

# American Pie (Don McLean, ca. 1971) (G)

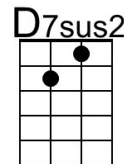
American Pie by Don McLean (1971) (G @ 138)

Concerning the impact of Feb. 3, 1959, "the day the music died"

Capo 5 — 4/4 Time

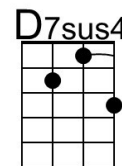
## Intro (Note or chord) G ↓

G D Em Am C  
A long, long time ago, I can still re-member,  
Em D7 | D7sus4 D7 D7sus2 D7  
how that music used to make me smile.



G D Em Am C  
And I knew if I had my chance that I could make those people dance  
Em C D7 | D7sus2 D7 D7sus4 D7 D7sus2 D7  
And maybe they'd be happy for a while.

Em ↓ Am ↓ Em ↓ Am ↓  
But February made me shiver, with every paper I'd deliver.  
C G Am C D [4 3 2 1]  
Bad news on the doorstep, I couldn't take one more step.



G D Em Am D  
I can't re-member if I cried, when I read about his widowed bride  
G D Em C D7 G↓↑↑ C↓ G↓  
Something touched me deep inside the day the music died. So...

## Chorus

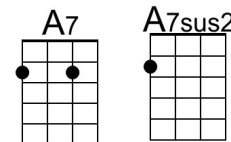
G C G D G C G D  
Bye, bye Miss A-merican Pie, drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was dry.

G C G D  
Them good old boys were drinkin' whiskey and rye,  
Em ↓ A7↓↑↑ Em ↓ A7 ↓ Em ↓ D7 | D7\*  
Singin' this'll be the day that I die. This'll be the day that I die. ↑ 1<sup>st</sup> Time Only  
D | D7

G Am C Am  
\_ Did you write the Book of Love and do you have faith in God above?  
Em D7 | D7sus4 D7 D7sus2 D7  
\_ If the Bible tells you so.

G D Em Am C  
Now do you be-lieve in rock and roll? Can music save your mortal soul? and  
Em A7 D7 | D7sus4 D7 D7sus2 D7  
\_ can you teach me how to dance real slow?

Em ↓ D ↓ Em ↓ D ↓ - D  
Well, I know that you're in love with him 'cause I saw you dancing in the gym.  
C G A7↓↑↑ A7sus2↑ A7 ↓  
You both kicked off your shoes.



C D7↓↑↑ D7sus4 ↓ D7 ↓  
Man, I dig those rhythm and blues.

G D Em Am C  
I was a lonely teenage broncin' buck with a pink carnation and a pickup truck.

G D Em C D7 G↓↑↑↑ C↓↑↑↑ G↓↑↑↑ D7↓↑↑↑  
But I knew I was out of luck the day the music died. I started singin' Chorus

**G** **Am** **C** **Am**  
 Now for ten years we've been on our own and moss grows fat on a rolling stone

**Em** **D7** | **D7sus4** **D7** **D7sus2** **D7**  
 But \_\_\_ that's not how it used to be.

**G** **D** **Em** **Am** **C**  
 When the jester sang for the king and queen in a coat he borrowed from James Dean and

**Em** **A7** **D** | **D7↓↑↑↑** **D7sus2↓** **D7↓**  
 a voice that came from you and me.

**Em ↓** **D ↓** **Em ↓** **D ↓** - **D↓↑↓**  
 Oh, and \_\_\_ while the king was looking down, the jester stole his thorny crown,

**C** **G** **A7↑↑** **A7sus2↑↑** **A7↓** **C** **D7↑↑↓** **D7sus4↓** **D7↓**  
 The courtroom was ad-journed, no verdict was re-turned.

