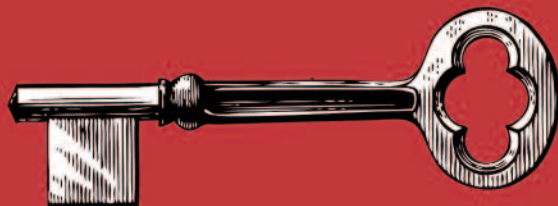


Keyed Up

PIANO

Self Taught Piano System



Chord School

How To Play Any Chord and
Throw Away This Book

by Joseph Pingel



The Greatest Self-Taught Composers of All Time



Bach



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Elgar



Rossini



Dvorak



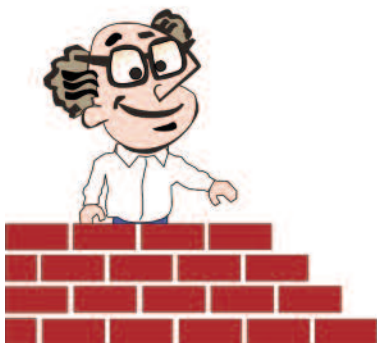
Berlioz



Khachaturian

Chord School

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Self Taught Piano System

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Please direct all inquiries regarding this book, distribution, affiliation, improvements, suggestions and anything of interest to Joseph Pingel.

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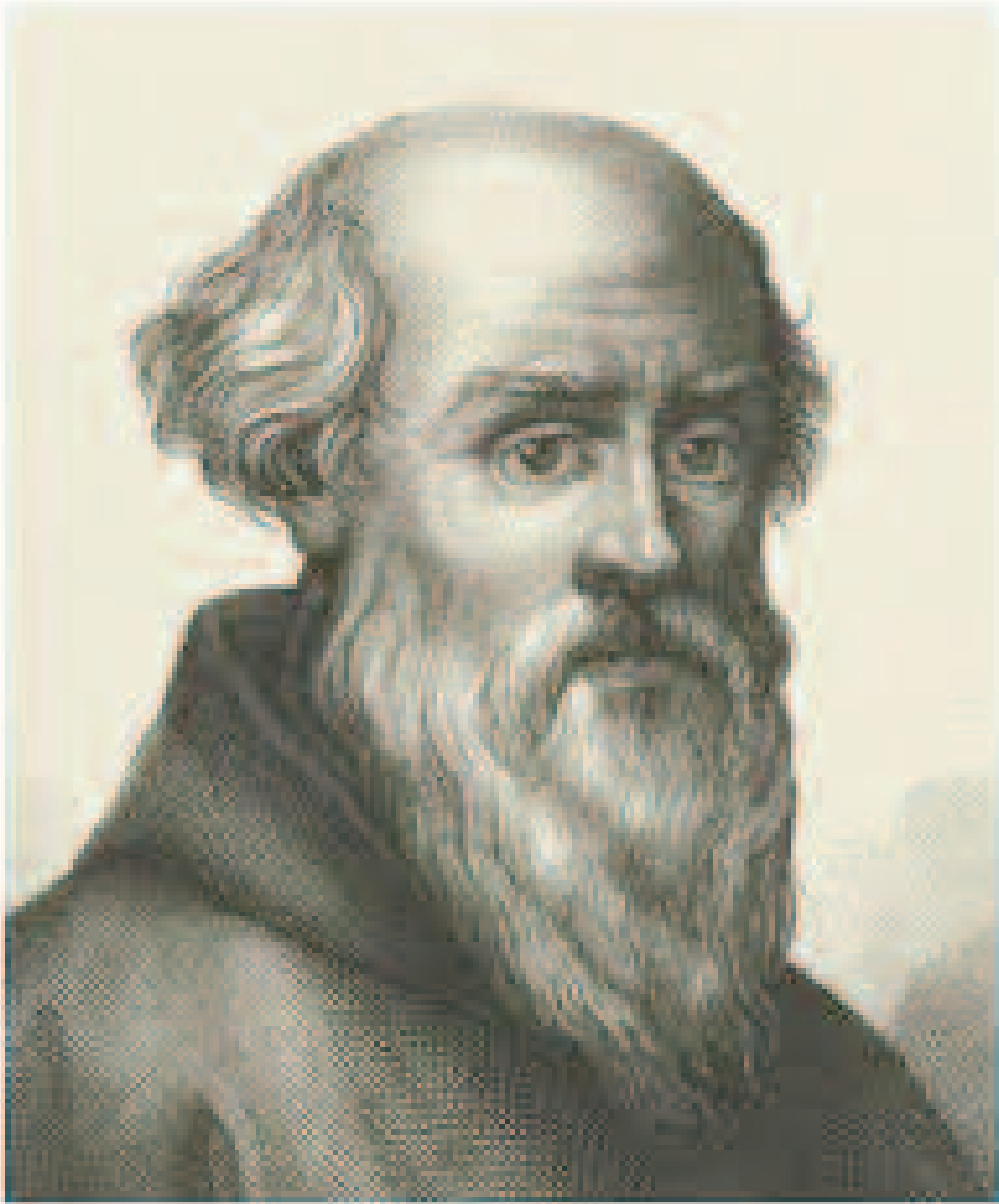
I wanted to be a rock star when I was a kid. I was good on the guitar at an early age and used guitar-chord knowledge to teach myself piano (after a couple years of lessons).

That changeover from one instrument to another drove home some music theory concepts that rocked my musical world. I made an unobvious discovery; a discovery missed by most musicians out there. That’s what this book is about.

No matter your musical skills, you will either acknowledge and recognize the rare insights I share here or aspire to understand them better.

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Guido of Arezzo
The Father of Music

Introduction

When I first learned chords, the only reference I had was Bradley's Piano Chord Encyclopedia. It was a great book, just 70 pages long containing everything you might want to know about building chords. The trouble was, it was all pictures and numbers, but no explanations.

At the time, I thought I understood music theory fairly well but I was totally confused by what I was reading. Each page showed the chords, numbers and staves, but without any explanations, I had to figure it all out on my own.

Perhaps it was all for the best because truly, no explanation of building chords will reveal to you the big picture. There is a missing element to building that can only be realized through diligent self-study.

After three months, I effectively reverse-engineered music theory and the numbers system until it all made sense. The outcome of such intense study revealed to me a side of music that I never imagined.

It opened the door to a completely different world; a world I dare say only 1% of the top musicians in the entire world understand. It's the world of "musical enlightenment."

Musical Enlightenment

This is a state of mind and understanding that changes your perspective of how important music theory is to manipulating music. Before, I had just thought of theory as a series of unrelated facts. However, enlightenment created a completely different mind set; one that gave me *control* over music. It revealed the inner workings; the guts of a moving machine where all parts moved in tandem.

To best describe it, it is what gives "enlightened ones" the understanding of how to play by ear and improvise. If you've ever wondered why certain musicians seem to have skills you don't understand; skills that make you think you missed the boat somehow, it has everything to do with enlightenment.

It only comes through studying scales, keys and numbers and then, getting clear on how they all work together. It's a personal self-teaching quest that I always endeavor to teach, but always fall short because in the end, you've just got to figure it out on your own.

Once you discover musical enlightenment, it will change your life forever. It frees you to explore music from a completely different perspective and gives you a solid path to follow to improve your skills.

It's All In The Numbers

So many people go kicking and screaming when you mention how numbers are what control all of music. "I'm no good at math" is the common answer. Frankly, if you want to be a good musician, you cannot adopt that limiting mind set. If you can count to 8 you can do it and the sooner you get started, the better.

In my book The Science of Music I break down music theory into 7 principles. Out of those 7 principles, only one is devoted to alpha notations on the staff. The other 6 principles are totally based on numbers, yet in modern music training, numbers are hardly ever mentioned as being the primary focus.

However to become a master, you must change your focus to learning the numbers system of music. It's not some newfangled twist of music created yesterday. It's the result of work performed by Guido of Arezzo, a Benedictine monk who invented music notation back in 1033 AD. He was the ultimate self-taught musician and his system is what we use today.

Unfortunately however, over the centuries music has evolved into something that old Guido probably never dreamed of. Music training has become so academic; far away from the basic principles he laid out in the beginning.

Simplicity

There is magic in simplicity and learning the basics well is the tonic of the seasoned musician. Back when I was first learning to play independently, I searched everywhere to find a book like this one. The Bradley book was the best I could find, but it was painful and slow to figure out.

35 years later, things are pretty much the same. It's hard find good information on this subject and most musicians are convinced building chords is an advanced skill that is beyond them; one where they have to go running to a chord encyclopedia every time they want to figure out a chord.

Truthfully, the way building is taught in modern music training, it's a wonder people ever learn this skill at all. This book reveals to you all the secrets you want to know but you're going to have to study it and THINK to uncover the musical enlightenment that you desire. It's not a pipe dream. It's real and once you discover it, you'll know it.

Good luck and thanks,

Seven Concepts Of Building Chords

- **Make up your mind to make it a priority.**

Learning chords is the key to independence on the piano and the first hurdle of the self-taught musician. The sooner you learn them, the sooner you will find yourself in control of your playing.

Chords are the beams of structure that hold all musical arrangements together. Without structure there can be no music and it is important to understand that learning chords on the piano trumps everything else you might learn in standard lessons.

Proficiency, sight-reading and technic are all following skills of standard lessons. While those things are important, they are much easier to understand and conquer once you get chords under your belt. Learning chords first teaches you to lead and understand what you are doing. Some people vehemently disagree with this premise, but it's hard to argue with control.

- **Your primary goal is to learn the 24 major and minor chords**

We tend to mistakenly believe there are thousands of chords to learn but that's not true. It's more like hundreds. Even then you're stretching it when it comes to practical application. In truth it makes no difference how many chords there are. All chords are built upon the sound foundation of a basic major or minor chord using a very simple and specific formula.

There are 12 majors and 12 minors; each being comprised of 3 notes which means they can be played 3 different ways; The root position, first inversion and second inversion.

When you learn all 24 chords and their inversions, that's called "Command." Achieving Command as quickly as possible is where you want to focus your attention.

- **Learn the rules of building and become independent.**

The rules of building are simple. You start with a basic major or minor chord and add one note at a time. Each chord builds off the one before it and only builds 4 times (7, 9, 11 and 13). It's just a matter of knowing the formula and how to find those numbers quickly.

