

Every C chord on the neck

C major has five shapes up the guitar neck, one for each letter of CAGED: the C shape (open), the A shape (fret 3), the G shape (fret 5), the E shape (fret 8) and the D shape (fret 10). After the D shape, the C shape comes back at fret 12. Every shape uses only the notes C, E and G.

The five shapes, up the neck

C shape Open	A shape Fret 3	G shape Fret 5	E shape Fret 8	D shape Fret 10
x 3 2 0 1 0	x 3 5 5 5 3	8 7 5 5 5 8	8 10 10 9 8 8	x x 10 12 13 12

Memory trick: C, A, G, E, D, then C again

The shapes always climb the neck in the order C, A, G, E, D. After D, start again at C, 12 frets above where you began.

Every dot is C, E, G. Cream dots are C, the root. Brackets show each shape.

No barre: the triads (G, B, high e)

G C E in C shape	C E G in A shape	E G C in E shape	G C E in D shape

How to practise it

1. Play each shape slowly and say its letter. Start with the open C, then the A shape at fret 3.
2. Climb: strum each shape four times, then move to the next one. Go up to the D shape and back down.
3. Do the same with the four triads on the top three strings. Each sits at the top of a shape you just played.

