The D7 Chord
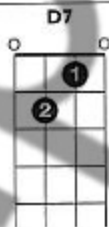
Now let's try fretting a D7 chord. This chord is called a seventh chord because it contains an additional note not found in a major chord. However, it's an easy chord to fret on the banjo. Place the left-hand middle finger behind the second fret on the third string, and the index finger behind the first fret on the second string.

Track ♪ D7 chord

Strum down with your thumb once again across strings 4 through 1 while fretting the D7 chord, making sure that your two fretted notes are ringing clearly and that your left-hand fingers are not touching the adjacent open fourth and first strings.
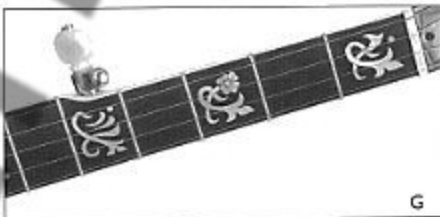

D7

Alternating between G and D7

Now let's try alternating between the G and D7 chords. Since the G chord is played with all open strings, you can prepare for the D7 chord by keeping the two left-hand fingers you use to fret this chord close to the fingerboard, ready to fret at a moment's notice.

Strum a G chord, moving down across all five strings with your thumb. Now fret the D7 chord and strum once again. This time it's okay to strum across all five strings, even though the fifth string is technically not a part of the D7 chord. Listen to the difference in sound between the two chords and also listen to make sure that your D7 chord is sounding clearly, with no string buzzing.

Alternate back and forth between the G and D7 chords with steady strums in the right hand to get used to the idea of moving between these two chords. Remember not to lift your fretting fingers very high off of the fingerboard as you play the G chord.

At first, don't worry about changing chords and strumming quickly. Go as slow as you need to get the best sound possible while fretting the D7 chord. As you continue to practice, you will be able to fret the D7 chord more quickly, at which point you can increase the speed of your right-hand strumming.

Track ♪ Alternating between G and D7 chords

G

D7

TIP

Remember that as you strum across the banjo strings with your right-hand thumb, you'll hear the highest-pitched string first and then the lowest-pitched string immediately after that.