THE CAPO *-written by David Taub*

Using a capo on your electric or acoustic guitar can be both functional and fun. It will give you access to a whole new and exciting spectrum of sound textures as well as making key transpositions a snap. Using it is like giving the guitar the whole new palette of sounds. Capo is actually short for the Italian phrase "capotasto", which translates to "principle fret". The device in essence provides a temporary nut on the guitar at various fret positions. In effect it shortens the length of the vibrating strings which raises the pitch of the open strings. So it makes open chord transposition a snap. The capo is also a very useful tool as it makes it extremely easy to change a songs key to a more suitable vocal range. The guitarist can instantly change the pitch of the strings to suit their vocal range from song to song. It also makes playing flatted bar chords like Eb, Ab, and Bb much easier as with a capo you can play them with open voicings as compared to bar chords.

If you affix the capo at the first fret, all the chords shapes you normally play will now be moved up a half step. Try playing familiar chord voicings while utilizing the capo at different frets and listen to the different sounds you can get with the capo. Below is a chart that illustrates basic major chord shapes and what they will be transposed to if a capo is used at the indicated fret. For example if you play a C chord shape while having the capo affixed at the 6th fret, the chord will ring out to the pitch of F#. If you play an E chord shape with the capo affixed at the 6th fret, the chord will ring out to the pitch Bb. You can see by these examples the capo allows the guitar player to shape common open chord fingerings but have the actual pitch ring out to a chord they may have to play with a bar chord.

capo fret	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
C	C	C#	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B
h	C#	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C
o	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#
r	Eb	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D
d	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	Eb
	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	Eb	E
S	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	Eb	E	F
h	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	Eb	E	F	F#
a	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G
p	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G	G#
e	Bb	B	C	C#	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G	G#	A
s	B	C	C#	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb