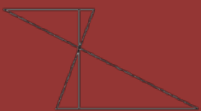


Fifth Chords



An unbiased, legitimate, and practical approach to Fifth Chords

Chris G.



Fifth Chords

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Always play for yourself; for if you play for others then inevitably you will begin to worry about their opinions; concerning yourself with other people's expectations of your performance as a measure of your musical worth.

- Chris G.

To maximize the utilization of this Book it is expected that the Reader will already have a basic knowledge of Music Terminology, Music Notation, and Guitar Tablature; and also a solid understanding of relevant Industry Standard Guitar graphical representations.

This Book does not specifically explain the implementation, common practices, and the relevancy of the within documented Chords, either their relationships or their individual stature.

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Fifth Chords

AN UNBIASED, LEGITIMATE, AND PRACTICAL APPROACH

FIFTH CHORDS ARE DYADS (TWO NOTE CHORDS)

If you have never heard of Fifth Chords, then you may have heard of them under the title of “*Power Chords*”, but this is an ignorant and misleading description, as it offers no understanding of the nature or use of these chords, as Fifth Chords have no relevance to any definition attached to the word “Power”.

- Fifth Chords are Dyads (two note chords)
- Fifth Chords are neither Minor nor Major, as there is no ‘Third’ defining such.
- There are two types of Fifth Chords – Open Fifth Chords and Barre Fifth Chords.

Key to the Charts in this publication:

- The numbers on the following Charts indicate which finger to use (eg. ‘1’ indicates the *Index Finger*), while an Open String is represented by ‘0’.
 - The symbol ‘⊗’ indicates that a string is muted by lightly resting the finger holding down the note on the above string. So, in **Figure 1.1** the second finger which is on the 4th string is also resting against the 3rd string; even though you are still striking the 3rd String as part of a six-string strum, the 3rd String will not ring out.
 - An ‘X’ indicates that the String is not to be struck at all.
 - **Figure 1.2** shows the positions of the two notes that produce an Open E5 Chord.
- ∅ DON’T get fixated on any one part you’re having trouble understanding, the whole idea of Fifth Chords will become logical as you continually read over all the material.

Figure 1.1

E5

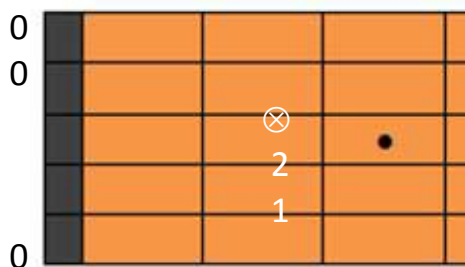
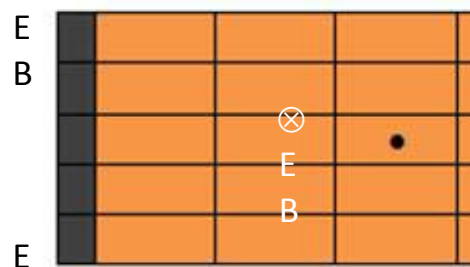


Figure 1.2

E5 (comprised of the notes E and B)

