

# Exercises to Learn Triad Fingerings in Inversion Rows

Ted Greene, 1975-04-15

For the serious, well-rounded guitarist, triads are the building blocks of harmony. A friendly acquaintance with the music of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and other classical masters should convince even the most skeptical of how true this is (many fantastical sounds from these men are build solely from triads). Therefore, the following exercises are offered to help one gain familiarity with these basic tools, to pave the way for inspired music.

All of the exercises should be done on *all* the diatonic chords in various keys (minor keys too). Also, do similar exercises with *open* triads (all of the examples below use an A chord with *closed* triads).

## 1. Learn the same voicings on different string sets.

● = Root of chord

## 2. Learn the “diagonal” shapes (3 main ways of going *across* the fingerboard with closed triads). Go both ways across the neck: → and ←

● = Root of chord

**3. Learn different inversions on the same strings.**

Go both ways across the neck: ↓ and ↑

The diagram illustrates four columns of guitar fretboard grids, each with five strings and five frets. The first column is marked with a downward arrow and contains five grids with notes at frets 5, 7, 12, 17, and 19. The second, third, and fourth columns each contain five grids with notes at frets 2, 7, 10, 14, and 19. The notes in each grid represent different triad inversions on the same strings.

| Column       | Fret | String 1 | String 2 | String 3 | String 4 | String 5 |
|--------------|------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Column 1 (↓) | 5    |          |          |          |          | 5        |
|              | 7    |          |          | 7        | 7        |          |
|              | 12   |          |          |          | 12       | 12       |
|              | 17   |          |          | 17       | 17       |          |
|              | 19   |          |          |          | 19       | 19       |
| Column 2     | 2    |          |          | 2        | 2        |          |
|              | 7    |          |          | 7        | 7        |          |
|              | 12   |          |          |          | 12       | 12       |
|              | 14   |          |          | 14       | 14       |          |
|              | 19   |          |          |          | 19       | 19       |
| Column 3     | 2    |          |          | 2        | 2        | 2        |
|              | 7    |          |          | 7        | 7        | 7        |
|              | 10   |          |          |          | 10       | 10       |
|              | 14   |          |          | 14       | 14       | 14       |
|              | 19   |          |          |          | 19       | 19       |
| Column 4     | 2    |          |          | 2        | 2        | 2        |
|              | 5    |          |          | 5        | 5        | 5        |
|              | 10   |          |          |          | 10       | 10       |
|              | 14   |          |          | 14       | 14       | 14       |
|              | 17   |          |          |          | 17       | 17       |

**4. Learn different ways of playing a Chord Stream (successive inversions in order)**

Also called "Change of Position or an "Inversion Row."

→

|   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |
|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|
| 5 | 2 | 7 | 7  | 10 | 10 | 14 | 17 |
| 5 | 2 | 2 | 7  | 5  | 10 | 14 | 17 |
| 5 | 7 | 7 | 12 | 10 | 14 | 14 | 17 |
| 5 | 7 | 7 | 12 | 14 | 14 | 19 | 17 |

These are just some of the examples of ways to play a chord stream on an A chord. Analyze the differences. You will notice that whether you go across the strings (as in Exercise 2) or up on the same strings (as in Exercise 3), you get the same sound.

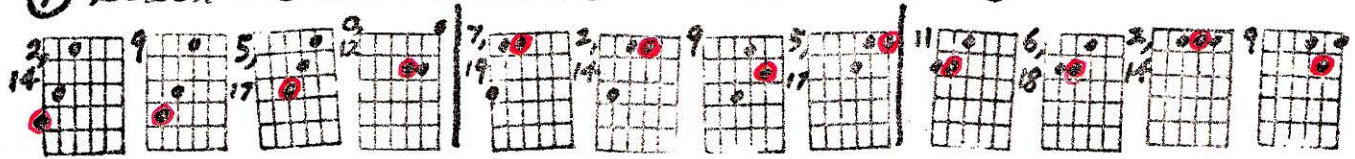
Play the chord streams backwards too – that is, from the highest chord to the lowest. Try making up other ways of playing the chord streams on all the diatonic chords, and remember to do similar concepts with the open triads. (You will find that these are less systematic than the closed triads, but with a little trial and error you will be able to decide on good fingerings with them too.)

