

Chord Study #1

Most people learn to play music by learning basic patterns and then slowly letting their ear develop and begin to dictate what is played. Let's take some basic patterns and try to build up some interesting lines.

The most basic chord progression in all of Western music is the so-called V-I chord progression. Let's focus on the key of F. The V-I chord progression for the key of F is C7th to F. Here is a typical example of this progression on the basic C6th tuning:

Steel Gtr. (C6th)

You can see that there is a lot available at the 10th and 12th frets for playing over a C7th chord. The example below shows that there is more available at the 3rd and 7th frets:

You can also use what I call "lead-in" chords, chords that are only a half-step away from the above positions. Here is an example that uses C7th positions plus lead-in chords to create a more interesting chord melody:

Once you learn these basic positions, you will be ready to build up a limitless body of chord melody and single note melody for nearly every tune you tackle. Stay tuned for more on chord progressions!