

Quick Glance at Alternate Tunings (and how each string is affected)

Step 1: Know the 12 notes in Western Music based on the alphabet

Step 2: Change the standard tuning to an alternate tuning

Step 3: Discover how a standard chord is rearranged

Step 1 – The 12 Notes in Western Music

Based on the alphabet, the 12 notes in Western music contain primary and secondary notes. While you probably already know this it's good to refresh yourself.

The alphabetical order of the primary notes are A, B, C, D, E, F and G. There are seven of these. Between most of these primary notes are what are called secondary notes. These secondary notes have dual names and look like this:

A#/Bb, C#/Db, D#/Eb, F#/Gb, G#/Ab

There are five of these secondary notes. Notice the slashes. This is where the concept of dual names come into play. An A# is ALSO a Bb. You can call it either one. The same applies to the rest of the notes. However, you'll notice that there is no secondary note between B and C or E and F.

In other words there is NO B#/Cb or E#/Fb on the guitar because notes are based on intervals, and there is only a half-step between these two. The easiest way to think of this is that there simply isn't any 'room' to fill the void. Here's what I mean:

Based on STANDARD tuning, the guitar is tuned as such:

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

(Once we get to 12 above notice everything starts over)

Notice that in the "Fret 0" tab you'll see everything is in standard tuning of E, A, D, G, B, and e. (The lower case "e" lets you know that this is the HIGH version of the same E note played open.)

If we change the tuning of one or more strings, the 'zero' will cause the alphabetical arrangement to shift in space(s). This may seem confusing at first, but you'll understand it much easier as we move through the alternate tunings. Let's go ahead and check those out now.

Lowered Tunings:

Lowered tunings means exactly what it says. You lower the original standard tuning of E-A-D-G-B-E to a variation as specified.

D - G - C - F - A - D

In the case of this tuning, we need to RE-examine the original chart I provided for you that showed the note order in standard tuning.

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Before we change the fretboard I've highlighted what the total possible combination of fretted and open notes could be when playing a C Major chord on the first three frets.

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Technically you do not play any note, either open or fretted, on the Low E string, but it IS allowed, because an open Low E string note rings as one of the notes required to form a C Major chord (C, E, and G.) But, you'll find that in most chord diagrams the Low E string open note isn't played. It's usually marked with an "x". It's usually not played because it tends to 'muddy' up the chord too much, and since we have the open E string played on the high E string, that note would suffice. Since we are exploring the total possible arrangement in alternate tuning, I still want to include all possible notes for the first three frets.

If we were to tune to D-G-C-F-A-D we'd need to see what a possible C Major chord would look like when changed to an alternate tuning.

Now let's change all the notes to reflect what we are tuning to and you'll see how the entire fretboard changes based on chord position. Realize that here I am just giving you a possible combination of the C Major chord based on the notes required of C, E, and G:

	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

It's rather neat to see how the arrangement changes a little isn't it? One neat thing to notice is that since the tuning is now D, G, C, F, A, and D you'll see a D Major chord shape (just the shape!) on frets 2 and 3 on the F, A, and D strings.

Eb – Ab – Db – Gb – Bb – Eb

When it comes to tuning to "all flats" it's actually easier than you might think.

Notice here that everything from 'standard' is really just moved over to the right one fret. So, you could also call Eb-Ab-Db-Gb-Bb-Eb this: D#(Eb)-G#(Ab)-C#(Db)-F#(Gb)-A#(Bb)-D#(Eb) but it's rarely called that. Just stick with the idea of tuning to "all flats."

	eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	eb
	Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	Bb
	Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	Gb
	Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	Db
	Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	Ab
	Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	Eb
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Since we've moved all the notes over to the 'right' in this case, in theory a C Major chord could look like this in any possible combination using the first four frets (just remember that we need the C, E, and G notes to form a C Major chord):

	eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	eb
	Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	Bb
	Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	Gb
	Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	Db
	Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	Ab
	Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	Eb
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Dropped Tuning

Drop D Tuning:

Not to be confused with 'double drop d' tuning, the only string affected in this tuning is the Low E string. This one is super easy to understand. Here's the chart:

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

The tuning here is just: D, A, D, G, B, e

What makes this tuning cool is that you can create easier chords than usual. In the case of the C Major we could have a combination of the following:

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Now, nothing huge has really changed has it? Take a look at the original C Major chord diagram when in standard tuning:

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Did you see the change? When we tuned to drop D nothing except the notes on the Low E string (tuned to D) changed.

