Big Yellow Taxi

Words and Music by Joni Mitchell, from Ladies of the Canyon

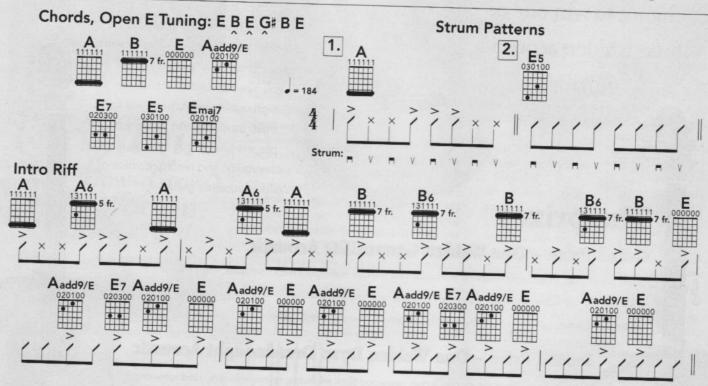


"Big Yellow Taxi" was the sole single from Joni Mitchell's 1970 album, *Ladies of the Canyon*. Though it didn't crack the top 40 (it charted at No. 67 on the Billboard singles chart), that doesn't accurately reflect the success and popularity of the song. Covered by plenty of other acts (including Bob Dylan, Amy Grant, and, more recently, Counting Crows), "Big

Yellow Taxi" became one of Mitchell's most popular songs.

Mitchell recorded the song in open-E tuning. If you're concerned about tuning your fifth, fourth, and third strings up to B, E, and G#, respectively, you can

always tune down to open-D tuning and put a capo on the second fret. This will relieve strain on both your strings and your guitar's neck. Strum quietly through the first half of each chorus, using strum pattern 2 below. Mitchell's verse strumming pattern (pattern 1) relies on a bit of string damping to keep things percussively moving forward. For the X's in the strum pattern, lift your frettinghand fingers enough to dampen the strings, and strum through the dampened strings to create a percussive "chuck" sound. Try the intro below to sound more like the recording, and add sections from the last four bars of the intro riff to the ends of each verse phrase to emulate Mitchell's fills throughout.



A

1. They paved paradise, put up a parking lot

A B E
With a pink hotel, a boutique, and a swinging hot spot

Chorus

E5 Emaj7 Don't it always seem to go

Aadd9/E E
That you don't know what you've got till it's gone

A B E
They paved paradise, put up a parking lot

A
2. They took all the trees, put 'em in a tree museum

And they charge the people a dollar and a half just to see 'em

A

B. Hey farmer, farmer, put away that DDT now

A B
Give me spots on my apples but leave me the birds

E and the bees, please

Repeat Chorus

Repeat Chorus

A E
4. Late last night I heard the screen door slam

A B E
And a big yellow taxi took away my old man

Repeat Chorus (two times)

They paved paradise, put up a parking lot They paved paradise, put up a parking lot