

AURORA

Chords and arpeggios, lit from the root

How to use it

Pick a key. Pick a chord. See every shape a hand can hold, hear it, and light it on the neck of your own instrument, in your own tuning.

Start here

Aurora answers one question: what are the ways to play this chord on this instrument, in this tuning? Everything on the page is a way of asking or a way of seeing the answer.

1. Observatory (top panel): choose your instrument, then a tuning preset — or retune any string with its + / – buttons. A capo goes here too.
2. Key: set the key you are playing in. The chords that live in it appear with their character written underneath (home, tense, somber...). Click one to chart it.
3. Chord: or set root, quality and extension yourself. The chord tones appear as coloured chips — click a chip to hear the note.
4. Voicings: six common shapes (or every playable one). Click a card: the shape lights on the neck, the stage shows it big, and Strum / Arpeggio play it.
5. Neck: scroll down to see every chord tone on the neck. Turn Sound on and click notes to hear them. Hide strings you are not using.
6. Keep it: Save PDF guide prints the neck, every voicing and the arpeggio shapes. Charted maps save six snapshots of the whole chart.

Reading the colours

	Root — amber — the only warm colour on the page; the eye finds it first.
	Third — ice blue — in a sus chord the 2nd or 4th sits in this slot and wears this colour.
	Fifth — violet.
	Extension — steel — 6ths, 7ths, 9ths, 11ths, 13ths sit back.
	Dimmed note — a chord tone that is not part of the focused voicing or shape.
	Bright ring — a note in the focused voicing or arpeggio shape; the dashed line joins them in playing order.

The Key panel

Choose a root and a mode (Major, Natural minor, Harmonic minor, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian and more — each with its character in the menu). Use charted chord as key sets the key from whatever is on the chart.

- In the key: the chords stacked from the scale, as triads or sevenths, with Roman numerals. The short line under each is its character; hover for the longer why.
- Colour from outside the key: borrowed chords and secondary dominants — the usual ways to step out for a bar and come back (iv, $\flat$ VI, $\flat$ VII, $\flat$ II, V/V...).
- Progressions in this key: stock changes spelled out in your key. Click one and it lands in the progression builder, ready to play.

Voicings

Common (best six) picks the most playable shapes spread up the neck: three frets of reach, no muted string in the middle. All (every playable) shows up to 72 shapes with four frets of reach and one inside mute allowed.

Bass: root only keeps the root as the lowest note. Switch it to any chord tone for slash chords (C/E, C/G). On ukulele and banjo this rule is off by default — those instruments have no bass register.

Spread keeps only Drop 2 or Drop 3 shapes (four-note chords only).

Reading a chord box: strings run low to high left to right; x is a muted string, a circle above the nut is an open string; a thick bar at the top is the nut, otherwise the starting fret is written at the left (5fr); a rounded bar across strings is a barre; the numbers under the box are fingers (1 index ... 4 pinky, ○ open).

Neck tools

- Fret focus lights chord tones only between two frets — a working area. Voicings are still found on the whole neck.
- Frets to chart: 12, 15 or 24. “All” voicings and arpeggio shapes search everything charted.
- Strings shown: click a string to hide it. Hidden strings go dark, and voicings and shapes use only the strings left showing — chart C on the top four strings and you get the rhythm-player triad shapes. The string labels on the neck toggle too.
- Sound: with it on, clicking a note on the neck plays it. Play, strum and arpeggio buttons always sound.
- Capo (in Quick tuning): chord boxes count frets from the capo; the neck shows true frets with the capo drawn as a bar; pitches are real.

Arpeggio Maker 6000

Shapes for raking through the chord, found from the same notes as the neck. Box is every chord tone inside a four-fret window, like a position. 1 / string ... 4 / string climb from a root, taking up to that many notes on each string and never doubling back: 1 is a sweep, 2 is economy picking, 3 is a stretch, 4 is tapping territory. Click a shape to light it on the neck; Play ▲ ▼ runs it.

Reverse lookup and the progression builder

Reverse lookup: turn picking on, click the positions you are holding on the neck (one per string), and every chord name that fits is listed, closest first. Click a name to chart it.

Progression: add chords and Aurora picks, for each one, the voicing that moves the fewest fingers from the one before. Focus a voicing before adding a chord to pin that shape. Play runs one bar per chord at the set BPM; Loop repeats. Click a step to load that chord.

The bars that follow you

Scroll past the Observatory and three things appear. The Helm (top) carries the chord, its function in the key, the key menus, the chord tones and the main buttons. The Placard (right) shows the chord in big type for glancing at from behind a guitar. The Dock (right, below the Placard) holds every control in flyouts: Chord, Arps, Neck, Tuning, Instrument. On narrow screens the Placard becomes a name rail, and on phones the bars stay out of the way.

Every control, in one place

What each button and menu does. Hovering any control in the app shows the same thing.

Observatory

Instrument	Sets the string count and the tuning presets: guitars (6/7/8), basses (4/5/6), 5-string and 4-string banjo, ukulele.
Tuning preset	Common tunings for the instrument. Shows “Custom tuning” once you change a string.
+ / – on a string	Retune that string by a semitone.
All strings ↓ ½ / whole	Lower every string a semitone or a tone.
Capo	Virtual capo at frets 1–9.
Root / Quality / Extension	The chord.
Note labels	Intervals (R 3 5 7), note names, or both.
Note spelling	Flats or sharps for black notes.

Key panel

Key / mode	The key you are playing in.
Triads / Sevenths	Chord size for the in-key row.
Use charted chord as key	Set the key from the chart.
Chord cards	Click to chart. Dashed cards are from outside the key.
Progression cards	Click to load into the progression builder.

Chord panel

Chord tone chips	Click to hear the note.
Scales that hold this chord	Scales on the chord's root containing every tone.
Common / All	How many voicings to show.
Bass	Root only, or any chord tone (slash chords).
Spread	Any, Drop 2 only, Drop 3 only.
Voicing card	Click to focus: lights the neck, opens the stage.
Strum ▲ ▼ / Arpeggio	Play the focused voicing.
Clear focus	Light every chord tone again.

Neck

Fret focus / Whole neck	Working area.
Frets to chart	12 / 15 / 24.
Left-handed	Mirror the neck and chord boxes.

Strings shown / All strings	Hide or show strings.
Sound / Play chord	Note-click sound; the chord as a block.
String label	Click to hide or show that string.
Charted maps	☐ saves a snapshot; click a name to recall; double-click to rename; × empties.

Below the neck

Shape (Box, 1-4 / string)	Arpeggio shape type.
Shape card / Play ▲ ▼	Light it, play it.
Save PDF guide	Neck, every voicing, arpeggio shapes.
Pick notes on the neck	Reverse lookup.
Add current chord / Play / Loop / BPM / Clear	Progression builder.
Start fresh	Forget the saved session.

When something looks wrong

- No sound when I click a note. Turn Sound On in the Neck tools (or the Helm). Browsers only allow audio after a click, so the first click wakes it.
- “No playable voicing” for my chord. Try All instead of Common, allow any bass note, or show more strings. Extended chords on four strings often need a dropped fifth, which All allows.
- The PDF did not appear. The browser downloaded it to your downloads folder; some browsers ask first. Pop-up blockers do not affect it.
- The page forgot my settings. Settings live in this browser's storage; another browser or a private window starts fresh. Start fresh clears them on purpose.
- A string shows no notes. It is hidden. Click its label on the neck or the Strings shown card.