There's two ways of building; the hard way and the easy way. Unfortunately, you have to spend a little bit of time on the hard way before the easy way kicks

in. It's a process of the major scale but building by thinking "scales" is way too time consuming; the song's over. You'll just have to bear with it until you learn your chords better. Once you know the basic chords, that's when the easy way kicks in.

- **The root note is the beacon of the building process.**



The easiest way to build is around the root note that you can always find no matter what position or inversion of the chord you may be playing. *Isolating the root note is a powerful tool to building.*

The root note is a point of reference that you add notes below and above. The root note is static and therefore, you always know where it is when you're playing chords. In standard building you have to count up the scale of the key for each chord and that takes a long time and a lot of brain power.

By isolating the root note as the primary reference point, it's easy to establish simple rules of building that work in all keys. For example, the 7th (e.g. C7) is always located 1 whole step below the root. The 9th is always one step above the root. The most common building takes place within 1 1/2 steps up and down from the root.

Although the building notes of 11ths and 13ths extend beyond the 1 1/2 step range, those are special chords that are easier to figure out by apply a memory trigger which you'll read about later.

- **Chords teach you the numbers system**

Learning chords is your first introduction to the numbers system of music but numbers play a far greater role in music once you understand them better. Take your time and learn the numbers of chords well in the beginning because once you understand the system better, your world of music will open up.

Numbers play a great role in transposing, composing, figuring progressive keys, modulation from one key to another and everything that requires manipulation. While in the beginning you might feel like you have your hands full, take it in stride and keep at it. It gets a lot easier and then you'll find yourself FREE to explore in ways you never thought of before.

- **Different voicings of chords make them sound better.**

Theres a lot of stylistic training out there that stress the need to voice chords in the best way to get the "professional" sound you want. A voicing is how you break up a chord between the left and right hands.

Different voicings of chords can create fuller, more robust sounds but in the beginning, don't get lost experimenting with voicings. Concentrate more on the bare facts of chords first and learn them well; straight no chaser. You've got the rest of your life to learn voicings.

- **View chords as a visual thing.**

The key to learning the basic major and minor chords quickly is to concentrate on the five groups of chords that share the same fingering positions.

Group 1: C, F, G, Dm, Em, Am

Group 2: A, D, E

Group 3: Cm, Fm, Gm

Group 4: Ab, Db, Eb

Group 5: C#m, F#m, G#m

Those 5 groups account for 18 out of the 24 chords and to learn all of them (including their inversions) only requires you to memorize 15 different fingering positions. That's fewer fingering positions than the number of chords you are learning (and that's a lot of leverage).

In the case of groups, the problem is not learning the fingering. The problem is in being able to identify which chord you are playing on the keyboard. They all look alike so the real mental work goes into being able to distinguish a C from an F from a G (in all their inversions) anywhere on the keyboard.

The most powerful tool of the Self Taught Piano System to memorize the names quickly are the chord flash cards that are included in the "24 Chords in 10 Lessons" package or can be purchased separately.

Scales and Keys

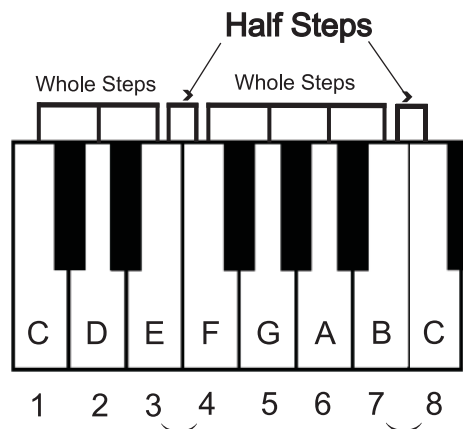
This understanding is the cornerstone of music. All scales are numerically the same. In this lesson you will learn a common numerical relationship shared by all keys. Understanding the simplicity of the mathematical order of 8 notes is everything to playing well.

- ✓ A **SCALE** is a series of eight notes that begins and ends on the same note. Each note is designated a number from 1 through 8.
- ✓ A **MAJOR SCALE** consists of half steps between the 3rd and 4th, and the 7th and 8th tones of the scale. All other steps are whole steps.
- ✓ The **ROOT NOTE** (or tonic) is the first note of a scale. It names the key and is given the number one.

Play all the white notes progressively up, one at a time, from C to high C. This sounds the same as singing do-re-mi-fa-sol-las-ti-do. This is called a diatonic scale. Now, repeat that exercise but this time play the white notes from D to D. This doesn't produce a diatonic scale. The reason it doesn't is that the key of D needs sharps to compensate for the *different position* it holds on the keyboard compared to the key of C.

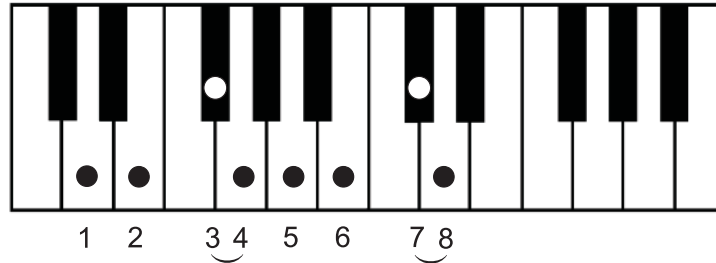
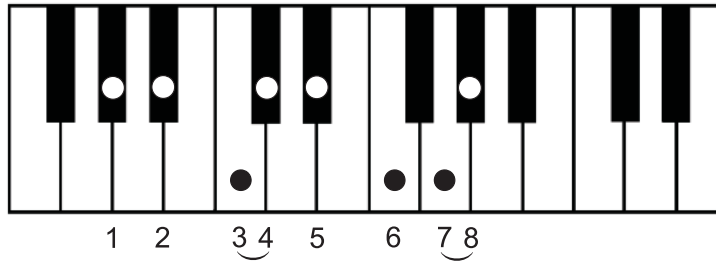
Likewise, all other major scales must compensate for the different positions they hold on the keyboard compared to C. The key of C shows the keyboard at rest with notes that fall directly in line with the definition of the major scale with half steps at the 3rd / 4th and the 7th / 8th intervals. Study the example shown in Figure 2. **This is the mathematical formula for all keys.**

The **KEY OF C** is the model for all other keys numerically because it has no sharps or flats.

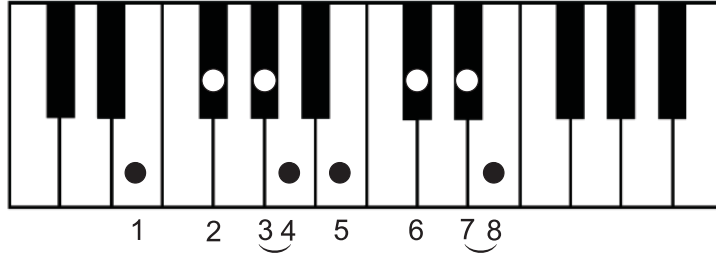


Study the examples below. Memorize the universal spacing of all keys and be able to pick out a major scale starting on any note. This is the most important understanding in all of music. It is the key to understanding how to build chords, transpose and playing by ear. Do the exercise and fully understand this chapter before going on.

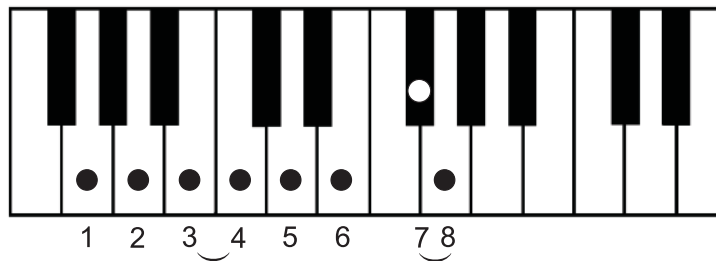
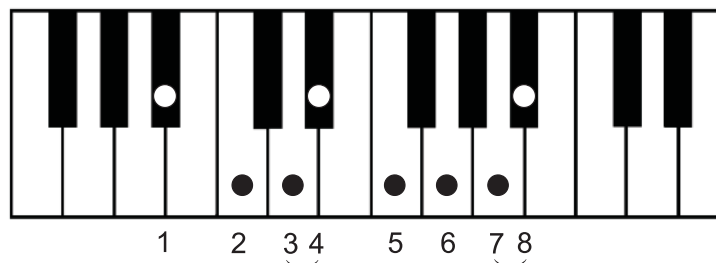
Key of D

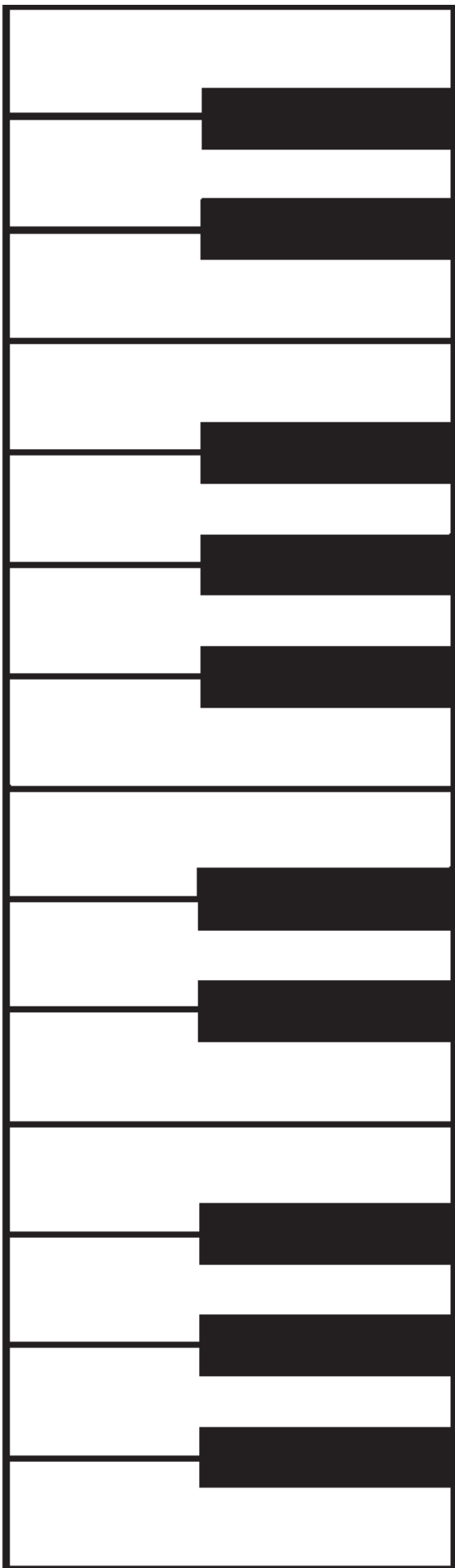
Key of A \flat 

Key of E



Key of G

Key of B \flat 



STOP

DO NOT GO ON WITH THE COURSE UNTIL YOU FULLY UNDERSTAND THIS CHAPTER ON SCALES AND KEYS!!!

