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Taking Care Of Business Lyrics And Chords

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The Enduring Appeal of "Taking Care of Business": A Deep Dive into Lyrics and Chords

Few songs capture the spirit of working-class optimism and rock-and-roll swagger quite like Bachman-Turner Overdrive's classic hit, "Taking Care of Business." Released in 1973, the track quickly became an anthem for anyone who found joy in a hard day's work, a catchy guitar riff, and a singalong chorus. For decades, musicians and music lovers alike have sought out the **Taking Care of Business lyrics and chords**to learn this timeless piece. Whether you are a beginner strumming your first guitar or a seasoned performer planning a setlist, this article will guide you through the song's structure, meaning, and musical nuances—all while helping you master the chords that made it a staple of classic rock radio.

Understanding the song is more than just memorizing notes. It’s about grasping the context in which the lyrics were written, the chord progressions that drive the energy, and the cultural impact that keeps it relevant. In this comprehensive guide, we will break down everything you need to know, from the history of the band to the precise fingerings for guitar and piano. By the end, you will not only know how to play the song but also appreciate why it continues to resonate with audiences around the world.

The Story Behind the Song: How "Taking Care of Business" Came to Be

To fully appreciate the **Taking Care of Business lyrics and chords**, it helps to know the story behind the track. The band, Bachman-Turner Overdrive (BTO), was formed in Winnipeg, Canada, out of the ashes of earlier groups like The Guess Who. Guitarist Randy Bachman, along with his brothers Robin and Tim, and drummer Robbie Bachman, created a sound that blended hard rock with a bluesy, boogie-woogie feel. The song "Taking Care of Business" was originally titled "White Collar Worker" and featured different lyrics. However, the band felt the original didn’t capture the blue-collar spirit they wanted.

In an inspired moment, Randy Bachman rewrote the lyrics to reflect the idea that taking care of business could mean doing what you love—whether that's working a 9-to-5 job or playing rock music. The line "Taking care of business every day" became a motto for millions. The song was recorded quickly and cheaply in a Toronto studio, with an infectious guitar lick that Bachman said he borrowed from a Johnny B. Goode era Chuck Berry vibe. That riff, combined with the straightforward chord progression, became the backbone of the track.

The song peaked at number 12 on the Billboard Hot 100 and has since been covered by countless artists, featured in movies (like "Remember the Titans" and "The Simpsons"), and used in commercials. Its enduring popularity is a testament to its universal message and musical accessibility.

Breaking Down the Lyrics: Meaning and Themes

The lyrics of "Taking Care of Business" are deceptively simple, yet they carry multiple layers of meaning. At first listen, the song seems to be a celebration of the working life—punching a time clock, getting paid, and going to work every day. But a closer look reveals a more nuanced commentary on the idea of success and fulfillment.

The opening lines set the scene: "You get up every morning from your alarm clock's warning / Take the 8:15 into the city." These images are relatable to anyone who commutes to a routine job. The song then twists: "But I can take the morning train and make the morning paper / Take a little nap and read the news." Here, the narrator suggests that he's not a typical office worker. He's a musician—someone who works hard but on his own terms. The chorus declares, "Taking care of business," which for the narrator means playing music, touring, and enjoying life.

This duality is what makes the **Taking Care of Business lyrics and chords**so powerful. They resonate with both the office worker and the free spirit. The line "If you ever get annoyed, look at me / I'm taking care of business" implies that no matter your station, you can find agency and pride in your work. It's a feel-good anthem that doesn't preach but invites you to sing along.

Semantically, the lyrics also emphasize a contrast between the "same old thing" and the excitement of the narrator's life. This contrast is reinforced by the energetic music, which mirrors the bounce of a working day but also the release of a night out. For lyric learners, the verses are short and repetitious, making them easy to memorize. The bridge—"Taking care of business and working overtime, work out!"—adds a call-to-action that's perfect for live audiences.

The Core Chord Structure: What Makes It Work

Now let's dive into the musical anatomy. The **Taking Care of Business chords**are remarkably straightforward, which explains why beginners love it. The song is primarily based on the classic I-IV-V progression in the key of D major. However, there's a twist: the song actually uses an open D tuning in many recordings, but you can easily play it in standard tuning without sacrificing authenticity.

For guitarists in standard tuning, the main progression is:

- Verse and Chorus: D – A – G – D (with occasional variations)
- Bridge: G – D – A – D

The iconic riff that opens the song is a series of hammer-ons and pull-offs on the D and A strings, using the open D chord shape. But if you prefer a simplified rhythm, just strum the chords in time with the driving beat. The tempo is around 130 BPM, giving it that boogie-woogie feel.

For pianists, the chords are equally simple. The left hand can play root notes (D, A, G) while the right hand plays triads. The signature sound comes from the rhythmic staccato and the occasional bluesy seventh chords. In the original recording, the piano (played by Randy Bachman) adds a honky-tonk flavor that enhances the song’s energy.