In the case of "Everlong" by the Foo Fighters you will see that Dave Grohl plays the following during the chorus:

e -----
 B -----
 G -----
 D ---9----
 A ---9----
 D ---9----

Let's place that chord on the fretboard:

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

What chord is this? It's a B5. In other words, it's a power chord. The notes needed in a B chord are: B, F#(Gb), and D#(Eb). Since in a power chord you usually only have the root and the fifth, in this case the D#(Eb) is dropped. You'll also see that the B notes here are duplicated. Why? Both strings are tuned to D. EUREKA!

What about this chord?

e -----
 B -----
 G -----
 D ---5----
 A ---5----
 D ---5----

Let's place that chord on the fretboard:

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

What chord is this? It's a G5. The notes needed in a G chord are: G, B, and D. Since in a power chord you usually only have the root and the fifth, in this case the B is dropped. What's strange about this is that if you were tuned to standard tuning you would have an A5 based on it being 5-7-7, but since we've dropped the E string to D, the movement changes. The notes needed in an A5 chord are A and E. You'll find that on the seventh frets this time. They've moved! Again in both instances you'll see that the G5 and the A5 have duplicate notes because they are tuned the same – to D.

What about "double drop d" tuning? It's not much different. Here's the chart for double drop d:

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Since there are now three open strings tuned to D you'll find a very thick, rich tone to the overall sound of this tuning.

If we wanted to play a C Major chord here, using the required notes of C, E, and G, we would need to create this possible formation on the first three frets:

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Are we starting to get the idea? When a tuning changes, so does the position of the chord in question.

Major Open Alternate Tunings

There are a few of these that I'm covering, but they are quite a bit of fun to investigate.

Open C Tuning

Here the tuning is C, G, C, G, C, and E. Let's take a look at our new chart.

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

If you want to play a C Major chord with the required C, E, and G notes you can strum all of the strings open. Maybe you wanted to play an F chord? It's common after or before a C. Where do you think that chord would appear?

We need the notes F, A, and C in order to create an F Major chord. Here's the answer:

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

It's getting pretty cool huh?

Open D Tuning

Ok. I'm not going to beat you to death with these Major Open Alternate Tunings because I think by now you're getting the picture. Instead I'll show you the diagrams. Open D is just D, A, D, Gb(F#), A, and D. Remember to always assume that a sharp and/or flat includes the dual name.

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	Gb
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

If we wanted to play a D Major chord we need the notes D, A, and F# (Gb). Obviously you're getting the idea.

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	Gb
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

What about an F chord again? We need F, A, and C. This time it's all strings on the third fret.

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	Gb
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Open E Tuning

This alternate tuning method is E-B-E-Ab(G#)-B-E.

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	Ab
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Here's an open E Major chord, which requires the notes E, B, and G#(Ab).

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	Ab
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

And of course, an F Major chord:

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	Ab
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Open G Tuning is also known as Spanish Tuning or Chicago Tuning.

This tuning employs the usage of D-G-D-G-B-D to achieve the desired sound.

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

You guessed it. Here's an open G Major chord:

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Here's an F Major chord:

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

It's moved all the way to the 10th fret. However, you could also play it here:

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Hmmm.....technically it's 100% possible and it's just one example, but as you can see changing from standard tuning opens a world of options.

Modal Tunings:

In modal tunings, the strings are tuned to form a chord which is not definitively minor or major. These tunings may facilitate very easy chords and unique sounds when the open strings are used as drones. Often these tunings form a suspended chord on the open strings.

C6 Tuning

This tuning was used by Jimmy Page in "Bron Yr Aur" this modal tuning offers a nice change in sound because it utilizes a C-A-C-G-C-E.

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Now if you want to play a C Major chord, simply find the possible C, E, and G notes.

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

What's the issue here? Well there really isn't one as long as you don't play the open A string. However, that would require a bit of muting or fingerpicking, so if you aren't ready for that, you can always search for a better combination:

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Even though you would still need to avoid a few strings, you can see where I am going with this. And of course you can easily play either one of the two I've shown you by only picking three (triad = chord) notes that are required to play a given chord.

Open Page was used in "The Rain Song" by Jimmy Page as well and employs the usage of a D-G-C-G-C-D modal tuning.