Use the keyboard on the left to practice charting scales based on numerical orders. Use eight dimes or pennies and practice starting on any note and counting out a major scale. Check your work against the scales on the next page.

When you feel that you have this concept down, sit at the piano and plunk out major scales with your new-found knowledge. **DO NOT** use any kind of key signature reference to play scales. Don't cheat by looking at this book or using any printed scales whatsoever. Keep going until you figure it out using only your mind and the keyboard.

A major concept in this lesson is that sharps and flats are used in different scales out of necessity to maintain the mathematical order shown in the key of C (1 through 8 model with half steps at 3 / 4 and 7 / 8).

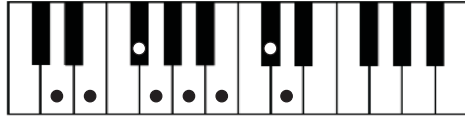
Now that you understand the make up of a major key, look at the accompanying key signatures on the following page. Assuming that you can read the staff (which some of you may not yet be able to do), notice that all of the notation matches exactly the sharps and flats you're plunking out for each key.

It is an important concept to understand that one does not play a note sharp or flat *because the key signature says to*, but rather, the key signature identifies the fact of the major scale order.

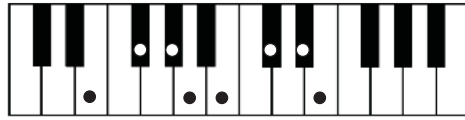
C



D



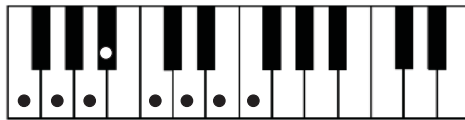
E



D \flat or C \sharp

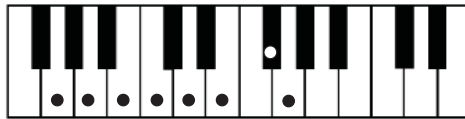
E \flat

F



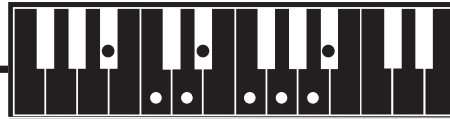
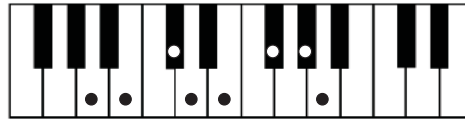
G \flat or F \sharp

G



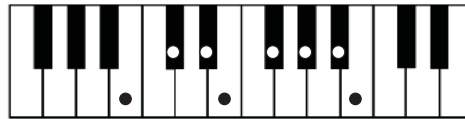
A \flat

A



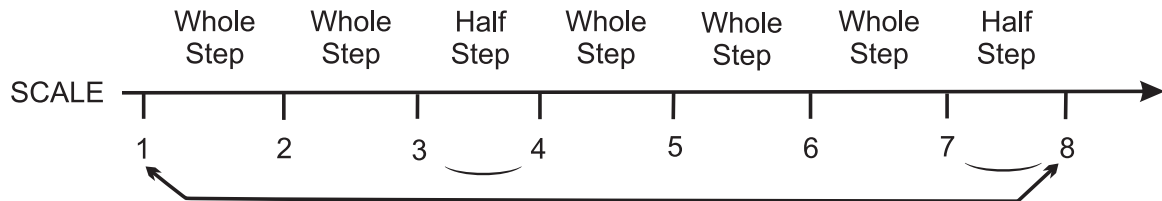
B \flat

B or C \flat



Chords and Numbers

All scales, in every key, are numerically the same. Note spacings are consistent throughout and each note of each scale is given a number from 1 through 8. Forget about the names of the notes or sharps and flats, the diagram below represents any scale.



Chord Foundations - Basic 3-Note Triads

There are two types of chords that serve as the foundations to all chords; major and minor chords. From these basic 3-note triad chords, all chords are built. You must learn these chords as a second nature in the same way that you know the keyboard. You must learn these chords if you want to play well.

MAJOR CHORD

✓ Has the numerical order of 1-3-5 which corresponds with the first, third and fifth tones of a major scale.

✓ The root note gives the chord its name.

✓ There is a major chord for each of the twelve notes in an octave.

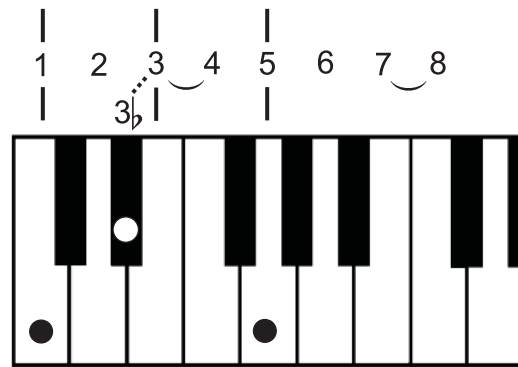
The diagram illustrates the C major chord. At the top, a treble clef with a C-clef is shown. Below it, a scale of notes C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C is written. A triad of notes C, E, and G is highlighted. Below the scale, the notes are numbered 1 through 8. At the bottom, a piano keyboard diagram shows the C major triad (C, E, G) with black dots on the white keys C, E, and G.

MINOR CHORD

This is a slight modification of a major chord in that the third note of the scale is flatted.



- ✓ Has the numerical order of 1-3 \flat -5 as it relates to the major scale.
- ✓ The root note gives the chord its name followed with an “m” (e.g. Am).
- ✓ There is a minor chord for each of the twelve notes in an octave.



Again, the important thing is to remember the 1-3-5 numerical order so you can figure out a chord without having to refer to this book. Each note has its own scale from which each major and minor chord is derived.



Put into perspective, there are 12 keys and all but the key of C need to use either sharps or flats. On the surface, the concept of keys using notes, sharps and flats may seem overwhelmingly detailed. But in reality, the concept of a scale has *nothing to do with individual notes* but rather only deals with the 1 through 8 numerical order. It doesn't matter where you start, the numerical order is always the same. The individual notes of each scale may change but the numerical order never does.

It's All Numbers

The sooner you start thinking in numbers, the sooner you will be playing like a pro.

It is this static understanding of numbers that gives you control over music. If you want to be a good musician you must think in terms of numbers over individually named notes. You cannot count using the alphabet!!! With numbers you can keep track of where you are. With numbers you can build new chords. With numbers you can figure out how to transpose to another key. With numbers you can chart chordal progressions. With numbers you understand the symmetry of music. When you understand one key, you understand them all. This is a major part of the musical matrix.

Rules of Building Chords

DON'T USE THIS BOOK AS A CRUTCH!

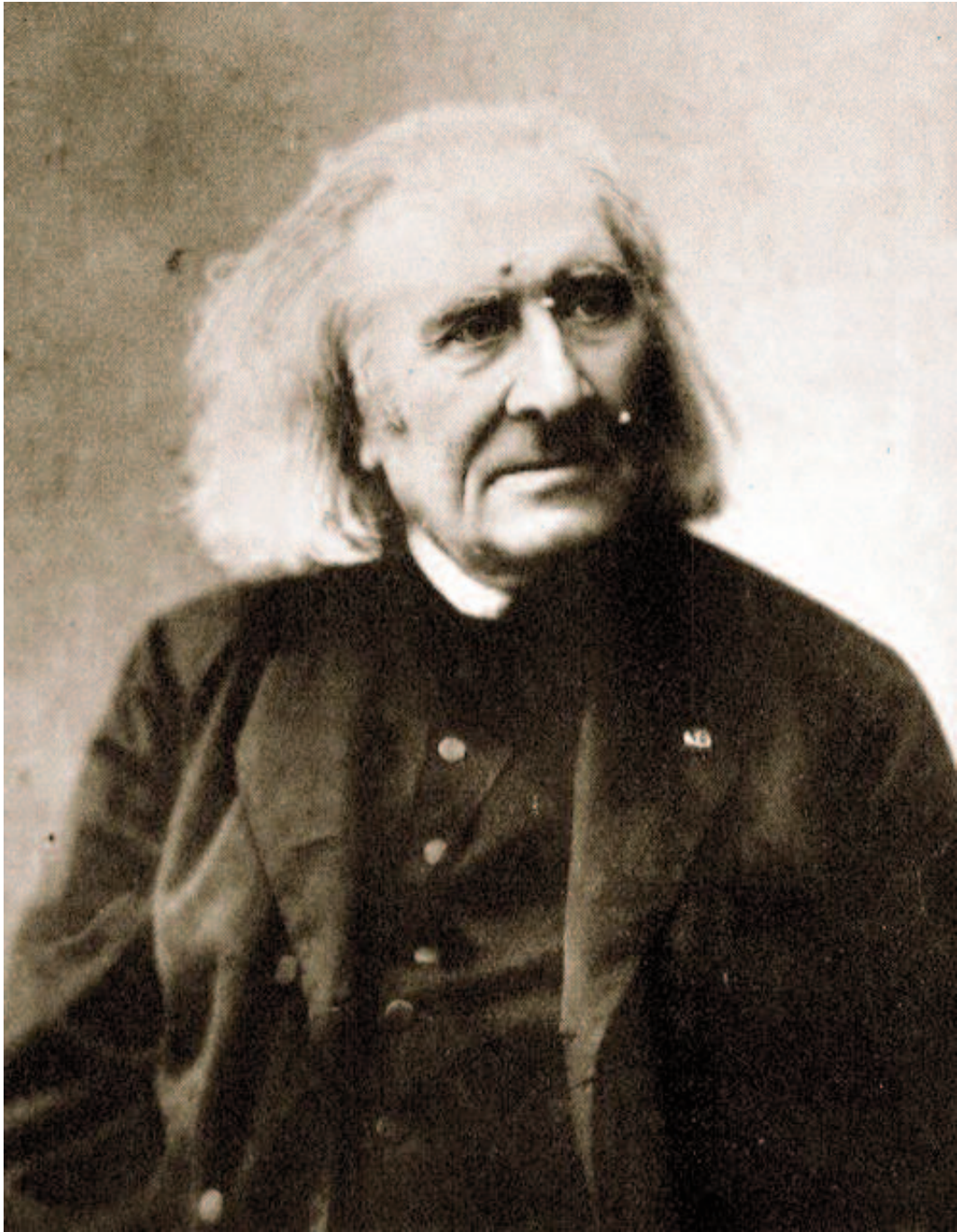
Learn how to build chords and you will be able to figure out and play any chord on the spot. You don't need this book to find a chord. You need this book to figure them out.