A crucial detail: many online resources list the chords as simply D, A, and G. However, live performances often include a quick D to C transition during the bridge. To get the authentic live feel, try this: during the "working overtime" line, play G, then D, then A, then D. If you want to add a bit of spice, substitute a D7 for the D in the chorus for a bluesier tone.

Step-by-Step Tutorial: How to Play "Taking Care of Business" on Guitar

If you're ready to learn, here is a step-by-step approach to mastering the **Taking Care of Business chords and lyrics** on guitar. This tutorial assumes standard tuning and a basic understanding of open chords.

1. Get Your Tuning Right: Standard tuning (EADGBE) works perfectly. However, many die-hard fans claim

the song sounds best in open D tuning (D A D F# A D). For standard tuning, just capo on the 2nd fret? No—actually the song is often played without capo, but you can capo 2 to match the recorded pitch if you find the barre chords easier. The original key is D, so stay in D.

2. Learn the Main Riff: The intro riff (tab available online) involves playing the open D, then hammering onto the second fret of the high E string while holding the D chord shape. Practice slowly. The rhythm is a steady eighth-note pattern with accents on beats 2 and 4.

3. Chord Changes: Practice switching between D, A, and G. The progression in the verse is: D (2 beats), A (2 beats), G (4 beats), D (4 beats). The chorus uses the same pattern but with emphasis on the D chord. Use a metronome set to 130 BPM and start at 70.

4. Strumming Pattern: Down-down-up-up-down-up works well. For the song's boogie feel, try to add a slight swing — not a straight eighth-note. Alternatively, use a simple down-down-down pattern if you're just singing along.

5. Bridge Section: The bridge goes G (4 beats), D (4 beats), A (4 beats), D (4 beats). Some versions repeat this twice. Sing the "workin' overtime" line over G and D. It's a great part to add power chords if you're using a distorted tone.

6. Put it Together: Play the riff, then verse 1, chorus, riff, verse 2, chorus, bridge, solo, chorus, end. The solo is based on the D pentatonic scale, but for beginners, simply repeat the main riff while singing.

Pro tip: If you're playing with a band, the bass usually follows the root notes. The drum pattern is a simple rock beat with a kick on 1 and 3, snare on 2 and 4. The song doesn't have complex changes, which makes it perfect for jam sessions.

The Legacy of the Song: Why It Remains a Must-Learn

Decades after its release, the demand for **Taking Care of Business lyrics and chords**shows no signs of fading. The song is a rite of passage for aspiring musicians. It’s one of the first songs many guitar teachers assign because it teaches open chords, basic rhythm, and the concept of a verse-chorus structure. Moreover, its positive, energetic vibe makes it a crowd-pleaser at parties, open mics, and even corporate events.

The phrase "taking care of business" has entered everyday language, often used as a motto for professionalism and punctuality. The song's inclusion in pop culture—from movies to sports arenas—ensures that new generations are exposed to it. Musically, it embodies the raw, unpolished sound of 1970s rock, with a touch of country and blues. It's no surprise that many cover versions exist, from heavy metal renditions to acoustic fingerstyle arrangements.

From an SEO perspective, if you search for "how to play Taking Care of Business," you'll find thousands of tutorials, but understanding the lyrics alongside the chords gives you a holistic learning experience. The song's simplicity is deceptive: it's easy to play, but difficult to play with the same feel as the original. Focus on the rhythm and the accents. The chords are just a skeleton; the soul lies in the groove.

Common Mistakes to Avoid When Learning the Song

Even though the chords are simple, pitfalls exist. Here are some common errors:

- Rushing the Tempo: The song has a laid-back groove, but many beginners speed up. Use a metronome or drum track to stay steady.
- Neglecting the Riff: The opening riff is iconic. If you skip it, listeners will notice. Spend extra time on the hammer-ons and pull-offs.
- Wrong Chord Voicings: Some players use barre chords for G and A. While that works, open chords sound more authentic and resonant in this song.
- Ignoring Dynamics: The verses are slightly quieter, the choruses louder. Play with dynamics to avoid a monotonous sound.
- Forgetting the Lyrics: The lyrics tell a story. Sing them with conviction. The line "I'm taking care of business" should be delivered with a grin.

Also, note that the original recording uses a certain amount of distortion on the guitar. If you have an overdrive pedal, set it to a mild drive—just enough to add grit without losing clarity. For acoustic versions, it sounds great fingerpicked with a brush of percussion.

Expanding Your Repertoire: Related Songs and Variations

Once you have mastered **Taking Care of Business lyrics and chords**, consider learning other BTO hits like "You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet" or "Let It Ride." They share similar chord structures and themes. Many classic rock songs from the 1970s use the I-IV-V progression, so your skills will transfer.

If you want to challenge yourself, try playing "Taking Care of Business" in a different key, like E or G, using a capo. This will help you understand transposition. You can also experiment with a reggae or funk rhythm to see how the chords fit different styles. The song's adaptability is part of its genius.

For vocalists, the melody sits comfortably in a mid-range. Randy Bachman's vocal delivery is conversational, so don't try to oversing it. The power comes from the band's tightness. When performing solo, you can hum the riff between verses to keep the energy up.

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