



# DROP D TUNING

Chords, Secrets & Beauty



## Drop D Tuning

Drop D tuning is one of the easiest and most useful altered tunings on the guitar.

Only one string changes from the standard guitar tuning.

The 6<sup>th</sup> string, normally tuned to a low E, is tuned down a whole step to a D.

So, the strings end up being...

- 6<sup>th</sup> – D
- 5<sup>th</sup> – A
- 4<sup>th</sup> – D
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – G
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – B
- 1<sup>st</sup> – E

This tuning is great for creating a low, full sound particularly when in the key of D.

## Exploring Drop D Tuning

Let's first get familiar with the sound and layout of the new tuning.

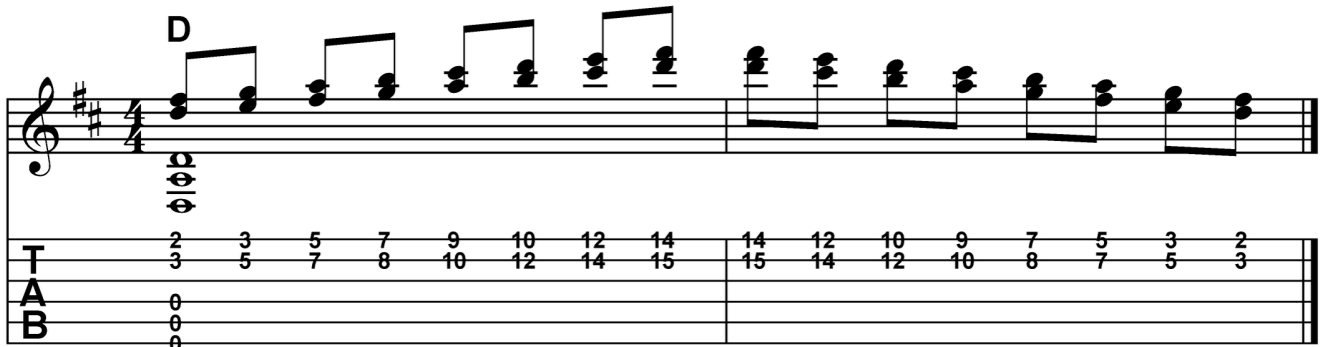
Here's a D major scale played on the 4<sup>th</sup> string up the neck with the added drop D notes.

**D**

<b>T</b>																				
<b>A</b>	0	2	4	5	7	9	11	12	12	11	9	7	5	4	2	0				
<b>B</b>	0																			

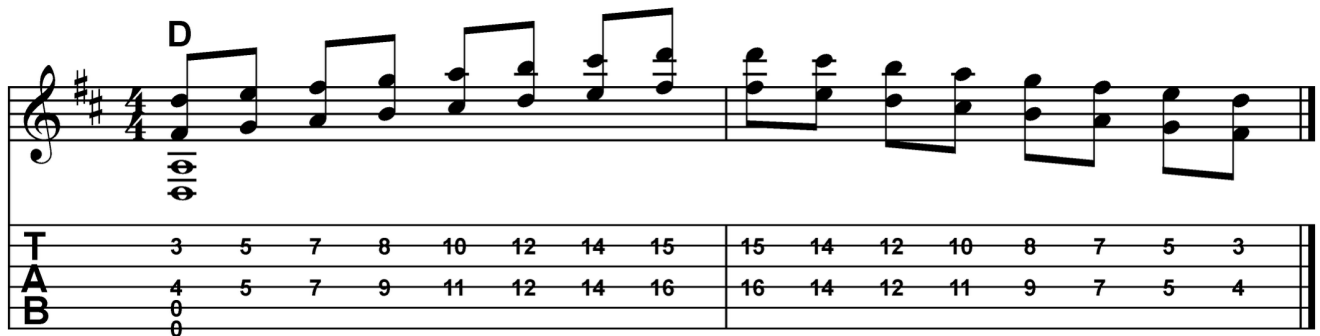
Try playing the scale up an octave on the second string as well.

Next, let's play the D major scale up an octave in 3rds on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> strings. Incorporate the middle D, A and low D along or in between the notes.



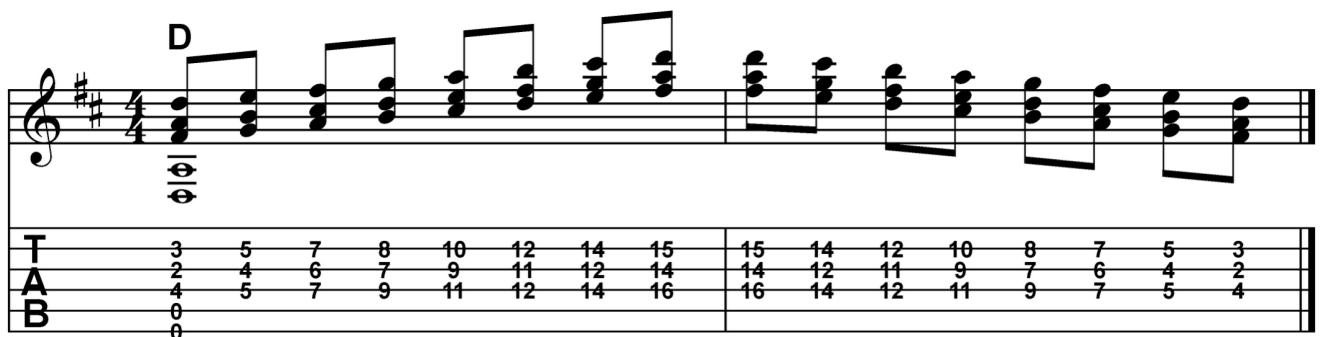
T	2	3	5	7	9	10	12	14	14	12	10	9	7	5	3	2
A	3	5	7	8	10	12	14	15	15	14	12	10	8	7	5	3
B	0															

Now, let's play the D major scale in 6ths up the neck as shown. Add the open D, A, and low D drone strings to improvise a rhythm.