Building chords is not difficult and follows a very specific order. You start with a basic major or minor chord and add notes in order. Each subsequent build is based on the previous one so for example, a 9th builds on top of a 7th; and an 11th chord builds on top of a 9th.

The following table covers 28 different kinds of chords. Some you will use a lot and others hardly ever (or never). Not all chords are shown and they don't need to be. Once you learn to build, even the narliest confusion of numbers can be tamed on the spot.

Chord	Abbreviation	Foundation Chord	Proximity to Tonic	Numerical Order
Major	M	Triad		1-3-5
Minor	m	Triad		1-3 _b -5
Augmented	Aug or +	Triad		1-3-5#
Diminished	Dim or °			1-3 _b -5 _b -6
Suspended	Sus	Major Triad		1-4-5
Sixth	6	Major Triad	- 1 1/2	1-3-5-6

Chord	Abbreviation	Foundation Chord	Proximity to Tonic	Numerical Order
Minor Sixth	m6	Minor Triad	- 1 1/2	1-3 \flat -5-6
Sixth with added Ninth	6 add 9	6th	1	1-3-5-6-9
Seventh	7	Major	-1	1-3-5-7 \flat
Major Seventh	Maj 7	Major	-1/2	1-3-5-7
Minor Seventh	m7	Minor	-1	1-3b-5-7b
Seventh with Augmented Fifth	7+5	7th	Aug 5th	1-3-5 \sharp -7b
Seventh with Flatted Fifth	7b5	7th	Flatted 5th	1-3-5b-7b
Seventh with Flatted Ninth	7b9	7th	+1/2	1-3-5-7b-9b
Seventh with Suspended Fourth	7 sus 4	7th	Sus 4	1-3-4-7b
Seventh with added Sixth	7 add 6	7th	-1 1/2	1-3-5-6-7b
Ninth	9	7th	+1	1-3-5-7b-9
Major Ninth	Maj 9	Maj 7	+1	1-3-5-7-9
Minor Ninth	m9	m7	+1	1-3b-5-7b-9
Ninth with Augmented 5th	9+5	9th	Aug 5th	1-3-5 \sharp -7b-9
Ninth with Flatted Fifth	9b5	9th	Flatted 5th	1-3-5b-7b-9
Eleventh	11	9th	+2 1/2 (same note as 4th)	1-3-5-7b-9-11
Eleventh with Flatted Ninth	11b9	11th	+1/2	1-3-5-7b-9b-11
Augmented Eleventh	11+5	11th	Aug 5th	1-3-5 \sharp -7b-9-11
Thirteenth	13	11th	-1 1/2 (same note as 6th)	1-3-5-7b-9-11-13
Minor Thirteenth	m13	m11	-1 1/2 (same note as 6th)	1-3b-5-7b-9-11-13
Thirteenth with Flatted Ninth	13b9	13th	+1/2	1-3b-5-7b-9b-11-13



“Beware of missing chances; otherwise it may be altogether too late some day.”

Franz Liszt

Major and Minor Chords

Description: Major and Minor chords are called “triads” and serve as the foundations to build all other chords. Almost every chord you want to play will begin with either a basic major or minor chord.

Numerical Order: Major 1-3-5. Minor 1-3 \flat -5.

Each chord is a derivative of its own particular scale.

C

Cm



Trigger: The tonic (the #1 position) of a major or minor chord acts as a point of reference to build all other chords. Building chords follow the order of 1-3-5-7 \flat -9-11-13. To build chords on the fly, you don't stop everything and start counting up the scale to figure out which note (or notes) to add (that would take too long). Rather, you add building notes by understanding where they are *in relation to the tonic*. Regardless of the position or inversion you may be playing, you *always* know where the tonic is located.

Though simple, this is a significant understanding. The tonic is not only designated #1, but more significantly #8. Most building notes are located within 1 1/2 steps above or below the tonic.

Voicings: You have to play all three (3) notes of a basic chord to establish its mode (major or minor). Playing the tonic of the chord in the bass clearly defines the chord.

Usage and Notes: If you are unsure whether a chord is major or minor, you can play it without including the 3rd (which defines major or minor mode).

Major Chord 1-3-5

C



D



E



F



G



A



B or Cb



D \flat or C \sharp

E \flat

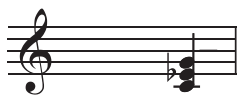
G \flat or F \sharp

A \flat

B \flat

Minor Chord 1-3 \flat -5

Cm



D \flat m or C \sharp m



Dm



E \flat m



Em



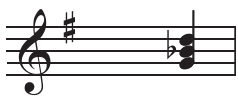
Fm



G \flat m or F \sharp m



Gm



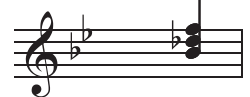
A \flat m



Am



B \flat m



Bm or C \flat m



Augmented Chords

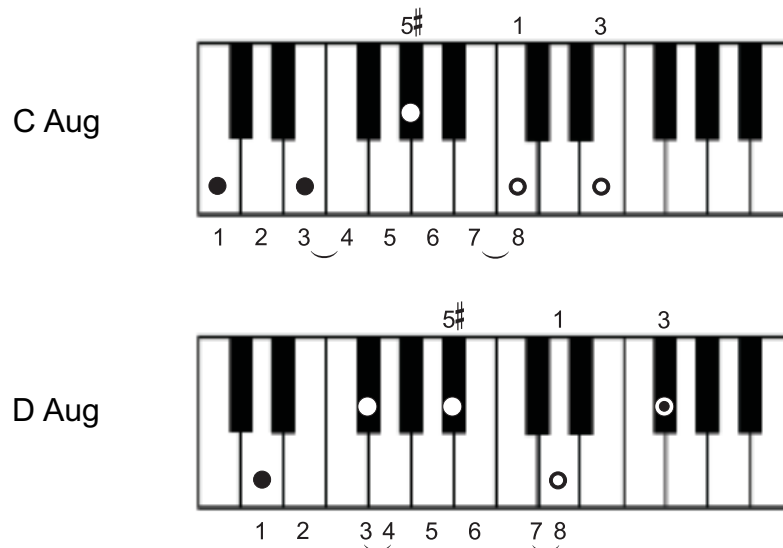
Description: Play a basic major chord and raise the 5th $\frac{1}{2}$ step. Notated as “+” or “Aug” (i.e. C+; C Aug).

Numerical Order: Major 1-3-5 \sharp

The Rule: Augmented chords are 3-note chords that are singular to themselves. One way to remember them quickly is to see the note intervals as a series of major 3rds (e.g. 2 whole steps). Or you may have the natural ability to quickly pick out the 5th without much trouble.

Trigger: A helpful realization to quickly remembering these chords is that there are only 4 different fingerings total (with inversions) for all augmented chords. Each augmented chord can potentially be named for any one of the notes it contains. The defining factor in naming the chord whatever root note you play in the bass.

Augmented chords can have three names. Define the chord by playing the root note in the bass.



Voicings: This is a 3-fingered chord that stands by itself with the tonic played in the bass.

Usage and Notes: Augmented chords are transitional that generally resolves to the tonic of the key you are playing. Adding these basic chords to your repertoire will improve your playing.

Augmented Chord 1-3-5#

C aug



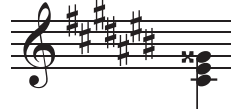
D aug



E aug



D \flat aug or C# aug



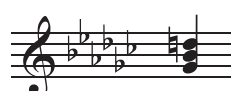
E \flat aug



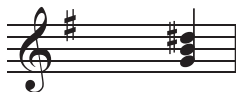
F aug



G \flat aug or F# aug



G aug



A \flat aug



A aug



B \flat aug



B aug or C \flat aug



Diminished Chords

Description: Diminished chords are made up of a series of minor 3rds (consisting of $1\frac{1}{2}$ steps each). Because the 4 notes are evenly spaced, there are only 3 root positions and 3 inversions each.

Numerical Order: $1-3\flat-5\flat-6$

Trigger: A diminished chord is a derivative of a minor 6th with a “diminished” 5th. In other words, play a m6 and then flat the 5th. Truly, these chords are chords in themselves and should be learned ASAP because they serve as excellent transition chords.

The Rule: Each chord is named in accordance with each note in the chord. To declare which chord you are playing, play the root note in the bass. Study the examples below:

C dim

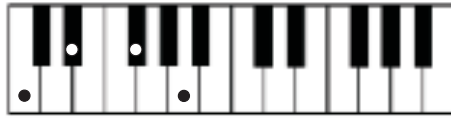
D \flat dim

D dim

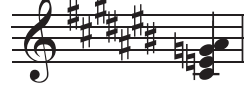
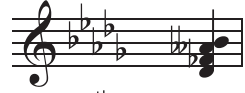
Usage and Notes: Diminished chords are transitional chords to move between the 1st and 2nd chords of a key (e.g. C - D \flat dim - Dm). They are also the foundations of 7 \flat 9 chords. Both these types of chords are excellent additions to your minimum proficiency. Learn them sooner than later and your playing will greatly improve .

