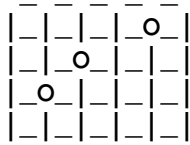


## How To Play Piano From Guitar Chord Charts:

c



I learned to play guitar by learning the chords from chord tab charts, like the C above. My first songs for guitar had to have the chord tab above the lyrics. After a while I no longer needed the fingering of the chord, just the letter was enough since I had learned all of the different versions of the chord fingering. So most of the music in my online database just shows the chord name and the song lyrics. The only time I show a chord tab is for unusual chords. The way you can play guitar to a song by just having the lyrics with the chords can be done on piano as well. Just like with guitar, you need to develop the muscle memory to finger the chords correctly and learn all the inversions to be able to move from chord to chord. One of the differences between guitar and piano is you sometimes use both hands to voice chords on a piano.

### Learning All The Chords

At first this seems like a really daunting task, but once you understand that they entire keyboard is just repeating patterns, you realize that you really just need to memorize one and the rest you can figure out from the one you know.

#### Major Key Chord Pattern

**I - ii - iii - IV - V - vi - vii °**

If you build triad chords from each note in a major scale you will come up with triads that have the flavors listed above.

#### Minor Key Chord Pattern

**i - ii° - III - iv - v - VI - VII**

If you build triad chords from each note in a natural minor scale you will come up with triads that have the flavors listed above.

### Building Muscle Memory:

Start off playing simple triad chords in different keys to get your hands used to playing them. Just like with playing a guitar where you had to get your fingers used to the chord forms such as C, D, A, E, etc... you need to develop the same kind of muscle memory in your hands for playing chords on a piano keyboard. Start with triads, then work on doing inversions of triads, then work on forming seventh chords. To begin with just focus on major and minor triads and major and dominant sevenths and all of their inversions.

## Things To Practice To Build Muscle Memory

- Scales - Major, Minor (Natural, Harmonic, Melodic)
- Triads
- Triad Inversions
- Seventh Chords
- Seventh Chord Inversions
- Parallel Octaves
- Parallel Thirds
- Country Thirds

## Practice Doesn't Have To Be Monotonous

Using the techniques listed previously, you can create little songs of sorts and little riffs, jams, etc... Make it fun, make it interesting. Some things like playing scales are by nature pretty boring. The whole point of learning scales is to build muscle memory and developing your musical ear for moving through the notes of the scale. There's no way around that, but you can break up the monotony with screw around / experiment time. Play scales for a while, then take a break and just play around. Using the scale techniques, create melodies. Try playing notes not in the scale to see how they sound. If you know all the chords in a key and you know its scale, you can use that information to create songs.

## Practice Playing In Keys

Since most songs stay within a particular key it's good to know how it feels to play in that key and know all of the notes within its scale. Take any scale and form the triads in that scale. Start off with an easy scale like C, G or F. Starting with the root triad, build a progression moving to other triads within the scale. First do a simple 1-4-5 movement, then play around with using the minor chords too. Try and create interesting chord progressions. Use inversions and create simple movements between chords. While forming chords in your left hand practice making accompanying melodies in your right hand. Alternate with your left hand creating bass lines supported by chord changes in your right. Use your left hand to create strong bass presence using parallel octaves supporting chords played in your right hand. Write down a progression to play and adhere to it. What you need to do is to be able to look at a chord and without thinking of it, form it on the keyboard. So for example if I am playing in the key of A. I should be able to move through all the chords in A: A, Bm, C#m, D, E, F#m. Note: I didn't include the diminished chord G#dim. The truth is you won't really use it until you get into more advanced playing like blues and jazz.

## Playing Songs

Probably the best way to get good and enjoy playing is by learning a song. Start with simple songs you know well to begin with. Most modern rock songs are written in keys that are easy to play on guitar like A, C, D, E and G. These are also fairly easy keys to play on piano. Find a song in one of those keys. Look at the chord progression for the song. Try and work out the chords and transitions on the piano keyboard. This is where knowing the chords and their chord inversions comes in handy. Inverted chords can be used in the right hand while the left establishes the bass of the chord. Just as establishing the bass in the left hand is important for the chord to sound right, the top end matters too. Try the different inversions of the chord in your right hand to see which complements the melody best. At first just try and make the chords, don't worry so much about the melody. Try singing along with the chord changes. Later as you become better and your ear develops, you can start playing the melody parts along with the harmony.