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

If you want to play a G Major chord, you'll need the notes G, B, and D. The following G Major chord appears in "The Rain Song" with our study, so I decided to use it here.

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Notice what happened here. With a little investigation you'll see that OFTEN it's a great idea to utilize the 'open' strings when they are tuned differently. It makes chord shapes much easier to play. I thought this would really help drill the idea in for you.

Dsus4 is often vocalized as "Dad-Gad" (or D-A-D-G-A-D) and is heard in Led Zeppelin's "Kashmir." Davy Graham initially employed this tuning so he could play along with the native musicians on a trip to Morocco. It was then taken up by Bert Jansch, who influenced Jimmy Page to use the tuning in "Kashmir" (which in turn helped further popularize this tuning method.)

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Want to play a G Major chord? Remember all we need are the notes G, B, and D.

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

This was the first one I found, and it's a great place to start with your investigation.

Esus2 is really E-B-E-Gb(F#)-B-E and was made popular by John Mayer in "Something's Missing" and "In Your Atmosphere."

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	Gb
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

If you wanted to play a G Major chord here, you could play it like this:

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	Gb
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

It might not be real user-friendly, but you can come up with your own ideas as well.

E modal is E-B-E-E-B-E and was used for "Suite Judy Blue Eyes" by Crosby Stills and Nash.

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

What if we want to play an E Major chord? We need the notes E, B, and G# (Ab). Check this out.

	e	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	e
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

What an easy chord formation!

Other Tunings:

Often you'll find that musicians tune their guitars just a little different than even the 'alternate' tuning option.

John Rzeznik's "Iris" tuning: B-D-D-D-D-D.

John Rzeznik of the rock band Goo Goo Dolls uses this tuning on the studio recorded version of his song Iris, an international hit featured on the soundtrack of City Of Angels. It creates a very shimmer-like ringing sound similar to a twelve string guitar. To tune to this tuning on a standard six string guitar the low E string is lowered to a B; the A string is lowered to a D, the D string is left the same, the G string is lowered to a D, the B string is raised to a D, and the high E string is lowered to a D. On some guitars this may require obtaining a thicker low E string than is usual to obtain a full sound when tuned down to B, and avoid the string slapping the fret board. John Rzeznik uses a different tuning for an acoustic version of "Iris", tuned at D-A-D-G-B-D. This allows the song to be played solo with an acoustic guitar and to retain a fuller sound than is achievable with the B-D-D-D-D-D tuning. However, this tuning also retains a slight ringing sound due to three strings being tuned to D as the piece is in the key of D major.

The song sample from this lesson DOES use the B, D, D, D, D, D tuning because it does work when tuned JUST right.

Here's how this tuning would look:

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

In the song "Iris" the actual chords shown are tricky and aren't easy to explain as actual 'chords' so I won't even try to go too far, but the progression is technically Bmno5 (or B minor no fifth) to Bmno5add2 (just add the 2nd) for the first measure.

This is the Bmno5:

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

This is the Bmno5add2:

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Then the next measure is G5 (easy one there) to Gmaj7no3 (G Major Seventh no third). I know, only the G5 is a common chord.

However, once you see the tablature you'll completely understand how easy the song is to play.

This is the G5:

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

This is the Gmaj7no3:

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D
	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Billy Corgan's "Mayonaise" tuning: Eb, Bb, Bb, Gb, Bb, D (or D#, A#, A#, F#, A#, D)

This tuning is an absolute joy to practice new song arrangements on because there is so much room to play around with the tuning. Here is the way this tuning looks on your fretboard:

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	Bb
	Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	Gb
	Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	Bb
	Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	Bb
	Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	Eb
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

The first time we reach a chord in this song is after the picked out intro. The first one is 9908xx (with a ghost note here and there like this: 99080x). This chord is a Gm/C (also a C7sus2) and looks like this on the fretboard:

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	Bb
	Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	Gb
	Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	Bb
	Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	Bb
	Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	Eb
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Here we have the notes C, G, D, and Bb. This is why we have a Gm/C, where the “/” in this case means “of” and not “or.”

The next chord is a Bb/Eb, which is really odd. This appears on the fretboard like this:

	d	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	d
	Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	Bb
	Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	Gb
	Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	Bb
	Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	D#/Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	Bb
	Eb	E	F	F#/Gb	G	G#/Ab	A	A#/Bb	B	C	C#/Db	D	Eb
Frets	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Here the notes used are Eb, Bb, F, and D. I know, it's crazy.