

# Lesson 1

## INTRODUCING SCALES & TRIADS

### What is a Triad?

A triad is the simplest type of complete chord. It is made of three parts; the root, the third, and the fifth. Let's look at what that means.

Here are the notes of the G Major Scale:

Notes: G A B C D E F# G

Fret numbers: ① 2 ③ 4 ⑤ 6 7 ①

A major scale contains seven notes. We're simply going to take the 1st (root), 3rd, and 5th notes from the G Major Scale, and this gives a G major triad. Here it is on the neck:

**G Major Scale**

5th fret

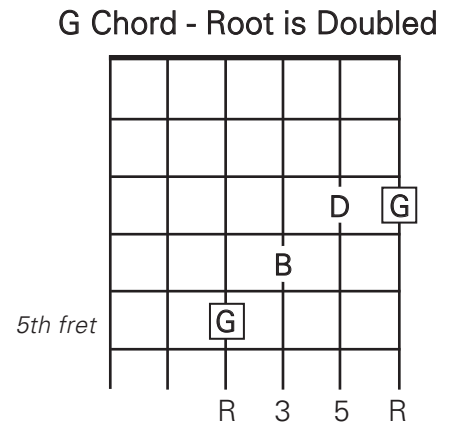
**G Triad (or G Chord)**

5th fret

R 3 5

The *spelling* of a G major triad is G, B, D. We will look more at chord spelling as we go.

If you add in the higher "G" note, you'll probably notice it looks a lot like an "F" chord, only two frets higher. This is no accident. You'll find that most basic open position chords are triads. Since any combination of G, B, and D make a G chord, you could leave out the fourth string or the first string, and still have a complete G chord.



## Triads Come in Four Types

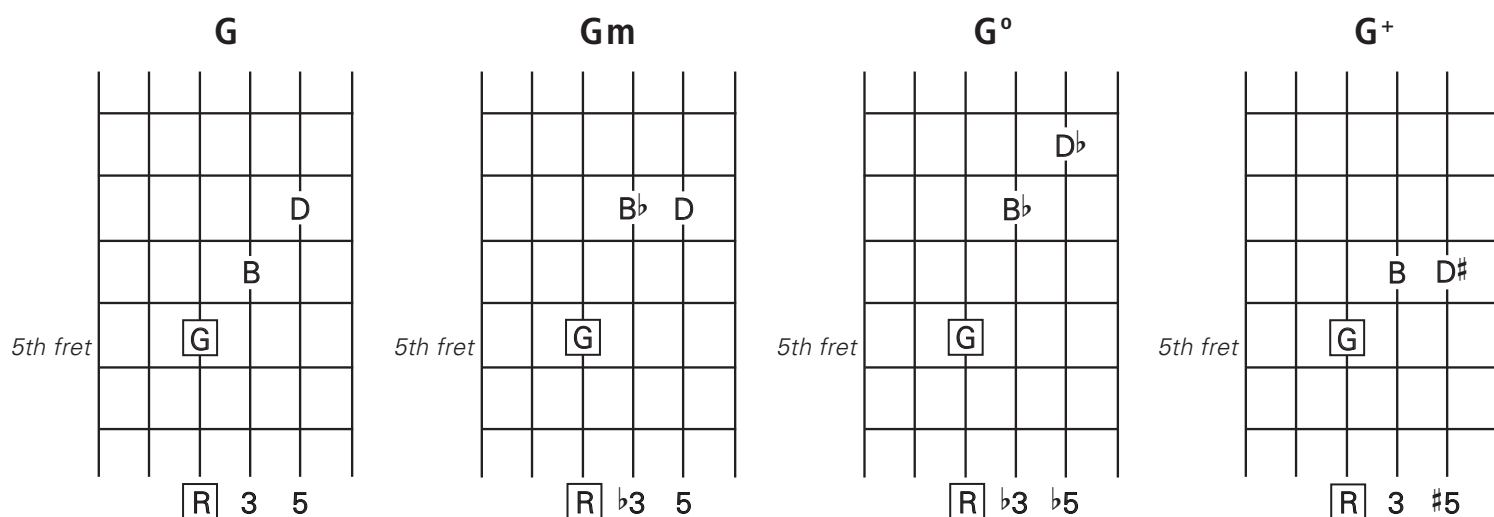
In this book, we will talk about each of the four types. For now, I just want you to memorize the four names and the chord symbol associated with each one.

