A man with glasses and a dark shirt is sitting and playing an acoustic guitar. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a music room with acoustic panels, a lamp, and other guitars hanging on the wall. The text "How to Play 25 Songs After One Guitar Lesson" is overlaid in large white font.

# How to Play 25 Songs After One Guitar Lesson

# No, really, you can do this.

We will get on with it as quickly as possible, but I want to first explain why you can play 25 songs after your first guitar lesson. It's not a gimmick, you really can play that many songs. Actually you can play way more than that, probably thousands of songs. 25 just seemed like a good starting number.

Here's why it's possible. The foundation of songwriting is **chords**. Chords are just a group of notes played at the same time. And in popular music, an unbelievably large number of songs use just **four chords**. In fact, there was a comedy band called Axis of Awesome that made fun of just how common these four chords are in an act called "Four Chords." It was hilarious, but that's not the point. The point is, if you learn these four chords, you can play thousands of songs with them. Of course, we will just start with 25.



# Here are the 25 songs you're about to play.

**"Good Life"** by OneRepublic

**"Perfect"** by Ed Sheeran

**"Zombie"** by The Cranberries

**"What A Wonderful World"**

by Sam Cooke

**"Last Kiss"** by Pearl Jam

**"Numb"** by Linkin Park

**"Shut Up And Dance"**

by Walk the Moon

**"Viva La Vida"** by Pearl Jam

**"Let Her Go"** by Passenger

**"Someone Like You"** by

Adele

**"21 Guns"** by Green Day

**"Wagon Wheel"** by Darius

Rucker

**"Fast Car"** by Tracy Chapman

**"Stand By Me"**

by Ben E. King

**"MmmBop"** by Hanson

**"Good 4 U"** by Olivia Rodrigo

**"You Belong With Me"**

by Taylor Swift

**"Wake Me Up"** by Avicii

**"The Scientist"** by Coldplay

**"Save Tonight"**

by Eagle Eye Cherry

**"I Will Always Love You"**

by Dolly Parton

**"Earth Angel"**

by The Penguins

**"Mr. Brightside"**

by The Killers

**"Despacito"**

by Luis Fonsi

**"Sweet Home Alabama"**

by Lynyrd Skynyrd

# Ready? Let's do it.

Hey! There is a video that goes along with this lesson. Hopefully you're already watching it. It's definitely best to use both the video and this PDF. You can find the video at [www.drudavis.com/25songs](http://www.drudavis.com/25songs).

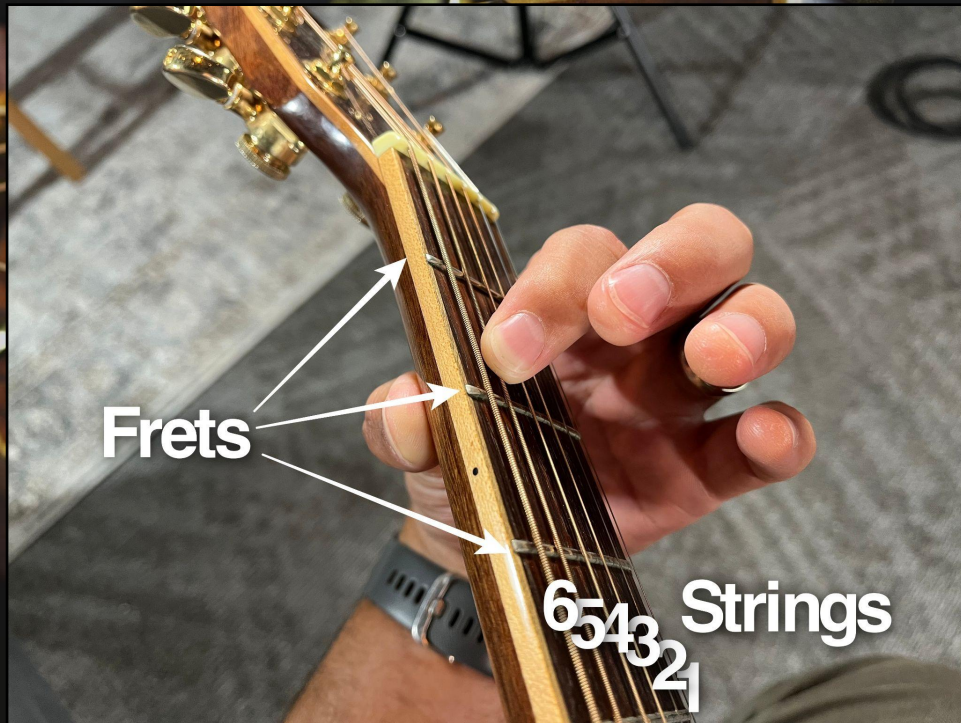
Alright, let's go! Grab a guitar and play along if you want, or you can just read and try it out later. If your guitar is out of tune, I have a 60-second quick tuning guide on my YouTube page.