## Song Analysis

### Daniel by Elton John

This song is written in the key of C major. I know this from the chords in the song, plus I have several versions of it in sheet music. Here are the chords in the key of C:

**Key Of C:** C Dm Em F G Am Bdim  
I ii iii IV V vi viio

### Song Chords

**Intro:** C G/F F G C F/C C F/C

**Verse:** C - Dm - G - E7 - Am - G - F - G - Am - G - F  
1:[G - F/G - C - G] 2:[G - G7 - C]

**Chorus:** F - C - F - C - G/B - Am - G - F - Ab - C - A7 - Dm7 - G7

If we put it into roman numerals with respect to the key of C, notice a few of the chords venture outside of the key, for example the E7 (III7), if it had stayed within the key would have been Em7 (iii7), but that's part of what makes this song interesting.

**Intro:** I - V/IV - IV - V - I - IV/I - I - IV/I

**Verse:** I - ii - V - III7 - vi - V - IV - V - vi - V - IV  
1:[V - IV/V - I - V] 2:[V - V7 - I]

**Chorus:** IV - I - IV - I - V/vii - vi - V - IV - VIb - I - VI7 - ii7 - V7

The only reason you should ever change to numbering the chords is if you want to transpose it to another key or you feel like analyzing the song.

# Song Structure

If we assign letters to the song parts where:

**Verse = A**  
**Chorus = B**  
**Instrumental = C**

The song pattern is: **A-A-B-A-C-B-A**

**Intro: C G/F F G C F/C C F/C**

**C** Daniel is traveling tonight on a plane,  
**Dm**  
**G** I can see the red tail lights heading for Spa---in,  
**E7** oh, and I can see Daniel waving goodbye.  
**Am**  
**Am/G F G Am** God it looks like Daniel,  
**Am/G F** must be the clouds in my eyes.  
**G F/G C G**

They say Spain is pretty, though I've never been,  
Well Daniel say it's the best place he's ever seen,  
Oh and he should know he's been there enough,  
Lord I miss Daniel,  
**G G7 C** oh I miss him so much.

**Chorus:**

**F C** Oh, Daniel my brother, you are older than me,  
**F C** Do you still feel the pain, of the scars that won't heal?  
**G/B Am G F** Your eyes have died, but you see more than I,  
**Ab C A7 Dm7 G7** Daniel you're a star, in the face of the sky

Daniel is traveling tonight on a plane,  
I can see the red tail lights heading for Spain,  
oh, and I can see Daniel waving goodbye.  
God it looks like Daniel,  
**G G7 C** must be the clouds in my eyes.

**Instrumental:** Same as verse.

**Chorus**  
**Verse 1**

## Intro Section

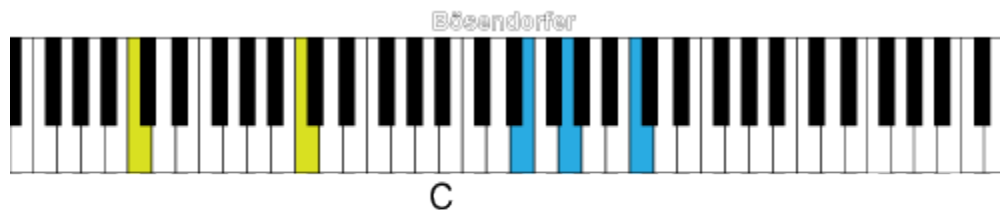
First let's look at the intro section. Notice it has some chords with non-root bass notes, sometimes called slash chords because of the slash between the chord and its bass note.

**Intro: C G/F F G C F/C C F/C**

If we remove the chord names for the slash chords and just look at the bass notes:

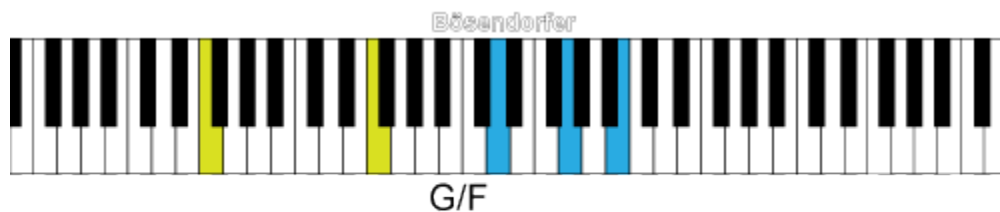
**Intro: C F F G C C C C**

You can see the bass doesn't move too much. The way I would start out "Faking" this part of the song, is to play octaves in the bass and chords in the right or treble side.



