cleaner.

Using the correct fingers to change chords

For anyone struggling, I think you should be placing the index finger down just before the other fingers when changing to Am, C, F, Dm, D and E. The 3rd or 3rd and 4th fingers should be placed first when changing to the G chord. This will stop you making too many unnecessary movements and get you sounding like a pro much quicker!

Don't lift fingers if you don't need to

In a nutshell, certain chord changes such as D to E or changes between the chords Am, C and F are much easier if you keep your 1st finger in contact with the fretboard and just slide your finger along when needed.

Dm, F and C are usually the hardest open chords to play

These chords should be practiced the most from day one. They may sound bad or be very tough; but they will get easier. Doing this will ensure you can play all of the chords comfortably in future instead of some of them sounding as pleasant as an airhorn in a toilet cubicle.

Use Triads

Some of the open chords have an extra benefit as they can be moved along the guitar to play more advanced chords in an easier way whilst you're learning. Chords such as Am, A, D and E are great for this as they aren't as difficult to play as the others.

This can be a little confusing for beginners.. but every time you move these chord shapes one fret higher, they move one pitch up the musical alphabet. For example, moving E major up one fret makes it an F major.

These chords are just some additional knowledge and if you're a beginner, you should only strum the fretted notes whilst learning how to use them to avoid them sounding bad!

Practice slowly

When first learning chords, you should be practicing slowly and doing your best to make sure all the movements, finger choices and posture are identical. Trying to go faster than you're able to will make the chords sound bad and it'll often take a lot longer to work out any issues this way.

If you haven't already, check out the Free Beginner Course on Youtube at Musicianswer!