**G** **D** **Em** **Am** **C**  
 And while Lenin read a book on Marx, the quartet practiced in the park

**G** **D** **Em** **C** **D7** **G↓↑↑↑** **C↓↑↑↑** **G↓↑↑↑** **D7↑↑↑↑**  
 And we sang dirges in the dark the day the music died. **We were singin'** **Chorus**

**G** **Am** **C** **Am**  
 Helter-skelter in a summer swelter, the birds flew off for the fallout shelter

**Em** **D** | **D7**  
 \_\_\_ Eight miles high and falling fast,

**G** **D** **Em** **Am** **C**  
 it landed foul on the grass, the players tried for a forward pass,

**Em** **A7** **D** | **D7**  
 with the jester on the side-lines in a cast.

**Em ↓** **D ↓** **Em ↓** **D ↓** - **D**  
 Now the half time air was sweet perfume, while sergeants played a marching tune.

**C** **G** **A7↑↑** **A7sus2↑↑** **A7↓** **C** **D7↓↑↓** **D7sus4↓** **D7↓**  
 We all got up to dance, oh, but we never got the chance, . . . .

**G** **D** **Em** **Am** **C**  
 'Cause the players tried to take the field, the marching band re-fused to yield.

**G** **D** **Em** **C** **D7** **G↓↑↑↑** **C↓↑↑↑** **G↓↑↑↑** **D7↑↑↑↑**  
 Do you re-call what was revealed the day the music died? **We started singin'** **Chorus**

**G** **Am** **C** **Am**  
 Oh, and there we were all in one place, a generation lost in space

**Em** **D** | **D7↓↑↑↑** **D7sus2↓** **D7↓**  
 With no time left to start a-gain.

**G** **D** **Em** **Am** **C**  
 So come on Jack be nimble, Jack be quick, Jack Flash sat on a candlestick

**Em** **A7** **D** | **D7**  
 'cause fire is the devil's only friend.

**Em ↓** **D ↓** **Em ↓** **D ↓** **D ↓** **D ↓** - **↓ ↓**  
 Oh and as I watched him on the stage, my hands were clenched in fists of rage.

**C** **G** **A7↑↑** **A7sus2↑↑** **A7↓** **C** **D7↑↑↓** **D7sus4↓** **D7↓**  
 No angel born in hell could break that Satan's spell.

**G** **D** **Em** **Am** **C**  
 And as the flames climbed high in-to the night to light the sacri-ficial rite

**G** **D** **Em** **C** **D7** **G↓↑↑↑** **C↓↑↑↑** **G↓↑↑↑** **D7↑↑↑↑**  
 I saw Satan laughing with delight the day the music died. **He was singin'** **Chorus**

**“Freely” (with limited strums)**

**G D Em Am C**  
 \_ I met a girl who sang the blues and I asked her for some happy news,  
**Em D7 | D7↓↑ D7sus4↓ D7↓↑ D7sus2↓ D7↓**  
 But she just smiled and turned away.  
**G D Em G Am G C**  
 I went down to the sacred store, where I heard the music years before,  
**Em C D7 | D7↓↑ D7sus4↓ D7↓↑ D7sus2↓ D7↓**  
 but the man there said the music wouldn't play.  
**Em ↓ Am ↓ Em ↓ Am ↓**  
 And in the streets the children screamed, the lovers cried and the poets dreamed.  
**C G Am C D - A5 E5 G5**  
 But not a word was spoken; the church bells all were broken.  
**G D Em G C D7**  
 And the three men I ad-mire most, the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost,  
**G D Em C Am D7 G↓↑↑ C↓ G↓ D7↓**  
 They caught the last train for the coast the day the mu - sic died. **And they were singin'**

**Chorus (Measured)**

**G C G D G C G D**  
 Bye, bye Miss A-merican Pie, drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was dry.  
**G C G D**  
 Them good old boys were drinkin' whiskey and rye,  
**Em ↓ A7 ↓ A7sus4 ↓ Em ↓ D | D7**  
 Singin' this'll be the day that I die. This'll be the day that I die.

**Outro (Up Tempo)**

**D7 D7sus2 D7 D7sus2 G C G D**  
 They were sing - in' bye, bye Miss A-merican Pie.  
**G C G D**  
 Drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was dry.  
**G C G D**  
 Them good old boys were drinking whiskey and rye, **(Ritard.)**  
**C↓ D7↓ G↓ C↓ G↓**  
 Singing this'll be the day that I die. **(Hold)**