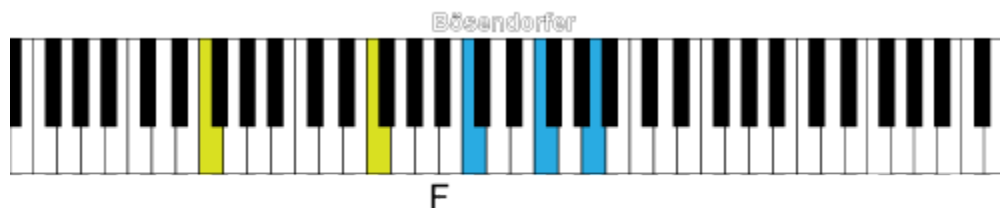
C Octave in the bass with a C 1st inversion triad in the treble.

The next chord to go to is a G with an F in the bass. So I need to move the left hand octave up to F. The right hand if you notice already has one note that is in the G major chord, so all I have to do to change this chord is to drop down both outer notes of the chord. I move the C to a B and I move the E to a D and I leave the G note alone. This will give me a G chord in the 2nd inversion form.



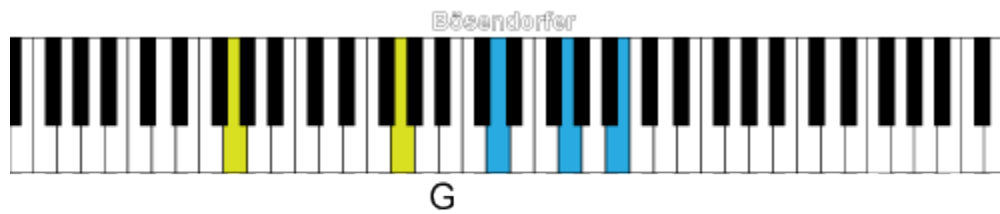
F Octave in the bass with a G 2nd inversion triad in the treble.

The next chord to go to is F. Since we already have an F in the bass, we don't need to do anything there. In the right hand, we just need to shift everything down one note.



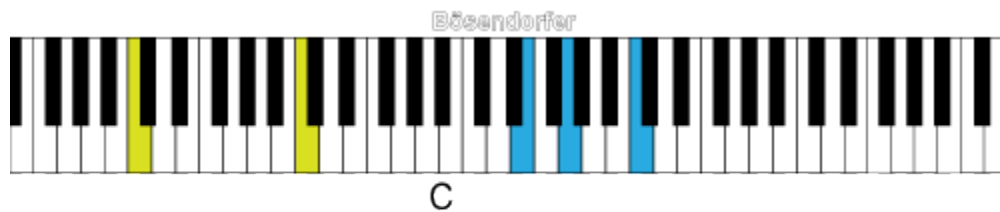
F Octave in the bass with a F 2nd inversion triad in the treble.

The next chord we need to go to is G major. The easiest way to do this is to shift everything up one note.



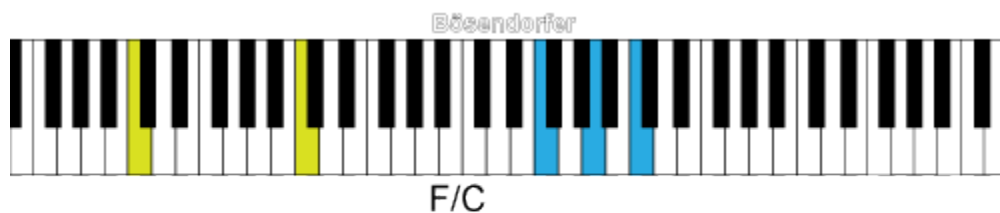
G Octave in the bass with a G 2nd inversion triad in the treble.

The next chord we need to go to is C major. To get there we need to move the bass hand down to a C octave and in the right hand to shift the lower and upper notes up one note to a C first inversion triad chord.



C Octave in the bass with a C 1st inversion triad in the treble.

The part here where it goes from C to F/C repeats a couple of times. I'm only going to illustrate it once. The next chord is a slash chord with C in the bass. Since we were already playing a C in the bass we don't need to move our left hand. To switch from a C 1st inversion to an F in the root position is easy. Just raise the two bottom notes up one note,



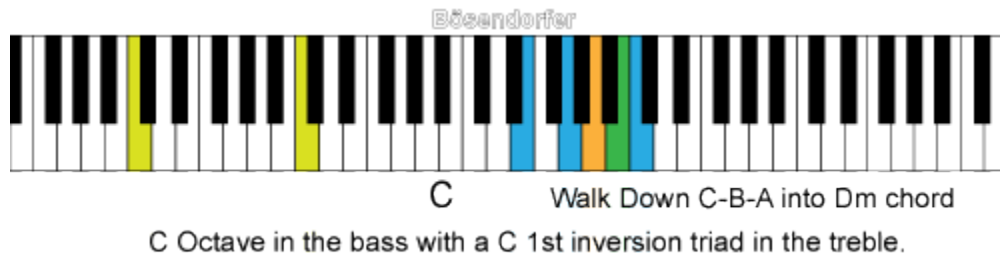
C Octave in the bass with a F root triad in the treble.

