

# IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THAT WAY ( Jim Croce )

Written by Jim Croce in the key of C in 4/4 time  
Released on the album: [Life And Times](#) ( 1973 )  
Released as a single in 1973  
Fingerstyle version for single acoustic guitar  
It Doesn't Have To Be That Way on [Wikipedia](#) | [Studio](#)

thumb: x                      Hammer on: h                      Bend up: )  
index: a                      Pull off: p                      Bend down: (  
dirty: b                      Slide up: /                      Press but don't play: !  
ring: c                      Slide down: \                      Staccato: :  
pinky: d                      Arpeggio: ~~~                      Mute: m

Chord sequence and patterns are pretty much the same as in "Lover's Cross"

## INTRO

```
e-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
b---8d-----\----6d-----\----5d-----3d-----|---1a-----1a---!3d-----1a---|
g-----0-----0-----0-----0-----|-----2c-----2c-----3c-----|
D-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----2b-----0-----|
A---7b-----\----5b-----3a-----2b-----|---0-----0-----|
E-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----2b-----|
      <----- Note ----->
```

picking pattern:  
xc - a - xc - a - xc - a - xb - a  
xb - a - x - b ( 2x )  
!: keep 1a pressed

### alternative pattern

```
e-----|-----1a-----|-----1a:--1a-----|-----1a---|-----|-----1a-----|-----|
b-----|-----1a-----|-----1a:--1a-----|-----1a---|-----0-----|-----0-----|
g-----|-----0-----|-----0:--0-----|-----0---|-----0-----|-----0-----|
D-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----|-----|-----0-----|-----|
A---!-----|-----|-----|-----|-----!-----|-----0-----|-----2b---|
E---3c-----|-----3c-----|-----|-----|-----3c-----|-----|
      <----->
```

picking pattern:  
x - a - bc - x - abc - abc - x - abc  
x - a - b - xc - b - a - x - x  
!: grab 3d

## 1ST VERSE

### ||:

1... Snowy nights and Christmas lights ...  
2... windy winter avenues ...

```
           C           Cmaj9/B           Am           Am/G
e-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|
b-----|-----1a-----|-----!3d-----|-----1a-----|-----1a-----|
g-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----2c-----|-----2c-----|-----0-----|
D---!-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----!-----|-----0-----|
A---3c-----|-----2b-----|-----0-----|-----|-----0-----|-----2b---|
E-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----3c-----|
```

picking pattern:  
x - a - bc - a ( 4x )  
!: grab 2b & keep 1a pressed

1... icy windowpanes ...  
2... just don't seem the same ... and the ...

```
           F           C/E           Dm (Dm7)           G
e-----|-----1a-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|
b-----|-----1a-----|-----1a-----|-----3d-----|-----0-----|
g-----|-----2b-----|-----2b-----|-----0-----|-----2b-----|-----2b-----|
D---3d-----|-----2b-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|
A---!-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
E-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----3c-----|
```

picking pattern:  
x - a - bc - a ( 4x )  
!: grab 3c

1... make me wish that we could be ...  
2... Christmas carols sound like blues ... but the ...

```
           C           Cmaj9/B           Am           Am/G
e-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|
b-----|-----1a-----|-----1a-----|-----1a-----|-----1a-----|
g-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----2b-----|-----2b-----|
D---!-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----2b-----|
A---3c-----|-----2b-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|
E-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----3c-----|
```

picking pattern:  
x - a - bc - a ( 4x )  
!: grab 2b

**1.**  
... together again ... and the ...

```
e-----|-----0-----|-----|-----|-----1a-----|-----|
b-----|-----3d-----|-----3d-----|-----0-----|-----1a-----|-----3d-----|
g-----|-----2b-----|-----2b-----|-----2b-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|
D-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|
A-----|-----|-----|-----|-----0-----|-----2b-----|
E---2a-----|-----3c-----|-----3c-----|-----|-----|
      <----- Note ----->
```

picking pattern:  
x - a - b - xc - b - a - x - a  
xb - a - xb - a - xb a - xc - a

