

The image shows a logo for 'TRAVIS PICKING BOOT CAMP' in a distressed, metallic font. The logo is set against a background of a dark wooden surface and the body and neck of an acoustic guitar. The guitar's body is light-colored wood, and the neck is dark wood with frets and a white dot on the fretboard.

# TRAVIS PICKING BOOT CAMP

## Travis Picking Bootcamp

Do you love the music of Merle Travis, Chet Atkins and Thom Bresh?

The Travis picking style is based off of a few fundamental techniques.

**For the next few sessions, we'll be doing a short series on Travis Picking.**

**You'll learn...**

- **Proper Travis Picking Technique**
- **Finger Independence and Palm Muting**
- **Alternating Bass on 6<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> String Chords**
- **How to Play "Freight Train"**

## Developing Thumb Independence


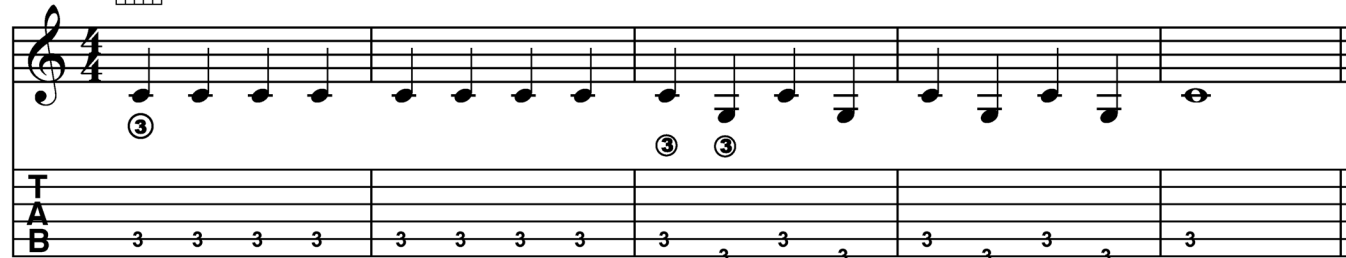
The main pulse – the engine - of Travis picking lies with the thumb. Some players playing Travis picking use a thumb pick and some players just use their thumb.

The thumb will be playing the ROOT and FIFTH of the chords. The string that the root is on can be on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> strings. Depending on which string the root is on determines where the fifth can be found.

# Step One: Alternating the Bass – 5<sup>th</sup> String Roots


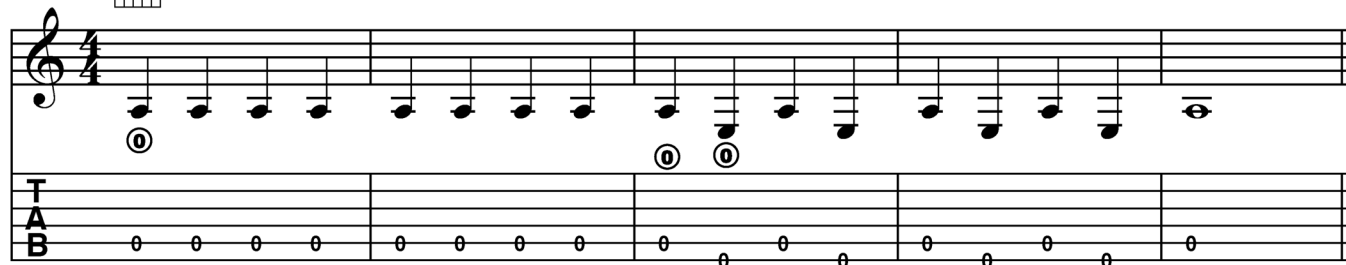
Let's start with basic chords with roots on the 5<sup>th</sup> strings – C Major, A Minor, B7. Play through the exercises slowly trying to get a clear sound with the thumb. Form the chord shown – even though you are only playing the root note at this point. Finger notations are circled notes.

