

ACOUSTIC MASTERCLASS

John Goldie presents another instalment of the now legendary Acoustic Masterclasses... a step-by-step guide for the beginner aimed at taking you through the basic principles of good playing technique and understanding the head-scratching theory.

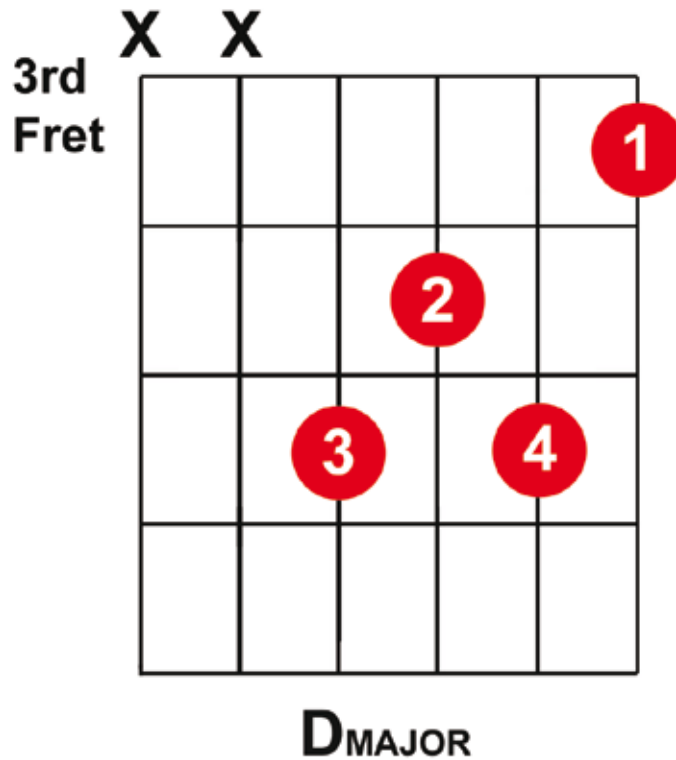
Words: John Goldie

In association with



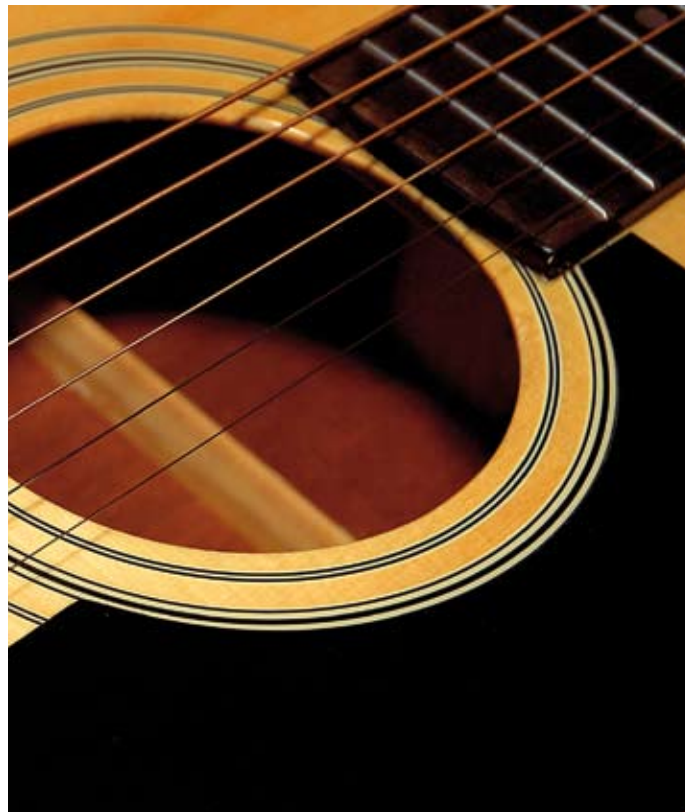
Hi there and welcome back to Acoustic Masterclass, the last chance saloon for those people with a phobia of all things theoretical in the guitar world! Since we've been hard at it for a while now and covered a lot about chord construction I felt it was time for a slight detour. Since we are now able to work out most chords using the methods covered in the earlier issues, I thought it would be a good idea to pause for a bit of reflection – no not the mirror and an air guitar solo but something a little more worthwhile!

Diag 1 shows us a simple chord – but what chord is it? Don't all shout at once! It is difficult to tell exactly what the name of the chord is because although we have enough notes to define a chord (3) – one of the notes doubles up, just in case you thought I needed glasses! It is tricky to be certain of the exact name of the chord without the bass note. Let's have a think about it – we have 2 G notes, a B and an E note – now if we have E in the bass this would give us an E minor chord – E –root, B – 5th and G – flattened 3rd. That's all very well unless your bass player decides to change things. Now at this point I should point out that the enlightened amongst you will know that we can have an E minor chord over different bass notes, normally indicated by the chord / bass note i.e. Em/D but the point of this exercise (yes there is one) is to show how we can name chords differently



depending on how we look at them.

Let's start with C in the bass – what chord will that give us if we name it C something? Lets check the notes – E is the major 3rd, G is the 5th and B the major 7th making this a C major 7th chord. Next let's try G as a bass note and see what G chord we get – G – root, B – 3rd and E – 6th, therefore we get a G6th chord. Thus far we have Em, C maj7th and G 6th all separated at birth! There is definitely a lot of mileage to be had from this concept – just think of the song writing possibilities alone that could derive from this idea of using one simple shape and merely changing the bass line around a bit or vice versa – keep the bass constant and change the chords. Obviously there is nothing new about these ideas but by having a more in-depth knowledge of chord structure you will be able to utilise this fully.



Let's get back to our chord and look at some other possibilities. What if the bass was an A note – what A chord would this make? We have G – b7th, B – 9th and E – 5th so it is a form of A9 – one of my favourites, although I have to admit playing it for a long time before I could name it! You can try this with any bass note, Ab is particularly tricky! Have a go and see how you get on you never know, that classic intro you always wanted to write could be just around the corner! Till next time have fun and thanks for the e-mails and interest in the workshops next year – looking forward to meeting up with some of you then.

Also managed to get a myspace site sorted at last – see link below. See you next issue for some more!

www.johngoldie.co.uk
www.myspace.com/johngoldieguitar