TYPE	CONTAINS	EXAMPLE
Major	1 3 5	G (Letter name only)
minor	1 b3 5	Gm (Letter name and a small "m")
diminished	1 b3 b5	G° (Letter name with degree sign)
Augmented	1 3 #5	G+ (Letter name with "plus" sign)

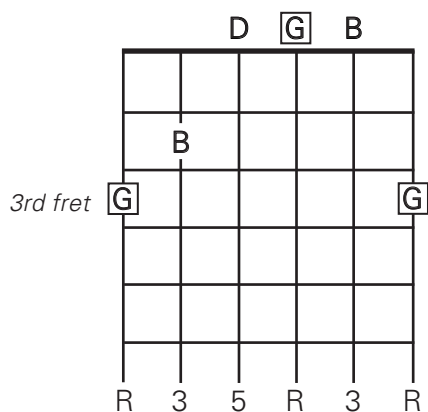
Let's look at the actual note spacing of the four types of triads. Remember that a major scale has two sets of notes that are a half-step apart; 3 & 4, and 7 & 1

<b>Major Scale</b>	<u>1</u>	—	<u>2</u>	—	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	—	<u>5</u>	—	<u>6</u>	—	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
Major	1	-	-	-	3	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	1
Minor	1	-	-	b3	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	1
Diminished	1	-	-	b3	-	-	b5	-	-	-	-	-	1
Augmented	1	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	#5	-	-	-	1

Let's try the four types of triads on a G. We'll use the same triad shape we were just working with as a starting point.

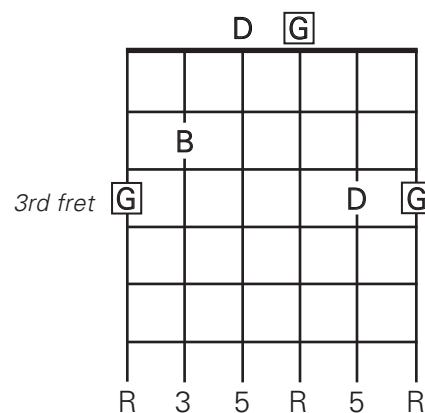


Now that we know the *spelling* of a G chord ( G, B, D ), let's look at a diagram of a typical G chord shape and identify the parts.

