

# SEARCHING FOR THE LOST CHORD I FOUND THE BEST TEACHER – MYSELF.

Suppose you play a chording instrument, perhaps the guitar, and you know a few chords you learned from a friend or from a book. If you could figure out how those chords came to be then you could create your own chords and essentially be your own teacher.

Start with a chord you probably already know, like a C chord, and “de-construct” it. This is similar to the approach used by computer hackers. They take a computer program and “reverse-engineer” it to reveal its inner workings. Once they know this they are in control and that’s where you want to be with music—in control. See Fig. 1 below to see what a C chord looks like on the guitar. Let’s “de-construct” it!

First, find what notes are being played to make this chord. Start with the names of the open (unfretted) strings and work from there. The open strings on the guitar are (from lowest to highest) E A D G B E. What you want to do is to find all of the C, E and G notes. On the chord chart for C, the 6th or lowest string is already an open E but many chord charts suggest not playing this string, and do so by placing an “X” above that string. The open 5th string is an A, so count up 3 frets, A#, B, C. To get a C, then, the 5th string is played at the 3rd fret. The 4th string starts out as D; move up two frets through D# to E. So, the fourth string is playing E. The 3rd string remains an open G. The 2nd string starts as B and moves up one fret to C. The 1st string is another open E. Here are the notes, string-by-string, that made up our C chord on the guitar: E C E G C E. Looking at our C major scale we can see that this is every other note or the 1st, 3rd and 5th notes of our C scale. This 1-3-5 triad should work the same with any major key scale.

Now let’s go the other direction to “construct” a G major chord. If you have been following this series of articles (available at [www.folkWorks.org](http://www.folkWorks.org)), you should already know how to write out a G

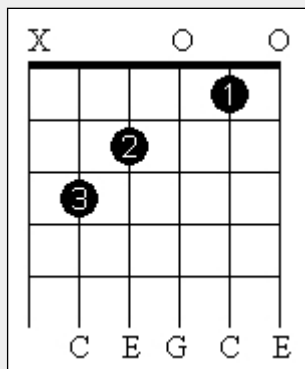


Fig. 1 Guitar - C Major Chord



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major scale. From there you take every other note to get the 1-3-5 triad of G-B-D. Going back to the guitar we can now turn this triad into a guitar chord. The bottom or 6th string is an E when open. We need it to be a G, a B or a D. So, moving up the guitar neck a fret at a time, we go from E to F to F# to G, leaving us at the 3rd fret on the 6th string. The 5th string starts out an open A and we move up to A#, then B. So the 5th string is played on the 2nd fret. The 4th string is an open D, the 3rd string is an open G and the 2nd string is an open B. All of them can stay open since they are already part of a G chord. The 1st or highest string is another open E and, like the 6th string, winds up on the 3rd fret to make a G. Your guitar chord should now look like the G chord chart (Fig. 2 below).

With what you know from past articles about constructing major scales and now the 1-3-5 major triad from this article, you should be able to generate the major triads or chords in all the keys. You’ll find it useful to do that as an exercise so that you will have a list of the notes for all the major triads. Also you now know enough that you should be able to pick up any chording stringed instrument and, once you know the names of the open strings, figure out your own chords. Another advantage of making up your own chords is that you will be able to see optional ways to play the chords rather than be stuck with the versions offered by standard chord charts. We will continue this discussion in the next article, so please stay tuned.