Now we have finished the intro section.

## Verse Section

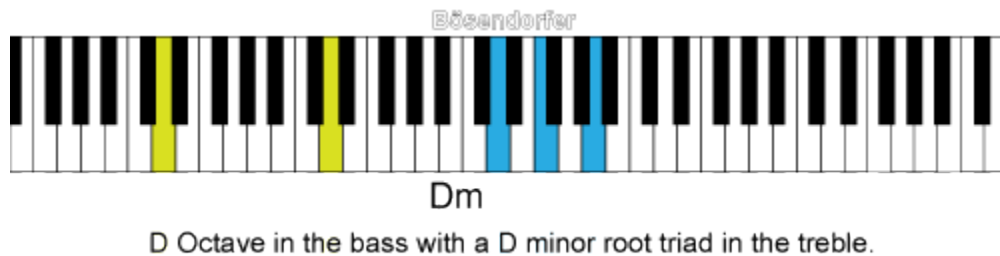
**Verse:** C - Dm - G - E7 - Am - G - F - G - Am - G - F  
1: [G - F/G - C - G] 2: [G - G7 - C]

The first chord is a C major. This plays until there is a walk down going to D minor. He hits the D minor chord with the lyric "Plane". The walk down occurs on the lyrics "On A" just before "Plane". I have indicated the walk down notes with parenthesis.



C (B) (A) Dm  
Daniel is traveling tonight on a plane,

When you hit the lyric "Plane" you should be playing the D minor chord

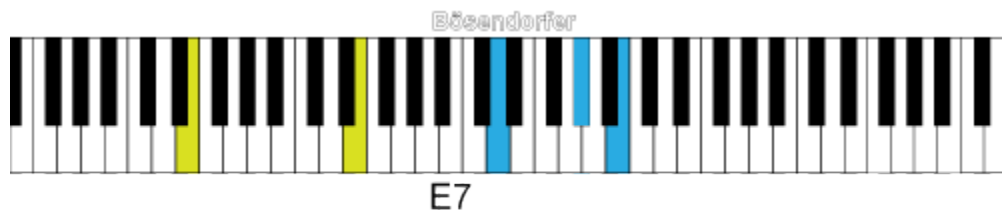


Next we need to move to G major. To do this, move the bass octave up to G and in your right hand raise the two top notes up one note each.



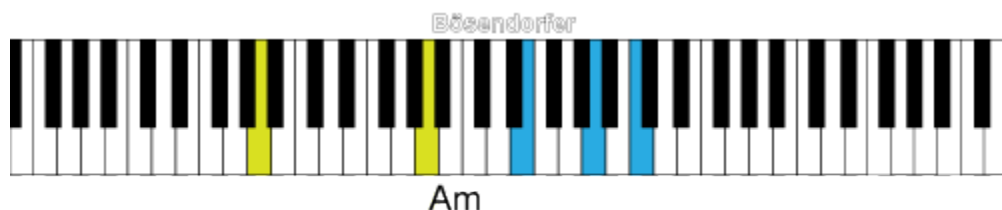
Our next chord after G is an E dominant 7th. If you look at the notes of an E7 you'll notice we are already using two of the notes in our right hand, the D, which is the seventh in the E7 chord and the B which is its fifth note. So all we need to do to form this chord in the right hand is to raise the G to a G sharp and lower the octave bass to E. The right hand won't actually be playing a full E7 triad, just the 3rd, 5th and 7th. The root note is played in the bass.

**G** **E7** **Am**  
 I can see the red tail lights heading for Spa---in,



E Octave in the bass with a E dominant 7th root triad in the treble.

The next chord is an A minor. He actually hits the A minor at the end of the lyric "Spain" which is drawn out. To get to the A minor, we bring the bass up to A, then move every note to the next white key.



