50s Progression Chart

I – vi – IV – V · in C major: 4 bars

Interactive page: triads-guitar.com/progressions-library/50s-progression · Play it with a band: triads-guitar.com/progression-builder-app

The progression in C major

I	vi	IV	V
C	Am	F	G

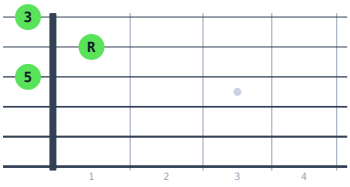
Why it works: Home, the wistful relative minor, then IV and V. The V points straight back at I, so the end of the loop feels like a doorway to the start. That is the doo-wop sweetness.

Songs built on it: Stand by Me · Earth Angel · Blue Moon · Heart and Soul · Unchained Melody · Every Breath You Take · Duke of Earl

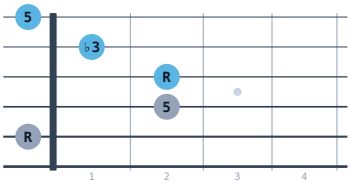
Heard in: Pop · Pop ballad · Soul · Gospel

How to play it in C major

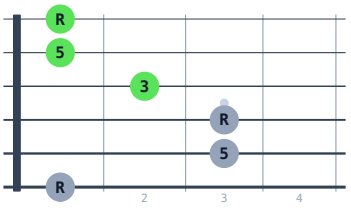
I · C · D shape



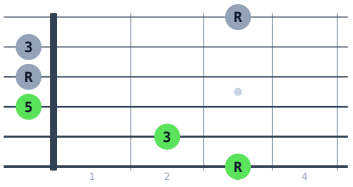
vi · Am · A shape



IV · F · E shape



V · G · G shape



50s Progression in every key

Key	I	vi	IV	V
C major	C	Am	F	G
D♭ major	D♭	B♭m	G♭	A♭
D major	D	Bm	G	A
E♭ major	E♭	Cm	A♭	B♭
E major	E	C♯m	A	B
F major	F	Dm	B♭	C
F♯ major	F♯	D♯m	B	C♯
G major	G	Em	C	D
A♭ major	A♭	Fm	D♭	E♭
A major	A	F♯m	D	E
B♭ major	B♭	Gm	E♭	F
B major	B	G♯m	E	F♯

What to play over it

Over the whole progression: C Major · C Major pentatonic

Chord by chord: C: C Major · Am: A Natural minor · F: F Lydian · G: G Mixolydian