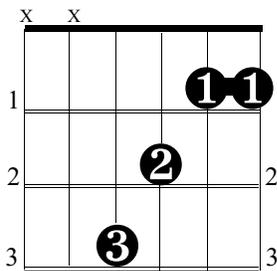


The 'F' Chord

There are many ways to play an 'F' chord, including the full six-string barre shape that even seasoned guitarists consider frustrating to play. The focus here will be to start with a basic *four-string 'F' chord shape* (shown below). For beginners, getting all four strings of an 'F' chord to sound clearly will be a challenge. What makes the 'F' chord challenging is that the first finger needs to be flattened or partially barred across the top two strings while the second and third fingers need to simultaneously be curved in order to fret the third and fourth strings.

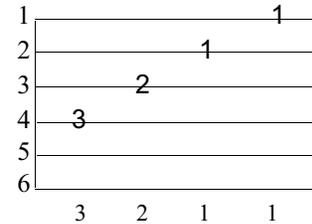
'F' Chord Diagram



'F' Chord Photo



'F' Chord Arpeggio



Moveable 'F' Chord Exercise

Play an 'F' chord arpeggio (*below*) using a pick or the thumb. Most likely, it will not be possible to get all four strings to sustain or ring clearly, but least try get clarity from the fourth (*bass note*) third strings to start. Next, slide the entire 'F' chord shape up one fret and repeat the same four-string arpeggio. Again, all four strings may not initially sound clear, but the objective here is to build finger strength by *keeping the fretting hand pressed down* against the strings while moving up the fretboard. Continue to slide the 'F' chord shape up one fret at a time and repeat the four-note arpeggio until reaching the fifth fret position (*below*).

	'F'	second fret	third fret	fourth fret	fifth fret
1	1	2	3	4	5
2	1	2	3	4	5
3	2	3	4	5	6
4	3	4	5	6	7
5					
6					
	3 2 1 1	3 2 1 1	3 2 1 1	3 2 1 1	3 2 1 1

Additional Tips

1. Play each arpeggio *slowly*. Even if all the strings do not ring clearly, continue on with the exercise. Simply holding the 'F' shape down and sliding up one fret at a time builds finger strength in the left hand, which eventually will make the exercise easier to practice.
2. The first string, which is the last string played in the arpeggio, will usually be the most difficult to sound because of the barring required with the first finger. Even though the objective is to play all four strings in each arpeggio clearly, make sure the fourth, third, and second strings sound clear before focusing on the first string.
3. Most likely, the first clear-sounding or 'perfect' arpeggio will be the last one played along the fifth fret due to the frets being positioned closer together higher up the fretboard.
4. The goal is to get a total of all 20 notes to ring clear (*four clear-sounding notes per arpeggio*). For some, this may take a few weeks of repeating the exercise.

Chords Are Moveable

To make any chord *moveable*, the general rule is that all notes that make up a chord shape must simultaneously move together up or down the fretboard. Understanding this concept of *moveable chords* can dramatically increase a guitarist's chord vocabulary. In theory, all chord shapes are moveable, however certain chord shapes simply do not 'fit' the hand as well as others and are not used as often.

Moveable 'F' Chord Shape

When moving an 'F' chord shape up from fret to fret, all four notes from the 'F' chord shift up together simultaneously, resulting in a *moveable chord shape*. To make an 'F' chord shape moveable, simply 'count-up' the *chromatic scale (from 'F')* and *twelve potential chords* can be played with just one moveable chord shape. For example, moving the 'F' chord shape up one fret (*to the second fret*) results with an 'F#' chord, while the same shape played up along the fifth fret results with an 'A' chord.

One Moveable 'F' Shape = Twelve Chords

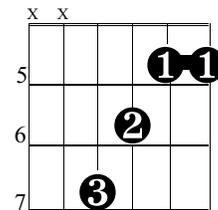
Below is an example of all *twelve chords* that can be played using the moveable 'F' chord shape:

	'F'	'F#'	'G'	'G#'	'A'	'A#'	'B'	'C'	'C#'	'D'	'D#'	'E'
1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
3	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
4	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
5												
6												

Chord Voicings

With *chord voicings*, there is more than one way to play a particular chord. For example, the moveable 'F' chord shape played along the fifth fret is an 'A' chord, (*see right*) which is a different chord voicing from the standard 'open A' chord. Both chords contain the same fundamental notes that makeup an 'A' chord ('A', 'C#', 'E'). The only difference will be how these notes are arranged and what octave range each note falls into.

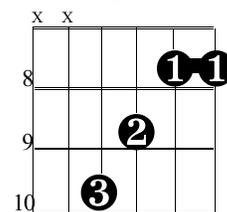
'A' - Fifth Fret



Fret Positions

Many times guitarists will describe different chord voicings by *fret positions*. For example, a moveable 'F' chord shape played along the fifth fret is actually an 'A' chord played at the fifth fret position. A moveable 'F' chord shape played along the eighth fret is a 'C' chord played at the eighth fret position. As more moveable chord shapes are learned, eventually chords can be played along various fret positions without needing a description of the chord shape.

'C' - Eighth Fret



Chord Synonyms

The same concept that applies to *enharmonic notes (sharps and flats)* will also apply to chords. For example, an 'F#' chord can also be referred to as a 'Gb' chord. A moveable 'F' chord shape played along the sixth fret position can be referred to as either an 'A#' chord or a 'Bb' chord.

Chord Vocabulary - 20 Total Chords

Along with the five basic Major chords ('G', 'C', 'D', 'A', 'E') and three basic Minor chords ('Am', 'Dm', 'Em'), the addition of the moveable 'F' chord shape (*twelve total chords*) increases the chord vocabulary for the beginning guitarist to *twenty total chords*.