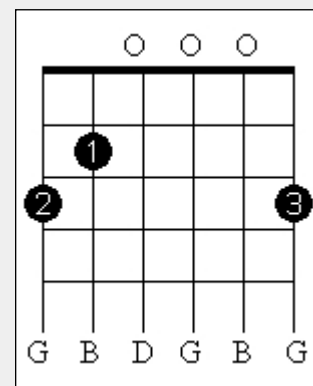


Fig. 2 Guitar - G Major Chord

| Triad or chord  | C-E-G | 1-3-5 | 1st-3rd-5th | Every-other note |   |   |    |   |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------------|------------------|---|---|----|---|
| C Major Scale   | C     | D     | E           | F                | G | A | B  | C |
| Any Major Scale | 1     | 2     | 3           | 4                | 5 | 6 | 7  | 1 |
| C Major Triad   | C     |       | E           |                  | G |   |    |   |
| Any Major Triad | 1     |       | 3           |                  | 5 |   |    |   |
| G Major Scale   | G     | A     | B           | C                | D | E | F# | G |
| Any Major Scale | 1     | 2     | 3           | 4                | 5 | 6 | 7  | 1 |
| G Major Triad   | G     |       | B           |                  | D |   |    |   |

# GOT TO BUY A GIFT

By HARLYNNE GEISLER

Birthdays and Valentine’s Day looming? Buy books, CDs, and stationary directly from storytellers whenever possible to support these artists rather than their middle men. Many of them have websites where you can print out order forms. Use them to make a wish list for gifts for you or to purchase for others. You will find links to some of their websites at [www.storybag.for-kids.com](http://www.storybag.for-kids.com). Story-Lovers produces beautiful storytelling greeting cards, notepads, post-cards, and other products featuring illustrations from folklore. I’m especially fond of the storytelling notepads and stationary because each sheet in the pack you purchase has a different picture and storytelling quotation on it. You can find the catalog online at <http://www.story-lovers.com>, or call Story-Lovers toll-free at 1-877-996-7007, e-mail: [bubbul@vom.com](mailto:bubbul@vom.com), or write P.O. Box 446, Sonoma CA 95476. Also at the website you will find links to many other storyteller’s materials for sale Two very worthwhile publishers of many storyteller’s books are August House, P. O. Box 3223, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72203, 501-372-5450, [www.augusthouse.com](http://www.augusthouse.com), and Libraries Unlimited, P.O. Box 6633, Englewood, CO 80155-6633, 1-800-237-6124, [www.lu.com](http://www.lu.com). They have books suitable for children, parents, teachers, storytellers, and story-lovers.

## THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

Tell your friends and family that you have made a donation in their name to one of these groups to keep stories alive at a time when our country really needs them:

- 1 Corn Island Storytelling Festival, Tale Trader Magazine and E.A.R.S., longtime storytelling arenas for tellers are devastated by the financial effects of Sept. 11. The festival took place the weekend after 9/11/01 with only 50% in attendance. All report it was a truly wonderful event which provided a healing environment to many tellers and fans just when it was needed most. At 20 years old, this is one of the oldest and largest festivals in the country. Its revenues supported the magazine and storytelling guild. Without our donations all three venues will close. Donations are 100% tax deductible. You may send contributions ASAP to: International Order of EARS, Inc., 12019 Donohue Avenue; Louisville, KY 40243. Call 502-245-0643 to donate via major credit cards.
- 2 DreamShapers is the only nonprofit dedicated to creating storytelling venues in the Southern California area. They need tax deductible donations to cover expenses, or they may go under. They also need fund-raisers, grant writers, and publicists. Send money to Los Angeles DreamShapers, 2926 Honolulu Blvd., La Crescenta, CA 91214
- 3 Because of the events of 9-11-01, Storyfest, a couple who takes people on storytelling tours (including religious tours) to worldwide destinations suspended all travel and pilgrimage programs for the next six months. They were the primary source of Storyfest’s income. You can support a lifetime’s work by subscribing to one or more of

their publications, which would enable them to pay their bills until they recover. If you go to their website at [www.storyfest.com](http://www.storyfest.com), you can download 14-to-23 page samplers of the first three books.

