

Part 3. Alternate Tunings and Use of Capo

A. Your Strumstick can be tuned in various ways besides its normal tuning (GDG for the Standard and DAD for the Grand). You might do this to facilitate playing in different keys, to adapt to the range of a singer, or to play along with other instruments in a different key.

There are two categories of alternate tunings:

1. The **normal relationship** of notes but all pitched higher or lower **We will call these 1 5 1 tunings**. All fingerings remain the same, only the note names change. The Standard and the Grand tunings can be thought of in this category, they are in the same relative tunings, and fingerings on one are interchangeable with the other, only the note and chord names change.

2. A **modified relationship** of notes. **Most common of these is the 5 1 5 tuning**. This will result in all new fingerings for songs or chords, since the relationship between the strings is changed compared with the normal tuning.

We will give the note names of the strings for various tunings, but no detailed explanations. We will indicate whether it is the same fingerings as the normal tuning, or requires all new fingerings

Normal (1 5 1) Tunings For the Standard Strumstick

Normal tuning: G D G' (' means an octave higher) **Key of G**

Up to A: tune A E A' **Key of A** (This is near the upper limit for the 1st string, it is pretty tight)

Down to F: tune F C F' **Key of F**

Down to E: tune E B E' **Key of E** (strings are rather loose here)

Down to D: tune D A D' **Key of D** (same as the Grand, strings quite loose but still playable here)

Normal (1 5 1) Tunings For the Grand Strumstick

Normal tuning: D A D' **Key of D**

Up to E: E B E' **Key of E**

Down to C: C G C' **Key of C**

Down to Bb: Bb F Bb' **Key of Bb** (Bb means Bflat; strings are rather loose here)

Modified (5 1 5) Tunings For the Standard Strumstick

G C G' **Key of C** (remember, all new fingerings, scale starts at the 3rd fret)

Up a whole tone to A D A' **Key of D** (you may break the first string, this is it's upper limit)

Down a whole tone F Bb F' **Key of Bb**

Lower still E A E' **Key of A**

END OF TUNINGS SAMPLE

C. Minor Scales, and The Use of a Capo To Change Key

A capo is a device that clamps across the strings at a given fret to raise them all by

the same amount. On a chromatic (sharps and flats) instrument like Guitar, this merely raises the notes. On a diatonic instrument like the Strumstick, the scale pattern gets changed also, because of the diatonic fret spacing.

Guitar capos can work on the Strumstick although they are bulky, being meant for 6 strings. Banjo capos work great, we have one available (see Capo in the online catalog at www.strumstick.com).

As a starting guide, from the normal tuning:

Capo at 1st fret raises by a whole tone, gives minor scale. **Key of A minor** on Standard, **Key of E minor** on Grand

Capo at 3rd fret (raises by a fourth, gives major scale) **Key of C** on Standard, **Key of G** on Grand

END OF CAPO SAMPLE