[Click here to watch it.](#)



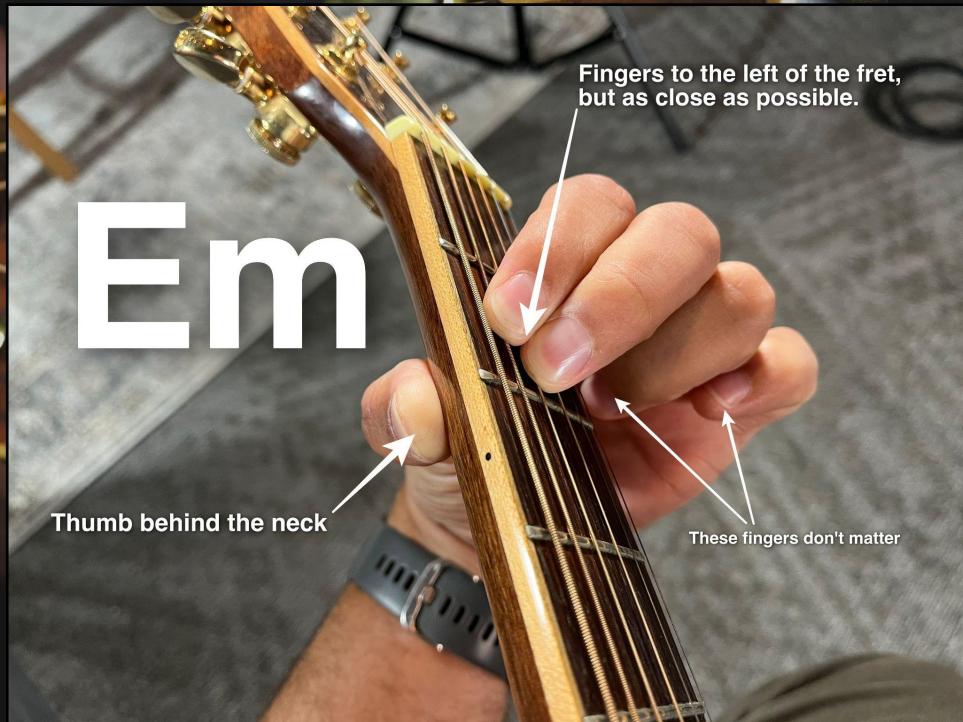
# How to play the chords

The chords that we need to play are called **G, C, D and Em**. To begin, set your guitar on your lap with the neck pointing left and the strings facing away from you. The little hump on the guitar goes on your right leg. Now you have access to the strings with your right hand around the body. Your left hand gets to do the fun stuff. Reach around the bottom of the neck and push the tip of your pointer finger into the fifth string. Which one is the fifth string? Just count from the bottom. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Once we're on the fifth string, we want to press the string on to the second fret. The frets are these little metal lines. You want the second one from the left (from the head of the guitar).



# How to play the chords

What you're trying to do is press the string firmly against the fret so that it can't move. It's pinned to the fret. Then we're going to put our next finger right on the fourth string, same fret. As with the first finger, make it nice and firm. Use your right hand to strum through all six strings, and boom, you just played your first chord. It's called an E minor chord (written as E with a little 'm' for short).

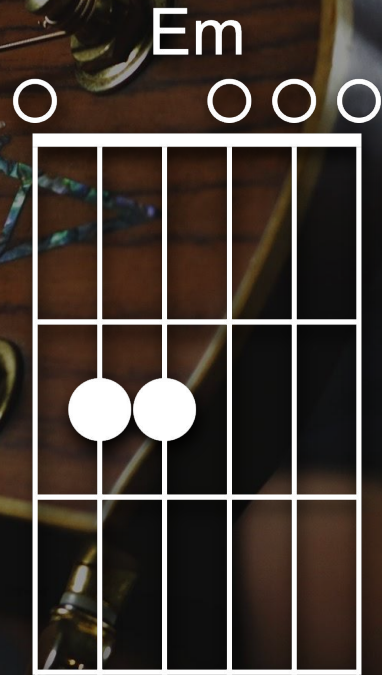




# How to play the chords

At this point we should probably show you a chord diagram. That's the most common way of writing a chord down. Here is the chord diagram for the chord you just played.