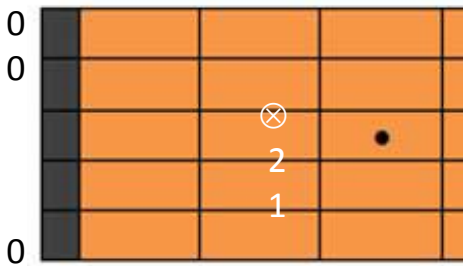


Fifth Chords

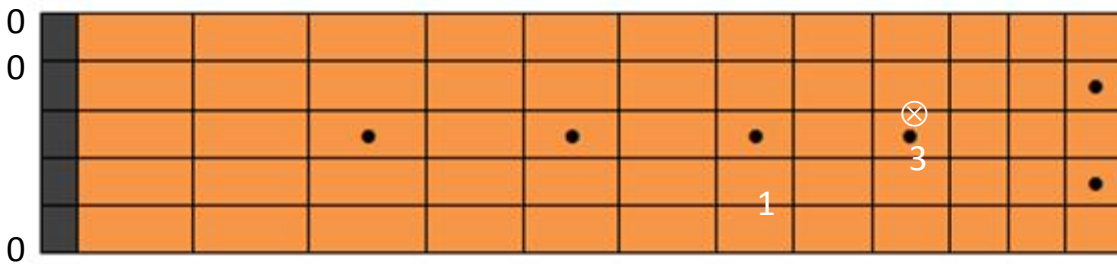
AN UNBIASED, LEGITIMATE, AND PRACTICAL APPROACH

OPEN FIFTH CHORDS

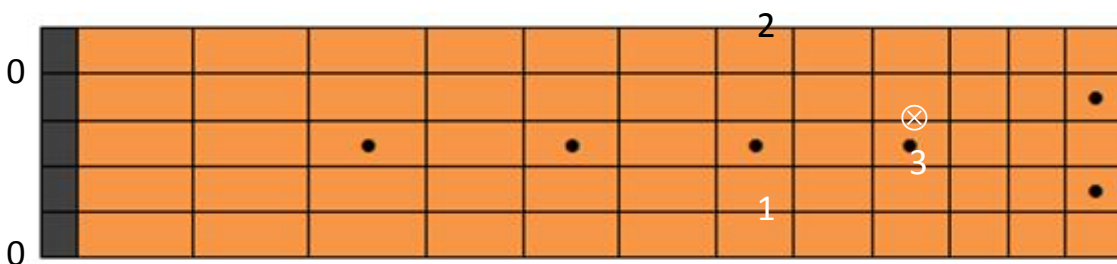
E5



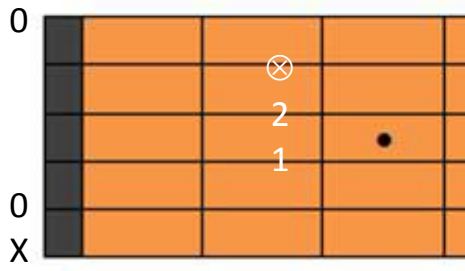
E5 (variation 2)



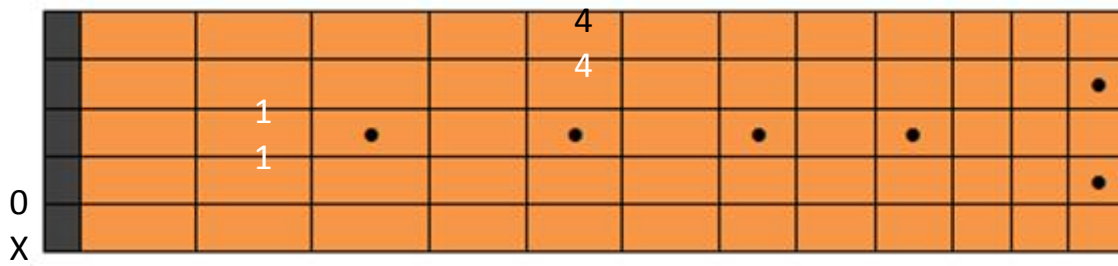
E5 (variation 3)



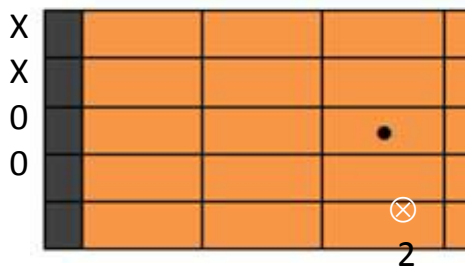
A5



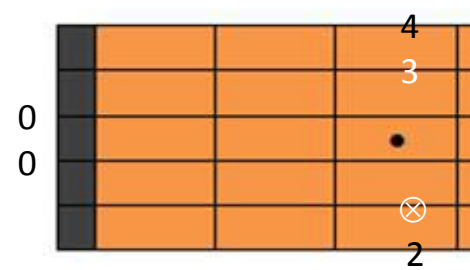
A5 (variation 2)



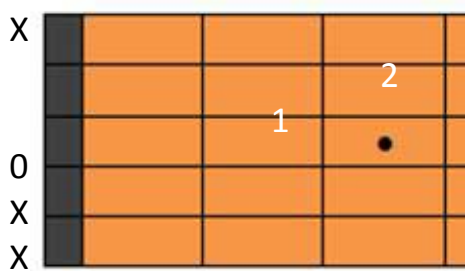
G5



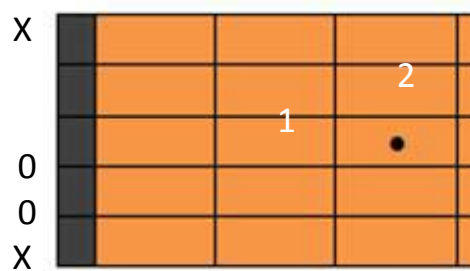
G5 (variation 2)



D5



D5 (variation 2)



Fifth Chords

AN UNBIASED, LEGITIMATE, AND PRACTICAL APPROACH

BARRE FIFTH CHORDS

Barre Fifth Chords are those that have the exact same finger shape (using the same finger numbers); the only difference is where you play them on the Guitar Neck.

