How to Transpose
Any Song, Any Key, Easily

Key: All
BPM: All
Chords Needed: C, Dm, Em, F, G, Am, Bdim
Video Tutorial: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OOscP3rktLg&t=530s
Chord Shapes:
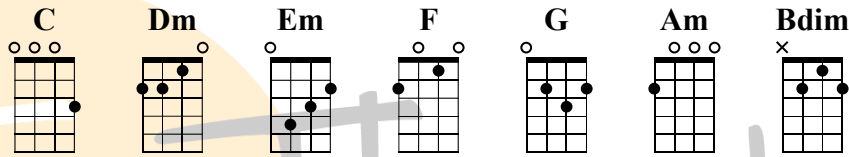
What is transposition?

- **Transposition is the act of changing the key of a song. For example, the song "Let It Be" by the Beatles is in the key of C. If we were to play it in the key of G we would have to transpose it from the key of C to the key of G.**

Why do we transpose music?

- **There are several reasons to transpose a song. One of the most common is to find a key that is more suitable for the singer's vocal range. If the song is in the key of C, but just a little too high, it can be transposed down a half step to B, to make it easier. Maybe the song is not even close in the key of C and needs to be transposed all the way to the key of G to make it easier for the singer to sing. You might transpose a song to make it easier to play, the key of E is very difficult on the Ukulele, but F is quite easy, so transposing the song up a half step makes it a lot easier. You might also transpose a song to make a cover sound more unique.**

A scale creates the chords for a key. This is scale for the key of C.
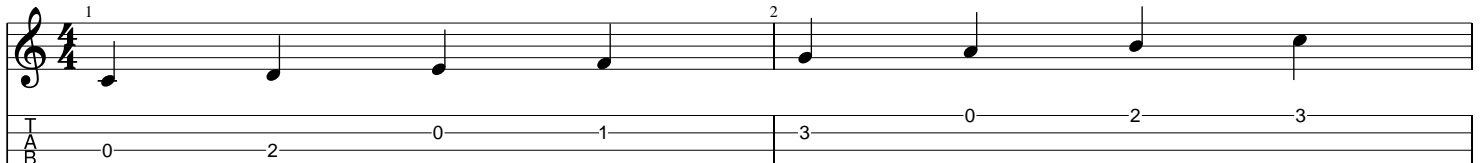
This is the C major scale. The major scale is created from a root, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th intervals. These notes turn into the chords for the key of C as well.

The first chord is always a major, the second and third chords are always minor, the fourth and fifth are always major, the sixth is always minor and the seventh is always diminished. We can see that with the chords above, C major, D minor, E minor, F major, G major, A minor, B diminished and the C is where the octave is and the chords start over.

These chords are always assigned a roman numeral, the major chords are capital letters, and the minors are lower case with the diminished having a little open circle.

I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii°

When we apply these symbols to the chords in the key of C we get.

That means if we have a chord progression that goes

- C - F - G - C

We can also consider this a

- I - IV - V - I in the key of C.

Understanding the roman numeral formula for the chord progression is how we transpose them as well. There are 12 keys and each key has its own version of the I - IV - V - I, but they are all equal. If we wanted to transpose the song from the key of C to F we would find the I - IV - V - I in the key F.

- F - Bb - C - F

The easiest way to get this information is with a key chart.

Key (Major)	I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi	vii°
C	C	Dm	Em	F	G	Am	B°
D	D	Em	F♯m	G	A	Bm	C♯°
E	E	F♯m	G♯m	A	B	C♯m	D♯°
F	F	Gm	Am	B♭	C	Dm	E°
G	G	Am	Bm	C	D	Em	F♯°
A	A	Bm	C♯m	D	E	F♯m	G♯°
B	B	C♯m	D♯m	E	F♯	G♯m	A♯°
Db	D♭	E♭m	Fm	G♭	A♭	B♭m	C°
Eb	E♭	Fm	Gm	A♭	B♭	Cm	D°
F# (Gb)	F♯ (G♭)	G♯m (A♭m)	A♯m (B♭m)	B (C♭)	C♯ (D♭)	D♯m (E♭m)	E♯° (F°)
Ab	A♭	B♭m	Cm	D♭	E♭	Fm	G°
Bb	B♭	Cm	Dm	E♭	F	Gm	A°

These are all twelve keys, with the keys in rows and the roman numerals in columns, you simply find the key and then find the I – IV – V and you can construct the chord progression in that key.

This is how transposition works with all chord progression in all keys. Let's take a look at another chord progression in C.

- C – Am – G – Em

First thing first, let's transform this into roman numerals.

- I – vi – V – iii

Now we can put this into any key. G for example, go to G and find the chords that correspond with these roman numerals.

- G (I) – Em (vi) – D (V) – Bm (iii)

Now we have the same chord progression in the key of G.

Boom, how to transpose any song, from any key, into any key, instantly.

- Melody works the same way. I will make a video to talk about how to transpose melody so we can clarify any questions there, but quickly the melody holds the same intervals for its new key. If a melody goes from C to G you simply see how many steps that is. C – C# - D – D# - E – F – F# - G. It moves up 7 steps, so you would add 7 steps to every single note. The other way is by knowing the intervals. If a melody goes Root 4th 5th 4th in the key of C it will play the same intervals in the key of G. Again, I will do a full break down of transposing melody in another lesson, this is just a brief breakdown.