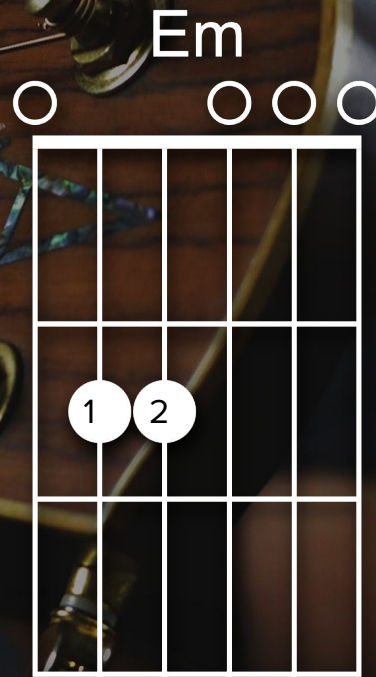
What they really are are just really simple drawings. If you hold your guitar up and down (with the neck pointing straight up) and look at the strings that way, you'll see all six strings going up and down, you'll see the metal frets going side to side. That's what a chord diagram is supposed to look like. And then a guitar teacher or somebody comes along and draws little dots on them to tell you where to put your fingers. We put the name of the chord at the top and that's a CHORD.



# How to play the chords

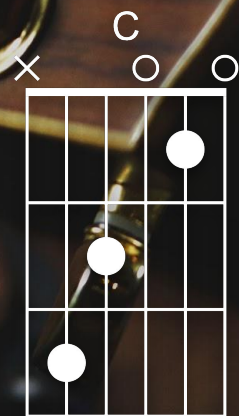
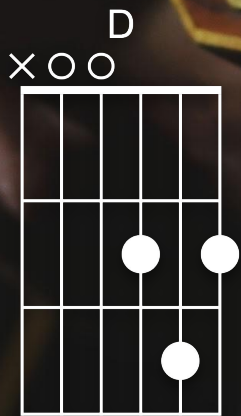
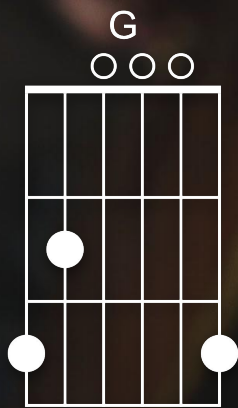
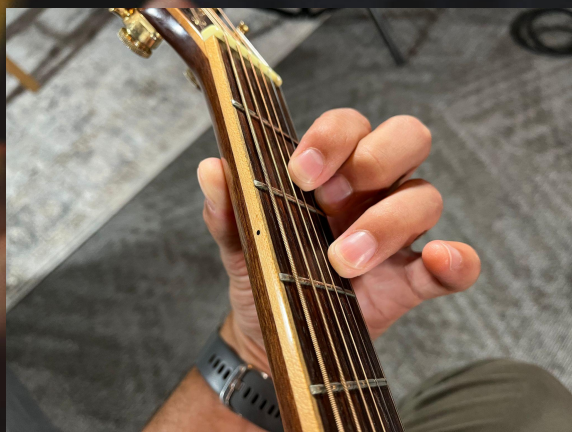
Then, to make things even easier, you will sometimes see little numbers on the dots. Those are your fingers. That way you don't have to decide which finger goes where. The finger numbers are just like you would count. 1, 2, 3, 4. Your thumb goes on the back of the guitar so it doesn't get a number.

Let's go ahead and learn the other three chords!





# How to play the chords



# Reading the songs

Chord sheets are a way of writing down music, and you don't need to read sheet music to read a chord sheet. It's just the lyrics of the song, with the chords on the top. If you were going to learn the song "**Good Life**," by OneRepublic, part of the chord sheet would look like this:

**G**

oh, this has gotta be a good life

**C**

This has gotta be a good life

**Em**

**D**

This could really be a good life good life



# Reading the songs

One song down, 24 to go. I realize we didn't play the entire song. I will include links to the complete chord charts at the end. For now, let's do another one. **"Perfect"** by Ed Sheeran:

**Em C G D Em**  
Baby, I'm dancing in the dark, with you between my arms

**C G D Em**  
Barefoot on the grass, listening to our favorite song

**C G D Em**  
When you said you looked a mess, I whispered underneath my breath

**C G D G**  
But you heard it, darling you look perfect tonight

# Changing Keys



So far, we've only played songs that are written in the same **key**. That is to say, they all use the same notes and chords. That's why we can play so much music using only four chords!

