

## *How to Get from One Chord to Another*

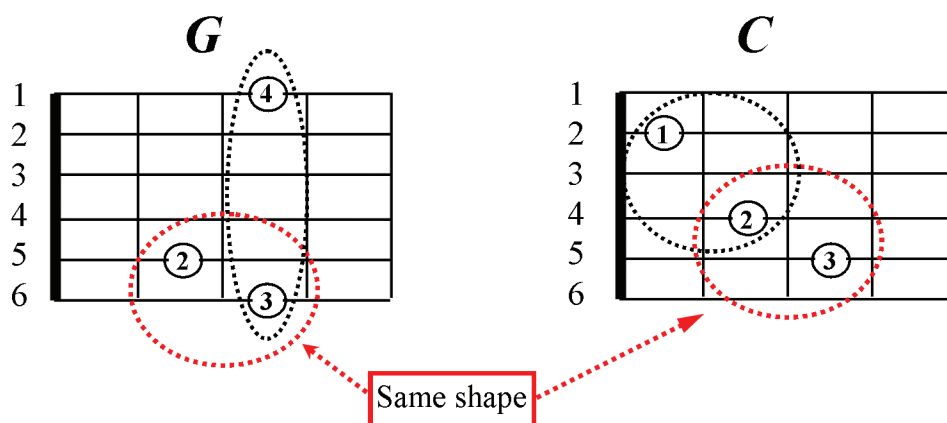
When we talk about playing chords on the guitar, we are really talking about two things at the same time. First is the chord, itself, as it is fingered on the fretboard. The second is the process of getting *from* one chord *to* any other. These ways of getting from one chord to any other are called **chordal pathways**. Chord books generally tell you *where* to put your fingers, but not *how to move them*. Simply put, *how* you move from one chord to another is critical to your success as a guitarist. Chordal pathways are the step-by-step movements of your fingers getting from the chord you're *on* to the chord you're going *to*. I have worked with thousands of guitarists whose biggest problem was that they had trouble moving from one particular chord to another, and this problem cropped up over and over again in songs using that chord-fingering.

### The logic of chordal pathways is:

- ◆ Never do any more than you must.
- ◆ Take advantage of any work that you've already done.
- ◆ Always do things the same way, once they are maximally successful (meaning, when you can't do it any better than that!).
- ◆ Keep it simple.

Look for these commonalities between chords before moving or letting go:

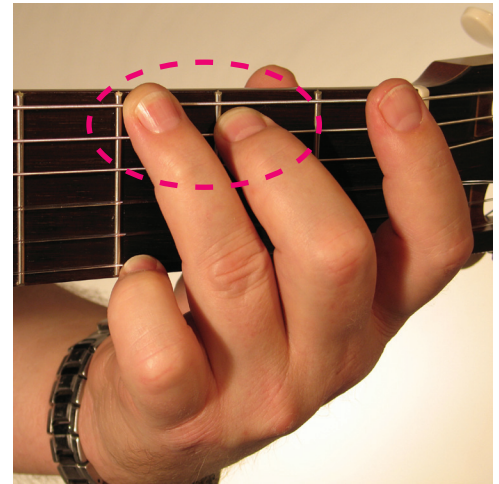
- ◆ Fingers that **don't have to move at all** from one chord to another.
- ◆ Fingers that **are the same shape** in both chords.
- ◆ Finger(s) **on the same string(s)** in both chords.
- ◆ Finger(s) **on same fret(s)** in both chords (i.e., same position).



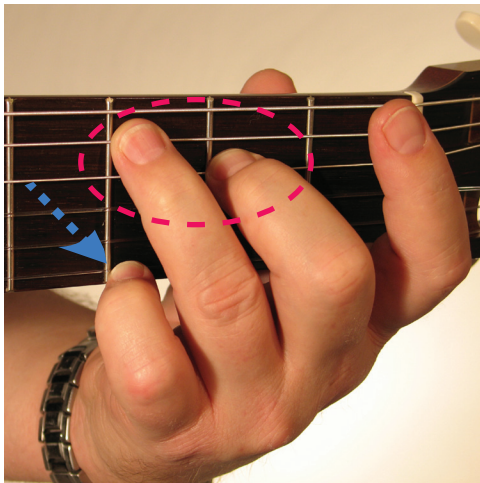
To demonstrate how chordal pathways work, let's compare two sample chords, *G* and *C*, bearing in mind that the thinking we'll use for these two chords could just as easily be applied to any other chords we choose.

**Best way to move from G to C:**

(1) When we first look at the **G** and **C** chords, we don't see any fingers that can simply stay where they are during the chord-change. However, notice that each chord contains 2 distinct shapes, and one of these is the *same* for both (fingers 2&3). To **save unnecessary work, we should move these fingers together as a *shape***, rather than allowing them to separate when moving from the **G** to the **C** chord.



(1) *G chord*



(2)

(2) Move fingers 2 & 3 together as a **shape (red dotted ellipse)** to their respective spots on the strings below. *4th finger remains planted, acting as a stationary anchor for the other fingers (blue arrow).*

(3) Add the 1st finger. *4th finger remains planted (blue arrow).*



(3)



(4) *C chord*

(4) Lift 4th finger. **G to C** chordal pathway is now finished!

To shift from a **C** chord *back* to a **G**, simply reverse the sequence (add 4<sup>th</sup> finger, take away 1<sup>st</sup> finger, then move fingers 2&3 as a *shape*).