Consider there to be only three major chord shapes C, G & E. Then, start with the C shape C - next, move to the 5th fret, and play a C chord using the G shape. Then, play the E shape at the 8th fret for C again. The C shape works at the XII fret octave.

Roman numerals refer to fret number. The numbers on each finger position relate to the note's location in the scale. In the case of C major scale C D E F G A B C Numbered: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1
G major scale G A B C D E F# G E major scale E F# G# A B C# D# E

The root note (1) is on string 2 for the C shape chord and strings 3 & 1 for the G shape. It is found on both the 1st and 4th strings in the E-shaped chord.

Use a bar behind the C, and move the C shape up to fret IV for E and fret VII for G. Move G shape up to fret V for C and to fret IX for E. The E shape can also be moved to the III fret for C and to the VIII fret for C.

What about the A shape? 5135
This is a modification of the G shape, playing the 5 note on the first string, 2 frets lower than the 513 on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th strings. Try at III fret for C.

Major chord contains 1, 3, 5 notes
In the case of C major, C E G
C major scale C D E F G A B C Numbered: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1
C shape C chord is 3 5 1 3 = E G C E
g shape C chord is 5 1 3 1 = G C E C
E shape C chord is 1 3 5 1 = C E G C

Note the chord shape note sequences
C=3513, G=5131, E=1351
513 is in both C and G shapes

We'll learn a method for finding the next position of the chord up the neck on the next page.
Baritone Ukulele CGE with Passing Chords
Navigating between the major chord shapes C G & E

Begin with the C shape C -Play the C chord, then the 1 and 3 notes of the C scale together, on the 2nd and 4th strings, then the 2 notes connected by dotted lines on the 2nd and 4th strings at the 3rd fret- play the next two connected notes at fret 4, then the third pair, leading you to the fret V.

Play the G shape C at fret V, and continue to move up the fretboard playing the 1 and 3 notes now found on strings 3 and 2, then the paired notes as passing chords. These can be played in unison or in sequence (arpeggios). This now leads you to play the E shape C at fret VIII. Finally, play pairs on strings 1 an 3 up to the XII fret where you bar it and play the C shape C again, this time with a bar.

The paired notes can help you find the location for the next chord shape for the same chord - they connect the 1 and 3 notes from the chord below to the 5 and 3 notes of the chord above. The paired notes in the 1 and 3 relationship are major thirds and minor thirds in the 5 - 3 relationship. See the interval module on ukeeducation.org for a deeper understanding.

Once you can remember how the passing chords fit, use these to move up the neck: Try starting with the E shape E and use the passing chord paired notes to find the correct location for the C shape E (IV) and up to the G shape E (IX) – try coming back down the fretboard using the passing chords to find the next correct chord,

Then, likewise, begin with the G shape G and use the passing note positions (strings 2 and 3) to find the correct location for the E shape G (III) and up to the C shape G (VII) : When beginning with the E shape E, the passing notes are on strings 1 and 3. These chord positions are shown on the other side of this sheet.

You can also use these passing chords to generate an intro – or turnaround for a song. Walk the pairs down from the XII fret and play the E shape C at the VIII. Then walk the pairs on strings 2 and 3 down from fret V to land on the G shape C. They could also be used to connect two locations for playing the same chord, especially while descending. These also work well to create a new location and “voice” to play when soloing.

Remember, the numbers relate to the note’s position in the scale:
In the case of C,
C major scale C D E F G A B C
Numbered: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1
C shape C chord is 3 5 1 3 = E G C E
G shape C chord is 5 1 3 1 = G C E C
E shape C chord is 1 3 5 1 = C E G C

To find the position of the next shape more readily, you can play two note passing chords as you move between them (dotted lines)

In the case of C,
C major scale C D E F G A B C
Numbered: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1
C shape C chord is 3 5 1 3 = E G C E
G shape C chord is 5 1 3 1 = G C E C
E shape C chord is 1 3 5 1 = C E G C

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To find the position of the next shape more readily, you can play two note passing chords as you move between them (dotted lines)