To play in other keys, you can learn all the chords there are, **OR** you could play using a **capo**. A Capo is a little clamp that holds down an entire fret. They come in all shapes and sizes, and they're very cheap (usually between \$5 and \$25). I recommend the Kyser Quick-Change, but any old capo will do.

If you clamp all six strings at any fret, you can simply pretend that this is the first fret of your guitar, and play the same chords all over again. You have now successfully changed keys and played four more chords without learning anything new.



# Now, Play.

Wait, wait! Before you go clicking, you should know a few things. First off, the website that I've linked for each song is called [ultimate-guitar.com](http://ultimate-guitar.com). It's pretty great, and it's free. But use a computer, not a phone or tablet. If you use a phone or tablet, they'll try and upsell you on their paid app (actually the paid app is pretty awesome, I use it all the time).

Secondly, you'll see some chords you don't know yet. That's fine! If you don't recognize the chords, just go down to the bottom of the page and hit the "transpose +" button until the chords look familiar. And if you see slight variations of the chords you know (like **G7** instead of **G**), just play the same old **G**, **C**, **D** and **Em**. They will sound fine for now, and you can learn those other chords whenever you like.

And finally, as we've already discussed, some of these songs are in a different key. You do not have to play the song in the original key. I almost never play songs in their original key, because I can't sing like many of the singers on this list. You think I can sing in the same key as Adele? I cannot. I made that clear in the video. But if you want to play in the original key, maybe so you can play along to the YouTube recording, I will put the correct capo placement after each link. Happy playing!

# What to do next



I hope these four chords will inspire you - think of all the music you can play with just this one concept! If you want to learn how to take your playing to the next level, I would love to help you reach your musical goals. I teach one-on-one, personal coaching sessions to get you playing like the guitarist of your dreams. If you're looking for a way to fast track your guitar success, go to [drudavis.com/lessons](https://drudavis.com/lessons) and sign up today.



# “Good Life” by OneRepublic

**G**

oh, this has gotta be a good life

**C**

**Em**  
This has gotta be a good life

**D**

This could really be a good life good life

Listen on YouTube: [OneRepublic - Good Life \(Official Music Video\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UuV3D008848)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/onerepublic/good-life-chords-1004828>

Capo: 11th fret. Whew, that's up there! Probably best to play this without a capo.

# “Perfect” by Ed Sheeran

**Em** **C** **G** **D** **Em**  
Baby, I'm dancing in the dark, with you between my arms  
**C** **G** **D** **Em**  
Barefoot on the grass, listening to our favorite song  
**C** **G** **D** **Em**  
When you said you looked a mess, I whispered underneath my breath  
**C** **G** **D** **G**  
But you heard it, darling you look perfect tonight


Listen on YouTube: [Ed Sheeran - Perfect \(Official Music Video\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZUo_1111111)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/ed-sheeran/perfect-chords-1956589>

Capo: 1st fret.



# “Zombie” by The Cranberries



**Em**                      **C**                      **G**                      **D**  
In your head in your head                      zombie zombie zombie

**Em**                      **C**                      **G**                      **D**  
What's in your head in your head                      zombie zombie zombie

Listen on YouTube: [The Cranberries - Zombie \(Official Music Video\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0iD10tuo6Y)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/the-cranberries/zombie-chords-844902>

Capo: No Capo

# “What A Wonderful World” by Sam Cooke

**G**

**Em**

Don't know much about history

**C**

**D**

Don't know much bi-ology

**G**

**Em**

Don't know much about a science book

**C**

**D**

Don't know much about the French I took


Listen on YouTube: [Sam Cooke - What A Wonderful World \(Official Lyric Video\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAWGmDYZ8h4)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/sam-cooke/wonderful-world-chords-258832>

Capo: 4th fret.



# “Last Kiss” by Pearl Jam



**G** **Em**  
Oh where oh where can my baby be?

**C** **D**  
The Lord took her away from me

**G** **Em**  
She's gone to heaven so I got to be good


**C** **D**  
so I can see my baby when I leave this world

Listen on YouTube: [Pearl Jam - Last Kiss \(Official Audio\)](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/pearl-jam/last-kiss-chords-38269>

Capo: No capo.

# “Numb” by Linkin Park



**Em**                      **C**                                      **G**  
I've become so numb I can't feel you there

**D**                                      **Em**  
I've become so tired so much more aware

**C**                                      **G**  
I'm becoming this all I want to do

**D**                                      **Em**  
Is be more like me and be less like you


Listen on YouTube: [Numb \[Official Music Video\] - Linkin Park](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/linkin-park/numb-chords-90873>

Capo: 2nd fret.