Diminished Chord 1-3 \flat -5 \flat -6

C dim



D \flat dim or C \sharp dim



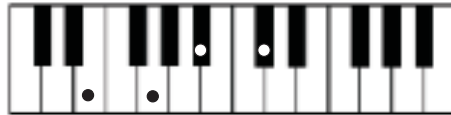
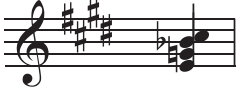
D dim



E \flat dim



E dim



F dim



G \flat dim or F \sharp dim



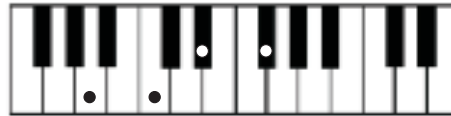
G dim



A \flat dim



A dim



B \flat dim



B dim or C \flat dim



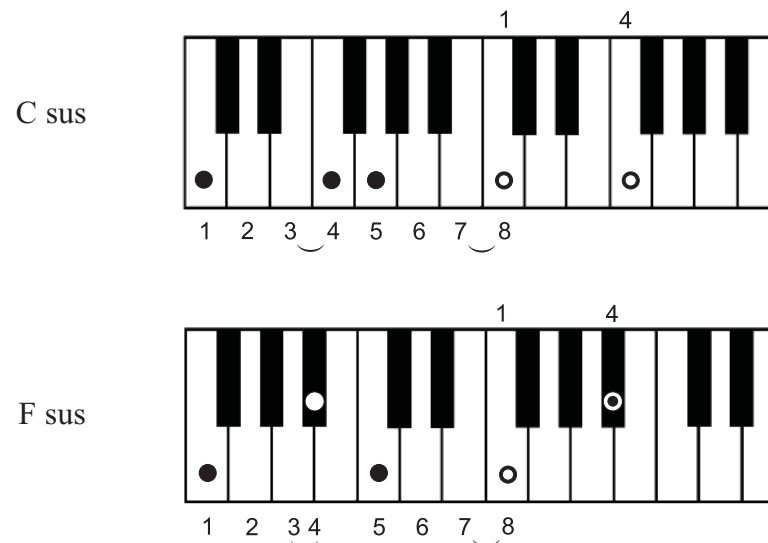
Suspended Chords

Description: A suspended chord, raises the 3rd of a major chord $\frac{1}{2}$ step (to the 4th).

Numerical Order: Major 1-4-5

Reminder: A “Major Scale” is a series of 8 notes that begins and ends on the same note with half steps at the 3rd/4th and 7th/8th intervals.

The Rule: Play any inversion of a major chord and raise the 3rd $\frac{1}{2}$ step. Study the examples below:

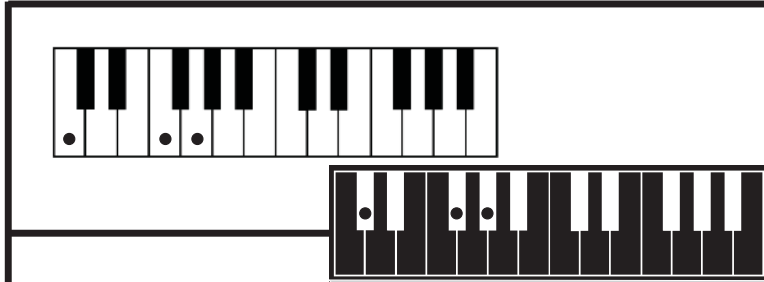


Voicings: This is a 3-fingered chord that stands by itself with the tonic played in the bass.

Usage and Notes: A suspended chord is transitional and often resolves itself to its own major chord. They have a distinctive sound that you should train your ear to hear.

Suspended Chord 1-4-5

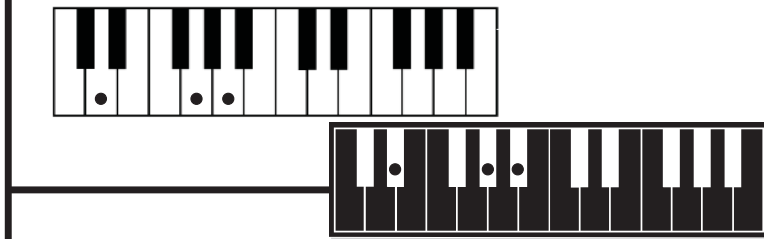
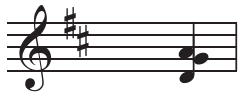
Csus



D \flat sus or C \sharp sus



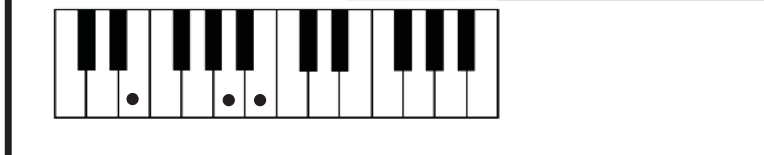
Dsus



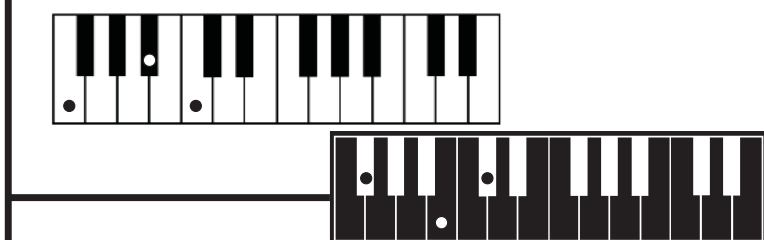
E \flat sus



Esus



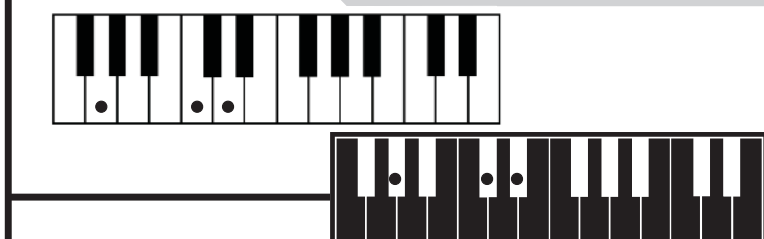
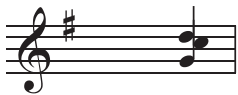
Fsus



G \flat sus or F \sharp sus



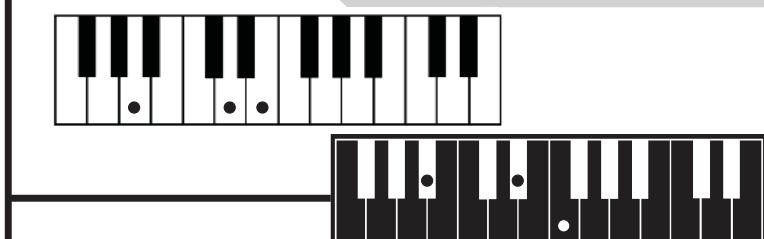
Gsus



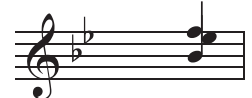
A \flat sus



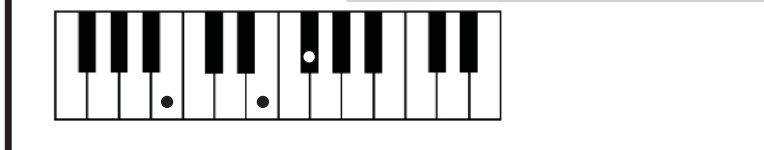
Asus



B \flat sus



Bsus or C \flat sus





If there is anyone here whom I
have not insulted, I beg his
pardon.

Johannes Brahms

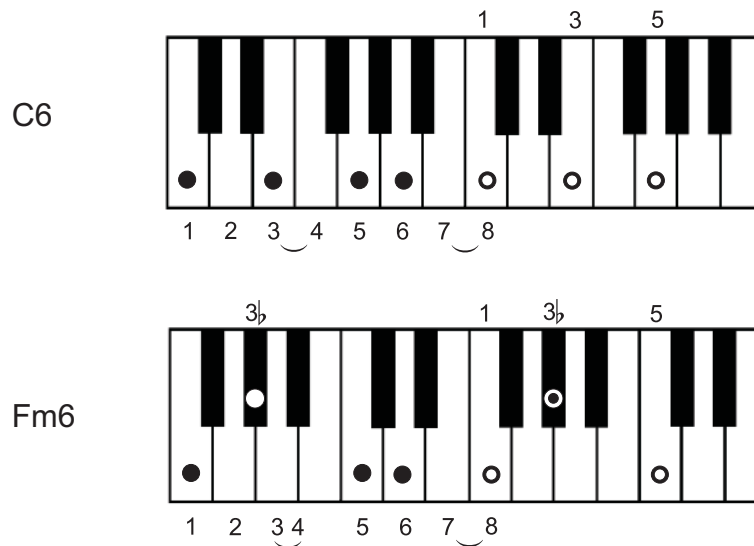
6th Chords

Description: Play a basic major or minor chord and add the 6th note of the scale.

Numerical Order: Major 1-3-5-6 Minor 1-3 \flat -5-6

Trigger: The 6th is always located 1½ steps below the tonic and is the same note as the relative m7 chord.

The Rule: Play any inversion of a major chord and add the note 1½ steps below the tonic to make a 6th chord. Study the examples below:



Voicings: This is a 4-fingered chord that stands by itself with the tonic played in the bass.



Usage and Notes: The 6th chord is the black sheep of music theory and the only mathematical anomaly of music in that it is a different note between the major and minor scales. For example in A major, the 6th is F#. Whereas in Am the 6th is F.

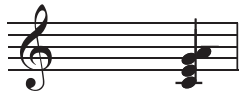
This brings about some confusion as to which 6th note to add to make the chord. The general concensus is to designate the 6th note of the major scale to add to the minor chord.

When played with the 6th of the minor scale, the chord is very dissonant and not very popular. When played with the major scale 6th, it sounds a little more palatable. But in either case, it's not a particularly popular chord.

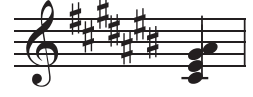
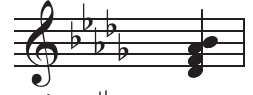
The minor 6 chart included here adds the major scale 6th to the minor chord.

