

The Transpo Capo

This is one of the products that stopped us dead in our tracks at NAMM 2008. We were immediately drawn in by its unique appearance, as the [TRANSPO™ Capo](#) is truly amazing in its design. It is essentially two capos in one. The company's demonstrators NAMM made its use look extremely simple. It combines the benefits of using a cut capo and a regular standard capo simultaneously, because it contains both. Its "Patented Double Capo System" combines a short cut capo and a regular capo into one convenient system, which according to the manufacturer, has several benefits. For example, it provides alternate tuning and new chord structures, it allows players to play complex chords with just one or two fingers, it provides a more open and full chord sound as compared to standard tuning, it can also be used as a regular standard capo, and its revolutionary redlined rubber™ molds to guitar strings preventing unwanted de-tuning. After trying the capo out for myself, I amazingly found all of these claims to be true – and then some.

DADGAD With More 'Nads

To grasp the full potential of the capo, users are instructed to start by placing the full side of the capo on the 2nd fret, and the cut side of the capo on the 4th fret (strings 3, 4 and 5). This creates an open E suspended chord (which due to the fretted voicing, sounds similar to the famous opening Gsus chord of the Beatles "A Hard Day's Night"). Once I placed the capo correctly, I was immediately blown away by the interesting, robust voicings that were instantly at my disposal. Besides having the distinctive sonic register of a capoed guitar, I immediately appreciated how the capo also provides the advantage of what some call the "drop E" approach to capoing -- or capoing only the bottom 5 strings of the guitar with a regular capo (leaving string 6 or the low E string open). For those familiar with this capo approach, you know that it also allows you to play many standard open/folk chords (such as D, C, G, A) without altering your finger placement or changing the essence of the chord. This approach is used by many guitarists on occasion for its advantages over a typical Drop D tuning, and the [Transpo Capo](#) provides this voicing but adds more advantages and versatility. As other reviewers have noted, the Transpo provides the same intervals as the famous DADGAD tuning but with none of the limitations. To achieve the DADGAD intervals in different keys, many guitarists have to use two separate capos to achieve similar results, which is tedious, cumbersome, and ineffective. The Transpo solves this problem, and allows the DADGAD form to be transposed upward by merely moving the capo.

After receiving a sample Transpo Capo to review (that came in a very cool box

containing a small instruction book), I put it on my 1979 Yamaha acoustic. I was quickly impressed by the power of the spring that keeps the capo open/closed. This is a very well-built product. Since I am a semi-novice with capos, I fumbled a few times putting it on correctly until I read the directions, which instruct users to put the cut/short side of the capo on strings 3, 4, and 5 (aka G, D and A). At first, I was putting it incorrectly on strings 4, 5, and 6 (D, A and E) and it sounded a little funny. D'oh! This reminded me of the adage for the internet age, "when in doubt, RTFM" (Read the F***ing Manual)! Once I consulted the manual and figured it out, and was blown away.

Right after putting it on my guitar, I was playing interesting chord progressions and riffs, while using simple and familiar fingerings. I was playing voicings I had never heard before, and they would inevitably lead to other variations and chords. As a songwriter and mediocre guitarist, I was extremely creatively inspired by this capo -- I literally could not put my guitar down. I can honestly say that I absolutely fell in love with this capo. This thing is COOL. What a genius concept!

Love at First Strum

Designed for both beginners and advanced guitarists, it is clear that the [Transpo Capo](#) offers a benefit for guitarists of every level of ability. For beginners, the [Transpo Capo](#) allows immediate creativity with even the simplest chords and strumming patterns. For the aspiring guitarist, this capo can create an easy entry into the playing of guitar fundamentals. For advanced players/professional players who are looking to take their guitar playing to another realm by experimenting with alternative tunings, chord structures and voicings, the [Transpo Capo](#) is really an outstanding tool.

One of the many benefits I found appealing is that the Transpo Capo can be used by musicians with hand/finger disabilities that may otherwise prevent them from playing and enjoying all the pleasure that a guitar can provide. I would predict that this capo would be perfect in music therapy settings as well. I can also see how songwriters who seek only a simple method to learn quick and simple chord structures would love the Transpo Capo – since it is an excellent choice to augment and inspire their songwriting. After trying it out myself, I very highly recommend it to anyone who owns a guitar. Seriously. The Transpo will Trans-*fix* any guitarist. With the Transpo Capo, it is truly "love at first strum."

As a bonus, the manufacturer provides a free downloadable and printable color sample chord sheet on their website, as well as free instructional videos via email. Not surprisingly, many reputable axe-centric publications (including Acoustic Guitar UK, Alternative Press Magazine, Pick Up Magazine) have already given the Transpo rave reviews. You can check them out <http://transpocapo.com/reviews.html>.

The Future of the Capo

At NAMM 2008, the folks at Transpo showed us their brand new capo that we are convinced will further revolutionize guitar playing -- the Evolution Capo. While not yet available to the public, it is a single capo that has 4 capos in one -- a standard capo, a cut capo, drop-D capo and open capo. Its design is also pure genius. This capo is going to be awesome, and we are really looking forward to its debut. It is projected to be released in the 4th quarter of 2008. (Check back then for a product review here on Voxonline).

The Transpo Capo can be purchased online (with or without chord book) by credit card and also via PayPal. For more information on these products, go to <http://transpocapo.com/>.