

Using a Capo

A Practical Guide for Worship Guitarists

What Is a Capo?

A capo (KAY-po) is a small clamp that attaches across the guitar neck, raising the pitch of all strings equally. It lets you play familiar open chord shapes in any key — without learning new fingering patterns or complicated chord voicings.

Benefits of Using a Capo

- **Match any singer's vocal range** — move the capo up or down until the key feels comfortable for your congregation or you as the worship leader.
- **Play easy chord shapes to achieve keys that would be difficult on guitar** — as an example, if a hymn is best played in the key of Ab, using a capo on the first fret allows the hymn leader to play simple chord shapes in the key of G and the result will be chords in Ab.
- **No need for complex barre chords** — as in the example above, playing an Ab would require a barre chord on the fourth fret. Using a capo virtually eliminates barre chords.
- **Play alongside piano or other instruments** — use guitar-friendly shapes while sounding in the piano's key.
- **Free up mental bandwidth** — simpler chord shapes let you focus on leading worship and singing at the same time.
- **Change keys instantly between songs** — just slide the capo up or down the neck.
- **Affordable and essential** — one of the most practical and inexpensive tools in a worship guitarist's kit.

Capo Transpose Chart

Keys G · A · C · D · E | Capo 1, 2, and 3

How to Use This Chart

Find the chord shapes you want to play in the left column. Then follow the row across to see what key the guitar sounds like (transposed key) when the capo is placed on frets 1, 2, or 3. The Worship Leader Toolkit provides charts in five keys — G, A, C, D, and E — so you can always start from a familiar set of shapes.

Chord Shapes (chart key)	Capo 1 Sounds In	Capo 2 Sounds In	Capo 3 Sounds In
G	Ab / G#	A	Bb / A#
A	Bb / A#	B	C
C	Db / C#	D	Eb / D#
D	Eb / D#	E	F
E	F	F# / Gb	G

Tip: A spring-clip or trigger-style capo works best in a worship setting — you can reposition it quickly between songs without fumbling.