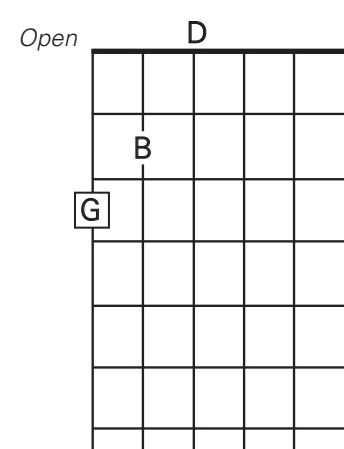
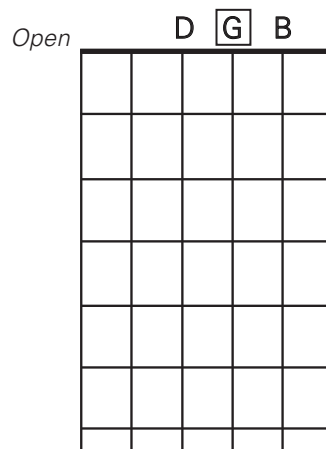
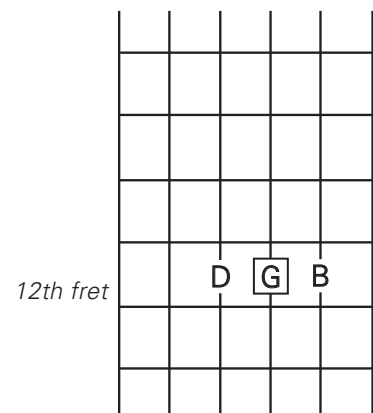
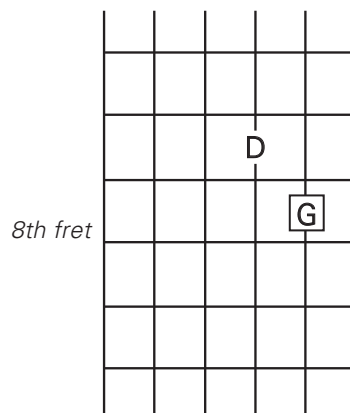
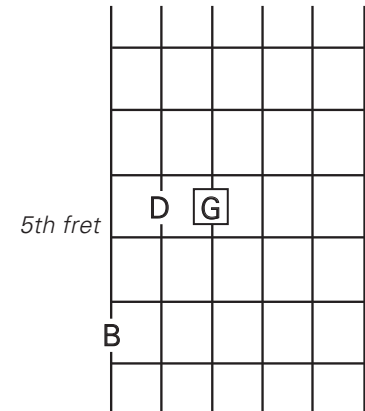
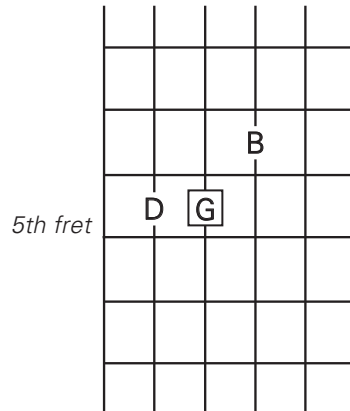
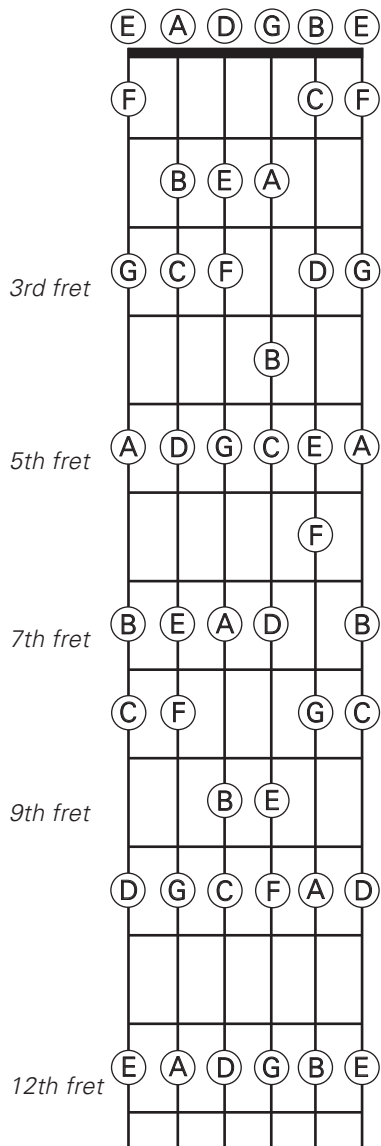


As you can see, what you know as a "G Chord" is really just notes of the G Major triad. In this case, there are three G's, two B's, and one D.

What if we use the "four finger" G chord? Again, we are still looking at nothing but a combination of G's, B's, and D's. The only difference is, we have swapped a 3rd for a 5th (swapped a B for a D). But we still just have the sound of a G chord, don't we?



Once I know that the spelling of a G chord is G B D, there are numerous ways to construct a G chord on the neck. Here are a few you can try. Find as many as you can. Don't include any open strings unless they are part of the triad. If you need blank chord diagrams, you can get them from our site at [jenningspublishing.com/downloads](http://jenningspublishing.com/downloads).



For more exercises using open chord shapes, see Appendices 1 & 2.