Figure 1.3 shows a G5 Barre Chord, while **Figure 1.4** shows an A5 Barre Chord.

Figure 1.3

G5

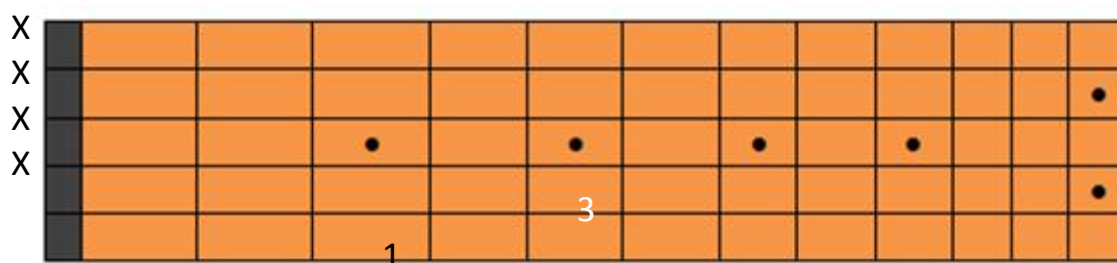
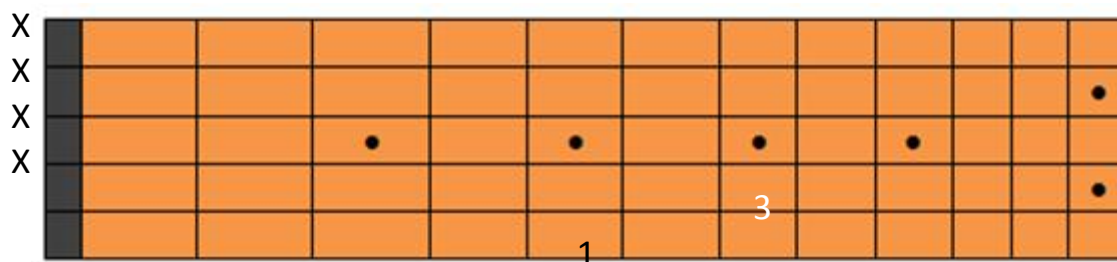


Figure 1.4

A5



The two Fifth Chords above (**Figures 1.3 and 1.4**) are, in fact, not true Barre Chords as there is no Barre*; but Fifth Chords that extend into the next octave usually require a 'true barre'. Essentially, there is really only two locations within a singular Fifth Chord Key that a 'true barre' can be used, as will be evident further in this book.

Figures 1.5 and 1.6 shows the same shape Barre Fifth Chord, but it has been moved to the 5th and 4th strings. So, a B5 becomes a C5 simply by sliding the same shape up one Fret.

**A Barre is defined as a Finger (usually the Index Finger) forming a vertical barre on the neck as one part of the construction of any and all Barre Chords.*

