

# Turning Melody into Chord Melody

## #ChordMelodyChallenge – Day 2



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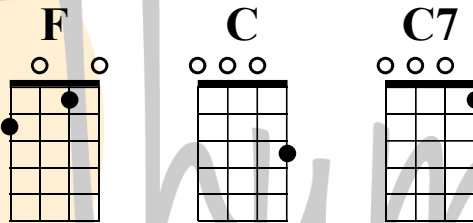
Key: F

Tempo: Medium

Chords needed: F, C, C7

Video Tutorial: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=flyEf8i23VU>

Chord Shapes:



The Melody – Again, start off getting comfortable with the melody and the chords, the more comfortable you are playing the melody the more natural it will be to harmonize it. The more times you hear it the easier it will be to transform it. This is an extremely important step.

1 2 3 4 5

Measure 1: Chord F, rests on strings 2, 3, 4, 5. Fingering: 0, 1, 1, 1, 3. Measure 2: Chord C, notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 0, 0, 0, 0. Measure 3: Chord F, notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 3, 0, 1, 0. Measure 4: Chord C7, notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 3, 1, 0. Measure 5: Chord F, notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 3, 1, 0.

6 7 8 9

Measure 6: Chord F, notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 1, 1, 1, 3. Measure 7: Chord C, notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 0, 0, 0, 0. Measure 8: Chord C7, notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 3, 0, 1, 0. Measure 9: Chord F, notes G4, A4, B4, C5. Fingering: 3, 1.

Seeing as the melody is the same with the exception of the open C string on the third beat of the 5<sup>th</sup> bar, we are going to focus on just half of this and do it one measure at a time. The first measure is a kick off

note, so we will leave the open C alone, so let's harmonize the 2<sup>nd</sup> measure.

Musical notation for measures 19-23. The top staff shows a melody in G major with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The chords indicated above the staff are F, C, F, C7, and F. The bottom staff shows guitar fretting diagrams for the bass and treble clefs. The treble clef diagram shows fretting on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd strings. The bass clef diagram shows fretting on the 4th, 5th, and 6th strings.

This is what the chords above the melody indicate. You will see this in almost all sheet music that you buy. The best purchases are sheets that you are "arranged for piano/vocal/guitar" and the voice will be the melody, the piano will be accompaniment and the guitar will be the chords over top. Here is an example

Musical notation for a vocal melody with piano accompaniment. The top staff shows the vocal line with lyrics: "Oh, life is big - ger. per of ev - ery wak - ing hour, \_". The bottom staff shows the piano accompaniment. An Am chord diagram is shown above the melody, indicating the chord structure for the piano part.

See the Am chord above the melody? That is what makes the "guitar" arrangement and that is the information that we use to choose the chord to play. On our melody it simply said "F" above the measure, that means the F chord, there is also a "C" above the 3<sup>rd</sup> beat, so for 1 beat there is the C chord, let's look at it again.

Musical notation for measures 19-23, identical to the first image. The top staff shows a melody in G major with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The chords indicated above the staff are F, C, F, C7, and F. The bottom staff shows guitar fretting diagrams for the bass and treble clefs. The treble clef diagram shows fretting on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd strings. The bass clef diagram shows fretting on the 4th, 5th, and 6th strings.

This is how we chose to use the F chord on the 1<sup>st</sup> beat and the C on the 3<sup>rd</sup> beat. In both cases we use the thumb strum for the first three strings, because the melody is on the E string and your ear hears what? That's right, the highest note, so to make those notes stand out we used the thumb strum through the first three strings, not four. Also, we only used the thumb strum on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> beats. Yesterday we used it on all the beats because we wanted to illustrate how it was used, but it is not

necessary, you will see that using it less frequently actually sounds clearer, cleaner, and often times prettier. Finding that balance is part of the arrangement process. Let's do the 3<sup>rd</sup> measure.

In this example the A note on the A string is the melody, so we use our thumb strum to play through all four strings. We don't have any more chords in the measure, so we only play the four chord on the first beat.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> measure we go to C7, and there are some interesting things going on here, so we decide to use the thumb strum on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> beats.

We don't have two chords, so why did we choose two thumb strums? The answer there is because of the 1<sup>st</sup> fret of the A string. That is the note that transforms a C chord to a C7.

- A good way to know that is to play a C chord and play a C7 and see which note is different. (This is a good trick when comparing a lot of chords, for example play a C, C<sub>sus2</sub>, C<sub>sus4</sub>, C<sub>m</sub>, C7, etc. look at the notes that change and the note that don't, the notes that change are the ones that define the character of a chord and by emphasizing those notes you can emphasize the color of the chord. More on that further down the challenge)

When add the thumb strum to the second beat, the B<sub>b</sub> note of the C chord gets special attention, really making the C7 stand out, sparkle and shine. That is why we went with two thumb strums here.

Lastly, the 4<sup>th</sup> measure, also some interest here let's take a look.

This is the first time we have had to harmonize a non-chord tone. The first beat of the 5<sup>th</sup> measure is an F chord, but the note in the melody is

a G... what?!?!?! The F chord only has the F, A, and C notes, so what is going on? Okay, this is cool, what we do is make an F chord and then locate the G note that we want to play, it is on the E string, so that means the 1<sup>st</sup> fret of E string becomes the 3<sup>rd</sup> fret. So the process is make the chord, locate the melody note, and that string will change, so everything else in the F chord is the exact same with the exception of that G note, that is the only thing we change. Because it is a non-chord tone moving to the root note, the F note, we did two thumb strums in that measure as well, this gives us a stronger "resolution" which is how we finish the song. Okay, let's put it all together into a final piece!

10 F C 12 F 13 C7 14 F

15 F C 16 F 17 C7 18 F

Here is a link to the cover that was being played in the intro  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vYh01VNufno>