Harlynn Geisler has created a program of All-American Folktales for schools and libraries. She can be reached at [storybag@juno.com](mailto:storybag@juno.com) or 858-569-9399. Her website is [www.storybag.for-kids.com](http://www.storybag.for-kids.com). © 2001



## FURTHER READING

- Courlander, Harold - *The Cow-tail Switch and Other West African Stories*
- Schram, Peninnah - *Jewish Stories: One Generation Tells Another* (Peninnah’s story, “The Golden Watch” is a variant of “The Cow-tail Switch”)
- MacDonald, Margaret - *Peace Tales*
- Forest, Heather - *Wisdom Tales from Around the World* (Read her version of “A Farmer’s Horse Ran Off” and the notes on the tale at the back of the book)
- Creeden, Sharon - *Fair is Fair: World Folktales of Justice*

## ON-GOING STORYTELLING EVENTS

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| <p><b>GREATER LOS ANGELES</b><br/> <b>LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY STORYTELLERS</b><br/>                 2nd Thursdays • 7:30 pm<br/>                 Temple Beth Torah • 11827 Venice Blvd.<br/>                 Audrey Kopp • (310) 823 7482<br/> <a href="mailto:akopp@ucla.edu">akopp@ucla.edu</a></p> <p><b>SUNDAYS ARE FOR STORIES</b><br/>                 2nd Sundays • 3:00 pm • Free<br/>                 Jewish Community Centers<br/>                 Los Angeles Citywide<br/>                 (323) 761-8644 • <a href="mailto:INFO@JCLLA.ORG">INFO@JCLLA.ORG</a>.</p> <p><b>FAMILY STORYTELLING</b><br/>                 Saturdays/Sundays • 11:00 am, noon, 1:00am • Free<br/>                 Storytelling in Spanish on alternating Saturdays.<br/>                 Getty Center Family Room<br/>                 1200 Getty Center Drive • L.A.<br/>                 (310) 440-7300.</p> <p><b>WHITTIER ADULT STORYTELLING GROUP</b><br/>                 Tuesdays • 5:00 - 6:00 pm<br/>                 Los Nietos Community Center,<br/>                 11640 E. Slauson Ave., L.A.<br/>                 (562)-699-9898</p> <p><b>LEIMERT PARK GRIOT WORKSHOP</b><br/>                 3rd Wednesdays • 7:00 pm<br/>                 Ja-Phyl’s Place, 4346 Degnan Blvd.<br/>                 (310) 677-8099</p> <p><b>SAN GABRIEL VALLEY STORYTELLERS</b><br/>                 3rd Tuesdays Pasadena • 7:30 pm<br/>                 Allendale Library, 1130 S. Marengo Ave.<br/>                 (626)792-8512</p> | <p><b>LONG BEACH STORYTELLERS</b><br/>                 1st Wednesdays • 7:00 pm<br/>                 El Dorado Library, 2900 Studebaker Rd.<br/>                 (310) 548-5045</p> <p><b>ORANGE COUNTY</b><br/> <b>COSTA MESA SOUTH COAST STORYTELLERS GUILD</b><br/>                 3rd Thursdays • 7:00 pm<br/>                 1551 Baker #A • (714) 496-1960</p> <p><b>SOUTH COAST STORYTELLERS</b><br/>                 Saturdays &amp; Sundays Santa Ana<br/>                 2:00-3:00pm<br/>                 Bowers Kidseum, 1802 North Main St.<br/>                 (714) 480-1520 •<br/> <a href="http://www.bowers.org/link3c.htm">http://www.bowers.org/link3c.htm</a></p> <p><b>ORANGE STORYTELLING</b><br/>                 Wednesdays • 7:00pm to 8:00pm<br/>                 Borders at the Block, City Drive<br/>                 (949) 496-1960</p> <p><b>MISSION VIEJO STORYTELLING</b><br/>                 Wednesdays • 7:00 to 8:00pm<br/>                 Borders, 25222 El Paseo<br/>                 (949) 496-1960</p> <p><b>COSTA MESA STORYTELLING BY LAURA BEASLEY</b><br/>                 Wednesdays • 10:00am<br/>                 South Coast Plaza • (949) 496-1960</p> <p><b>COSTA MESA STORYTELLING BY LAUREN ANDREWS</b><br/>                 Fridays • 10:00am<br/>                 South Coast Plaza • (949) 496-1960</p> |
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