TOOLS AND RESOURCES 83

25 Tunings to Try

ere are 25 alternate tunings—some widely used, some one-off creations of a particular artist—along with song and artist examples. Arrows underneath tuning notes indicate strings that are altered from standard tuning and whether they are tuned up or down. Next to the notes of each tuning, you'll find the chord degree of the open strings. In dropped-D tuning, for example, if you consider D as the root (R), the other strings are the fifth (A), the root again (D), the fourth (G), sixth (B), and second (E) of a D chord, so the tuning is written as R 5 R 4 6 2. Keep in mind that sometimes the artists raise the tuning (and the key) with a capo.

Many of the songs below have been transcribed in *Acoustic Guitar* magazine; for a complete list with tunings and capo positions, searchable by song title, artist, and tuning, go to www.acousticguitar.com. Songs that have appeared in an *Acoustic Guitar* CD Songbook, which include complete transcriptions along with original performances on a compilation CD, are noted with the songbook title in the right column (more details on these can also be found at www.acousticguitar.com). *Acoustic Guitar's book Alternate Tunings Guitar Essentials* includes a more extensive tuning list (60 tunings) along with instruction in various alternate tunings.

Other Web sites that offer valuable tuning information are www.JoniMitchell.com; www.stropes.com, which includes a database of tunings used by Michael Hedges, Leo Kottke, and others; users.plinet.com/-bquade/AlternateTuningl02.html, which contains an ingenious, interactive, open-tunings chord guide; and www.harmony-central.com, from which you can download a couple of different alternate-tuning software programs.

SONG

ARTIST

ACOUSTIC GUITAR CD

SONGBOOK (See back page)

BASS- AND TREBLE-STRING DROPS D A D G B E (R 5 R 4 6 2)

Dropped D.

And So It Goes . . . Steve Tilston What Goes Around
Beeswing Richard Thompson

Black Waterside Bert Jansch

Coryanna Stephen Fearing Habits of the Heart
Dust Bowl Children Peter Rowan

Embryonic Journey Jorma Kaukonen Fingerstyle Guitar Masterpieces

Fishing Blues Taj Mahal
Green Green Rocky Road Kate and Anna High on a Mountain

McGarrigle
Living in the Country Pete Seeger
Look How Far Bruce Cockburn

Muir Woods Andrew York High on a Mountain Shotgun down the Avalanche Shawn Colvin Shades of Blue

When You Give It Away Bruce Cockburn Wondering Where the Lions Are Bruce Cockburn

EADGBD (625R35)

The Boxer Paul Simon (intro/lead guitar)

SONG

ARTIST

ACOUSTIC GUITAR CD SONGBOOK

DADGBD(R5R56R)

Double dropped D or D modal. Close to standard and frequently used by Neil Young.

Black Queen Black Water

Bluebird

Stephen Stills Doobie Brothers **Buffalo Springfield**

Free Man in Paris Let the Bad Air Out Ohio

Joni Mitchell Bruce Cockburn Neil Young

Shelf in the Room

Days of the New

That House Use Me While You Can **CPR** Bruce Cockburn

You Should See the Way David Wilcox

DADGBC (26257R)

Galileo

Indigo Girls

The Moon and St. Christopher

Mary Chapin

Alternate Tunings Guitar Collection

Alternate Tunings Guitar Collection

Alternate Tunings Guitar Collection

Carpenter

D TUNINGS

DADGAD (R 5 R 4 5 R)

Usually referred to by its pronunciation (dad-gad), this tuning is like open D but with a suspended fourth (G) on the third string. This characterizes it as neither major nor minor. It's a favorite tuning of modern fingerstylists and Celtic rhythm guitarists.

After Your Orgasm

Black Mountain Side

David Wilcox

Barbie

David Wilcox Jimmy Page David Wilcox

Blow 'em Away Catch Me if I Try

David Wilcox Luka Bloom

Ciara

(CGCFGC)

Dangerous

David Wilcox Dáithí Sproule

The Death of Queen Jane

with Trian

Chris Whitley

Dirt Floor

(CGCFGC)

Do I Dare From One Island to Another David Wilcox Chris Whitley

(C# G# C# F# G# C#)

Mary Watches Everything Spin

Luka Bloom David Wilcox David Wilcox

Strong Chemistry

Patty Larkin David Wilcox

Tango Western Ridge

(CGCFGC) Chris Whitley

Wild Country

Open D. Favored by blues and slide guitarists as well as many folksingers and modern fingerstylists. Sometimes referred to as Vastapol tuning after the song of the same name in open-D tuning. Related tunings: open E, E B E G B E; open C, C G C E G C.

Alive in the World

Amelia

Jackson Browne Joni Mitchell (CGCEGC)

ACOUSTIC GUITAR CD SONG **ARTIST** SONGBOOK

Big Yellow Taxi Joni Mitchell

(EBEG#BE)

Both Sides Now Joni Mitchell

(EBEG#BE)

Center Stage Indigo Girls Chelsea Morning Joni Mitchell Freedom Richie Havens David Wilcox Frozen in the Snow David Wilcox Golden Key

If You Love Somebody **Guy Davis** Habits of the Heart

(CGCEGC) Indian Summer Chris Whitley Kindness David Wilcox Little Martha Allman Brothers (EBEG#BE)

Nothing Ever Lasts Clive Gregson

High on a Mountain

(CGCEGC) Nick Drake One of These Things Police Dog Blues

Jorma Kaukonen (EBEG#BE)

Prayer in Open D **Emmylou Harris**

Pierce Pettis Swimming Acoustic Guitar Artist Songbook, Vol. 1

DADFAD (R 5 R 3 5 R)

D minor.

