



## BACKUP CHORDS and RUNS

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This workshop will help you get started playing backup with a note pattern similar to that played on the piano or the guitar. For example (see measure 1 below), for a G chord-- play the G on the bass bridge with the right hand, then play the G an octave higher on the right side of the treble bridge with the left hand and the B on the bass bridge with the right hand together, then play the D on the right side of the treble bridge with the right hand and then play the high G and B as before. Now repeat this many times until you are very comfortable with this pattern.

The advantage of this pattern is that you can move it around to different starting notes to play the following chords on a standard 12/11 dulcimer: going up the bass bridge we have G major, A minor, B minor, C major, D minor, E minor, F major, G minor, and A minor; going up the treble bridge we have C# minor, D major, E minor, F# minor, G major and so on, as on the bass bridge (except an octave higher) until you run out of notes after the D minor chord. Notice that if the starting note is on a marked course the chord is major otherwise it is minor. In order to be proficient at playing backup for many tunes you need only to be able to move smoothly between these chords and know when to change to another chord. Playing simple backup with this method can be very musical and rewarding. Now that you have a chord pattern your main task is to learn to read or hear the chord changes. We will cover chord progressions in a separate workshop. *Rick Fogel*

1 G

2 G to C

3 C to G

4 G to D

5 D to G

6 C to D

7 D to C

8 G to C

9 G to D

10 D to G

11 C to D

12 TAG in G

13 TAG in D

14 TAG in G

Measures 2 through 11 are runs that may be used when moving from one chord to another. If you do not see the transition you want you must transpose to another key. Measures 12 through 14 are fun tags to use when you feel it is appropriate.

Country music is three chords and the truth. *Harian Howard*