**C**


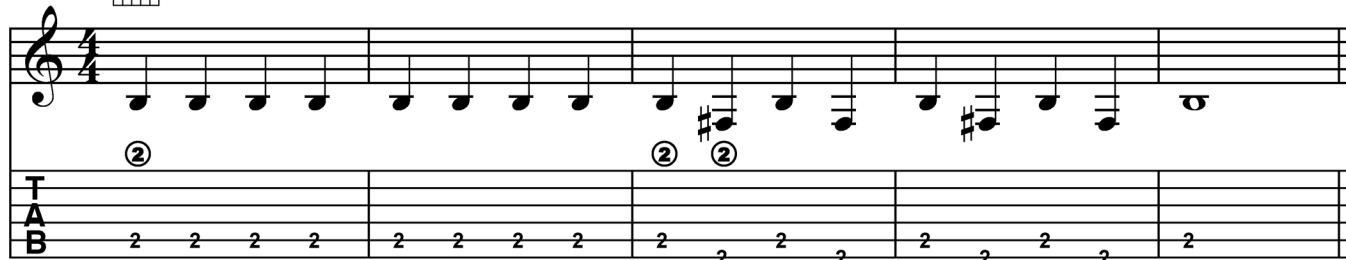
T  
A  
B 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

**Am**






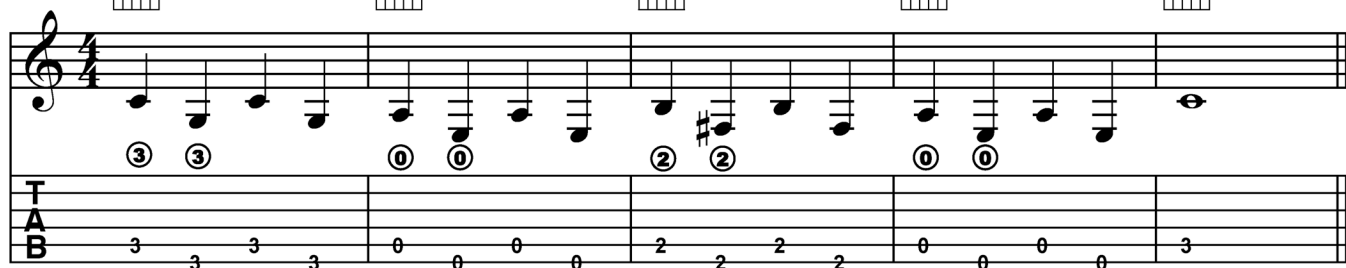
T  
A  
B 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

**B7**

T  
A  
B 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2

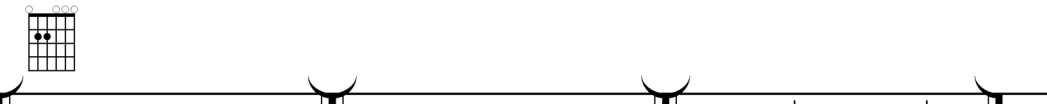
**C Am B7 Am C**

T  
A  
B 3 3 3 3 0 0 2 2 0 0 3

The musical score for the 'F' section consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a guitar tablature (TAB) staff. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into four measures by bar lines. Above the first measure, there is a chord diagram for the F major chord (F-A-C-E-A-C) on a six-string guitar. The first measure contains a quarter note F4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note C5, and a quarter note E5. The second measure contains a quarter note F4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note C5, and a quarter note E5. The third measure contains a quarter note F4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note C5, and a quarter note E5. The fourth measure contains a quarter note F4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note C5, and a quarter note E5. The TAB staff shows the fretting for each note: F4 is the open string (1), A4 is the 2nd fret (2), C5 is the 3rd fret (3), and E5 is the 4th fret (4). The sequence of fret numbers for the four measures is: 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, and 1 2 3 4.