# “Shut Up And Dance” by Walk the Moon



**G**                    **C**  
Oh don't you dare look back

**Em**                    **D**  
Just keep your eyes on me.

**G**                    **C**  
I said you're holding back,

**Em**                    **D**                    **G**  
She said shut up and dance with me

Listen on YouTube: [WALK THE MOON - Shut Up and Dance \(Official Video\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KX0F0111110)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/walk-the-moon/shut-up-and-dance-chords-1673832>

Capo: 6th fret.





# “Let Her Go” by Passenger

Well, you only need the light when it's burning low

Only miss the sun when it starts to snow

Only know you love her when you let her go

Listen on YouTube: [Passenger | Let Her Go \(Official Video\)](#)

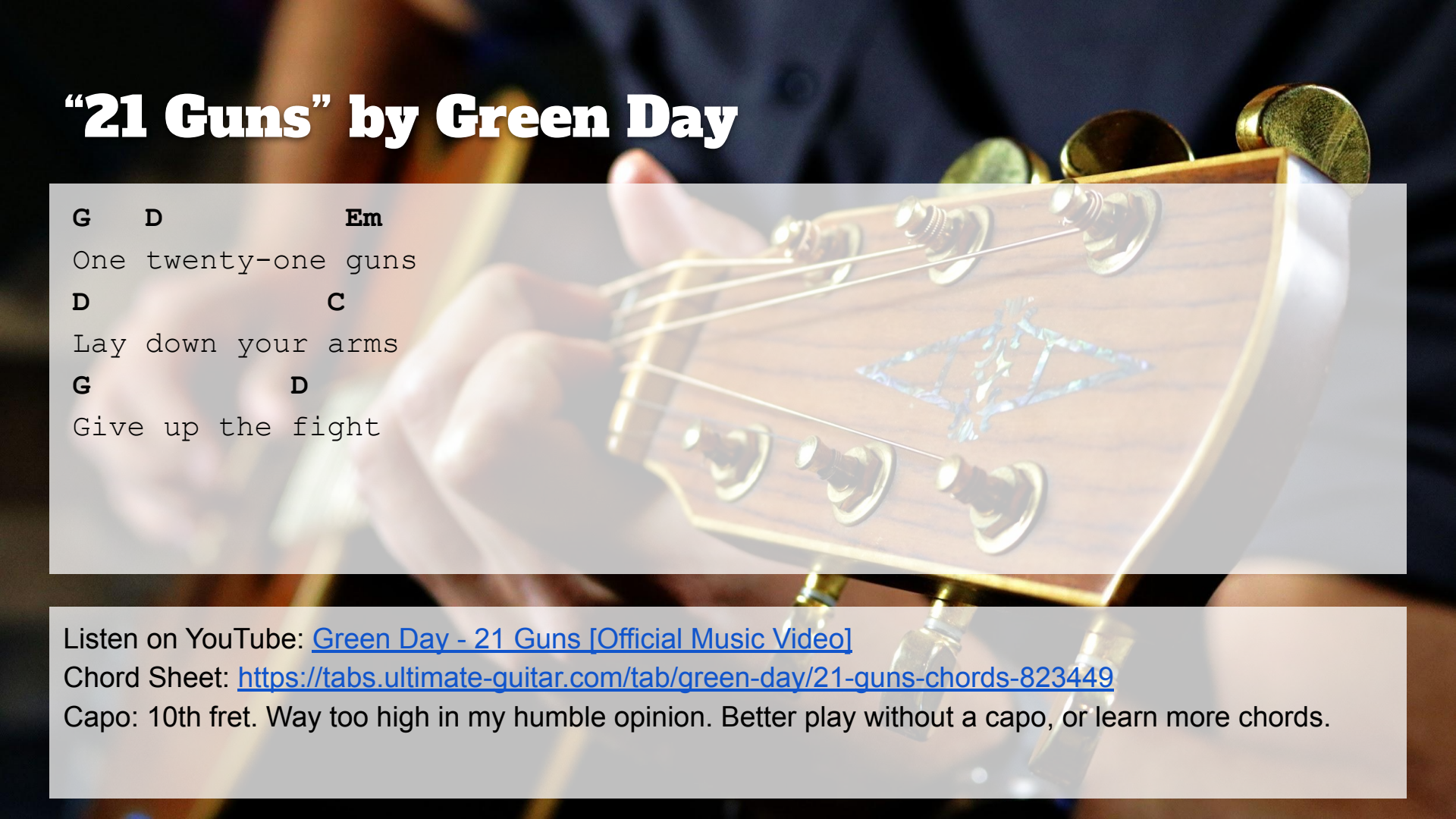
Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/passenger/let-her-go-chords-1137467>

Capo: No capo





# “21 Guns” by Green Day



**G**   **D**            **Em**  
One twenty-one guns

**D**                    **C**  
Lay down your arms

**G**                    **D**  
Give up the fight

Listen on YouTube: [Green Day - 21 Guns \[Official Music Video\]](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/green-day/21-guns-chords-823449>

Capo: 10th fret. Way too high in my humble opinion. Better play without a capo, or learn more chords.

