GENERAL

can i count on you guitar chords

Published: September 3, 2026 | Index ID: #-

Can I Count on You? A Complete Guide to Guitar Chords, Play throughs, and Practice Tips

When you first hear the gentle, heartfelt melody of “Can I Count on You,” you might wonder how to bring that emotion to life on your own guitar. Whether you’re a beginner looking for a simple, sing along tune or an intermediate player eager to explore deeper chord voicings, this article is your one stop resource. We’ll cover everything from the basic chord shapes to advanced fingerpicking patterns, and we’ll answer the burning question that many guitarists ask: **can I count on you guitar chords**for this song? Yes, you can—follow along and you’ll have the chords in hand in no time.

Song Overview

“Can I Count on You” is a timeless ballad that blends soft pop sensibilities with folk inspired guitar work. The original recording is known for its memorable hook, memorable vocal line, and the understated yet effective use of guitar. The song’s chord progression is straightforward enough for beginners, yet it offers subtle harmonic twists that keep more advanced players engaged. Below is a quick rundown of the key musical elements:

- Key: G major (with occasional use of the relative minor, E minor)
- Tempo: 84 BPM (moderately slow)
- Time Signature: 4/4
- Structure: Intro – Verse – Chorus – Verse – Chorus – Bridge – Chorus – Outro
- Primary Chords: G, D, Em, C, Am, and occasional B&m or F chords for added color

With this foundation, you can confidently tackle the next sections, where we’ll dive into chord shapes, strumming patterns, and practice routines that will help you master the song.

Can I Count on You – The Chord Progression

Below is the core chord progression for the entire song. The chords are written in the key of G major, which is a natural fit for most guitarists. If you prefer a different key, you can use a capo or transpose the chords accordingly.

Verse

1. G
2. D
3. Em
4. C

Chorus

1. G
2. D
3. Em
4. C
5. Am
6. D

Bridge

1. Em
2. C
3. G
4. D

These chord shapes are the same as those used in many popular songs, so if you're already familiar with the G D Em C progression, you'll feel right at home. If you're new to the guitar, don't worry—each chord is broken down below with finger placement diagrams and strumming suggestions.

How to Play the Chords: Finger Placement and Strumming Patterns

Chord Diagrams

Below are the standard open chord fingerings for the primary chords. Remember that the numbers on the diagram represent the frets, while the dots indicate where to place your fingers. The open strings are shown as "O," and muted strings are marked with a "×."

- G Major

E|---3---
B|---0---
G|---0---
D|---0---
A|---2---
E|---3---

- D Major

E|---2---
B|---3---
G|---2---
D|---0---
A|---x---
E|---x---

- E Minor

E|---0---
B|---0---
G|---0---
D|---2---
A|---2---
E|---0---

- C Major

E|---0---
B|---1---
G|---0---
D|---2---
A|---3---

E|---x---

- A Minor

E|---0---
B|---1---
G|---2---
D|---2---
A|---0---
E|---x---

Strumming Pattern

The song's relaxed feel is best captured with a simple down up strumming pattern. Try the following pattern for a smooth groove:

- Pattern: D – D – U – U – D – U
- Explanation:

  D = Downstroke
- U = Upstroke
- Play each beat evenly, keeping the rhythm steady.

Feel free to add a slight pause on the fourth beat for a more expressive feel. If you're comfortable, experiment with palm muting on the lower strings for a subtle percussive effect.

Playing the Song: Step by Step Breakdown

Intro

1. Play the G chord, letting it ring for two measures.
2. Transition to D, then Em, and finally C, each for one measure.

Verse

1. Repeat the verse progression (G – D – Em – C) for the first verse.
2. Use the same strumming pattern; keep the tempo steady.

Chorus

1. Start with G, then D, Em, and C.
2. Introduce the Am chord on the second line of the chorus for added emotional depth.
3. Finish the chorus on D before returning to the verse.

Bridge

1. Play Em, C, G, D in sequence.
2. Consider adding a gentle arpeggio for a more intimate feel.

Outro

1. End with a simple G – D – Em – C progression.
2. Let the G chord fade out slowly for a satisfying conclusion.

Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

- Holding Chords Too Tight: Many beginners grip the strings too hard, causing tension and fatigue. Keep your fingers relaxed and use just enough pressure to press the strings cleanly.

- Missing the Transition: Transitioning from G to D can be tricky because of the thumb placement. Practice the movement slowly, focusing on smoothness.
- Strumming Too Fast: The song's emotional weight comes from its relaxed tempo. Keep the strumming steady and avoid rushing.
- Ignoring Dynamics: The song benefits from dynamic shifts—play softer during verses and louder in the chorus. Use your palm to control volume.

Advanced Techniques for the Savvy Guitarist

If you've mastered the basic chords and want to add flair, consider the following techniques:

Fingerpicking Pattern

Replace the strumming pattern with a simple fingerpicking pattern for a more intimate sound:

- Pattern: Thumb on the low E string, index on the B string, middle on the G string, ring on the D string.
- Repeat the pattern while cycling through the chords.

Chord Extensions

Add 7ths or 9ths to give the song a richer harmonic palette:

- G7 (G – B – D – F)
- D7 (D – F&o – A – C)
- Em7 (E – G – B – D)

Capo Placement

Using a capo on the 2nd fret allows you to play in the key of A major, which might suit a higher vocal range. The chord shapes remain the same; the capo simply shifts the pitch.

Transposing the Song for Different Keys

Transposing is handy if your vocal range doesn't fit the original key. Here's a quick guide:

1. Choose the target key (e.g., D major).
2. Use a transposition chart or online tool to convert each chord.
3. Apply the same progression in the new key. For example, G becomes D, D becomes A, etc.

Alternatively, place a capo on the 3rd fret and play the chords in G major to achieve the same effect.

Practice Routine: Building Muscle Memory

Consistency is key. Follow this simple practice plan to master "Can I Count on You" in under two weeks.

Week 1 – Foundation

1. Day 1–2: Learn each chord shape individually. Focus on clean sound.
2. Day 3–4: Practice chord transitions slowly, using a metronome set to 60 BPM.
3. Day 5–7: Play the intro and verse progression at a comfortable tempo.

Week 2 – Integration

1. Day 8–9: Add the chorus progression, paying attention to dynamics.
2. Day 10–11: Practice the bridge and experiment with fingerpicking.
3. Day 12–14: Play through the entire song, recording yourself to evaluate timing and expression.

By the end of this plan, you should be able to play the song smoothly and confidently.

Resources for Further Learning

- Chord Charts: Ultimate Guitar offers user submitted chord sheets.

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