

The 3 Chord (and 4 Chord) Trick

Many songs can be played with just 3 chords. Once the key has been decided upon, the chords used are the I, IV and V. For example, the key of C would use the chords C, F and G.

Key	I	IV	V	(Relative Minor)
C	C	F	G	(Am)
A	A	D	E	(F#m)
G	G	C	D	(Em)
E	E	A	B(7)	(C#m)
D	D	G	A	(Bm)

Here are some songs that can be played with just these chords...

Swing Low Sweet Chariot
 Chasing Cars - Snow Patrol **A E D A**
 Johnny B Goode - Chuck Berry **A D E** (capo 1)
 Rock Around the Clock - Bill Hailey **A D E**
 The Lion Sleeps Tonight - The Tokens **D G D A** (capo 3)
 Brimful of Asha - Cornership **A D E** (capo 1)
 Bad Moon Rising - Creedence Clearwater Revival **D A G D**
 La Bamba - Richie Valens **C F G**
 Happy Birthday
 Three Little Birds - Bob Marley **A D E**
 Wild Thing - The Troggs **A D E D**
 Guitar Boogie Arthur Smith **E A B7**
 Common People - Pulp **C F G**
 The Tide is High - Blondie **A D E** (capo 2)
 You Are My Sunshine - Johnny Cash **A D E**
 500 Miles - The Proclaimers **E A B7**
 Budapest - George Ezra **E A B7** (capo 1)
 I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For - U2 **A D E** (capo 4)

And here are some songs that use the relative minor...

Roar - Katy Perry **G Em** (capo 3)
 Stand By Me - Ben E King **G Em C D** (capo 2)
 Back to December - Taylor Swift **C Am F G** (capo 2)
 Brown Eyed Girl - Van Morrison **D G A Bm**
 I'm Yours - Jason Mraz **G Em C D** (capo 4)
 Hello - Adele **Em G D C** (capo 1)
 Good Riddance - Green Day **G C D Em**
 Let Her Go - **F C G Am** (capo 7)
 The Passenger - Iggy Pop **Am F C G**
 With or Without You - U2 **D A Bm G**
 Let it Be - The Beatles - **C G Am F**
 No Woman No Cry - Bob Marley **C G Am F**
 When I Come Around - Green Day **E B C#m A** (capo 2)
 Complicated - Avril Lavigne **E C#m B A** (capo 1)
 Blank Space - Taylor Swift **D Bm G A** (capo 3)

Try to listen to some of these songs (they are easily found on Youtube) and try to hear the chord changes as you listen. Some songs I have indicated that you will need a capo if you wish to try and play along.