

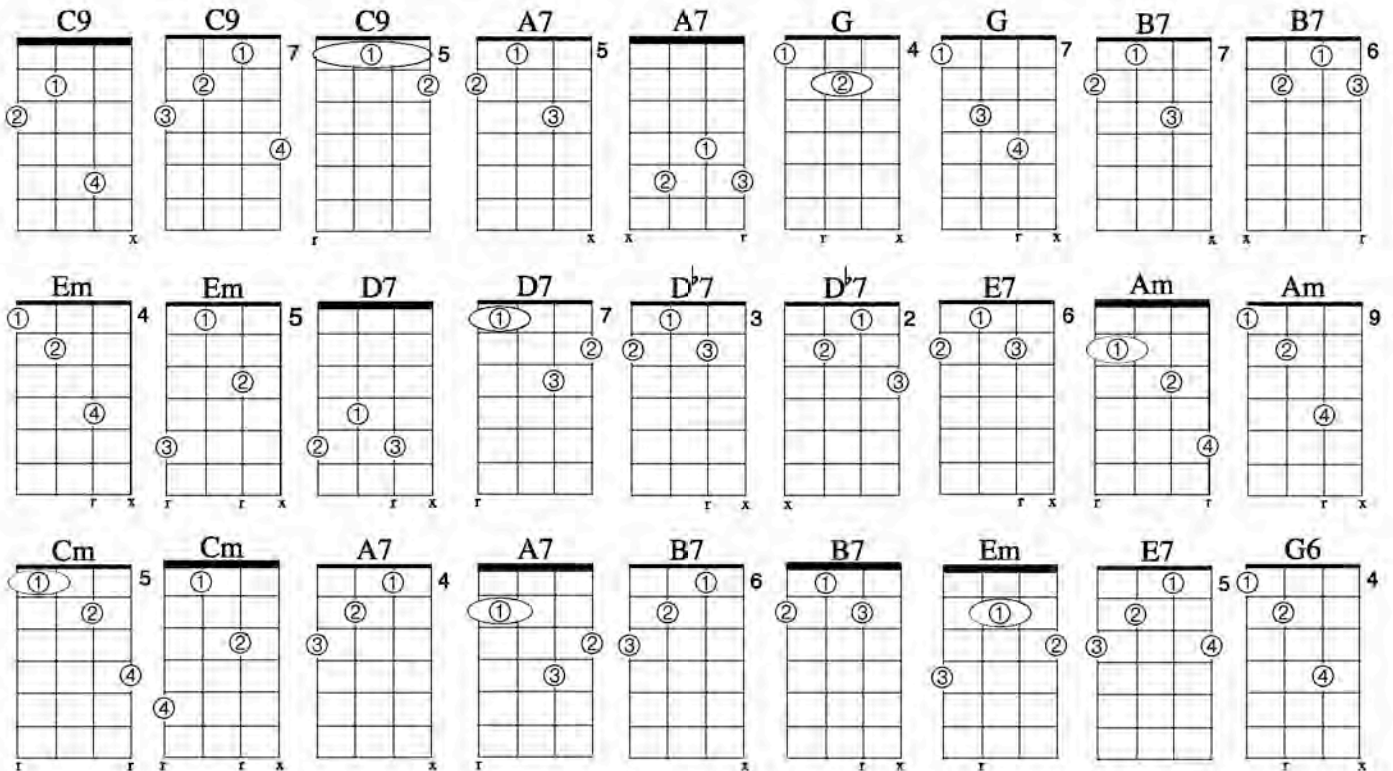
Limehouse Blues

“Limehouse Blues,” has been a popular tune in jazz since the 1920s. Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli recorded it at least twice together, once at a moderate tempo, once at a breakneck pace. The tempo of our recorded version, written in the key of G, is somewhere in between, tending toward the faster tempo. Once you learn a tune at a slower tempo, you can always speed it up.

“Limehouse Blues” is written in cut time, signified by a **C** in the time signature with a vertical line through it: **C**. If there was no line and only a **C**, the meter would be “common time” or 4/4. Cut time means to give each note half of its written value. So, notes written as quarters are played as eighths, halves as quarters, effectively doubling the tempo of a piece. Cut time isn’t always noted in the time signature. Often it’s just implied by the way a person counts off a tune: “One—two, one—two—three—four.”

If you’ve worked with any of my books before you know that I always urge you to learn everything in closed positions without open string notes. That’s so you can easily shift a melody to other keys up and down the fingerboard. Open string notes make transposing much more difficult. The first version of “Limehouse Blues” is shown in the lower octave with some open string notes. When you can play it from memory, learn the second version, this time closed, with no open string notes. This closed melody can be moved up and down the fingerboard to different keys by simply shifting your relative fretting hand position. Work your way up the neck to an upper octave version of “Limehouse Blues” in the key of G. Your first note will be the seventh fret second string E fretted with finger one. (If you can’t figure it out, download the music from my website.) Try to learn closed position versions of all the tunes in this book. Take the time to move them around to new keys and also to find lower or higher octave versions of your melodies and solos. Doing so will help you discover the secrets of the mystic fingerboard!

The first chord is a C9. This C9 is a C7 with a D note, the “nine” of the C scale, added. A dominant nine chord can be used as a substitution for a regular dominant seven and vice versa. So, we could play a regular C7 in place of the C9. We could also substitute dominant nine chords for the other dominant sevens in “Limehouse Blues,” B9 for B7, A9 for A7, D9 for D7, etc. Try substituting the G6 for the regular G I (“one”) chord.



Limehouse Blues

Key of G, CD tracks 3-5

Braham and Furber, 1922

1 C9 A7

Oh! Lime-house kid, Oh! Oh! Oh! Lime-house kid, Go - ing the way that the
1 2 3

7 G B7 Em

rest of them did, Poor bro - ken bios - som and no - bod - y's child,
1 2 3 1 2 1 3

13 A7 D7 Db7 C9

Haunt-ing and taunt - ing you're just kind of wild. Oh! Oh! Lime-house blues, I've the
1 2 3 4 1 4 3 2 2

19 A7 G

real Lime-house blues, Can't seem to shake off those sad Chin - a blues, Rings on your fin -
3 1 3 2 3

26 E7 Am Cm D7 G

- gers and tears for your crown, that is the sto - ry of old Chin - a town,
3 1 2 1 2 2 1 2 3 1

Limehouse Blues closed position

4 **C9** **A7**

Oh! Lime house kid, — Oh! Oh! Oh! Lime house kid, — Go - ing the way — that the

1 2 3

7 **G** **B7** **E m**

rest of them did, — Poor bro - ken blos - som and no - bod - y's child, —

4 1 2 3 4 4 1 4 4 3

13 **A7** **D7** **D b7** **C9**

Haunt - ing and taunt - ing you're just kind of wild. Oh! Oh! Lime - house blues, — I've the

1 2 3 4 4 1 4 3 2 2 2

19 **A7** **G**

real Lime - house blues, — Can't seem to shake — off those sad Chin - a blues, — Rings on your fin -

3 4 1 3 2 3 4

26 **E7** **A m** **C m** **D7** **G**

- gers and tears for your crown, — that is the sto - ry of old Chin - a town. —

3 1 2 1 2 4 2 1 2 3 1 4 3

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