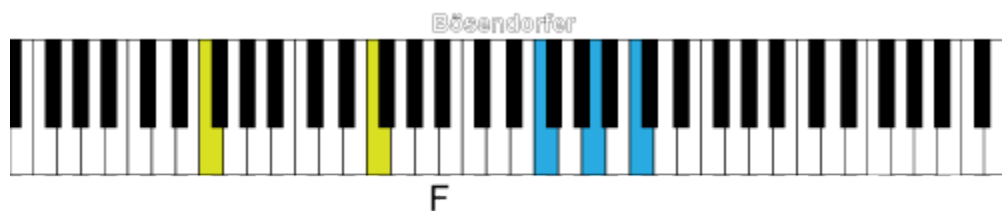
A Octave in the bass with a A minor 2nd inversion triad in the treble.

This next part happens fairly quickly, the bass is walking down from the A to F. In the right hand, once the left is reaching the F, all that is necessary is to raise the E on the bottom to an F.

**Am/G** **F** **G** **Am**  
 oh, and I can see Daniel waving goodbye.



G Octave in the bass with a A minor 2nd inversion triad in the treble.



F Octave in the bass with a F major root triad in the treble.



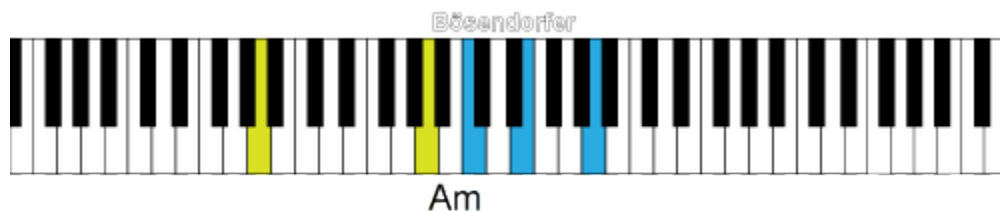
**Am/G**   **F**                      **G**                      **Am**    (Cont...)  
 oh, and    I can see Daniel waving goodbye.

The next chord change is to **G major**. Now we could just shift everything up to the **G** since it's right next to **F**, but there is a rule in Classical music that says you should avoid parallel fifths. They also have the same rule about parallel octaves, but in rock we break that rule all the time. Yet, the truth is, a progression sounds much better to the ear if you can avoid parallel fifths. What I'm going to do here is, instead of going straight to the **G**, I'm going to go to an inversion of **G**. There is another reason for doing this. I notice that the next chord is an **Am**, which means I would have to make the same movement twice if I just moved up to **G**. So I voice the chord as a second inversion of **G**.



G Octave in the bass with a G 2nd inversion triad in the treble.

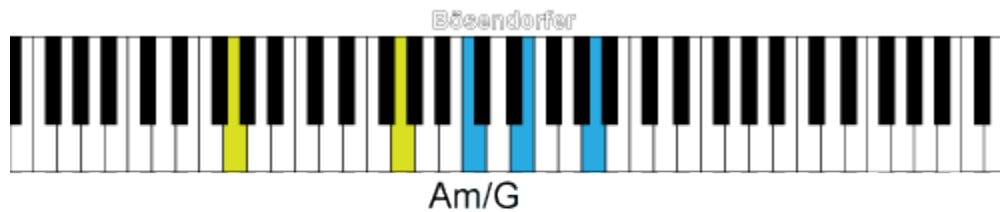
Next to the **Am**, which I voice as a first inversion chord while raising the **G** to an **A** in the bass.



A Octave in the bass with a A minor 1st inversion triad in the treble.

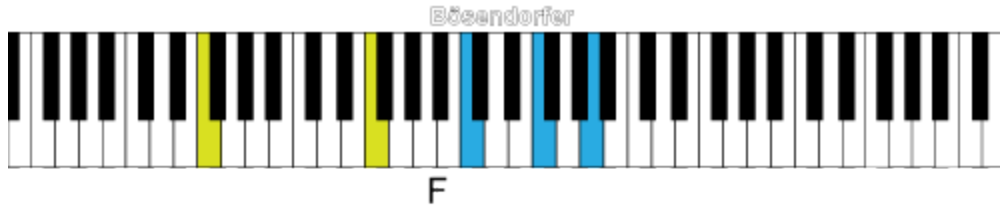
The next chord to go to is **Am/G**. Since we are already playing an **Am** in the treble, all we need to do is to lower the bass note by one to **G**.

**Am/G**                      **F**  
 God it looks like Daniel,



G Octave in the bass with a A minor 1st inversion triad in the treble.

