

UFO Reference Document

Chord Stuff

From: Donley Smith [donleymith@home.com]

Sent: Saturday, May 26, 2001 10:19 AM

To: Wayne Creekmore

Cc: Del Medina

Subject: Chord Stuff

Hey Aloha Wayne

Here's a bit of cheap theory. The attached transposition matrix really just shows you a bit about how to change keys. If the tune you want to play is in A, but you would rather play in C, you can easily see that wherever you would normally play an A, you would instead play a C, and wherever you would play a D normally, you would instead play an F, and so on.

Most popular, folk, traditional, Hawaiian etc tend to follow certain patterns.

The most common pattern is 1 - 4 - 5. So you can see from the chart that if the Key is C, you will play C - F - G. The most common of the common is 1 - 4 - 1 - 5 - 1.

A lot of 50's and 60's rock and roll throw in a 2 or a 6 chord as well, but they are always expressed as minors.

So you would find C - A Minor - F - C - G - C, or 1 - 6 - 4 - 1 - 5 - 1. Love Me Tender, almost everything by the Everly Brothers, you name it, you can find it.

The progression often changes, but the chords/numbers etc don't.

I play a lot of swing. It has a pattern too, called the circle of 5th's

C - E7 - A7 - D7 - G7 - C. If you look at the chart you will see that E7 is the 5th of A and A7 is the 5th of D and D7 is the 5th of G and G7 is the 5th of C. Insidious isn't it. Some swing tunes move on up to a Circle of 7th's.

Once you learn basic progressions you can fake your way through almost anything. Learning the numbers like this also allows you to play in larger groups where everybody brings forth tunes in the best keys for their singing voices or style of playing.

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Really versatile players learn almost everything by their numbers and they learn a lot of what is commonly called “four finger chords”. Not exactly bar chords but those too are heavily used. Four finger chords come from a lot of the early jazz players like Django. You almost always end up playing four strings and muting two. Once you learn all these, the capo becomes a quaint and useless tool.

In the Bluegrass and Old Timey music like I play, the patterns are basically the same, but the key a tune is played in has become very concrete over the years and that has mostly to do with the style of fiddling or banjo playing that has been employed and traditionalized.

I have some easy theory stuff I will copy and bring next week.

Donley

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Transposition Chart

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1
A	B	C#	D	E	F#	G#	A
Bb	C	D	Eb	F	G	A	Bb
B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B
C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
Db	Eb	F	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	Db
D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D
Eb	F	G	Av	Bv	C	D	Eb
E	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#	E
F	G	A	Bb	C	D	E	F
Gb	Ab	Bb	Cb	Db	Eb	F	Gb
G	A	B	C	D	E	F#	G
Ab	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	G	Ab