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NCX2000 guitar photos by YAMAHA Guitars

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Published by Daniel Ho Creations

ISBN: 0-9842928-4-5

EAN: 978-0-9842928-4-4

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Concept to Fruition

This page outlines the set of parameters I used to develop the *Open-String Fingerstyle Method*. It's as easy as 3, 4, 5, 6!

Three Fingers per Chord

Every voicing in the *Open-String Fingerstyle Method* can be played with three or fewer fingers on your left hand. Most of the voicings use only one or two fingers. One voicing of the E minor chord, as a matter of fact, is played entirely on open strings and requires no fretting by the left hand.

Four Fingers for *Four* Strings

Though fingerstyle playing requires more finesse from your right hand than strumming, it is actually easier on your left hand. When playing fingerstyle, the left hand isn't required to finger entire chord voicings; it is only accountable for the strings plucked by your right hand.

Because classical technique uses four fingers on the right hand to pluck strings, I have developed special voicings that only use four strings to define chords. Each finger on the right hand is assigned to a string, so no finger has to pluck more than one string.

To further simplify this method, these modified voicings utilize as many open strings as possible, easing the responsibilities of the left hand. Believe it or not, you can play all the main chords in the keys of E and G, using only two fingers on your left hand!

Five Common Guitar Keys

A key is the tonal center of a piece of music. The five keys most often used in guitar music are E, A, D, G, and C. Why? You guessed it—because these keys use the greatest number of open strings!

Six Main Chords

The main chords of a key are based on the first six notes of a key's scale. A scale is made up of seven notes, but the seventh note forms a different kind of chord that we don't need to know right now. The scale determines whether a chord is major or minor. For instance, chords built on the first, fourth and fifth notes of a scale are always major, and chords built on the second, third and sixth notes of a scale are always minor. This is important to remember because it will help you figure out whether a chord in a particular key is major or minor. Below is a chart of the six main chords in the keys of E, A, D, G, and C.

| | Key of E | Key of A | Key of D | Key of G | Key of C |
|------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1 - major chord | E | A | D | G | C |
| 2 - minor chord | F#mi | Bmi | Emi | Ami | Dmi |
| 3 - minor chord | G#mi | C#mi | F#mi | Bmi | Emi |
| 4 - major chord | A | D | G | C | F |
| 5 - major chord | B | E | A | D | G |
| 6 - minor chord | C#mi | F#mi | Bmi | Emi | Ami |