From here we go to **F major**. Two notes in the right hand are already in place. All we have to do is raise the **E** to an **F** and lower the bass note to **F**



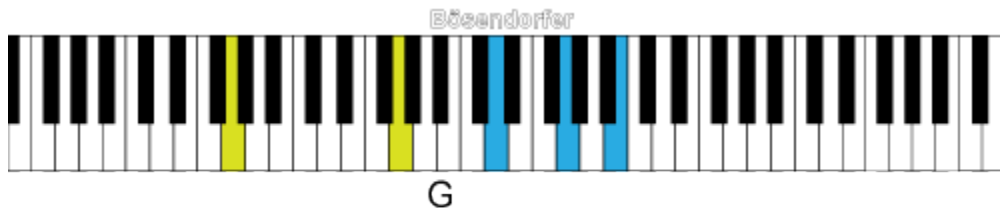
F Octave in the bass with a F 2nd inversion triad in the treble.

From above, musically it continues to End Verse 1 for the first verse, for the second verse it should jump to that section which follows this.

### Start of End Verse 1

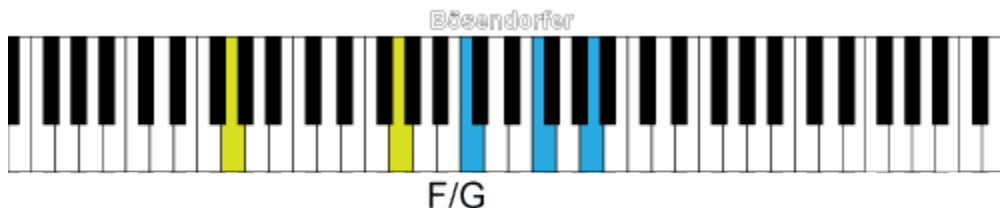
The end of verse 1 goes from the previous F back up to G major. From here the next chord is F/G

G                                      F/G                                      C      G  
 must be the clouds in my eyes.



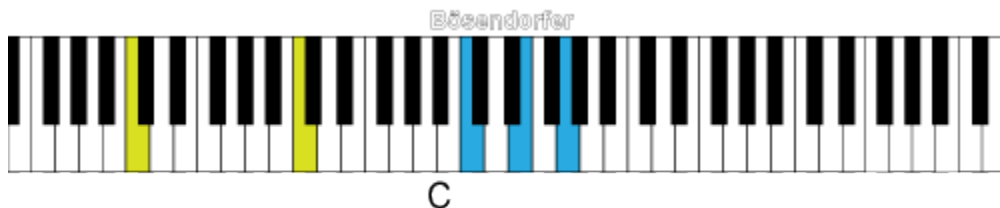
G Octave in the bass with a G 2nd inversion triad in the treble.

Since we are already playing a G in the bass, we just need to adjust the treble side by playing an F major chord.



G Octave in the bass with a F major 2nd inversion triad in the treble.

The last part of verse 1 ends with the chords C followed by G before leading back into the second verse.



C Octave in the bass with a C major root triad in the treble.



G

G Octave in the bass with a G major 1st inversion triad in the treble.

**End Verse 1 End**

**Start of End Verse 2**

G            G7            C  
oh I miss him so much.



G

G Octave in the bass with a G 2nd inversion triad in the treble.

To the G7, just drop the middle note in the above illustration from G to F. Since the G is already doubled up in the bass, there's no need to add it to the G7 in the treble.



G7

G Octave in the bass with a G dominant 7th in the treble.

To C, then into the Chorus



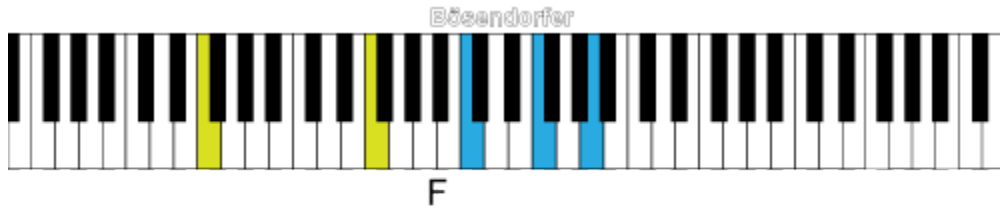
C

C Octave in the bass with a C 1st inversion triad in the treble.

