

# ACOUSTIC MASTERCLASS

Fast becoming part of the furniture here at Play, our resident acoustic expert John Goldie is on hand with some more

Words: John Goldie

In association with



**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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Hi there and welcome back to Acoustic Masterclass, the place to come for quiet reflection, peace and learning – or maybe that’s just the toilet I’m thinking of... Anyway lets crack on. Having established Major and Minor chord inversions so far, this should start you thinking about where to play chords and which is the best inversion for differing strumming/picking patterns. After a while you will probably find yourself gravitating towards the best position automatically for the style of music or song that you are playing.

Since we’ve covered Major and Minor inversions the next logical step is to look at sevenths. We know that there are 3 notes that make up a major/minor chord therefore we have 3 inversions, so with a 7th chord we have 4 notes in the chord so naturally 4 inversions. The 1st inversion I want to look at is with the root of the chord on the first string – again we will be sticking to the first four strings and only the notes that make up the 7th chord, meaning each inversion will have the same notes but in a different order!

Lets start in the first position with F7th (Diag 1). We can see from this that the root (F) is on the

DIAGRAM 1

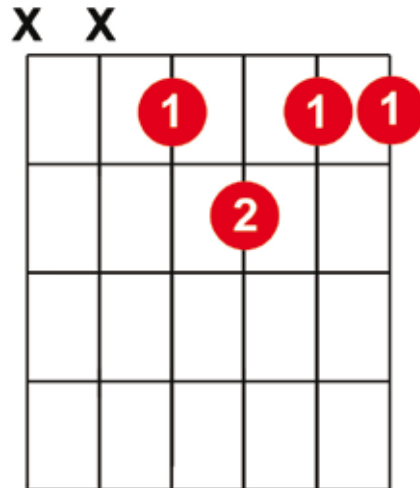
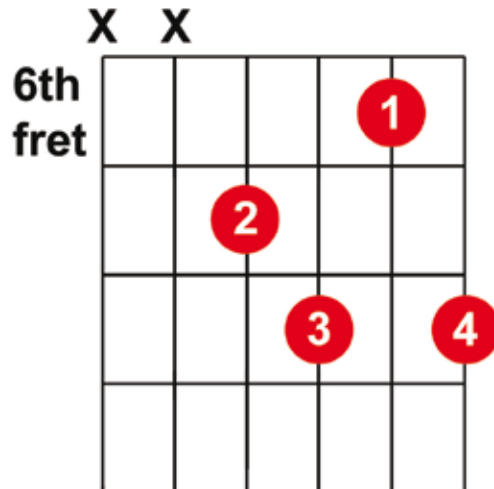


DIAGRAM 3



1st string, fifth (C) is on the 2nd string, third (A) on the 3rd string and b7th (Eb) is on the 4th string. As I’ve mentioned previously there are barre chord versions of most chords but remember if you’re in a band then the bass player should be taking care of the bottom end as it were! So why give yourself unnecessary hand cramps! Now lets look at the next inversion with the 3rd on the top string (Diag 2) This time our notes are – starting from the top string A (3rd), Eb (b7), C (5th) and F (root). This a really neat chord and a good alternative to the 1st inversion for rhythm playing.

Next up is probably the least

DIAGRAM 2

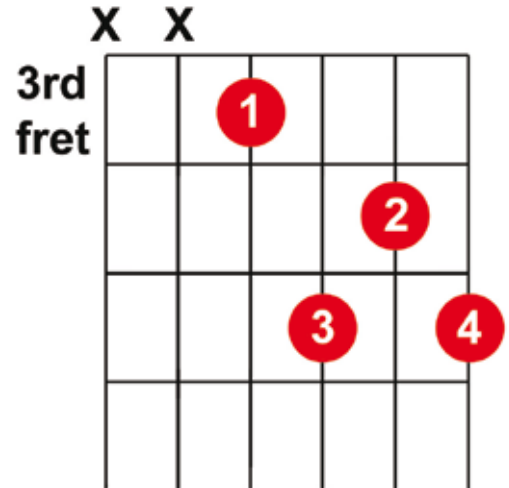
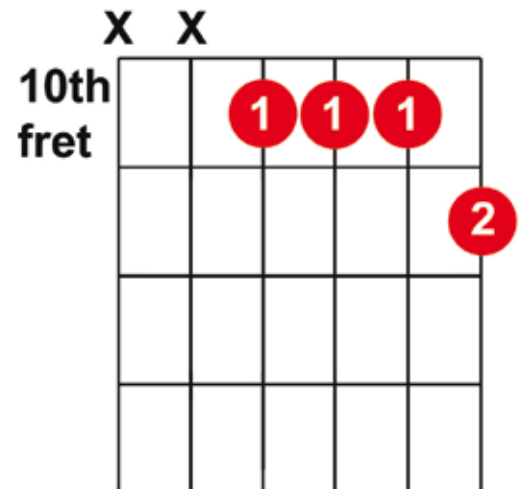


DIAGRAM 3



commonly used (Diag 3) notes are, top string C (5th), F (root), Eb (b7) and A (3rd). Although not as hip as it’s funk brothers, this chord comes into its own if you play tunes with the chord and melody at the same time. One big advantage with knowing your inversions is that with very little effort we can match up the chord with the melody on the top string therefore enabling us to play tunes as solo guitar pieces, but I will cover that more thoroughly in a future issue.

Now for the last inversion with the top string Eb (b7), A (3rd), F (root) and C (5th). This is a great funky rhythm chord and much more hardcore than the other brothers.

Because of the shape and sound of this chord it can cut through even in the midst of a big funk outfit at full throttle – remember those ear plugs! As with any new shapes, don’t expect them to fall under the fingers immediately, it takes time but is definitely worth the effort. At the end of the day this knowledge should open up a few new doors or at least unlock some old ones!

Thanks again for the e-mails and great feedback (though is there any other kind?) from people I’ve met at gigs up and down the country. Till next time have fun.

Till next time have fun – and keep practicing!