T	3	5	7	8	10	12	14	15	15	14	12	10	8	7	5	3
A	4	5	7	9	11	12	14	16	16	14	12	11	9	7	5	4
B	0															

Next, let's make each chord a triad.



T	3	5	7	8	10	12	14	15	15	14	12	10	8	7	5	3
A	2	4	6	7	9	11	12	14	14	12	11	9	7	6	4	2
B	4	5	7	9	11	12	14	16	16	14	12	11	9	7	5	4

# Drop D 10ths with Open D

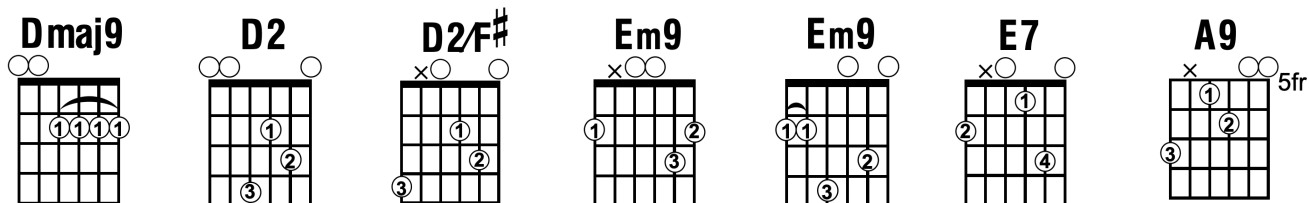
Another great sounding option for Drop D intervals is playing 10ths with an open 4<sup>th</sup> string D in-between the 10ths. This creates many rich chord options that are easy to play.

# Drop D Chords

Here are a few helpful chords shapes in Drop D.

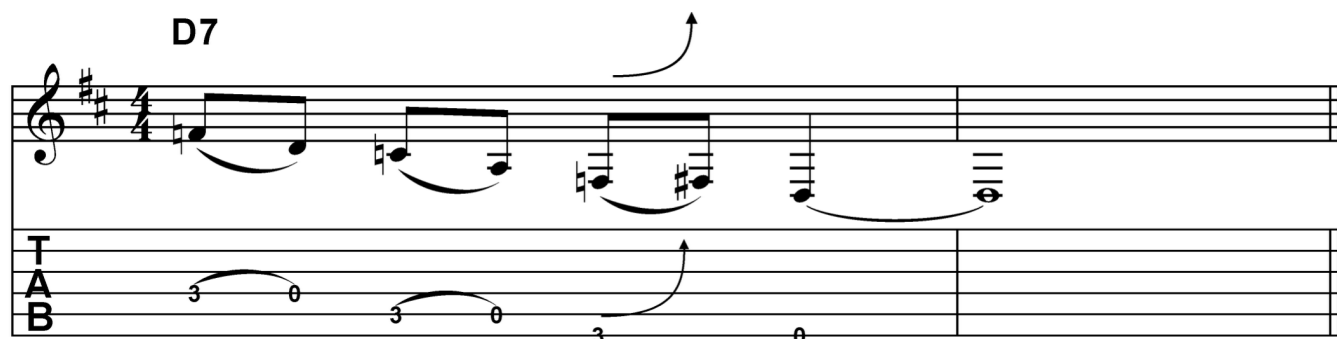
# Other Colorful Drop D Chord Options

Here are a few more helpful chords shapes in Drop D.

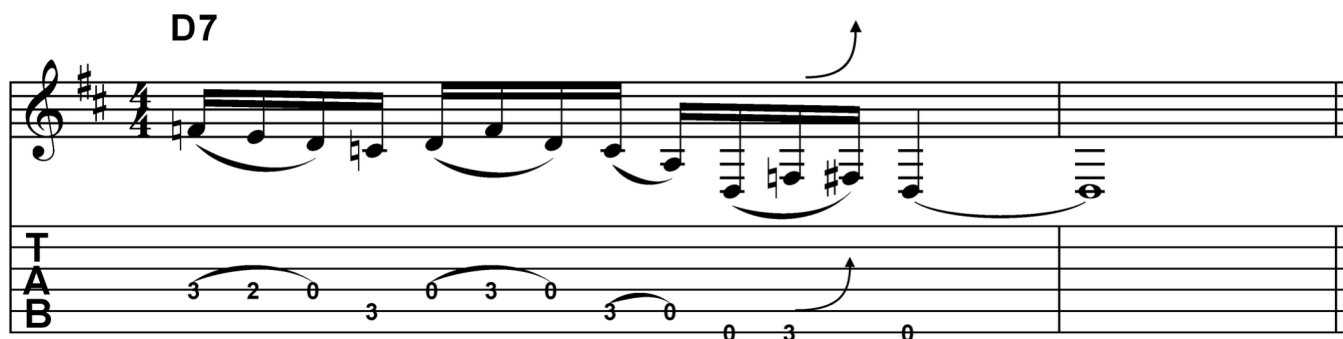


## Drop D Blues Licks

Drop D tuning works great for incorporating blues licks in D. Try this lick that bends on the 3<sup>rd</sup> fret 6<sup>th</sup> string. Use your 3<sup>rd</sup> finger for all the fretted notes.



A more advanced lick based on the same idea is below.



Finally, try to improvise your own blues patterns ending on these licks. Experiment with emphasizing the notes of the G major scale which gives a bluesy sound when played in the context of the key of D.

Learn all you can! – Steve