**End Verse 2 End**

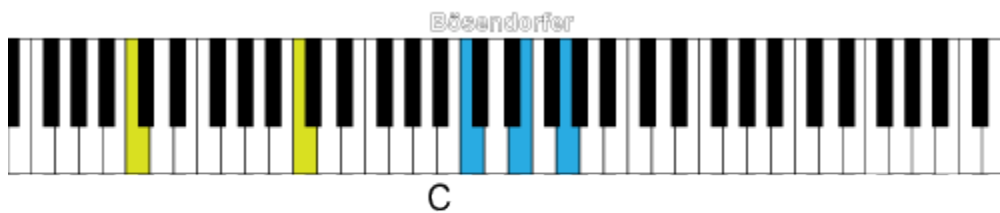
## Chorus Section

**F** **C**  
Oh, Daniel my brother, you are older than me,



F Octave in the bass with a F 2nd inversion triad in the treble.

Then from F to C major

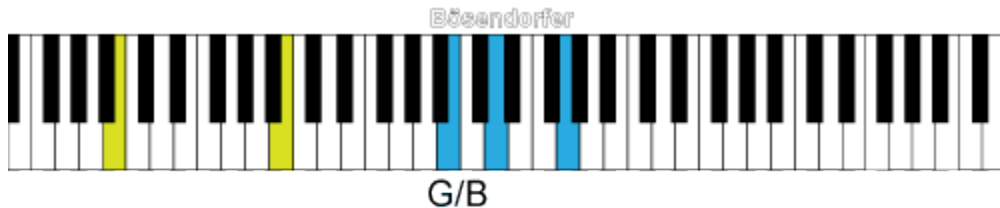


C Octave in the bass with a C major root triad in the treble.

**F** **C**  
Do you still feel the pain, of the scars that won't heal?

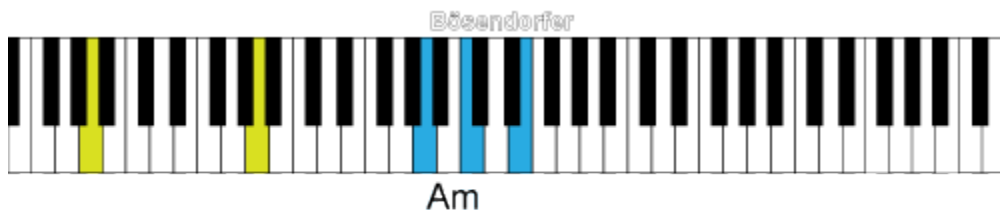
Then back to F, then back to C (Note: Use same chords as above) After that there is a quick walk down from C to Am

**G/B** **Am** **G** **F**  
Your eyes have died, but you see more than I,



B Octave in the bass with a G Major 1st inversion triad in the treble.

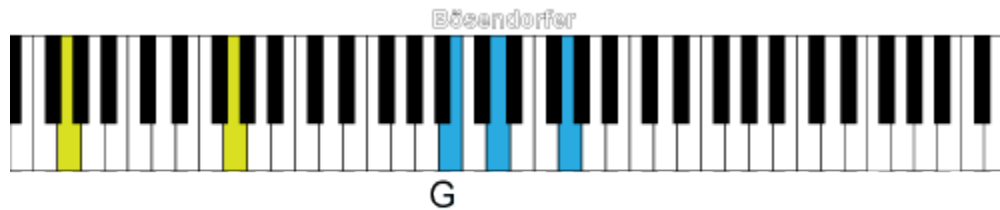
To the Am chord



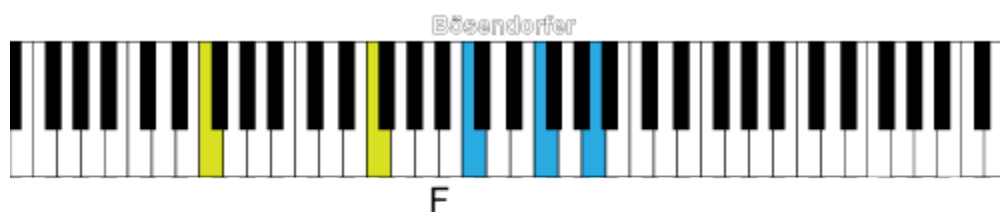
A Octave in the bass with a A Minor root position triad in the treble.

G/B Am G F (Continued)  
 Your eyes have died, but you see more than I,

From the Am we go to G major, then to F major



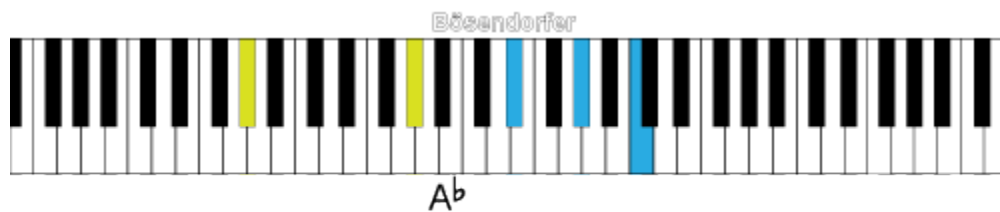
G Octave in the bass with a G Major 1st Inversion triad in the treble.



