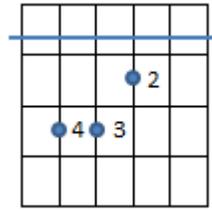
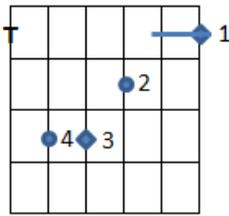


The F Chord

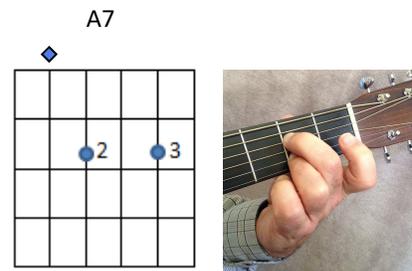
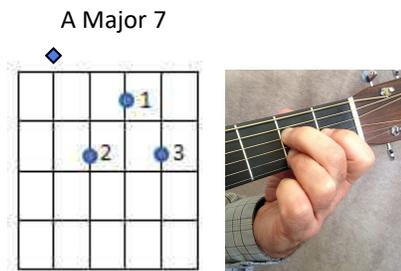
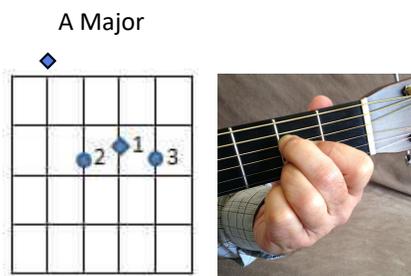
Eventually you will need the F chord, which is a real stickler for a lot of people—especially the barred version. But just like the D chord, there are a few other solutions:

1. Don't play the 6th string. Just play the upper strings and avoid the low E string.
2. Wrap your thumb around the neck to hold down the 6th string on the 1st fret. This is a little more difficult than wrapping the D chord because it is a bigger stretch for your hand.
3. It is often easier to play barred forms higher up the neck when you are first learning them, so start on the 5th fret, which makes it an A chord.



The A Chord

No chord I know has more possible fingerings than the simple A chord. Classical guitar players often finger it 1-2-3 straight across the strings, but on steel-strung guitars with narrower necks this isn't so easy. Whatever works for you is fine, but I have a preferred method I want to show you. I play the A chord sort of inside-out, fingered 2-1-3 with my second and third fingers split apart (as in an A7 chord) and my index finger jammed up in between them on the third string.



This fingering has the advantages of any other fingering: you can hammer any string and suspend the chord on the 2nd string or add a 6th or seventh on the 1st string. Plus: 1) Changing chords to E and D are simplified. The first finger always stays on the third string; 2) You can get three variations of the A chord by simply moving your first finger down the third string fret by fret, a technique which can be very useful now and then.

So I recommend this fingering. But in the end, it's what works for you that counts. Heck, James Taylor plays with reversed fingering as you can see on his YouTube videos and that doesn't seem to slow him down much.