# “Wagon Wheel” by Darius Rucker

**G**

**D**

So rock me momma like a wagon wheel

**Em**

**C**

Rock me momma any way you feel

**G D**

**C**

Hey momma rock me

Listen on YouTube: [Darius Rucker - Wagon Wheel \(Official Video\)](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/darius-rucker/wagon-wheel-chords-1215756>

Capo: 2nd fret.





# “Stand By Me” by Ben E. King

**G**  
When the night has come  
**Em**  
And the land is dark  
**C**  
And the moon is the  
**D** **G**  
only light we'll see

**G**  
No I won't be afraid,  
**Em**  
No I won't be afraid  
**C** **D**  
Just as long as you stand  
**G**  
stand by me

Listen on YouTube: [Ben E. King - Stand By Me](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/ben-e-king/stand-by-me-chords-73005>

Capo: 2nd fret.



# “MmmBop” by Hanson

**G**

MmmBop ba duba dop ba do bop

**C**

**G**

Duba dop ba do bop

**D**

Ba duba dop ba do

Listen on YouTube: [Hanson - MMMBop \(Official Music Video\)](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/hanson/mmmBop-chords-440733>

Capo: 2nd fret.

# “Ring of Fire” by Johnny Cash

<b>D</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>G</b>	
I	Fell	Into	A Burning Ring Of Fire
	<b>D</b>		And It Burns Burns Burns
I	Went	Down	Down
	<b>C</b>	<b>G</b>	
And	The	Flames	Went Higher
			The Ring Of Fire
			The Ring Of Fire

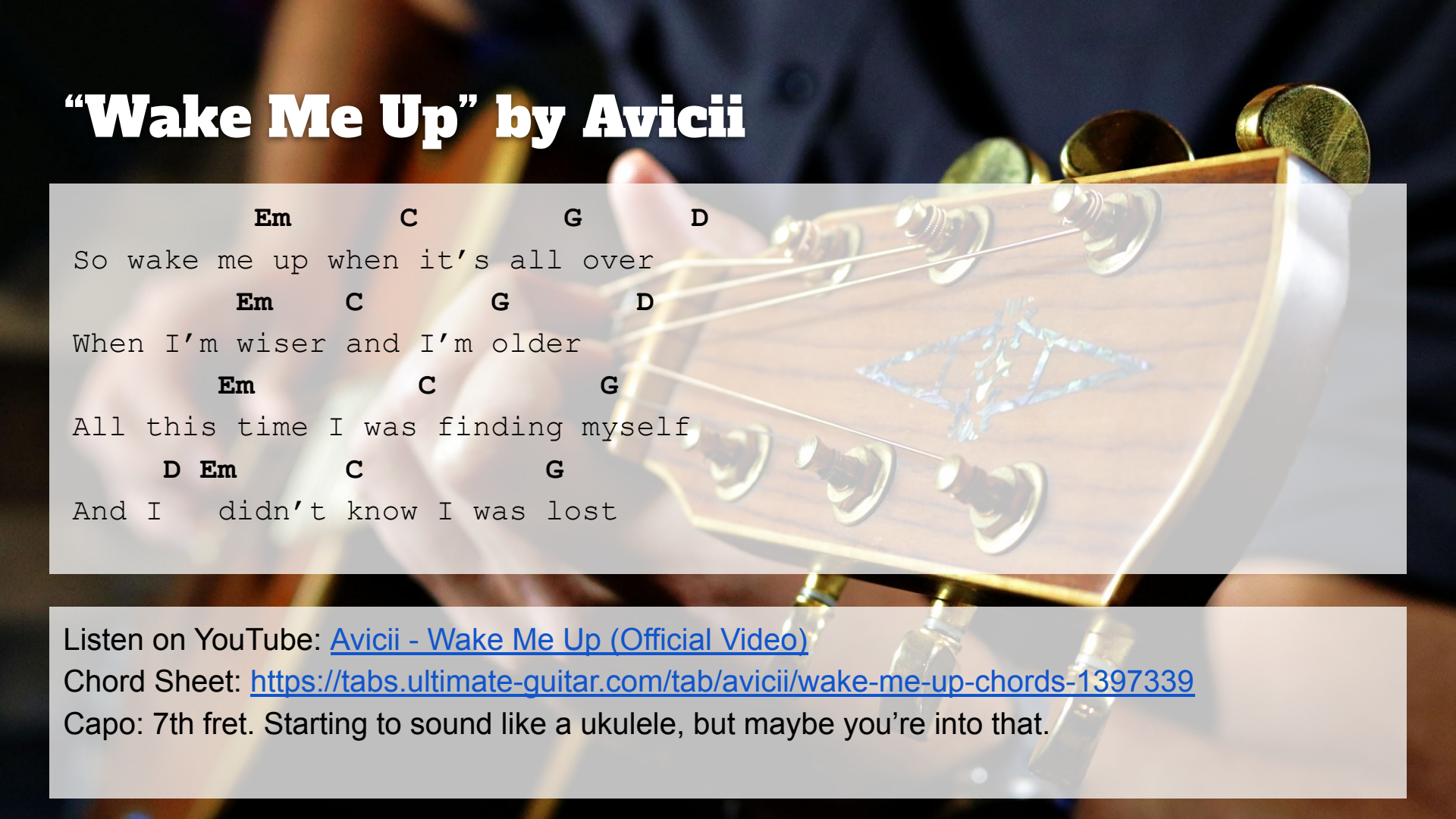
Listen on YouTube: [Ring of Fire](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/johnny-cash/ring-of-fire-chords-63352>

