GENERAL

the only exception paramore chords

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Introduction

When it comes to learning new songs on the guitar, the first step is always figuring out the chords. For fans of Paramore, one of the most beloved tracks is “The Only Exception.” This heartfelt ballad showcases the band’s knack for blending powerful melodies with emotionally resonant lyrics. If you’ve ever wanted to play this song for friends, at a gathering, or just for yourself, you’ve come to the right place. In this article, we’ll dive deep into the chords that make “The Only Exception” sing, walk through the progression, explain how to play each chord, and give you practical tips to master the song in no time.

About “The Only Exception” and Paramore

Released in 2017 as part of the album *After Laughter*, “The Only Exception” is a standout track that highlights Paramore’s evolution from pop punk to a more introspective, synth driven sound. The song’s lyrical content explores the vulnerability of opening up to someone who may not reciprocate those feelings. Musically, it’s built around a simple yet effective chord progression that allows the emotional weight of the lyrics to shine through. Because of its accessibility, the song has become a staple for guitarists of all skill levels.

Why Knowing the Only Exception Paramore Chords Is Worth the Time

- Builds a Solid Foundation: The chords used in this song are common in many other popular tracks, making it easier to transition to new songs.
- Improves Finger Strength: Switching between open chords and barre chords strengthens the fingers and improves hand coordination.
- Enhances Musical Expression: Understanding the chord structure allows you to experiment with strumming patterns, dynamics, and vocal harmonies.
- Fun for Jam Sessions: Once you’ve mastered the chords, you can play along with the original recording or create your own covers.

Chord Overview

Below is a quick reference of the primary chords used throughout “The Only Exception.” These chords are all played in the open position, which keeps the arrangement approachable for beginners while still sounding authentic.

- G Major – 320003
- D Major – xx0232
- E Minor – 022000
- C Major – x32010
- F Major (Barre) – 133211 (optional for a richer sound)

Feel free to experiment with a capo on the 2nd or 3rd fret if you want to match the original vocal pitch or if your vocal range requires it. The chord shapes remain the same; only the relative pitch changes.

The Chord Progression in Detail

Understanding the structure of the song will help you anticipate chord changes and play more fluidly. “The Only Exception” follows a classic verse pre chorus chorus bridge chorus format. Below is a breakdown of each section and the chords that accompany it.

Verse

1. G – D – Em – C
2. G – D – Em – C

Each line of the verse uses the same four-chord sequence. The progression offers a gentle, reflective backdrop that complements the introspective lyrics.

Pre Chorus

1. Em – C – G – D
2. Em – C – G – D

The pre chorus introduces a slight tension by starting on the relative minor (E minor) before resolving back to the major chords. This creates a sense of longing that sets up the emotional lift of the chorus.

Chorus

1. G – D – Em – C
2. G – D – Em – C
3. G – D – Em – C

In the chorus, the chord sequence repeats three times, providing a powerful and anthemic feel. The repetition also reinforces the lyrical hook, making it easier to sing along.

Bridge

1. F – C – G – D
2. F – C – G – D

The bridge introduces the F major chord, which adds a fresh harmonic color. This variation keeps the arrangement engaging and signals a shift before the final chorus.

How to Play the Chords

Below you’ll find a concise guide on how to position your fingers for each chord. Even if you’re new to guitar, these shapes are among the most common and will become second nature with practice.

G Major

- Place your second finger on the 3rd string, 2nd fret.
- Place your first finger on the 2nd string, 3rd fret.
- Place your third finger on the 5th string, 3rd fret.
- Strum from the 6th string down to the 1st.

D Major

- Place your first finger on the 3rd string, 2nd fret.
- Place your second finger on the 1st string, 2nd fret.
- Place your third finger on the 2nd string, 3rd fret.
- Strum from the 4th string down to the 1st.

E Minor

- Place your second finger on the 5th string, 2nd fret.
- Place your third finger on the 4th string, 2nd fret.
- Strum all six strings.

C Major

- Place your first finger on the 1st string, 1st fret.
- Place your second finger on the 4th string, 2nd fret.
- Place your third finger on the 5th string, 3rd fret.
- Strum from the 5th string down to the 1st.

F Major (Barre)

- Barre your index finger across the 1st fret (all strings).
- Place your second finger on the 3rd string, 2nd fret.
- Place your third finger on the 5th string, 3rd fret.
- Place your fourth finger on the 4th string, 3rd fret.
- Strum all six strings.

Tip: Keep your thumb positioned at the middle of the guitar neck for better leverage, especially when playing the F major barre chord.

Using a Capo

If you want to match the original vocal pitch or make the song more comfortable for your voice, consider placing a capo on the 2nd or 3rd fret. The chord shapes remain unchanged; only the overall sound will shift higher. For example, placing the capo on the 2nd fret turns the G major chord into an A major sound, while still being played as a G shape.

Strumming Patterns

The original recording uses a gentle, syncopated strumming pattern that gives the song its laid back feel. Here's a simple pattern you can start with:

1. Downstroke on the 1st beat.
2. Downstroke on the 2nd beat.
3. Downstroke on the 3rd beat.
4. Downstroke on the 4th beat.
5. Upstroke on the "and" between beats 2 and 3.

Practice this pattern slowly, then gradually increase your tempo until you can match the original track's groove.

Fingerstyle Option

If you'd like a more intimate rendition, try a fingerpicking pattern. Start with a basic pattern that plucks the bass note of the chord with your thumb, followed by the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st strings with your index, middle, and ring fingers. For example:

1. Thumb on the low E string (bass note).
2. Index on the G string.
3. Middle on the B string.
4. Ring on the high E string.

Repeat this pattern throughout the song, adjusting the rhythm to fit the verse and chorus sections.

Common Mistakes and How to Fix Them

Even seasoned players can stumble on certain aspects of “The Only Exception.” Below are some frequent issues and practical solutions.

- Chord Transitions Too Fast: Practice each transition slowly, then use a metronome to build speed gradually.
- Muted Strings: Ensure your fingers are pressing down just behind the fret, not on top of it, to avoid buzzing.
- Inconsistent Dynamics: Use a dynamic range from soft to moderate volume to capture the song’s emotional arc.

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