

The Money Chords in D

In almost every studio recording session I'm in, whether on acoustic or electric, I tend to derive my ideas from a basic set of chord shapes. These chord shapes combined with a few chord substitution rules make for great sounding guitar parts. I call these chords the "money chords" and they have certainly put food on my table more than once. These are the nuts and bolts of great sounding guitar parts whether you are playing for your enjoyment or laying down the intro for a Grammy-winning artist's song in the studio.

This lesson covers these important "money chords" in the key of D that make up great sounding guitar parts.

The Money Chords in D

There are six chord shapes in the key of D that we will be using.

D2	D/F#	G2	Em9	B m11	A2/C#

Chord Progressions in D

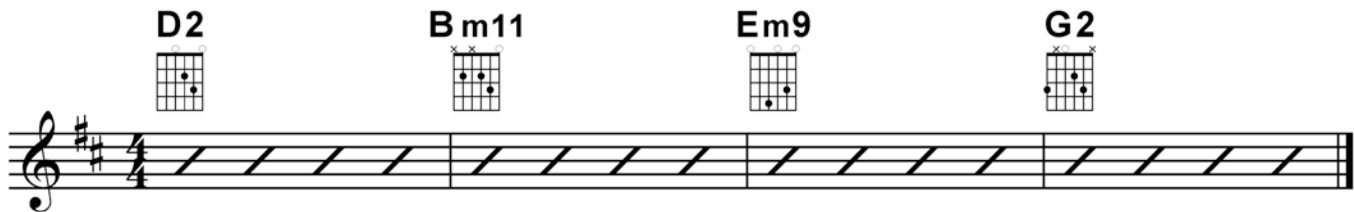
This first example is played using an arpeggiated fingerstyle approach with a pick. I purposefully did not include the tab so that you can practice hearing the accompaniment pattern and try to mimic it. The ability to hear an accompaniment pattern and recreate it in some measure is a vitally important skill for a guitarist. It doesn't need to be exactly what is played. Try to come up with something that works for you but is similar to what is demonstrated.

D2	D/F#	G2	Em9

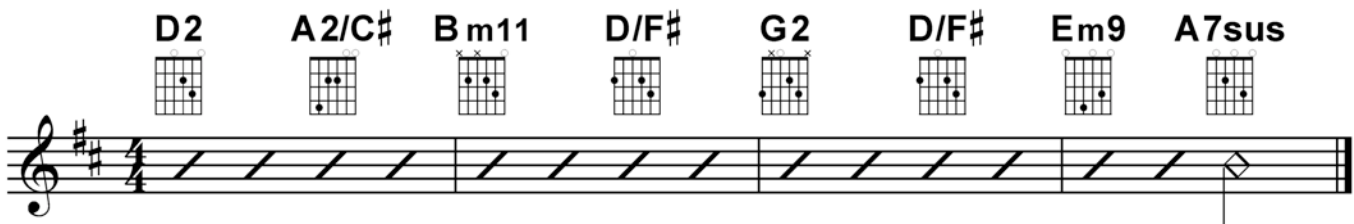
The second example uses a descending bass line. Listen for how this descending bass line defines the sound of the progression.

D2	A2/C#	B m11	A7sus

The third progression illustrates the use of a common melody tone. Use the high E as the melody note for the D2 and Bm11; then use the 2nd string D as the melody note for the Em9 and G2.



The final example utilizes everything we've done so far.



Key Concepts

- 1) A "2" chord can be substituted for any major chord.
- 2) A minor 11th chord can be substituted for almost any minor chord.
- 3) The bass movement directs the flow of the chord progression.
- 4) Common tones between chords make a progression sound connected.

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Steve Krenz

As an educator, Steve is best known for the top-selling guitar instruction course, **Gibson's Learn & Master Guitar** that received the 2011 Acoustic Guitar Magazine Player's Choice Award for Best Instructional Material. As a professional guitarist in Nashville, Steve's broad playing experience includes playing guitar with a symphony orchestra, to jazz big bands, to performing with numerous Grammy-winning artists like Donna Summer, Michael W. Smith, Bryan White, The Fifth Dimension, Israel Houghton, and Tommy Sims.

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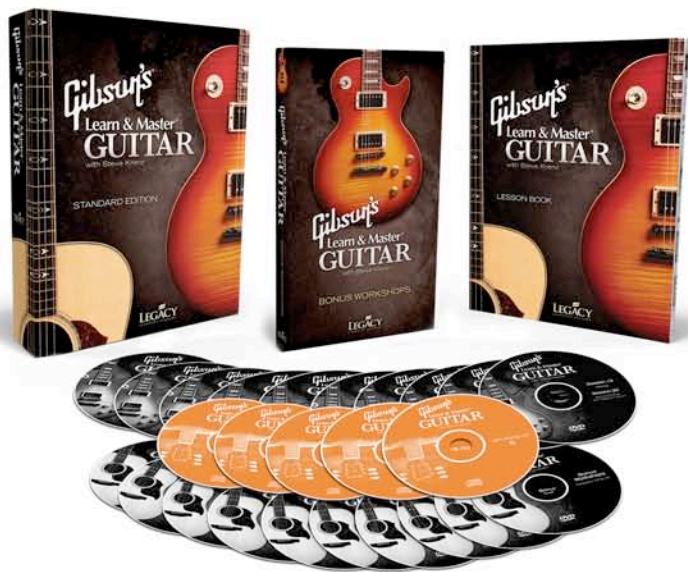
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