SOFTWARE & TECH

Radiohead House Of Cards Tab

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Introduction

Learning to play the intricate, atmospheric sound of Radiohead's "House of Cards" is a rite of passage for many guitarists. The song, known for its shimmering arpeggios and haunting chord progression, holds a special place in the band's catalog from the 2007 album *In Rainbows*. For any guitarist looking to capture that elusive blend of warmth and melancholy, finding the correct **Radiohead House Of Cards Tab** is the first step. This article provides a comprehensive guide to the song's guitar parts, including tuning, chord shapes, fingerpicking patterns, and performance tips, all while exploring why this track remains a favorite among players of all levels.

Whether you are a beginner struggling with barre chords or an experienced player seeking to refine your dynamics, understanding the nuances behind the **Radiohead House Of Cards Tab** will elevate your playing. We will break down every section of the song, discuss the gear and techniques used by guitarist Jonny Greenwood, and point you toward reliable tab resources. By the end, you will have a thorough roadmap to mastering this beautiful piece.

About the Song: "House of Cards" and Its Musical Language

"House of Cards" is a standout track on Radiohead's critically acclaimed album *In Rainbows*. The song features a restrained, almost hypnotic rhythm section, with Thom Yorke's ethereal vocals floating over delicate guitar work. Lyrically, it explores themes of insecurity and fragile relationships, perfectly matched by the musical arrangement's gentle push-and-pull. The guitar parts rely heavily on open-string voicings and light distortion, creating a shimmering soundscape that feels both intimate and expansive.

The key to recreating this sound lies in the guitar tab. Unlike many rock songs that use power chords or pentatonic riffs, "House of Cards" demands precise fingerpicking and chord voicings that utilize the guitar's natural resonance. The most widely used **Radiohead House Of Cards Tab** is based on standard tuning with a capo on the first fret, though some alternative arrangements exist in drop D or open tunings. Understanding the song's harmonic structure will help you appreciate why the tab works the way it does.

Understanding the Guitar Tabs for "House of Cards"

Guitar Tuning and Capo Placement

The official recording uses standard tuning (EADGBE) with a capo placed at the first fret. This raises the pitch by a half step, giving the chords a brighter, more open quality. The capo allows for simpler chord shapes while still producing the correct pitch. Many online **Radiohead House Of Cards Tab** resources indicate "Capo 1" as a starting point. Some alternative tabs suggest playing without a capo using barre chords, but the capo version is by far the most common and easiest for most players.

If you choose to play without a capo, you can transpose the chords up by a semitone (for example, playing F

major instead of E major shapes). However, for the sake of authenticity and ease, stick with the capo. Be sure to tune your guitar carefully before practicing—intonation and fresh strings will help the chords ring out as intended.

Chords Used in House of Cards

The chord progression in “House of Cards” is relatively simple but features extended chords that add color and tension. The primary chords (with capo on 1st fret) are:

- Cmaj7 (x32000 or 8-10-9-9-8-8 shape) – the central chord giving the song its floating feel.
- Fmaj7 (x33210 or 8-10-9-9-10-8) – adds a warm, unresolved quality.
- Am (x02210) – provides a touch of melancholy.
- G (320003) – used sparingly for movement.

Some alternate voicings appear in the bridge and pre-chorus. The tab often indicates chord diagrams or fret numbers to clarify these shapes. When searching for a **Radiohead House Of Cards Tab**, pay attention to the specific chord diagrams used—they can differ between transcriptions. The key is to maintain the open strings that give the song its signature resonance.

Breaking Down the Tab

Intro and Verses

The intro consists of a repeating fingerpicked pattern over the Cmaj7 chord. The right-hand technique is crucial: use your thumb (p) to pluck the bass note (A string, 3rd fret), followed by your index (i) on the D string (2nd fret), middle (m) on the G string (open), and ring (a) on the B string (3rd fret). This arpeggio creates a cascading effect that defines the verse. The tab often notates this as follows:

- Bass: A string, fret 3 (thumb)
- Then D string, fret 2 (index)
- Then G string, open (middle)
- Then B string, fret 3 (ring)

During the verse, the chord changes to Fmaj7 and Am while maintaining a similar picking pattern. The **Radiohead House Of Cards Tab** will show slight variations in the bass notes for each chord. For Fmaj7, the bass note is on the low E string (1st fret, with capo) or the A string (8th fret). For Am, the bass is the open A string. The secret is to keep the picking fluid and relaxed, letting the notes ring into each other.

Chorus

The chorus introduces a fuller chord progression: Cmaj7 – Fmaj7 – Am – G. The right-hand pattern changes to a gentle strum or a combination of strumming and picking. Many tabs indicate a down-up-down-up pattern across all strings, with slight muting between chord changes. Listen to the recording: the chorus builds in intensity but never becomes aggressive. The **Radiohead House Of Cards Tab** usually recommends using a light touch and adding a subtle reverb effect to replicate the studio sound.

Bridge

The bridge (around the 2:30 mark) features a shift to a more open chord voicing, often written as a variation of Em or Bm7. The picking pattern becomes more syncopated, with rests between notes. This section can be challenging rhythmically because it requires counting quarter notes against the underlying pulse. Practice with a metronome at a slow BPM (around 72) before speeding up. A good **Radiohead House Of Cards Tab** will include rhythmic notation or a description of the pattern (e.g., “pick bass on beat 1, strum on beat 2, rest on beat 3, etc.”).

Playing Tips and Techniques

Radiohead House Of Cards Tab goes beyond merely hitting the right notes. Here are some essential tips to capture the song's spirit:

- Dynamics: Use a light touch throughout. The song is intimate, so avoid heavy picking. Focus on the contrast between the soft verses and the slightly louder chorus.
- Guitar Tone: Set your amp to a clean setting with a touch of reverb and a very low gain (if any). Jonny Greenwood often uses a Fender Telecaster through a Fender Twin Reverb or similar amp. A compressor pedal can help sustain the notes evenly.
- Fingernails: Consider growing your fingernails on the picking hand (index, middle, ring) to get a clearer, brighter attack—this is common in fingerstyle guitar.
- Muting: Keep idle strings muted with both hands. The left hand should lightly touch any strings not being played, while the right hand rests on the bridge or the strings after plucking.
- Timing: The song swings gently; use a metronome set to 8th notes (72 BPM) and feel the space between beats.

Also experiment with alternative fingerings. Some guitarists prefer to play the verse pattern using only thumb and index, while others use all four fingers. Find what is comfortable for you, but consistency is key.

Where to Find the Best Tabs Online

While this article provides a detailed overview, a full **Radiohead House Of Cards Tab** with fret numbers and timing is best obtained from reputable sources. Here are some trusted websites:

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