

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 fretting-hand 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.

Chords, Open E Tuning: E B E G# B E

Chord diagrams for A, B, E, Aadd9/E, E7, E5, and Emaj7.

Strum Patterns

Strum patterns 1 and 2 with rhythmic notation and a tempo marking of 184 bpm.

Intro Riff

Intro riff with chord diagrams and strumming notation for A, A6, B, B6, E, and Aadd9/E.

Repeat Chorus

Lyrics and chord progressions for the chorus, including verses 1, 2, 3, and 4.

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