Em



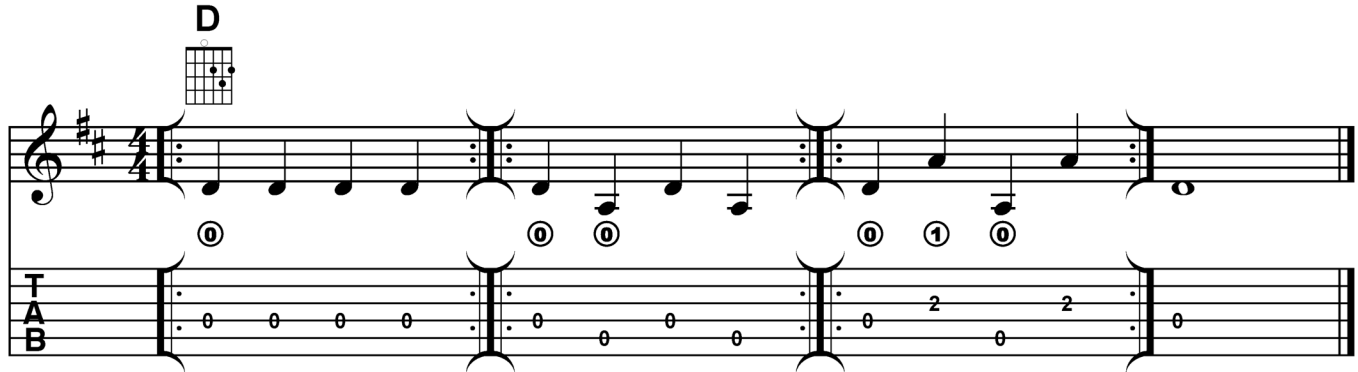
4/4

TAB

# Alternating the Bass – 4<sup>th</sup> String Root

Finally, let's move to chords with roots on the 4<sup>th</sup> string – the D Family, D Major, D Minor, D7.

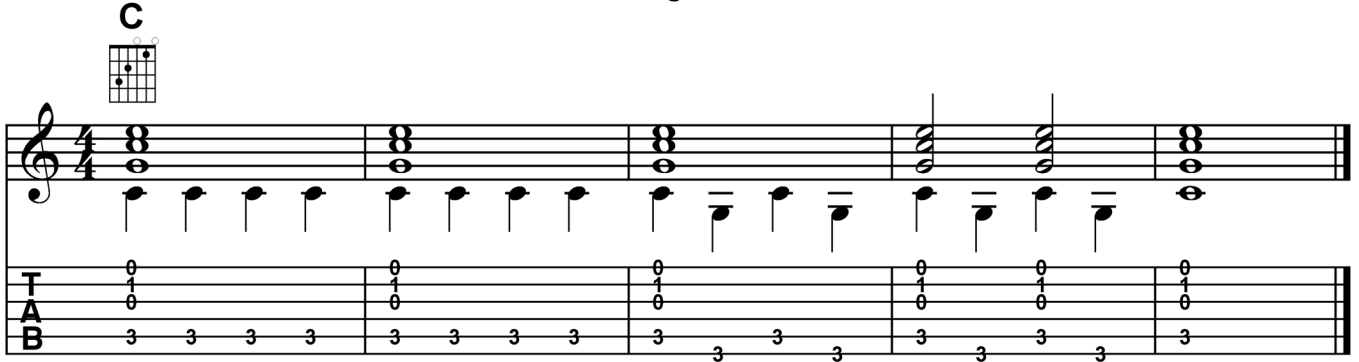
**D**



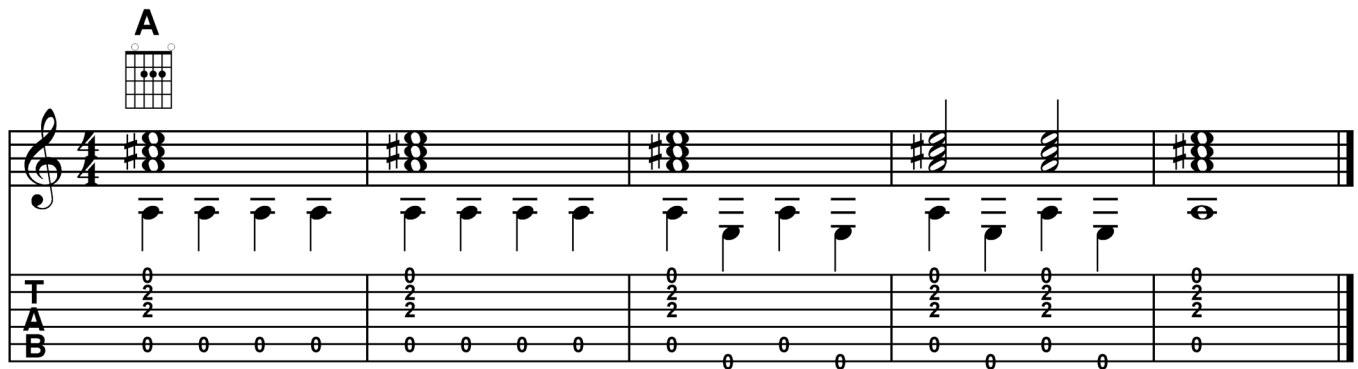
## Step Two: Adding Chords to the Bass Line