### alternative pattern

**2.**  
... choir is not to blame ... But it ...

```
e-----|-----1a-----|-----3d-----|-----0-----|-----1a-----|-----|
b-----|-----1a-----|-----1a-----|-----0-----|-----1a-----|-----0-----|
g-----|-----2b-----|-----2b-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|-----0-----|
D---3d-----|-----2b-----|-----0-----|-----!-----|-----3d-----|
A---!-----|-----|-----|-----|-----3c-----|-----|
E---3c-----|-----3c-----|-----|-----|-----3c-----|
      <---- Hint ---->
```

picking pattern:  
x - a - bc - a ( 4x )  
!: grab 3c & 2b

### :||

## CHORUS

||:

1... doesn't have to be that way ...  
2... I'll be dropping by today ...

```
e-----0-----1a-----0-----|-----1a-----0-----| picking pattern:  
b-----3d-----1a-----0-----|-----1a-----1a-----| xc - a - xb - a - xb - a - xb - a  
g-----0-----0-----0-----0---|-----2b-----2b-----0-----0---| x - a - bc - a ( 2x )  
D-----|-----|  
A---3c---2b---0---|-----|  
E-----3c-----|---1a-----0-----|  
                                     < full barré >
```

The following part is not easy to analyse, cause a bass keeps interfering in the background of the studio version.  
A two guitar live version of the song exists, but no video material.  
I checked the tabs of some other guys, but wasn't really satisfied with their ideas.  
The following tab is my temporary working hypothesis.

1... what we had should never have ended ...  
2... we could easily get it together to- ...

```
e-----1a-----0-----|-----| picking pattern:  
b-----1a-----1a-----|-----1a-----1a-----| x - a - bc - a ( 2x )  
g-----2b-----2b-----0-----0---|-----2b-----0-----0-----0---| x - a - b  
D---3d-----2b-----2b-----|---3d-----| x - a - b - x - a ( pushed C chord )  
A---!-----!-----|---!-----3c-----| !: grab 3c  
E-----|-----|  
    < full barré >                <----- Note ----->
```

:||

... night ... it's only ...

```
e-----1a-----|-----1a-----| picking pattern:  
b-----1a-----1a-----|-----0-----0-----| x - a - b - xc - b - a - x - a ( 2x )  
g-----2b-----2b-----2b---|-----0-----0-----0-----0---|  
D---0-----|-----|  
A-----0-----|-----|  
E-----3c-----|-----3c-----|
```

## BRIDGE

... right ...

```
e-----0-----|-----1a-----| picking pattern:  
b-----1a-----1a-----|-----0-----0-----| x - a - b - xc - b - a - x - a  
g-----0-----0-----0---|-----0-----0-----0-----0---| x - a - b - xc - b - a - x - x  
D-----2b-----|-----0-----|  
A---3d-----3d-----|---!-----!-----0---2b---| !: grab 3c & keep 3d pressed  
E---!-----|---3c-----|
```

## 2ND VERSE ( same tab as 1st verse )

... Crowded stores, the corner Santa Claus ...  
... tinsel afternoons ... and the ...  
... sidewalk bands play their songs ...  
... slightly out of tune ...  
... down the windy winter avenues ...  
... there walks a lonely man ... and ...  
... if I told you who he is ... well I ...  
... think you'd understand ... But it ...

## CHORUS

... doesn't have to be that way ...  
... what we had should never have ended ...  
... I'll be dropping by today ...  
... we could easily get it together to- ...  
... night ... it's only ...

## OUTRO

... right ...

```
          C                               Dm7 (Dm)  
e-----0-----|-----1a-----| picking pattern:  
b-----1a-----1a-----|-----1a-----1a-----| x - a - b - xc - b - a - x - a ( 2x )  
g-----0-----0-----0---|-----2b-----2b-----2b---|  
D---!-----2b-----|---0-----|  
A---3c-----3c-----|-----0-----|  
E-----|-----|  
  
          Em                               F                               G7  
e-----0-----|-----1a-----1a-----| picking pattern:  
b-----0-----0-----|-----1a-----3d-----| x - a - b - xc - b - a - x - a  
g-----0-----0-----0---|-----2b-----2b-----0-----0---| x - a - bc - a ( 2x )  
D-----2c-----|-----|  
A---!-----|-----| grab 2b  
E---0-----|---1a-----3c-----|  
                                     < full barré >
```

Finish the song with a strummed C chord ( 3c3d2b01a0 )