

4 Chord Song Worksheet I – V – vi - IV

There is a simple 4 chord progression used in popular music which you can also use in your own song writing. It has been used in lots of hit records and is sometimes called the 'money progression'. In this worksheet you will learn how to play the chord progression and different ways in which you can use it. Once you have learned to play the sequence see if you can use it in one of your own songs. You can play this on any instrument guitar, ukulele, piano, mandolin etc.. If you don't play an instrument see if you can sing along with the examples.

Critical listening

Have a listen to the list of songs below. All these songs use the 4 chord sequence, some use it throughout the entire song and others use it just in part of the song. See if you can spot the chord sequence. Notice how the songs all sound different but are using a similar chord pattern. What is different about each of the songs? How are they similar?

No Woman No Cry – Bob Marley

Let it Be – The Beatles

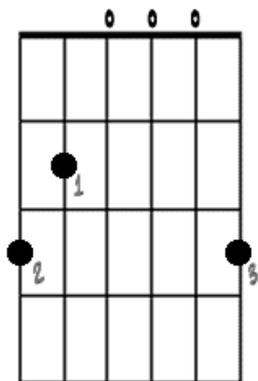
With or Without you – U2

We are never ever getting back together – Taylor swift

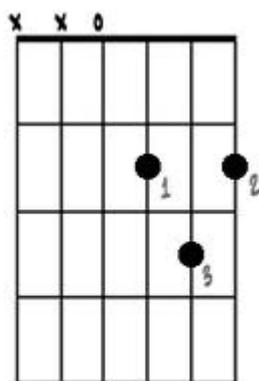
Task

Using your instrument play the simple sequence of chords below (I have listed guitar chords in this example)

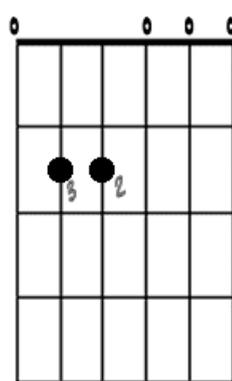
Repeat the sequence playing slowly at first, as you become more comfortable play the sequence faster. How does the tempo change the feel of the sequence? Try to play the progression using arpeggios.



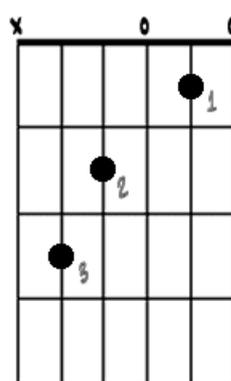
G MAJOR



D MAJOR



E MINOR



C MAJOR

||: G / / / / | D / / / / | Em / / / / | C / / / / :||

Extension Tasks

Write your own song using the 4 chord progression

Play the chord progression in different keys e.g in the key of D the progression would be D, A, B min, G
See if you can find examples of other songs using the same 4 chord progression.

A word of warning, when using it in your own writing be careful not to make it sound too obvious. Familiarity can breed contempt so see if you can still make it sound fresh and interesting. Have fun!