Now, let's add the rest of the chord to our moving bass line.

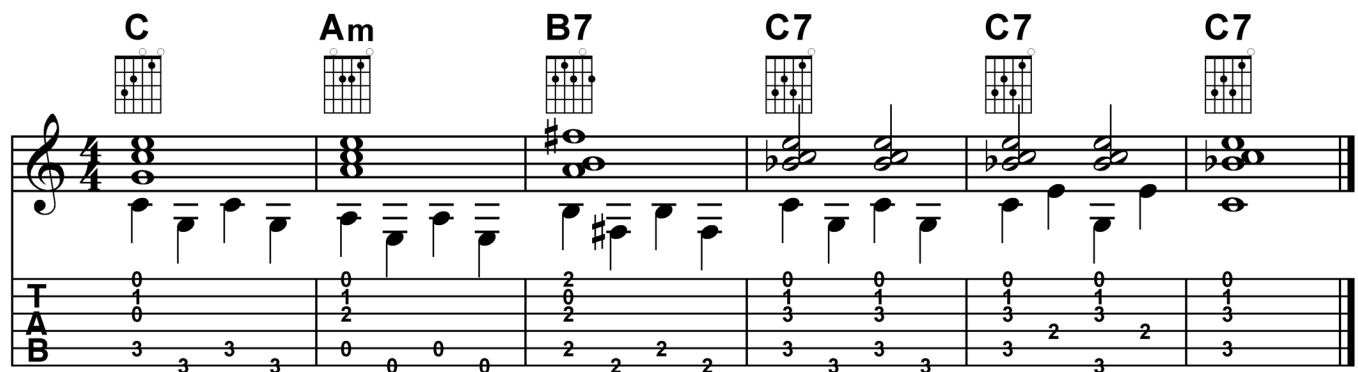
**C**



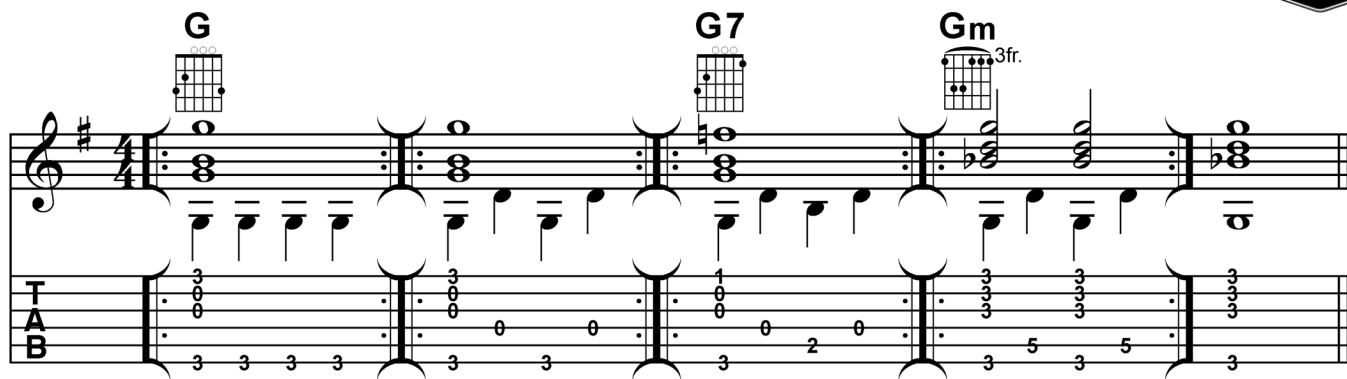
