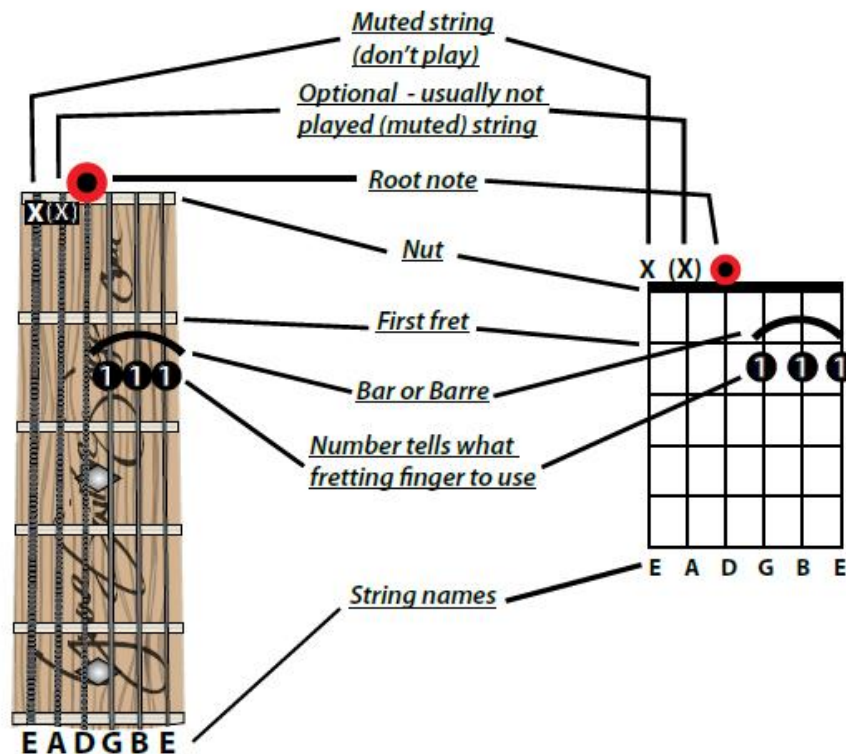


How to Read Chord Stamps



The above diagram is called a **Chord Stamp**. It allows us to easily read chord shapes. Many chord stamp illustrations vary, but for our example, let's go over the following:

The red/black dot represents the root of the chord; the note that we build the chord upon. Essentially, it's the note that the rest of the chord is based on (i.e. "D", "D-", "D7" chords would all have different "fingerings", but would all have the same root, D). Often times, the root is the lowest sounding note in the chord.

The number within the black circle represents the fretting hand finger that should be pressed down on that particular place on the neck. "O" means open, or play that string without a finger on it. Sometimes I will put a "T" if I want to bring your thumb up and over the back of the neck to play certain notes. However, you should not attempt that technique for quite some time as you will need to understand the "proper" way of playing chords before you try this "rogue" method.

Your fingers are notated:

Index=1, Middle=2, Ring=3, Pinky=4. The semi-circle/arc located above the three 1's on the

chord represents a bar. A bar is when you lay your finger across several strings – like a bar. This can be tricky in the beginning, but don't over-think the process! Typically, a new player will only be able to bar 2 or 3 notes at a time. As your hand gets stronger and your technique increases, you will be able to bar all 6 strings when necessary!

The “X” means “*don't play that string*”, or “*mute that string*”. It should not vibrate or make any sound when you play the chord. The “(X)” means that you can play the note, but for practical purposes, you usually would not. Technically, this particular note could be played in the chord without any “dissonance” (disagreeable notes/sound). If you do choose to play it, the chord will still sound “harmonic” (agreeable notes/sound).