6th Chord 1-3-5-6

C6



D \flat 6 or C \sharp 6



D6



E \flat 6



E6



F6



G \flat 6 or F \sharp 6



G6



A \flat 6



A6



B \flat 6

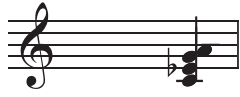


B6 or C \flat 6

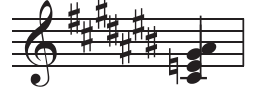
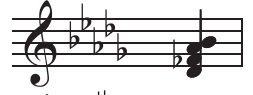


Minor 6th Chord 1-3 \flat -5-6

Cm6



D \flat m6 or C \sharp m6



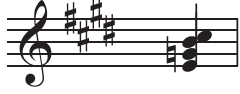
Dm6



E \flat m6



Em6



Fm6



G \flat m6 or F \sharp m6



Gm6



A \flat m6



Am6



B \flat m6



Bm6 or C \flat m6



7th Chords

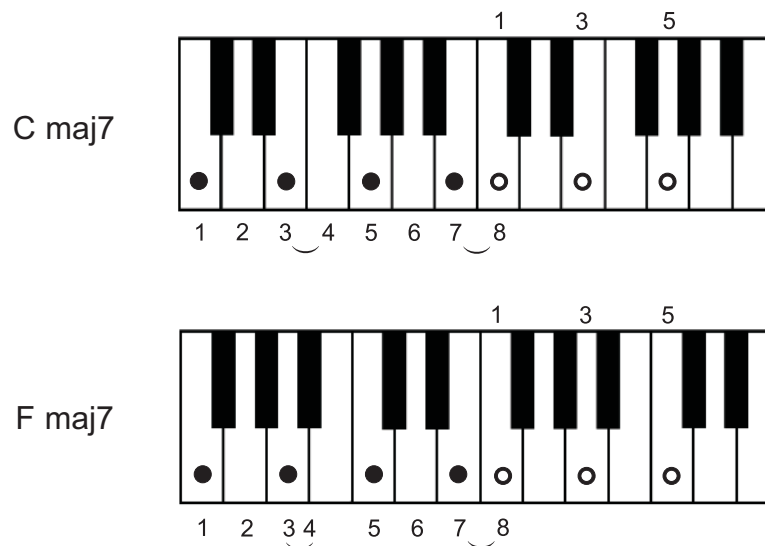
Major 7th Chords

Description: To play a Major 7th chord, start with any major chord and add the 7th note of the chord's major scale.

Numerical Order: Major 1-3-5-7

Reminder: A "Major Scale" is a series of 8 notes that begins and ends on the same note with half steps at the 3rd/4th and 7th/8th intervals.

The Rule: Play any inversion of a major chord and add the note 1/2 step below the tonic to make a Major 7th chord. Study the examples below:



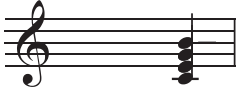
Voicings: This is a 4-fingered chord. Play the tonic in the bass so the chord is clearly defined.

Usage and Notes: Major 7ths have a dreamy feel to them and are very calm and relaxing. They have a distinctive sound that you should train your ear to hear.

There are instances when a major 7th is added to a minor chord as well. When it comes to building, anything is possible.

Major 7th Chord 1-3-5-7

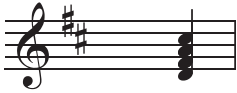
Cmaj7



D \flat maj7 or C \sharp maj7



Dmaj7



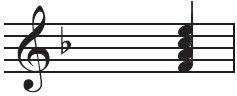
E \flat maj7



E \sharp maj7



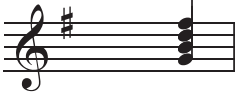
Fmaj7



G \flat maj7 or F \sharp maj7



Gmaj7



A \flat maj7



A \sharp maj7



Bmaj7 or C \flat maj7



B \flat maj7





Whoever is most impertinent
has the best chance.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

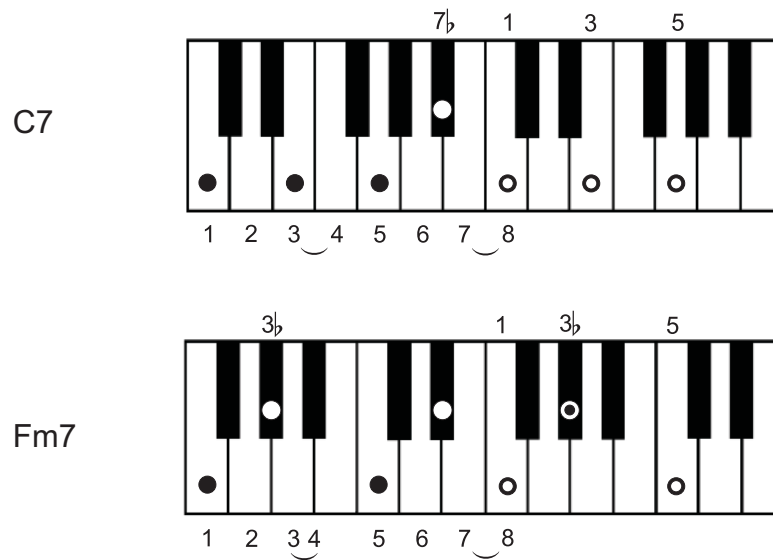
7th Chords (Dominant)

Description: To play a basic major or minor chord and add the flatted 7th ($7\flat$) note of the chord's major scale. This 7th is called a dominant 7th.

Numerical Order: Major 1-3-5- $7\flat$ Minor 1- $3\flat$ -5- $7\flat$

Reminder: A "Major Scale" is a series of 8 notes that begins and ends on the same note with half steps at the 3rd/4th and 7th/8th intervals.

Trigger: The dominant 7th is always located 1 whole step below the tonic (or #8). Study the examples below:



Voicings: This is a 4-fingered chord that stands by itself with the tonic played in the bass. Other popular voicings include playing the basic major or minor chord with the right hand and the tonic and 7th played in the bass.

Usage and Notes: A 7th is a transitional chord leading to the next chord. The dominant 7th is the building chord for subsequent builds up to 13ths.

7th Chord 1-3-5-7_b

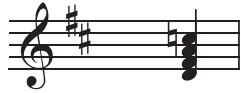
C7



D_b7 or C[#]7



D7



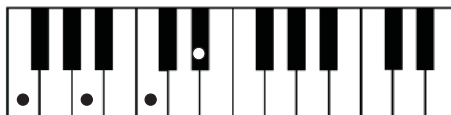
E_b7



E7



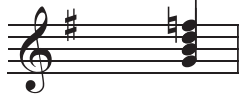
F7



G_b7 or F[#]7



G7



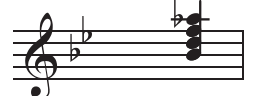
A_b7



A7



B_b7



B7 or C_b7



Minor 7th Chord 1-3_b-5-7_b

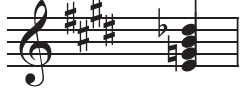
Cm7



Dm7



Em7



Fm7



Gm7



Am7



Bm7 or C_bm7



D_bm7 or C_♯m7



E_bm7



G_bm7 or F_♯m7



A_bm7



B_bm7



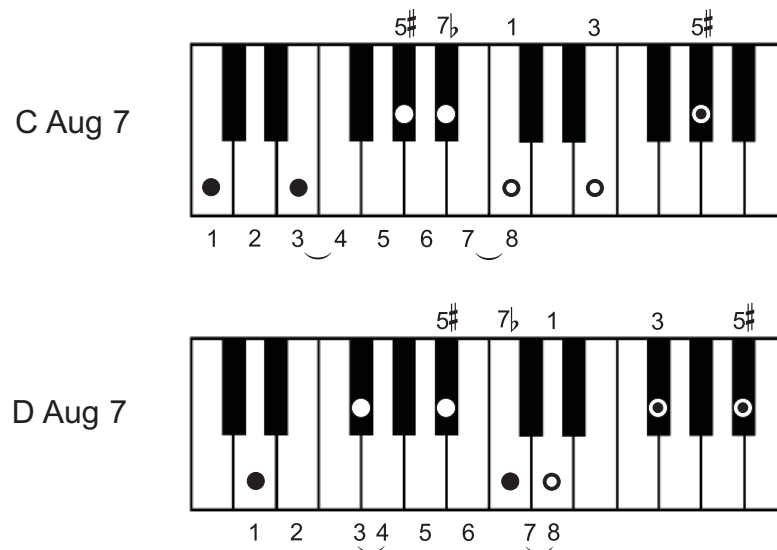
Augmented 7th Chords

Description: To play a basic augmented major chord, add the flatted 7th ($7\flat$) note of the chord's major scale. Commonly notated +7 or Aug 7.

Numerical Order: Major 1-3-5 \sharp - $7\flat$

Reminder: A "Major Scale" is a series of 8 notes that begins and ends on the same note with half steps at the 3rd/4th and 7th/8th intervals.

The Rule: Play any inversion of an augmented chord and add the note 1 whole step below the tonic to make an Aug 7th chord. Study the examples below:



Voicings: This is a 4-fingered chord that stands by itself with the tonic played in the bass.

Usage and Notes: An augmented chord alone is transitional and adding a 7th makes it even more transitional.

Augmented 7th Chord 1-3-5[#]-7^b

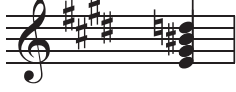
C aug 7



D aug 7



E aug 7



F aug 7



G aug 7



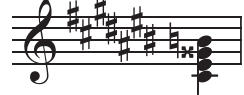
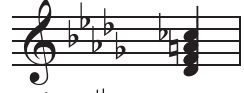
A aug 7



B aug 7 or Cb aug 7



D^b aug 7 or C[#] aug 7



E^b aug 7



G^b aug 7 or F[#] aug 7



A^b aug 7



B^b aug 7



Suspended 7th Chords

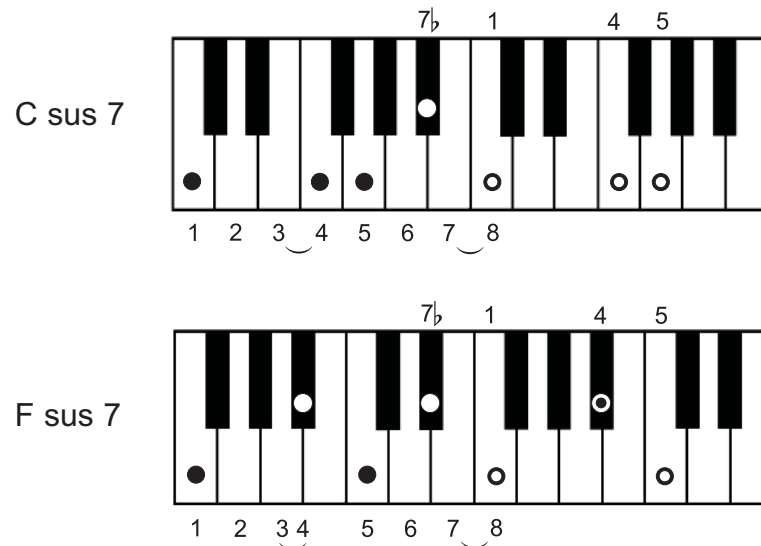
Description: To play a suspended 7th chord, add the dominant 7th ($7\flat$) to a basic suspended chord.

Numerical Order: Major 1-4-5- $7\flat$

Reminder: A “Major Scale” is a series of 8 notes that begins and ends on the same note with half steps at the 3rd/4th and 7th/8th intervals.

