

CHORD FORMULAS

Triads

Major -- 1-3-5

Minor -- 1-b3-5

Augmented -- 1-3-#5

Diminished -- 1-b3-b5

Sevenths

Major 7 -- 1-3-5-7

Minor 7 -- 1-b3-5-b7

Dominant 7 -- 1-3-5-b7

Augmented 7-- 1-3-#5-7

Minor/Major 7 -- 1-b3-5-7

Diminished 7-- 1-b3-b5-bb7

Minor 7 b5 (Half Diminished) -- 1-b3-b5-b7

Extended Chords

Above are all the basic chord formulas. Ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords are called extended chords. All you need to do is add the needed extension to the seventh chords. For example, if you need a major 13th chord simply add 9-11-13 to the major 7 chord. If you need a Dominant 9^b 11[#] 13 chord, just add 9-b11-#13 to the dominant seventh chord. For those instruments that cannot play the full chords look at the list below to find out which notes can be removed. Extended chords must contain the root, third, seventh, and extended note. For example in a 13th chord you can leave out the fifth, ninth and eleventh and still have the sonority of a thirteenth chord.

- Never remove the 3 or 7 notes, for these define whether the chord is major, minor or dominant.

Never remove any of the notes that are to be altered, else it will not be the chord that is called for.

In eleventh chords the 9 can be removed.

In thirteenth chords the 9 or/and 11 can be removed.

Never remove the 1, for it will completely change the chords property.

Other Helpful Tips About Chords

- Minor chords are often written as a small "m" or min, such as m7 or min7; a slash over the m is also common.

Dominant chords are often with D or no letter at all, such as D7 or 7.

The dominant chord is sometimes called the Major/Minor 7.

Major seventh chords are written as M7; sometimes the 7 will have a slash through it.

Tertiary chords are chords built with stacked thirds.

Quartal chords are built with stacked fourths.

Quintal chords are built with stacked fifths.

Chords Clusters are stacked seconds.

Secondal Chords

Secondal harmony is based upon chords constructed with stacked seconds. These seconds can be major or minor, diminished is not normally used because it sounds like a unison and the augmented gives the sound of a third. Chords built from seconds do not have traditional names, such as those built with thirds. These chords are often called chord clusters.

Tertian Chords

Tertian harmony is based upon chords constructed with stacked thirds. These thirds can be diminished, major, or minor. See above for the common spellings of these chords and their common names.

Quartal Chords

Quartal harmony is based upon chords constructed with stacked fourths. These fourths can be diminished, perfect, or augmented. Chords built from fourths do not have traditional names, such as those built with thirds.

Quintal Chords

Quintal harmony is based upon chords constructed with stacked fifths. These fifths can be diminished, perfect, or augmented. Chords built from fifths do not have traditional names, such as those built with thirds.