Figure 1.5

B5

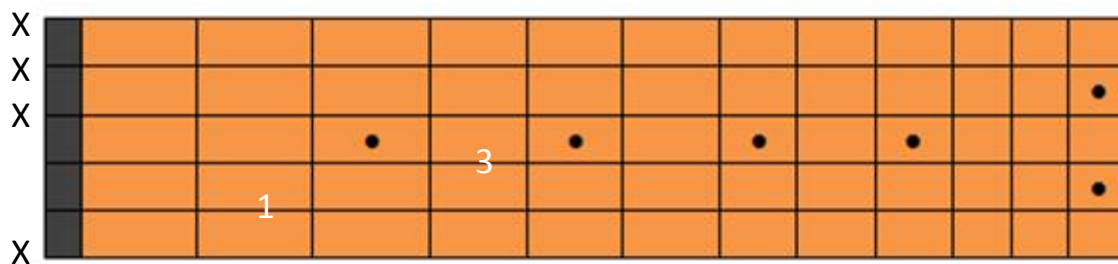
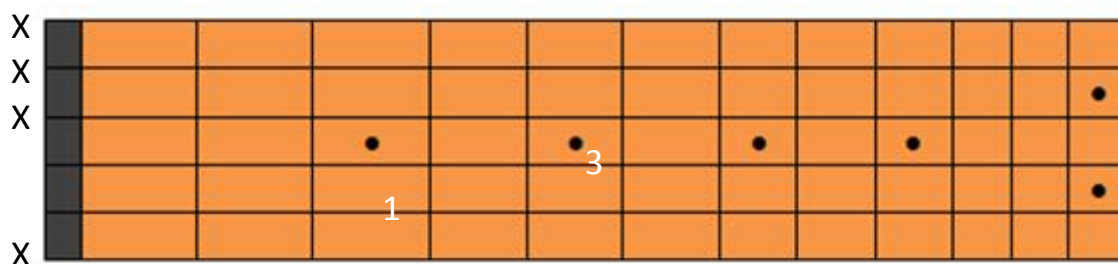


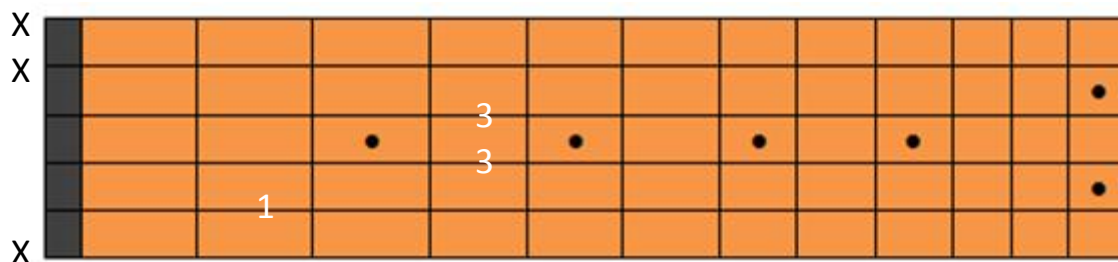
Figure 1.6

C5

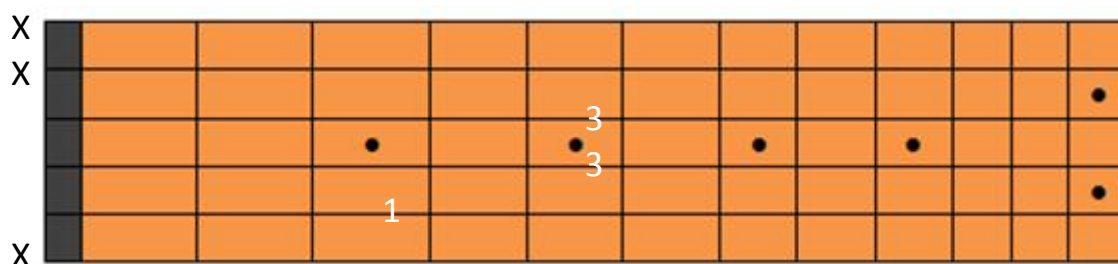


The following two Fifth Chords are variations on **Figures 1.5** and **1.6** and are true Barre Chords as the 3rd finger is required to barre across two strings. The added Tonic Octave Note gives the Chord a fuller sound and makes the Tonal Centre more pronounced.

B5 (variation 2)



C5 (variation 2)



Fifth Chords

AN UNBIASED, LEGITIMATE, AND PRACTICAL APPROACH

TAKING FIFTH CHORDS TO THE EXTREME

Remembering that **ALL** Fifth Chords have only two Notes, we can locate the two Notes of any Fifth Chord anywhere on the entire Guitar Neck and play them, and it would still be a Fifth Chord.

Figure 2.1 shows all the Notes on the Guitar, with the G and D notes highlighted.

So, if we want to play a *G Fifth Chord* (the two notes in the Chord being G and D), we can select any combination of the two notes in any Octave, and in any order; the only limit being what is physically possible. **Figure 2.2** is another example, this time it's a *B Fifth Chord* (the two notes in the Chord being B and F#).