**A**



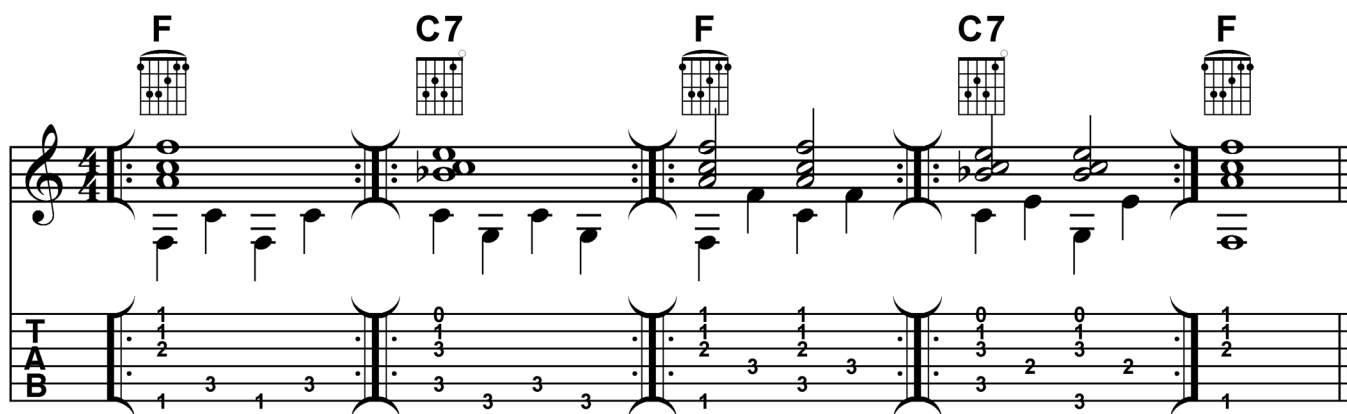
**C Am B7 C7 C7 C7**



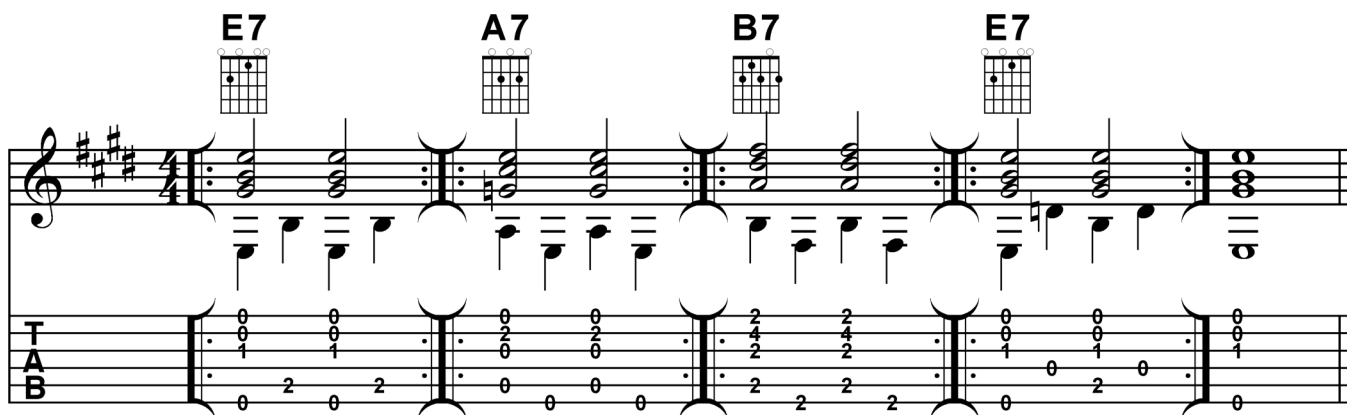
**G** **G7** **Gm** 3fr.