Trigger: Given the understanding that #1 and #8 are the same note, the dominant 7th is always located 1 whole step below the tonic (or #8). Forget about the names of the notes and concentrate totally on the numerical order. All keys are the same and this rule applies to all major chords.

The Rule: Play any inversion of a suspended chord and add the note 1 whole step below the tonic to make a sus 7th chord. Study the examples below:

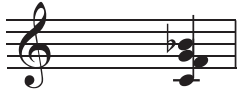


Voicings: This is a 4-fingered chord that stands by itself with the tonic played in the bass. Other popular voicings include playing the basic suspended chord with the right hand and the tonic and 7th in the bass.

Usage and Notes: A suspended 7th is another level of transition above a basic suspended chord. They have a distinctive sound that you should train your ear to hear.

Suspended 7th Chord 1-4-5-7^b

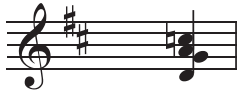
Csus7



D^bsus7 or C[#]sus7



Dsus7



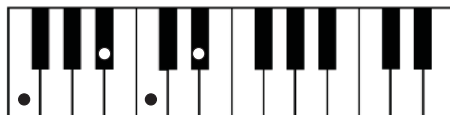
E^bsus7



Esus7



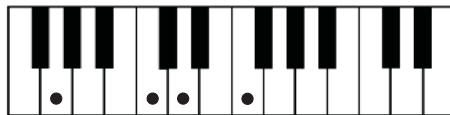
Fsus7



G^b7 or F[#]7



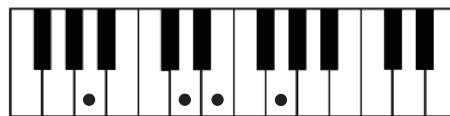
Gsus7



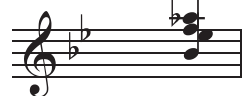
A^b7



A⁺7



B^b7



B⁺7 or C^b7



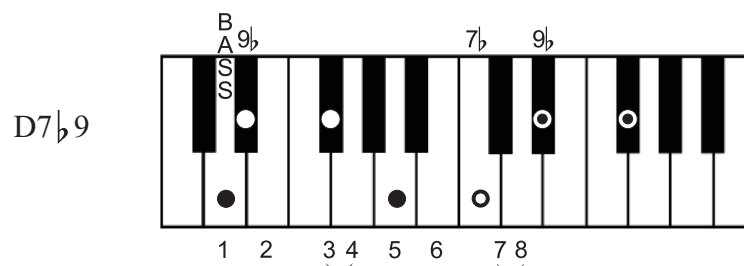
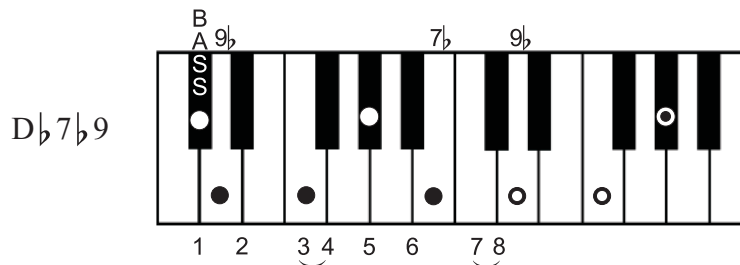
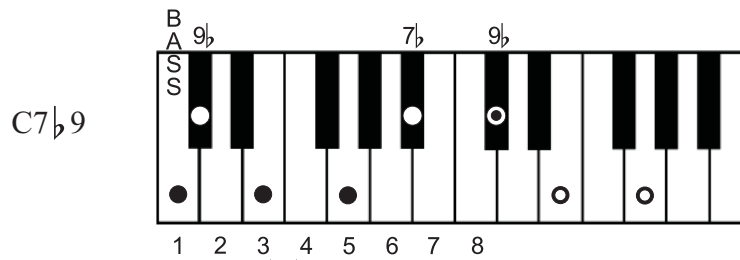
7 \flat 9 Chords

Description: 7 \flat 9 chords are unresolved diminished chords. The construction is the same as a diminished chord with an alternate root note in the bass.

Numerical Order: 1-3 \flat -5-7 \flat -9 \flat

The Rule: Play the root note in the bass and the diminished chord $\frac{1}{2}$ step up from the root. For example, play a C in the bass and a D \flat dim with your right hand to play a C7 \flat 9 chord. This is a really good trigger. Don't forget it. Study the examples below:

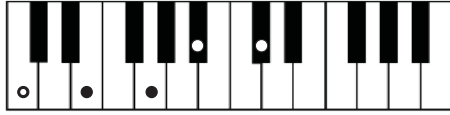
These chords are derivatives of Diminished. Very useful chords that are easy to remember.



Usage and Notes: The 7 \flat 9 chord is one of the best reasons to learn diminished chords. A diminished chord serves double duty by simply changing the tonic in the root. This chord has a real jazzy feel about it and is used in a transitional way.

7 \flat 9 Chord 1-3-5-7 \flat -9 \flat

C7 \flat 9



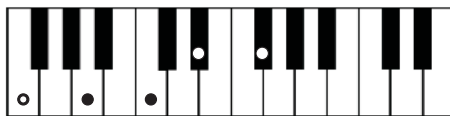
D7 \flat 9



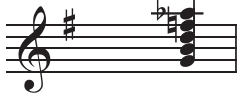
E7 \flat 9



F7 \flat 9



G7 \flat 9



A7 \flat 9



B7 \flat 9 or C \flat 7 \flat 9



D \flat 7 \flat 9 or C \sharp 7 \flat 9



E \flat 7 \flat 9



G \flat 7 \flat 9 or F \sharp 7 \flat 9



A \flat 7 \flat 9



B \flat 7 \flat 9



9th Chords

Major 9th Chords

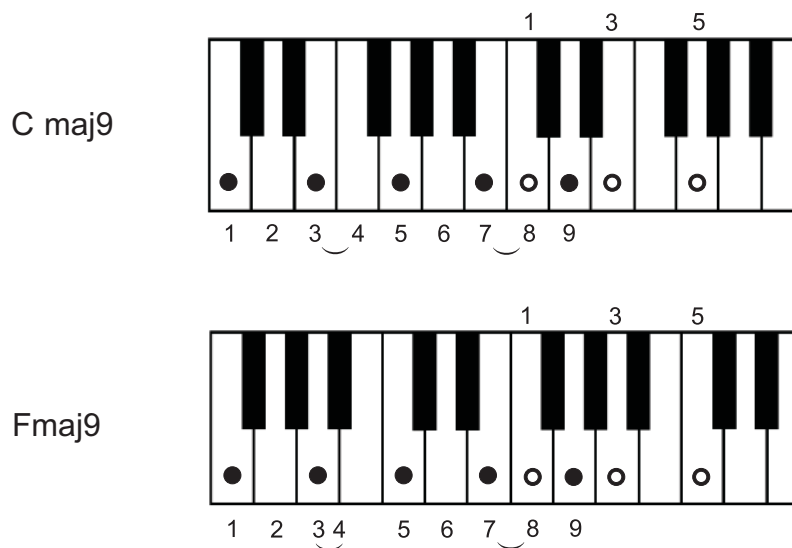
Description: The Major 9th chord, builds on a Major 7th chord by adding the 9th note of the chord's major scale.

Numerical Order: Major 1-3-5-7-9

Reminder: A "Major Scale" is a series of 8 notes that begins and ends on the same note with half steps at the 3rd/4th and 7th/8th intervals.

Trigger: Given the understanding that #1 and #8 are the same note, the 9th is always located 1 whole step above the tonic (or #8). Forget about the names of the notes and concentrate totally on the numerical order. All keys are the same and this rule applies to all major chords.

The Rule: Play any inversion of a major 7th and add the note 1 whole step above the tonic to make a Major 9th chord. Study the examples below:



Voicings: This is a 5-fingered chord but you can turn it into a 4-finger chord by dropping the tonic from the right hand and playing it in the bass.

Usage and Notes: Major 9ths build on a major 7th and share the same type of dreamy feel. They have a distinctive sound that you should train your ear to hear.

Major 9th Chord 1-3-5-7-9

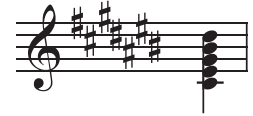
Cmaj9



D \flat maj9 or C \sharp maj9



Dmaj9



E \flat maj9



E \sharp maj9



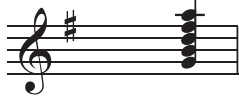
Fmaj9



G \flat maj9 or F \sharp maj9



Gmaj9



A \flat maj9



A \sharp maj9



B \flat maj9



B \sharp maj9 or C \flat maj9





“Every kind of music is good, except the boring kind.”

Gioacchino Rossini

9th Chords

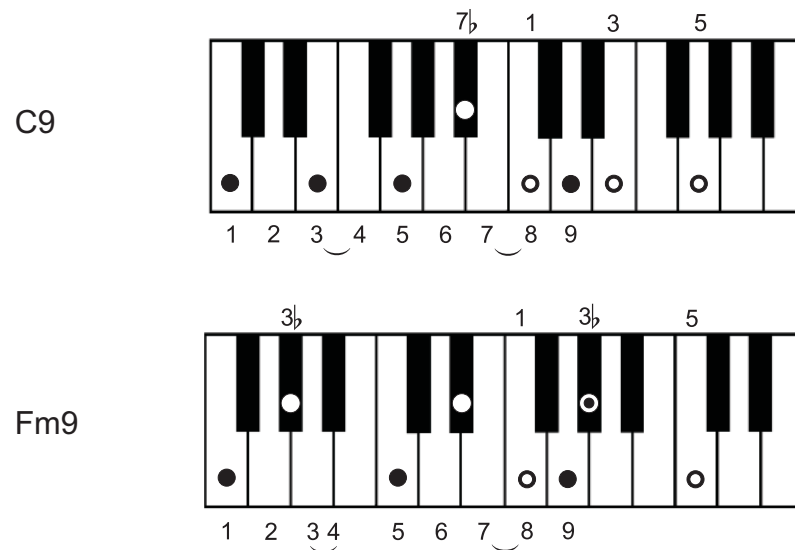
Description: To play a 9th chord, start with a 7 or m7 chord and add the 9th of the chord's major scale.