Figure 2.1

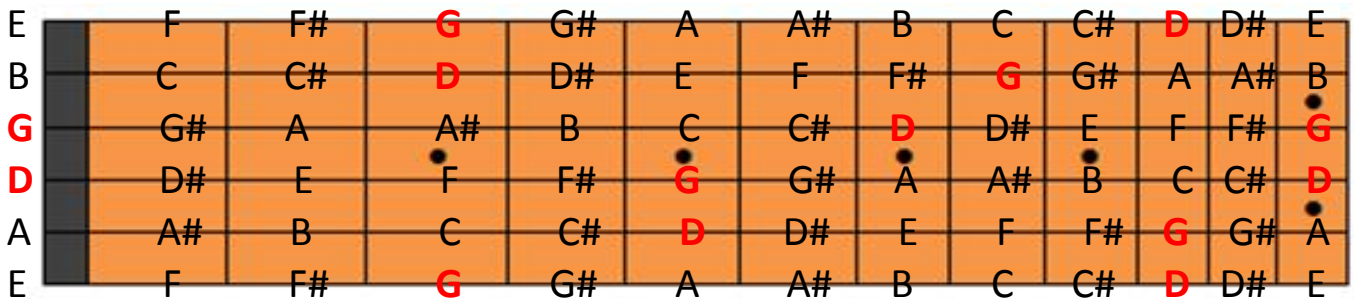
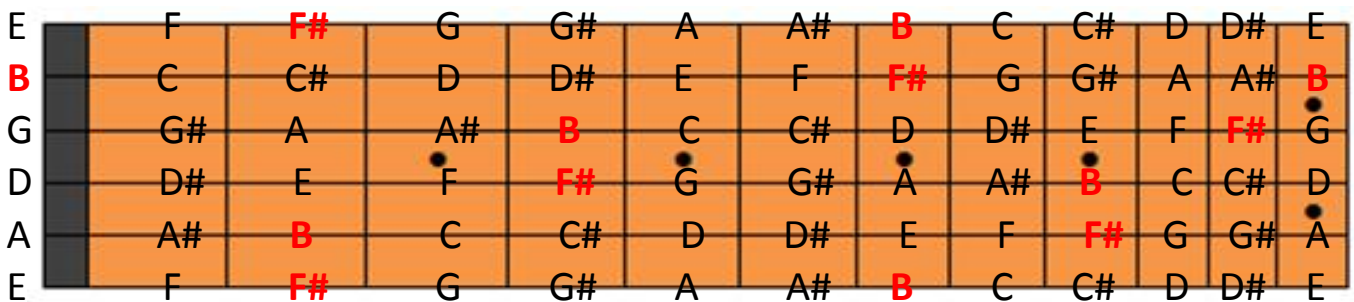


Figure 2.2



Observe how all the Notes on the 12th Fret are the same as those Notes that are found before the Neck Bridge.
All the Notes after the 12th Fret are repeated and are the same as from the first Fret.

This simple Table shows all twelve Fifth Chords that are available to the Guitarist and presents the two Notes that create each of them.

Find the notes of these Fifth Chords on the Guitar Neck and construct your own Open Fifth Chords or Barre Fifth Chords.



Fifth Chord	Notes
A	A and E
A#	A# and F
B	B and F#
C	C and G
C#	C# and G#
D	D and A
D#	D# and A#
E	E and B
F	F and C
F#	F# and C#
G	G and D
G#	G# and D#

LAST WORD

A Fifth Chord could also be called a *Perfect Chord*, as the internal Interval within Fifth Chords is one of only two Perfect Intervals out of all the Intervals between any two Notes. The other Perfect Interval is a 4th, but this is simply an Inversion of a 5th Interval.

It is important to remember that;

- Fifth Chords are legitimate Chords!
- Fifth Chords have an equal standing amongst Major and Minor Chords!
- All styles of Music utilize Fifth Chords!

Consider this book as merely an introduction to Fifth Chords and a foundation for further exploration.

No musician can be considered competent without a solid understanding of Fifth Chords and their uses, and limitations. As with the saying, “less is sometimes more”, Fifth Chords will be appropriate in some circumstances, and inappropriate in others.

Fifth Chords should never be substituted for Major or Minor Chords simply because some Major and Minor Chords are physically difficult to play, especially when those Major and Minor Chords extend beyond Triads.

The correct Chords for any Song are those which are necessary for the Sound and the Song; more or less than what is needed for the ‘message’ to be perfect would result in the message being compromised!

- Keep Playing!

