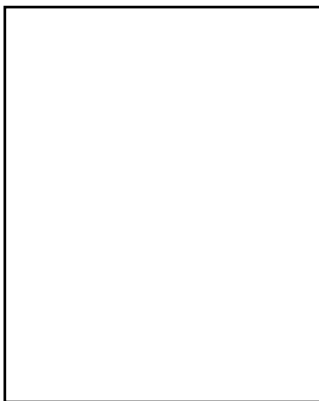


HAVING BECOME ONE OF PLAY'S FAVOURITE ARTICLES, JOHN GOLDIE BRINGS US ANOTHER ACOUSTIC MASTERCLASS, THIS ISSUE LOOKING AT THE DARK ART OF MINOR CHORDS.

Words: John Goldie



Hi there and welcome back to Acoustic Masterclass. By now anyone who has been following this series (the chosen ones), you know who you are, should be able to work out most major and dominant chords in the key of C and hopefully extended this to include other keys as well. The main reason in selecting C major was to avoid sharps and flats – all other keys have them. For example to work out a D major chord we need the root, 3rd and 5th of the D scale, which has 2 sharps (F and C) giving us, D, E, Fsharp, G, A, B, C sharp and D. I have used probably the most common version of this chord in Diag 1 utilising the open 4th string (D) as a bass note. I realise most

of you will already know this chord but there is method in my madness!

The bright sparks amongst you will have noticed that thus far I haven't looked at minor chords (sad really!) but fresh from our success with the majors I feel this is the time to take the bull by the horns and enter the dark place that is home to the minor chords! Minor chords are formed by taking the Root, flat 3rd and 5th of the relevant major scale i.e. C minor would be C, Eb and G, while D minor would be D, F and A. Now, remember when flattening a note we move a fret backwards toward the nut so if we look again at Diag 1, in order to make this a minor chord we must flatten the 3rd i.e. F sharp moves down to F natural see Diag 2. This is a great chord put to good use by the likes of Clapton, Knopfler etc. But that's not enough I hear you cry – or am I hearing the voices again! Anyway despite the fact that this is a good chord, it's not mobile i.e. if we move the shape up the neck it doesn't work because of the open D string, but there is a solution – cue fanfare! Although there are basically 3 notes making up major and minor chords most times we use more notes by

doubling some up to create a bigger sound. This means that we can move notes around without changing the name of the chord, see Diag 3.

What I've done here is replace the open D note with another F note - still D minor but now moveable and can be played anywhere on the neck, so if we slide up one fret that will give us D sharp or Eb minor – two frets up would be E minor etc. This is only one shape for minor chords but I have found it invaluable over the years and it's easy to play which may be an good option for those of you who don't like Barre chords much. D minor chords are often found in songs in the key of F major, so if we look at the F chord Diag 4 we can see that to change this to a D minor we simply add a D note, 3rd fret 2nd string. Over the next few issues I will be taking a closer look at minor chords, sticking with D minor and again staying in the first position to make things as easy as possible but also seeing how many chords are easily available.

One important point to remember is that the only difference between major and minor chords is the third, so if we look back at the last AM in

issue 33 which has C9 Diag 1 and flatten the 3rd of the chord i.e. E on the 4th string 2nd fret down to Eb on the 4th string 1st fret we have C minor9 – how easy is that? And what a great sounding chord!

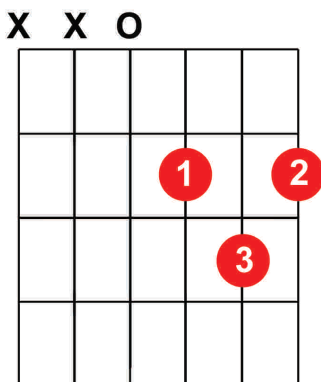
If you didn't catch the last issue or if you need any previous issues they are available from my website. Keep those e-mails coming too. Till next time have fun.

John Goldie is a virtuoso acoustic fingerstyle guitarist who encompasses twenty years experience as both session player and jazz guitarist into his repertoire as a solo performer. He is also a renowned composer and educator.
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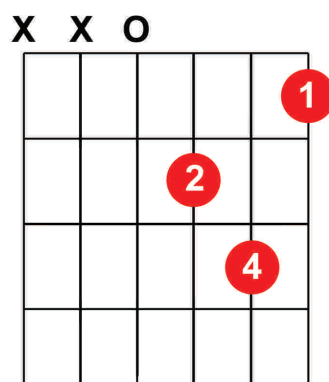


DIAG 1



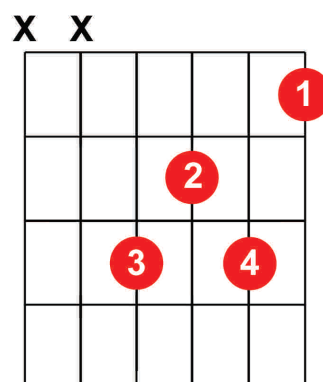
D MAJOR

DIAG 2



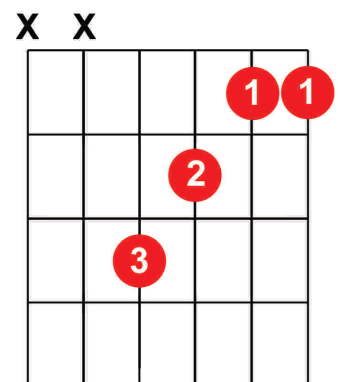
D MINOR

DIAG 3



D MINOR

DIAG 4



F MAJOR