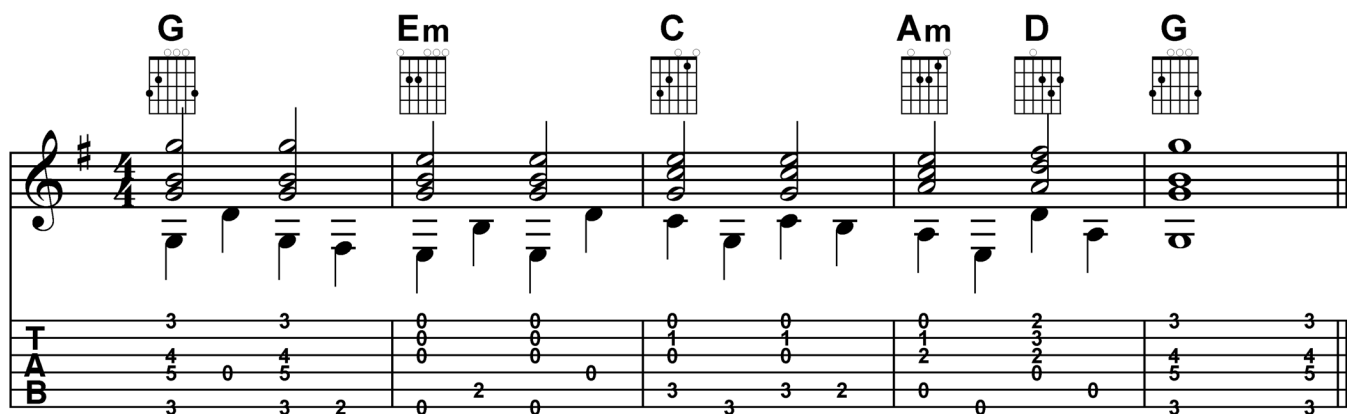
**F** **C7** **F** **C7** **F**



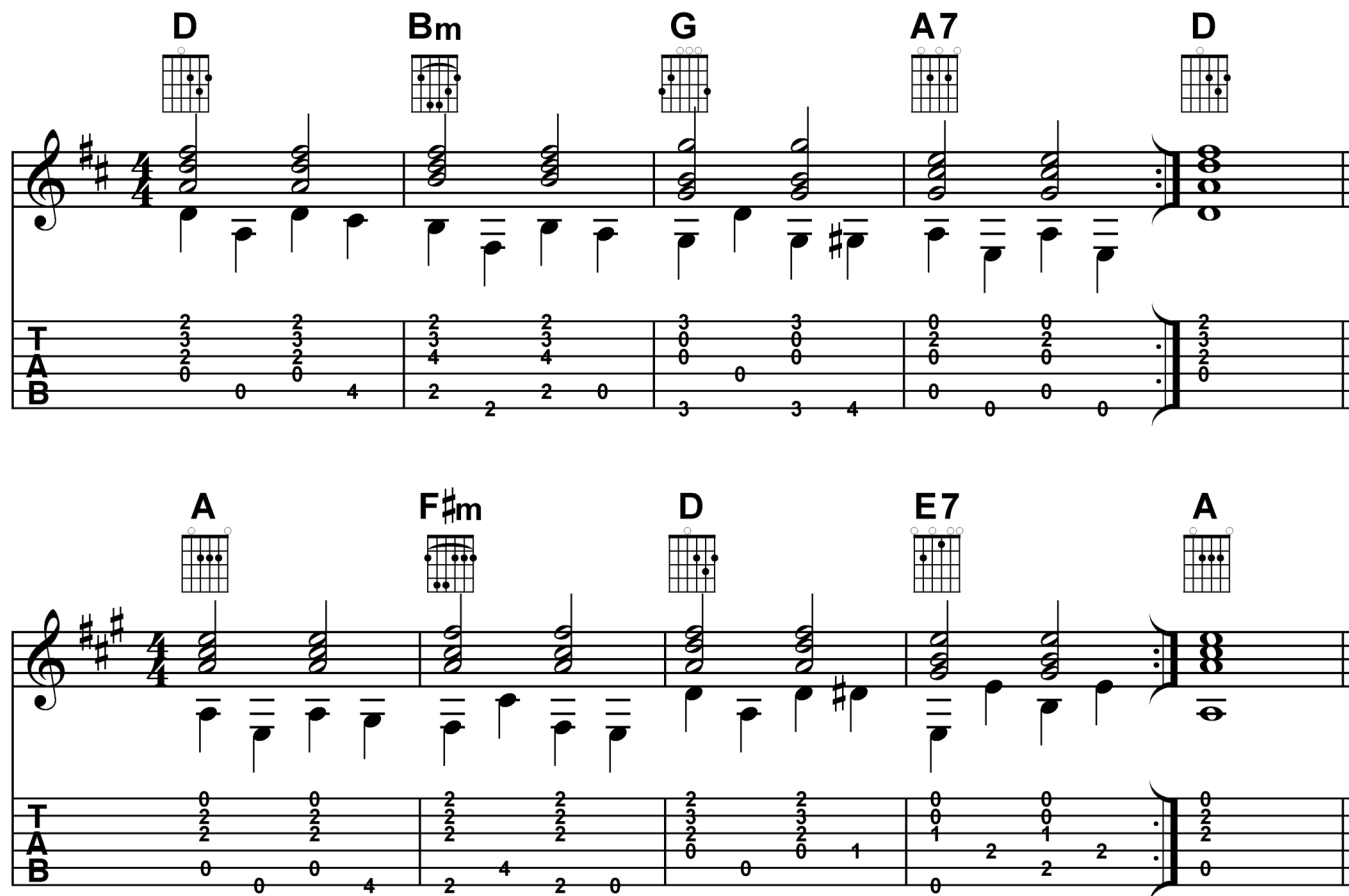
**E7** **A7** **B7** **E7**



**G** **Em** **C** **Am** **D** **G**

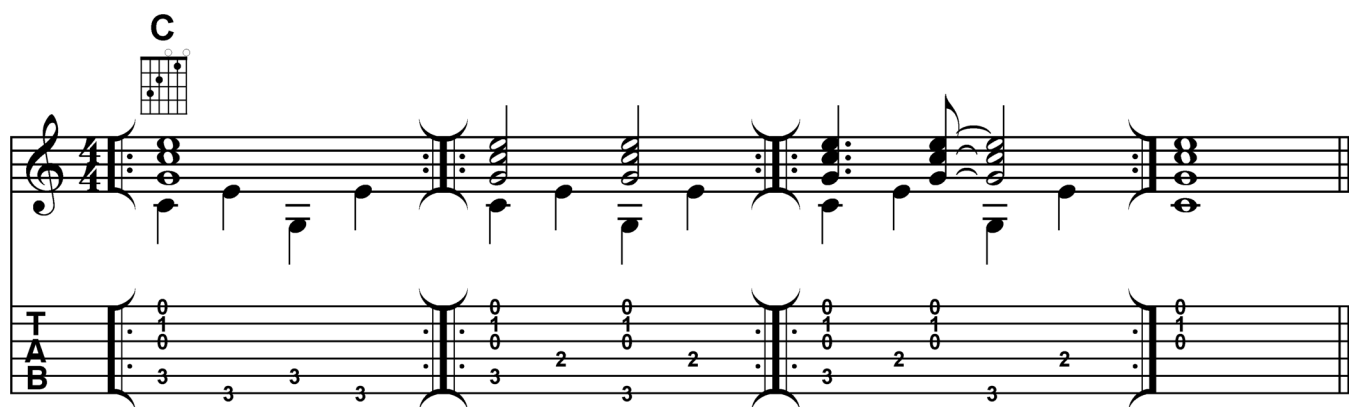


Now, add some fourth string chords walking through a I-vim-IV-V7 progression in D and A.



## Step Three: Adding Syncopation to Chords

Now, let's add some syncopation to the chords by displacing them from the bass rhythm.



**Am7**



4/4



**C**



**Am**



**F**



**G**



4/4



**A**



**F#m**



**D**



**E**



4/4