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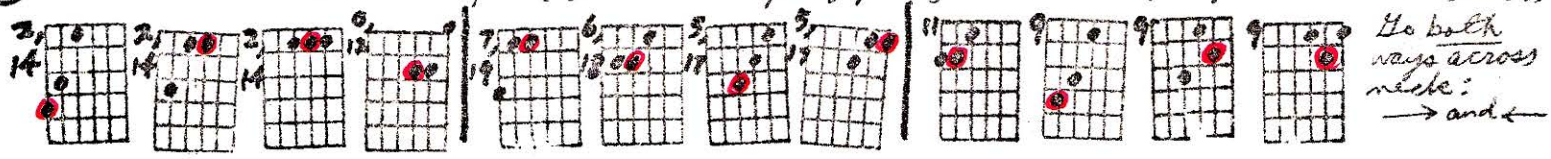
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All of the exercises should be done on all the diatonic chords in various keys (minor keys too), also do similar exercises with open triads (all of the examples below use an A chord with closed triads).

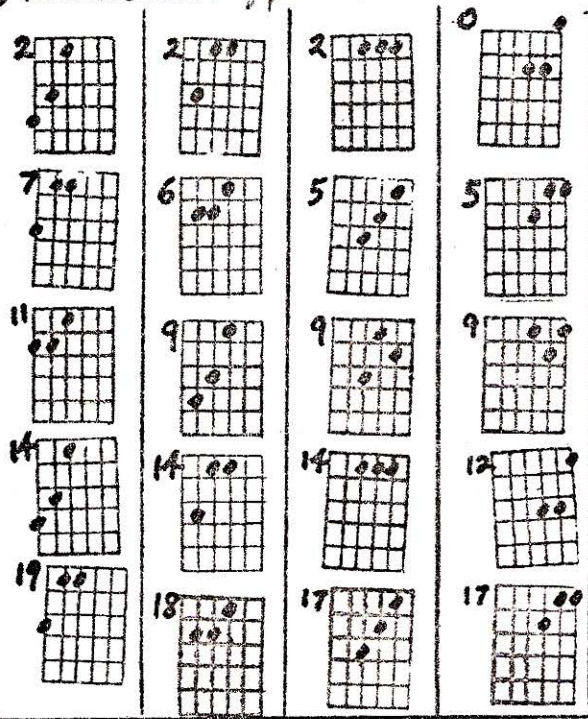
① Learn the same voicings on different string sets.



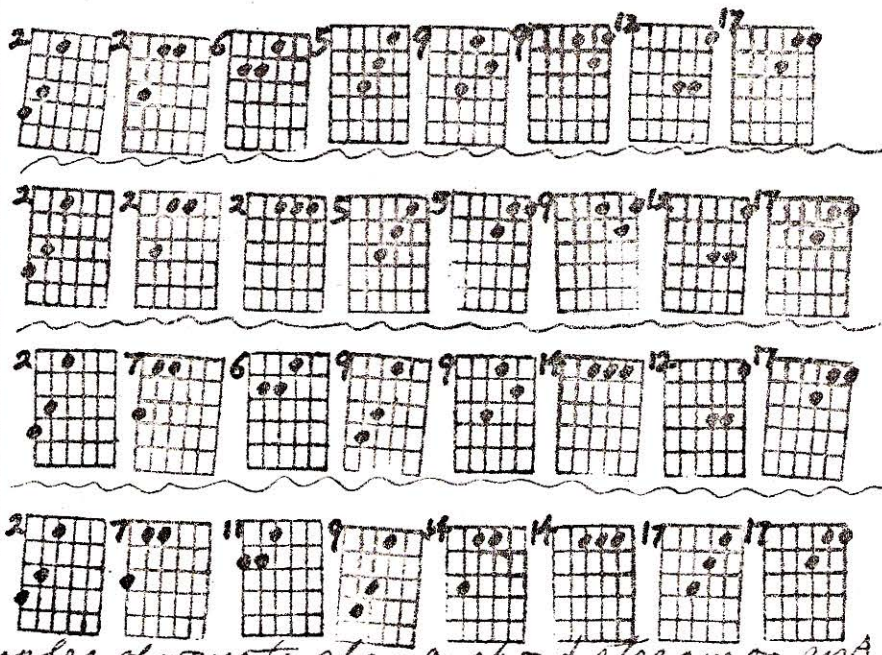
② Learn the "DIAGONAL" shapes (3 main ways of going across the fingerboard with <sup>with closed triads</sup> triads).



③ Learn the different inversions on the same strings. Go both ways: ↓ and ↑



④ Learn different ways of playing a **CHORD STREAM** (successive inversions in order).  
 Some examples: <sup>also called "CHANGE OF POSITION"</sup> or an "INVERSION ROW"



These are just some of the examples of ways to play a chord stream on an A chord. Analyze the differences, you will notice that whether you go across the strings (as in Exercise ②) or up on the same strings (as in Exercise ③), you get the same sound.

Play the chord streams backwards too - that is, from the highest chord to the lowest. Try making up other ways of playing the chord streams on all the diatonic chords and remember to do similar concepts with the open triads (you will find that they are, less systematic than the closed triads, but with a little trial & error you will be able to decide on good fingerings with them too).