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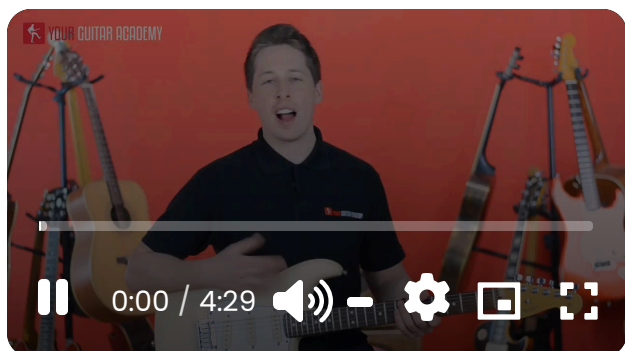
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LEVEL 3 • Guitar Skills



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The Em Shape

UNIT 3 • **LESSON 2** << PREVIOUS NEXT >>

Lesson notes Diagrams

Why Two Shapes?

Now that we have an E shape minor barre chord and an A shape minor barre chord, it is worth talking about why we need both of them. As we mentioned before, with either of those shapes you can play any minor chord you want, so if that's the case why bother learning two shapes?! Well, the answer is twofold:

1. convenience

Let's say that you had a chord progression that went Am /// G /// Dm /// Am ///. This is a very common progression and one you will definitely have to play at some point. If you started the A minor chord using the E shape version, you would be on the 5th fret. If you then used only the E string version to play the rest of the chords, you'd be jumping up and down the fretboard like a wild monkey! Especially when it comes to that G to Dm change, which looks like this:

Course navigation

UNIT 1

The E Shape Chord

0%



UNIT 2

The Am Shape Chord

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UNIT 3

The Em Shape

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At this point in the barre chord quest, we will be tackling the third shape, the Em shape. However, there is still a lot to be done on the previous shapes to get them confident and clear, so in the song at the end of this course, we use all 3 shapes!

Lessons:

- The Em Shape
- Why Two Shapes?
- "Minor Blues"
- Rhythm...
- The Chords

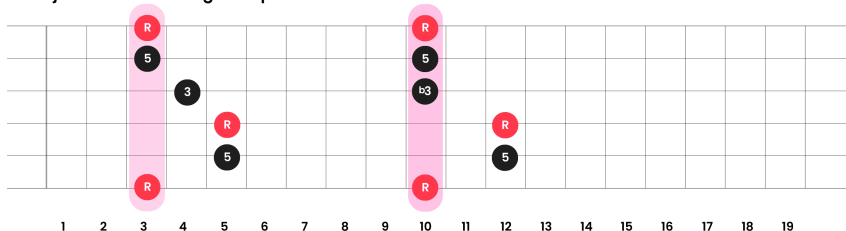
UNIT 4

The A Shape Chord

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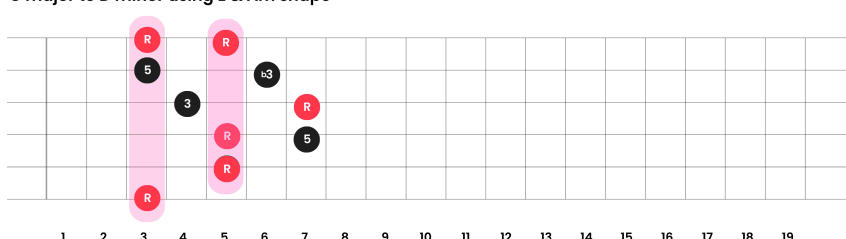
G major to D minor using E shape



This is a 7 fret jump up the fretboard, and the frets are much tighter up on the 19th fret.

As you can see, the jump from G major to D minor takes you a long way up the fretboard! This is really not what you want to be doing, especially if you are singing at the same time! You are far better off moving the Dm chord onto the A string and using the following shapes:

G major to D minor using E & Am shape



Ok so this looks a little complicated, but the shapes are fundamentally overlapping now, which means they are much closer together!

2. sound

The other key point is that you may prefer the sound of one chord over another. If you have a D minor chord to play, using these barre chords, you can play one on the 5th fret A string or one on the 10th fret E string. As the latter is higher up the fretboard you will get a different vibe and tone from it than the A shape chord which is further down. So the second point is that creatively you may want one or the other.



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