Indigo Girls Everything in Its Own Time Hard Time Killing Floor Skip James

John Henry John Cephas and

Phil Wiggins

Little Hands **Duncan Sheik**

DADEAD (R 5 R 2 5 R)

A close relative of open D and D A D G A D with a distinctive character from the close interval between the third and fourth strings. Related tunings: E B E F# B E.

Alternate Tunings Guitar Collection

Duncan Sheik Days Go By (EBEF#BE)

David Wilcox That's Why I'm Laughing

DAC; EAE (4R35R5 or R57252)

Rainy Road into Atlanta Cheryl Wheeler Rhythms of the Road

DAEGAD (R 5 2 4 5 R)

My Secret Place

Joni Mitchell Hejira

(B F# C# E F# B) Joni Mitchell

(C# G# D# F# G# C#)

Slouching towards Bethlehem Joni Mitchell

DAEF + AD (R 5 2 3 5 R)

Cherokee Louise Joni Mitchell Deep Lake Bruce Cockburn

(CGDEGC) Night Ride Home Joni Mitchell (CGDEGC)

SONG

ARTIST

ACOUSTIC GUITAR CD SONGBOOK

Sunny Sunday

Joni Mitchell

(C# G# D# E# G# C#)

DADDAD (R 5 R R 5 R)

Highway in the Wind

Arlo Guthrie

Meditation (Wave upon Wave)

Arlo Guthrie

DDDDAD(RRRR5R)

A favorite of Stephen Stills.

4 + 20

Stephen Stills

(EEEEBE)

Suite: Judy Blue Eyes

Stephen Stills

G TUNINGS

DGDGBD(5R5R3R)

Open G. Probably the most popular tuning for slide guitar. Often called Spanish tuning, referring to the popular open-G song "Spanish Fandango." Also favored by Hawaiian slack-key guitarists, who refer to it as taro-patch tuning. Related tuning: open A, E A E A C‡ E.

Arthur McBride

Paul Brady

Alternate Tunings Guitar Collection

The Circle Game

Joni Mitchell

Pearl Jam

Daughter Going to California

Led Zeppelin Joni Mitchell

Marcie Nightshift

David Wilcox Peter Frampton

Penny for Your Thoughts

Peter Frampton Steve James

Stack Lee's Blues Water Song

Jorma Kaukonen

Rhythms of the Road

DGDGBE (5 R 5 R 3 6)

G6: standard except for the bottom two strings tuned down one whole step.

I Still Want To

Catie Curtis

What Goes Around

Hurricanes, Earthquakes,

Doyle Dykes

Acoustic Guitar Artist Songbook, Vol. 1

and Tomatoes

C TUNINGS

CGDGBE(R52573 or 4 R5 R36)

Low C.

1952 Vincent Black Lightning

Richard Thompson

Just As I Am

Chet Atkins

CGDGBD (R52572 or 4 R 5 R 3 5)

Like open-G tuning, but with a nice low C on the bottom. Slack-key guitarists refer to this tuning as C wahine.

Cold Blue Steel and Sweet Fire

Joni Mitchell

Golden Day It's Almost Time David Wilcox David Wilcox SONG

ARTIST

ACOUSTIC GUITAR CD **SONGBOOK**

CGCGCE(R5R5R3)

Open C.

Busted Bicycle

Caledonia

Eye of the Hurricane Foxglove

Mango

Leo Kottke

Dougie MacLean David Wilcox

Bruce Cockburn David Wilcox

Alternate Tunings Guitar Collection Alternate Tunings Guitar Collection

CGCGCD(R5R5R2)

Altitude

Chris Whitley

(C# G# C# G# C# D#)

Carolina Scrapyard Lullaby Patty Larkin

Chris Whitley

Habits of the Heart

(C# G# C# G# C# D#)

Wolf at the Door

Patty Larkin

What Goes Around

CGDFCE(R524R3)

A favorite of Joni Mitchell.

Coyote

Don Juan's Reckless Daughter Just Like This Train Sistowbell Lane

Woman of Heart and Mind

Joni Mitchell

Joni Mitchell Joni Mitchell Joni Mitchell

Joni Mitchell

C F C F C F (R 4 R 4 R 4)

From the Morning Harvest Breed

Nick Drake Nick Drake

High on a Mountain

E-MINOR TUNINGS

EBDGAD(R5 7 34 7)

A favorite tuning of David Crosby.

Déjà Vu

David Crosby

Guinnevere

David Crosby

EBBGBD (R 5 5 3 5 7)

Not a Pretty Girl

Ani DiFranco

Alternate Tunings Guitar Collection

MIDDLE-STRING DROPS

EADGAE (5 R 4 7 R 5 or R 4 7 3 4 R)

Caleb Meyer

Gillian Welch

EADF # BE (R4 + 7 25 R or 5 R 4 6 2 5)

Cello Song

Nick Drake Bruce Cockburn

The Embers of Eden Isn't That What Friends Are For? Bruce Cockburn Last Night of the World

Bruce Cockburn

Mango The Thoughts of Mary Jane Bruce Cockburn

Nick Drake

Rhythms of the Road