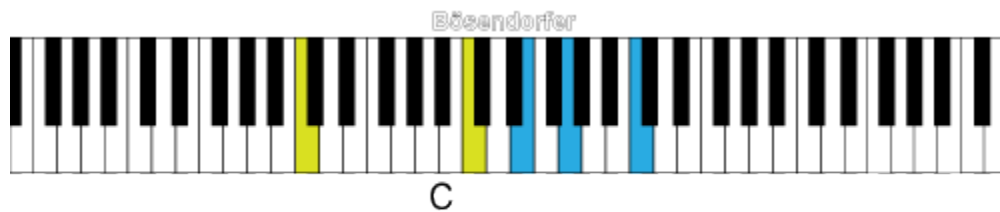
F Octave in the bass with a F 2nd inversion triad in the treble.

The next chord, the **A<sup>b</sup>** is definitely not within the key. The **A<sup>b</sup>** then goes to a **C major** chord

**A<sup>b</sup>** C A7 Dm7 G7  
 Daniel you're a star, in the face of the sky



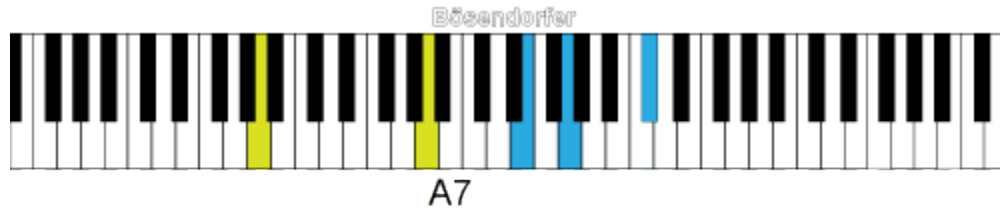
A<sup>b</sup> Octave in the bass with a A<sup>b</sup> Major 2nd Inversion triad in the treble.



C Octave in the bass with a C Major 1st Inversion triad in the treble.

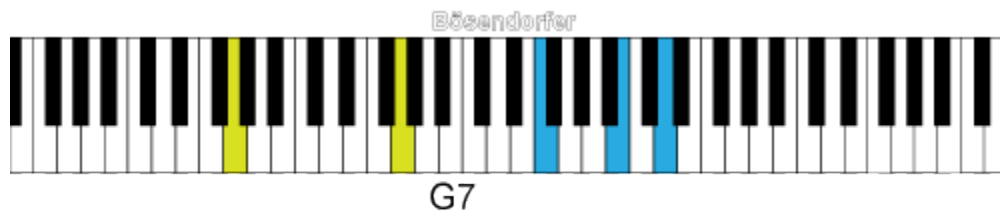
**Ab**                      **C**                      **A7**                                      **Dm7**   **G7**  
Daniel you're a star,    in the face of the sky

From the C chord we need to go to an A dominant 7th chord.



A Octave in the bass with a A Dominant 7th 2nd Inversion triad in the treble.

From the A7 we need to go to a D minor 7th chord followed by a G dominant 7th chord. The G7 chord is formed by an octave G in the bass and a 2nd inversion B diminished chord in the treble making it a D minor 7th chord.



G Octave in the bass with a B diminished 2nd inversion triad in the treble.

And that is it for the music part. Since the music repeats for the verses and chorus, this is everything.

This is just a very simple example of what can be done by just using song chord files. Knowing and understanding chords and inversions, I could have voiced this a lot of different ways. The truth is, I play this much differently than this. How I play it would take 10-20 more pages. This is just an outline that shows the chords. Rhythmically, how you should play it is much different. You need to play this with much more movement and the notes need to be broken up and syncopated to make it sound more interesting and have a rhythmic beat to it. At first the stuff you play will be rather boring, but practice will make perfect.

Another thing I need to note is the fact that I used octave notes for the bass for this entire song. I don't play it that way. I mix it up between octaves and different chord formations in my left hand. I did this like this for simplicity.

Analyze the chords used here. Make sure you understand everything completely. Ask me questions about anything that is confusing or needs clarification.