Capo: No capo!



# “Wake Me Up” by Avicii



**Em**      **C**      **G**      **D**  
So wake me up when it's all over

**Em**      **C**      **G**      **D**  
When I'm wiser and I'm older

**Em**      **C**      **G**  
All this time I was finding myself

**D Em**      **C**      **G**  
And I didn't know I was lost

Listen on YouTube: [Avicii - Wake Me Up \(Official Video\)](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/avicii/wake-me-up-chords-1397339>

Capo: 7th fret. Starting to sound like a ukulele, but maybe you're into that.

# “The Scientist” by Coldplay

C

Nobody said it was easy

G

G

It's such a shame for us to part

C

Nobody said it was easy

G

D

No one ever said it would be this hard

G

Oh take me back to the start


Listen on YouTube: [Coldplay - The Scientist \(Official Video\)](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/coldplay/the-scientist-chords-42050>

Capo: 10th fret, which is way up there.



# “Save Tonight” by Eagle Eye Cherry



D          Em          C          G                                  D  
Save tonight          and fight the break of dawn

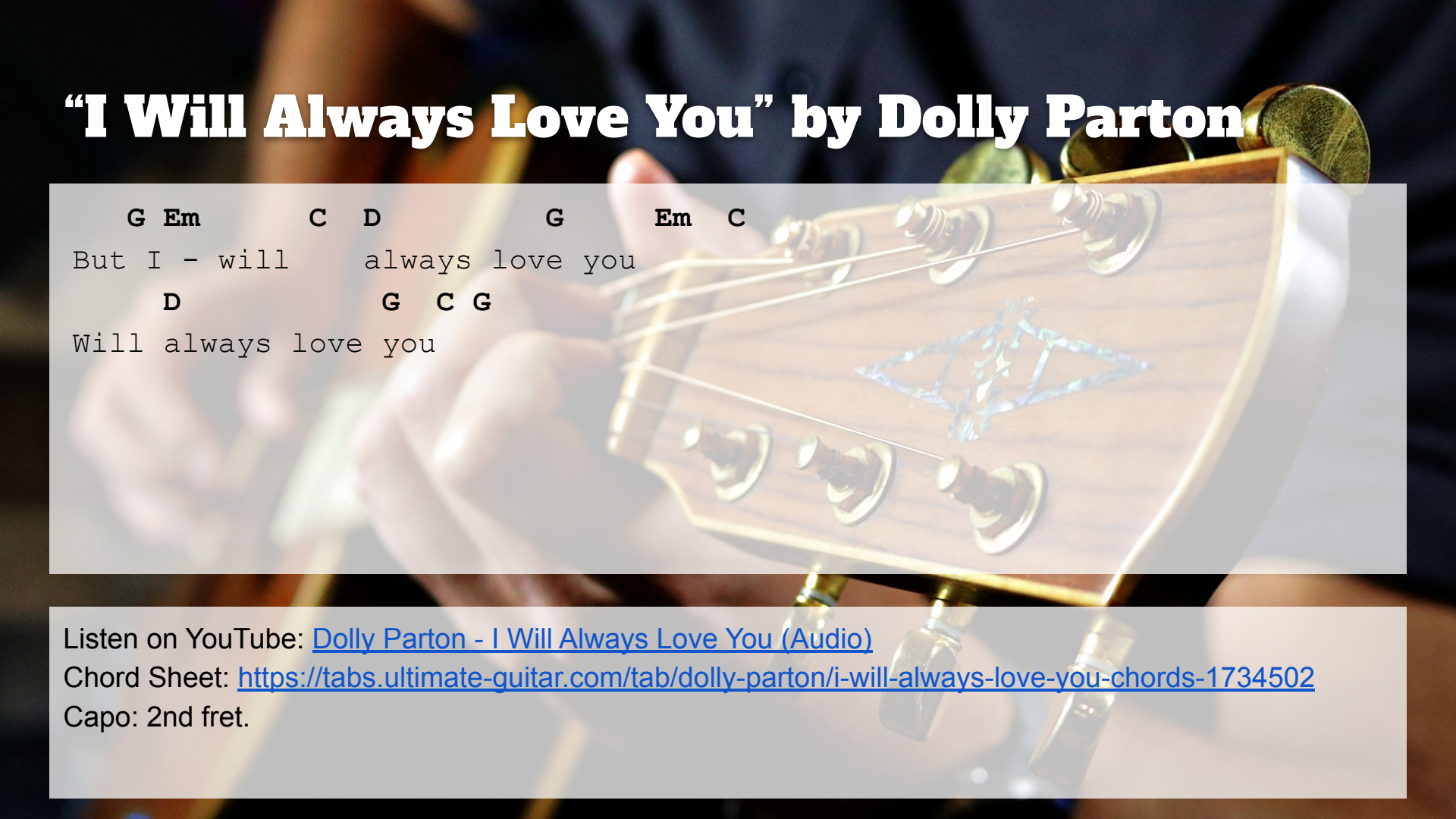
Em                          C          G                                  D  
Come tomorrow          tomorrow I'll be gone

Listen on YouTube: [Eagle-Eye Cherry - Save Tonight](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/eagle-eye-cherry/save-tonight-chords-14172>

Capo: 5th fret.

# “I Will Always Love You” by Dolly Parton



**G Em C D G Em C**  
But I - will always love you  
**D G C G**  
Will always love you


Listen on YouTube: [Dolly Parton - I Will Always Love You \(Audio\)](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/dolly-parton/i-will-always-love-you-chords-1734502>

Capo: 2nd fret.



# “Earth Angel” by The Penguins



**G** **Em** **C** **D**  
Earth angel earth angel will you be mine

