



PLAY IT YOURSELF

PLAY IT YOURSELF WITH ACOUSTIC MASTERCLASS. GUIDE TO MIXING, LAPTOP MUSIC and DR TONE CORE

ACOUSTIC MASTERCLASS: PART 3



In association with:

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Hi everyone and welcome back to the acoustic workshop. In response to some of your e-mails I've put the back issues of these articles on my website so that anyone who has missed out on any of the thrilling instalments can catch up.

Again in this issue I will be looking at C chords and staying within the relevant safety of the first position. In the last issue we looked at building a C major 7 chord using the natural seventh from the C scale (B note) so this month I thought it would be a good idea to tackle C7 and related chords. Firstly lets figure out how to make a C7 chord.

When we formed C major 7 we used the natural seventh of the C scale which is B, but when making a 7th chord we use the flattened 7th note which would be Bb. If you're not familiar with flat notes it can be helpful to visualise them on the fretboard. If we look at diag 2, any fretted note can be flattened by simply moving back a fret - in the case of G on the 1st string it is played using the 3rd finger on the 3rd fret so to flatten this note we move it back a fret. The easiest way to do this is by using your 2nd finger on the 2nd fret giving us a Gb note. So on the 1st string we now have E open, F 1st finger, Gb 2nd finger and G 3rd finger. Obviously this can be applied anywhere on the neck but try working out as many flats in the 1st position to start with before moving up the neck.

Now getting back to the note we need for the C7 chord which was Bb - how do we find that? The more enlightened amongst you (that means you!) may have spotted a problem with trying to flatten an open string like B - 2nd string open. As we are unable to flatten this by moving back a fret an alternative must be found. If we can find B on the 3rd string then we can flatten it! B is on the 4th fret of the 3rd string, some of you may be familiar with this if you adopt the open string/fretted note method of tuning. Now that we can play B as a fretted

note we can flatten it giving us Bb on the 3rd fret of the 3rd string. Now all we have to do is add this note using your 4th finger to the C chord shown in diag 1 giving us C7 (diag 3). Seventh chords are used extensively in Blues, Rock and Funk music from BB King to the Chilli's and just about everything in between.

With C7 safely under our belt, lets look at some of the other members of the 'dominant' family starting with C9 which is the slicker, funkier relative of C7, think James Brown and you'll get the idea! So now that we've got C7 all we need to do is add the 9th note of the C scale to the chord, to make C9. A quick look at diag 2 will show us that there is a D on the 3rd fret of the 2nd string, so lets add that to our C7. Now unless you have a few extra digits on your left hand this could be tricky! To get around this we have to change the fingering as shown in diag 4. Once again, I should point out that we're not really 'losing' a C note from the 2nd string, there's still a C note on the 5th string. Although this a genuine C9 chord (honest!) most people play this chord using a partial barre with the 3rd finger over the top 3 strings thereby adding a G (which is part of the chord anyway) at the top of the chord. (see diag 5). This may take a bit of practice if your not used to it but it's well worth the effort. It's a great sounding chord and it's also now mobile (no extra charge!)

We can move this shape up and down the neck which will allow us to play any 9th chord. Whew! A lot to take in this time but this should open a few doors not only with chord formation but also sound. Sevenths and ninths are extremely popular chords so it's important to be familiar with not only their sound but also the musical genres they belong to. On a final note, I'll be performing at the London Guitar Show 6th, 7th and 8th of May in the Westside live room. If your around drop by and check it out, it should be 3 great days of guitar madness. 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. www.johngoldie.co.uk