Numerical Order: Major 1-3-5-7 \flat -9 Minor 1-3 \flat -5-7 \flat -9

Reminder: A "Major Scale" is a series of 8 notes that begins and ends on the same note with half steps at the 3rd/4th and 7th/8th intervals.

Trigger: Given the understanding that #1 and #8 are the same note, the 9th is always located 1 whole step above the tonic (or #8). Forget about the names of the notes and concentrate totally on the numerical order. All keys are the same and this rule applies to all major chords.

The Rule: Play any inversion of a 7 or m7 chord and add the note 1 whole step above the tonic to make a 9 or m9 chord. Study the examples below:

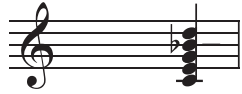


Voicings: This is a 5-fingered chord that is usually reduced to a 4-finger chord by playing the 9th chord less the tonic (but playing the tonic in the bass). Other popular voicings include playing the major or minor chord with the added 9th on right hand while playing the tonic and 7th in the bass.

Usage and Notes: 9th chords build on 7th chords. These have a bluesy feel to them that you should train your ear to hear.

9th Chord 1-3-5-7 \flat -9

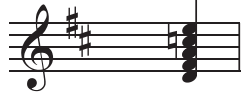
C9



D \flat 9 or C \sharp 9



D9



E \flat 9



E9



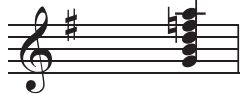
F9



G \flat 9 or F \sharp 9



G9



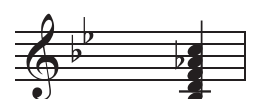
A \flat 9



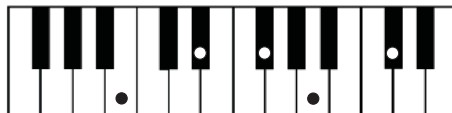
A9



B \flat 9



B9 or C \flat 9



Minor 9th Chord 1-3 \flat -5-7 \flat -9

Cm9



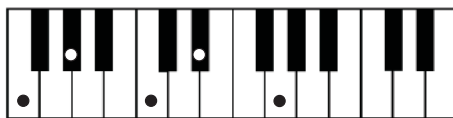
Dm9



Em9



Fm9



Gm9



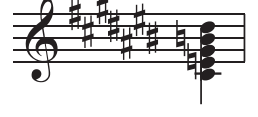
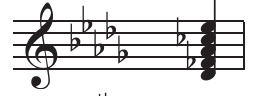
Am9



Bm9 or C \flat m9



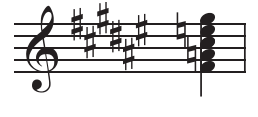
D \flat m9 or C \sharp m9



E \flat m9



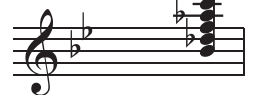
G \flat m9 or F \sharp m9



A \flat m9



B \flat m9



11th Chords

Description: An 11th is the first chord where building starts to get confusing and cumbersome. To play a 11th chord, start with a 9 or m9 chord and add the 11th (equivalent to the 4th) of the chord's major scale. There's an easier way. Read on.

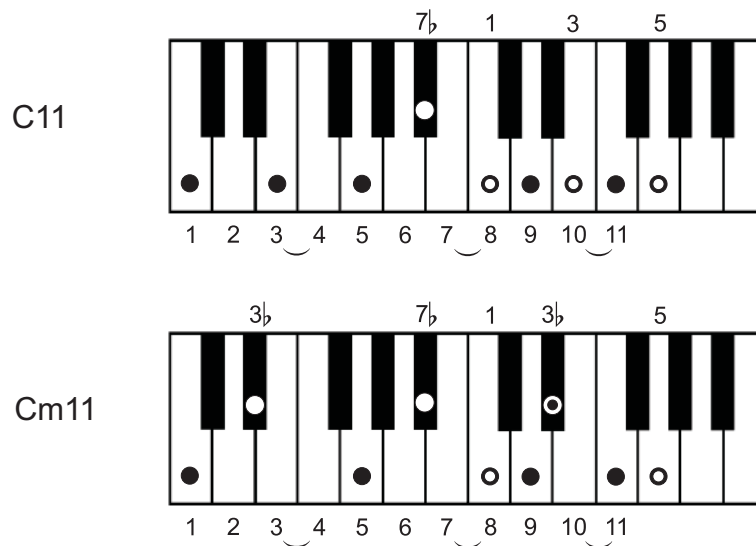
Numerical Order: Major 1-3-5-7 \flat -9-11 Minor 1-3 \flat -5-7 \flat -9-11

Trigger: It gets rather involved to think about playing a 9th chord and then adding the 11th of the key. On top of that, the fully-defined chord has 6 notes (which means you have to use both hands).

Define the tonic in the bass and play the 7 \flat -9-11 with the right hand.

The Rule: The notes that make the 7 \flat -9-11 of a 11th are the same as the major chord one whole step below the tonic. To play a C11, play C in the bass and the B \flat major chord with the right hand.

Play the Root in the bass and the major chord one whole step down and that's a quick 11th.

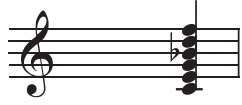


Voicings: The rule above gives you a lot of flexibility to play the chord any number of ways. The main thing is to define the chord by playing the tonic of the chord in the bass. After that, you can play any inversion of the major chord one whole step below the tonic to make the 11th.

Usage and Notes: An 11th is a highly dissonant chord. If you want to make it a minor 11, you build on a minor bass (but that's really getting out there). We haven't included m11s in the chord charts.

11th Chord 1-3-5-7 \flat -9-11

C11



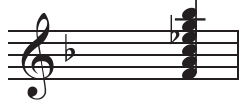
D11



E11



F11



G11



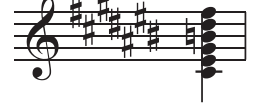
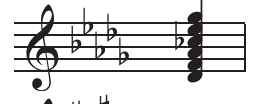
A11



B11 or C \flat 11



D \flat 11 or C \sharp 11



E \flat 11



G \flat 11 or F \sharp 11



A \flat 11



B \flat 11



13th Chords

Description: A 13th continues the confusion by adding on, again, to an 11th chord. Like the 11th, a 13th can be figured out on the fly without having to stop and build it. Technically, to play a 13th chord, start with an 11 or m11 chord and add the 13th (equivalent to the 6th) of the chord's major scale.

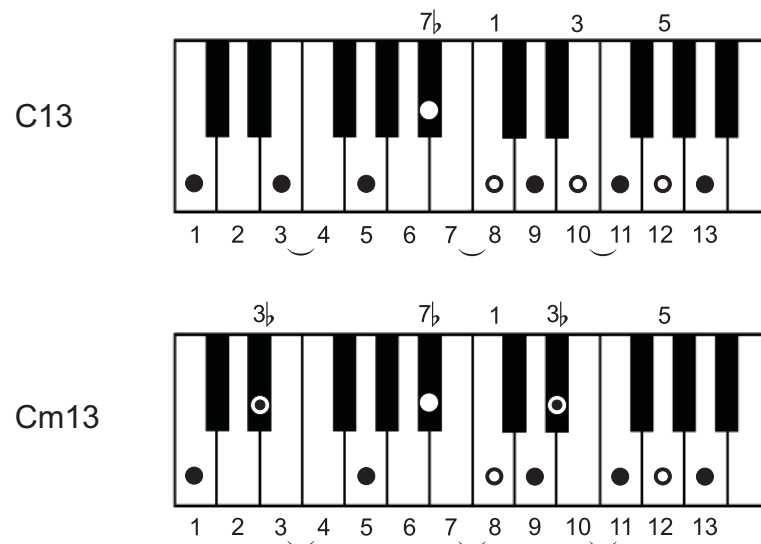
Numerical Order: Major 1-3-5-7 \flat -9-11-13 Minor 1-3 \flat -5-7 \flat -9-11-13

Trigger: It gets rather involved to think about playing an 11th chord and then adding the 13th of the key. On top of that, fully defined, a 13th chord is comprised of 7 notes which means you have to use both hands. A 13th is a 7-fingered chord but generally only the defining notes of the chord are played.

Define the tonic and 7th (7 \flat) in the bass and play the 9-11-13 with the right hand.

The Rule: The notes that make the 9-11-13 of a 13th are the same as the minor chord one whole step up from the tonic. To play a C13, play C and B \flat in the bass and a Dm major chord with the right hand.

For a quick 13th, play the root and 7th in the bass and the minor chord 1 whole step up.

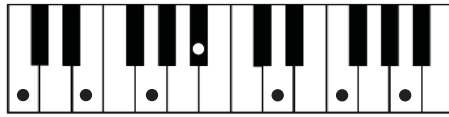
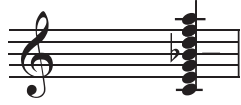


Voicings: The rule above gives you a lot of flexibility to play the chord any number of ways. You must define the chord by playing the tonic and 7th in the bass. After that, you can play any inversion of the minor chord one whole step up from tonic to make the 13th.

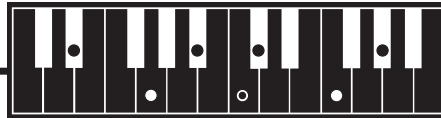
Usage and Notes: An 13th is a ridiculously dissonant chord. If you want to make it a minor 13, you build on a minor chord (but that's really, really getting out there). We haven't included m13s in the chord charts.

13th Chord 1-3-5-7_b-9-11-13

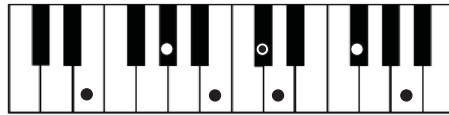
C13



D13



E13



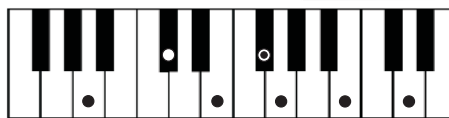
F13



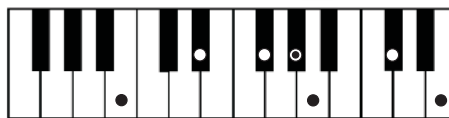
G13



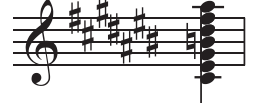
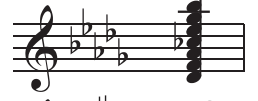
A13



B13 or C_b13



D_b13 or C_#13



E_b13



G_b13 or F_#13



A_b13



B_b13

