

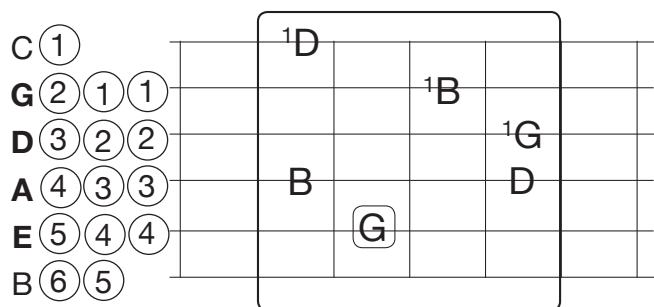
First Inversion Hit Songs for Four, Five or Six String Bass

Previously we learned to play many hit songs with only **six** harmonies from the major scale in **zero Inversion**: I, IV, V major and ii, iii, vi minor. The definition of inversion is to switch the bottom to the top. An **inversion** is symbolized with a harmony tone or letter in the bass. When tone 1, also known as the root, is in the bass, it is traditionally called root inversion. For example, 1 3 5 major. However, since no tones have yet to be inverted, and since we're not studying botany, I like to call a harmony with tone 1 in the bass: **zero inversion**.

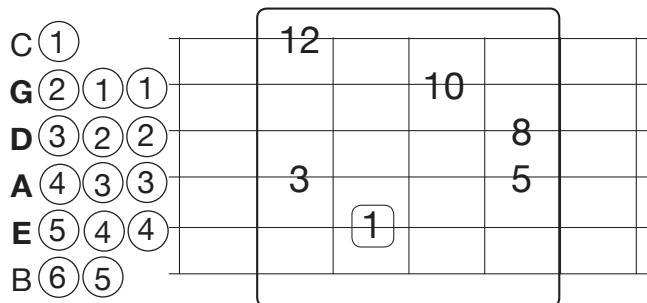
Now, let's learn a first inversion harmony and apply it to tone 7 of the major scale. Arpeggios and chords in **first inversion** have tone 3 in the bass. For example, 3 5 8 major. Notice that when you spell a major arpeggio or chord in first inversion, tone 1 an octave higher, becomes tone 8.

The C major scale has the following tone numbers and letters: 1C, 2D, 3E, 4F, 5G, 6A and 7B. With these seven tone numbers and letters you can spell many harmonies, however, this lesson will use only two. With their **harmony numeral** symbols, they are: **I C** and **V/3 G/B**. Notice that the second harmony, whether an arpeggio or chord, is a **slash harmony**.

Let's begin by illustrating a complete ⑤ 2 or ④ 2 G major arpeggio shown as letters: G B D, ¹G ¹B ¹D for four, five or six string bass.

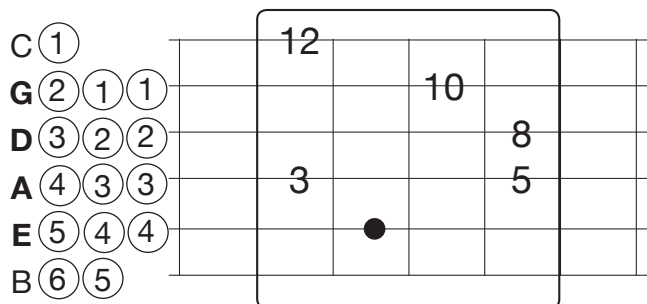


Next, let's show the ⑤ 2 or ④ 2 **major arpeggio** as tone numbers: 1 3 5 8 10 12.



Remember, the **first inversion** has tone 3 in the bass. Therefore, the G major chord in first inversion is **G/B**, and in the **key of C major** is symbolized as **V/3**.

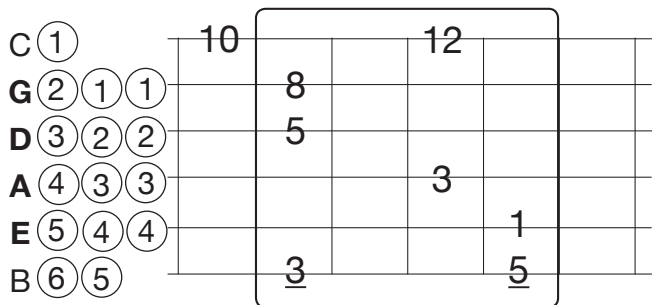
To play the ⑤ 2 or ④ 2 major arpeggio in first inversion, we need to fragment the arpeggio. **Fragment** means to play only a part of the entire arpeggio. Here are the tones of the ⑤ 2 or ④ 2 major arpeggio in **first inversion**: 3 5 8 10 12. The **black dot** identifies tone 1, even though you're not going to play it.



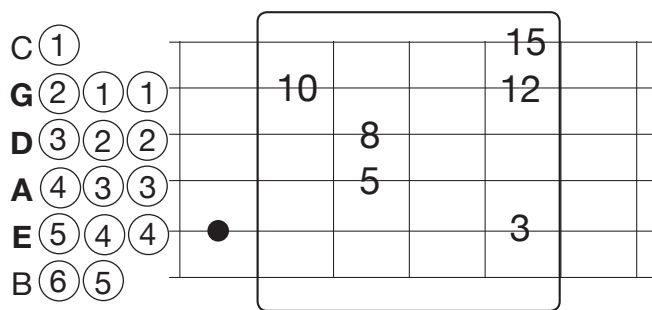
Here's something important. The G major harmony is spelled G B D, and the letter B functions as a **common tone** because it is both tone 7 of the C major scale, and tone 3 of the G major arpeggio. And since G major is "five major" V, in the key of C major, the letter B may be considered tone 3 of V. Furthermore, since first inversion G major has B in the bass, it may be used as a **substitute** for "chord seven" of the

C major scale: Bm \flat 5, vii \flat 5. In other words, when playing hit songs, use G/B instead of Bm \flat 5!

Now, let's explore first inversion in a few other forms. Here is form ⑤ 4 or ④ 4 major arpeggio in first inversion. Underline tone numbers are lower than tone 1 in pitch.



Here is form ⑤ 1 or ④ 1 major arpeggio in first inversion.



As you know, there are 7 forms of the major arpeggio, see **Bass EncycloMedia** page 37. However, not all 7 forms are practical in first inversion. It helps to think of practical logically.

There is the possible and the impossible. Practical is possible. Practical and practice have the same root word. Practice is technique or skill. The opposite of technique is theory or thinking. Therefore, simply stated, **practical** is what you put into practice, not something you think about. Remember, practical doesn't negate, it simply prioritizes.

We can now understand that even though there are 7 forms of major arpeggios, some of them are a

bit **impractical**.

Okay, let's end this lesson with some **I - V/3** slash harmony hit songs.

Kansas, Dust In The Wind

Lynyrd Skynyrd, Free Bird

Percy Sledge, When A Man Loves A Woman

Steely Dan, Reelin' In The Years

Eric Clapton, Tears In Heaven

Journey, Open Arms

Jim Croce, I Got A Name

'Til next time, have some **first inversion slash harmony** fun... I'll be listening!

P.S. If you liked, or didn't like this lesson, please drop me a line <frets@12tonemusic.com> and let me know.

Mike Overly is the creator of the **Tone Note® Music Method**, *Guitar & Bass EncycloMedia* and *Fretboard Flashcards*. Mike's publications are available from Bass Books.com, Amazon.com, JK Lutherie.com and many other fine music and book retailers around the world - just ask for them!