

## Two Note Rhythm

There is a general theory among top players that “Less is more” and this month’s article will help get you into the less is more approach. Beginner and intermediate level players tend to stick around bar type chords for many reasons, but bar chords tend to sound very ordinary at best and tie up all your fingers making it difficult to play fills and other cool add ons. Power chords are also great two note chords, but not the centre of this lesson.

You won’t need a lot of technique to play this lesson, but it would pay to know something of the theoretical side. If you look at the first bar of music you can see there are two notes (F & B) which are going over a G7 chord. If you play your E shape G7 bar chord at the third fret and strip away your fingers one by one until you have only have your fingers on the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> strings you will see that they are the two notes on the music staff coming from your bar chord. It is important to see this connection before carrying on as these two notes are from the root chord. By seeing this connection will allow you to play this rhythm part in all keys.

Those two notes you have your fingers on are called the “Tritone” (two notes a flattened 5<sup>th</sup> apart), and are the 3rd and 7th notes of the chord. They are also the two most important notes you need to play of any chord. You don’t need to play the other two notes which make up the G7 chord, being the root and the 5<sup>th</sup>. This same theory also works for the C7 and D7 chords. The bass player tends to play (or emphasize) the root so you don’t want to get in their road or double up on what they are doing and the 5<sup>th</sup> of any chord can be left out at any time.

Now if you go to the 2<sup>nd</sup> bar of music, the two notes there come from the open C7 chord shape and the D7 notes in the 9<sup>th</sup> bar come from the same shape chord two frets higher. As you can see the notes in the three chords are only one fret apart from each other making it effortless to play.

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is for the treble clef and the bottom staff is for the bass clef. Both staves are in 4/4 time. The key signature is one sharp. The top staff has six measures. The first measure is labeled G7 and contains a two-note rhythm pattern. The second measure is labeled C7 and contains a similar pattern. The third measure is labeled G7 and contains a similar pattern. The fourth measure is labeled C7 and contains a similar pattern. The fifth measure is labeled G7 and contains a similar pattern. The sixth measure is labeled C7 and contains a similar pattern. The bottom staff has six measures. The first measure is labeled 7 and contains a two-note rhythm pattern. The second measure is labeled G7 and contains a similar pattern. The third measure is labeled D7 and contains a similar pattern. The fourth measure is labeled C7 and contains a similar pattern. The fifth measure is labeled G7 and contains a similar pattern. The sixth measure is labeled D7 and contains a similar pattern. Fingerings are indicated above the treble staff and below the bass staff.

When playing this rhythm part you can use any two of your fretting fingers and any strumming style. Make sure to mute adjacent strings so they don't ring unintentionally. When you can play it in this key easily then transfer it to all keys.

Playing cut down chords like this are not only fun, they sound much better than their bulky counterparts, and they allow us to concentrate on the song we are playing. This type of backup will sound great in all styles of music and originate from the Hammond B3 organ players like Jimmy Smith.

To hear the music for this lesson visit <http://www.guitar.co.nz/two-note-rhythm/>

Happy Practising  
Kevin.

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Kevin Downing is a professional guitarist, teacher, and author. For more great lessons or to study with him in person or over the internet visit [www.guitar.co.nz](http://www.guitar.co.nz)

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