

## CHORDS - HOW TO PRACTICE SWITCHING

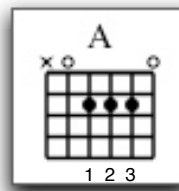
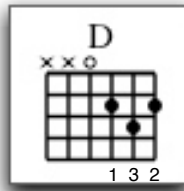
### Plan ahead for chord changes



The main reason beginning students have trouble switching chords quickly has nothing to do with their fingers! Most often, new guitarists haven't learned to THINK AND PLAN AHEAD, and visualize exactly which chord they're about to play, and which fingers they'll need to move.

#### Try this exercise:

- Choose two chords you know (for example 'A' and 'D'). You will be moving back and forth between these two chords.
- Play the first chord eight times (strumming slowly and evenly), and then, without breaking the rhythm of your strumming, quickly move to the next chord, and play that chord eight times.



If you're like most beginners, you paused or hesitated while switching chords. Your fingers hovered, very unsure of where to go.

If so, let's try and examine what the problem is. Try the following, without strumming the guitar:

- Put your fingers back in position to play the first chord.
- Now, try and move quickly to the second chord, and study your fingers while doing so. Chances are, one (or a few) of your fingers will come way off the fret board, and perhaps hover in mid-air while you try to decide where each finger should go. This happens, not because of any lack of technical ability, but because you haven't mentally planned ahead to be ready to switch chords.

Now, try fretting the first chord again. Without actually moving to the second chord, **VISUALIZE** playing this second chord shape **BEFORE MOVING**. Picture in your mind, finger by finger, how to most efficiently move to the next chord. **Only** after you've done this should you switch chords. If some fingers continue to pause, or hover in mid air while moving to the next chord, back up and try again.

Also, concentrate on "**minimum motion**" - commonly, beginners bring their fingers very far off the fretboard while switching chords; this is unnecessary. Spend five minutes going back and forth between the two chords, visualizing, then moving. Pay attention to any small, unnecessary movements your fingers make, and eliminate them.

Although this is easier said than done, your hard work and attention to detail will start paying off quickly with better tones and easier movements. Good luck!