**G** **Em** **C** **D**  
My darling dear love you all the time

**G** **Em** **C** **D** **G** **Em** **C** **D**  
I'm just a fool a fool in love with you

Listen on YouTube: [The Penguins - Earth Angel](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/the-penguins/earth-angel-chords-80422>

Capo: 1st fret.

# “Mr. Brightside” by The Killers

**G**

Coming out of my cage

**D**

And I've been doing just fine

**C**

Gotta gotta be down because I  
want it all

**G**

It started out with a kiss

**D**

How did it end up like this?

**C**

It was only a kiss it was only a kiss

Listen on YouTube: [The Killers - Mr. Brightside \(Official Music Video\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZyYx4T81U30)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/the-killers/mr-brightside-chords-202646>

Capo: 6th fret



# “Despacito” by Luis Fonsi

**Em**

Despacito

**C**

Quiero respirar tu cuello despacito

**G**

Deja que te diga cosas al oído

**D**


Para que te acuerdes si no estás conmigo

Listen on YouTube: [Luis Fonsi - Despacito ft. Daddy Yankee](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/luis-fonsi/despacito-chords-1932541>

Capo: 7th fret

# “Sweet Home Alabama” by Lynyrd Skynyrd



D            C                            G  
Big wheels keep on turning

D                    C                            G  
Carry me home to see my kin

D                    C                            G  
Singing songs about the southland

D                    C                            G  
I miss ole 'bamy once again and I think it's a sin

Listen on YouTube: [Sweet Home Alabama](#)

Chord Sheet: <https://tabs.ultimate-guitar.com/tab/lynnyrd-skynyrd/sweet-home-alabama-chords-1053582>

Capo: No capo



# **It would be a shame to stop here. Just sayin'.**

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