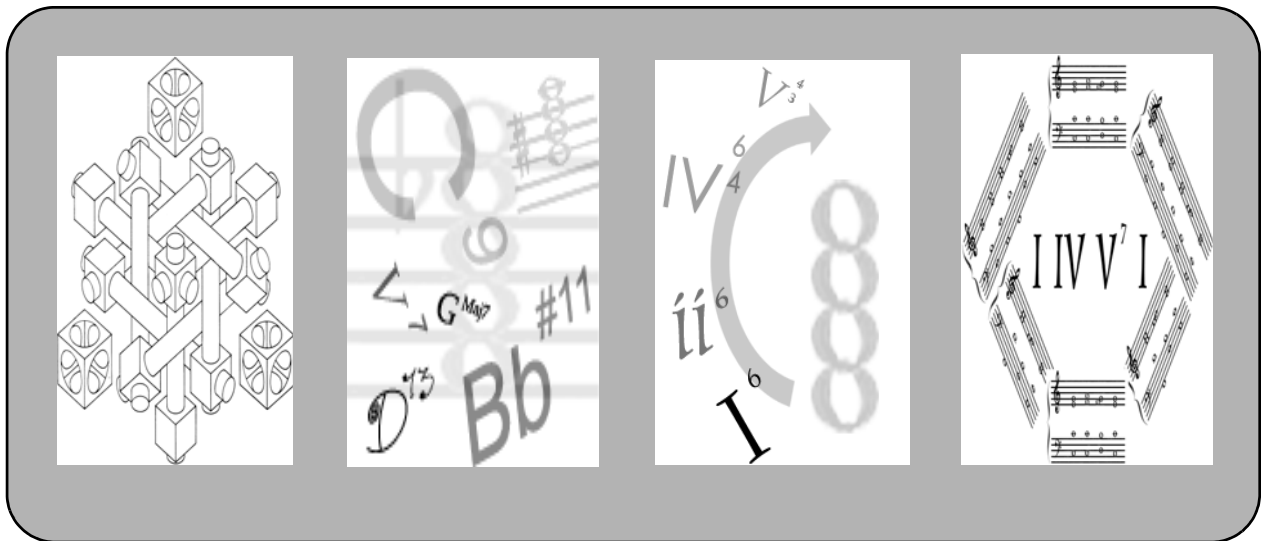


PART SIX

Strike a Chord



In This Section You Will Learn:

- Triads
- Chord Extensions
- Chord Inversions
- Chord Progressions

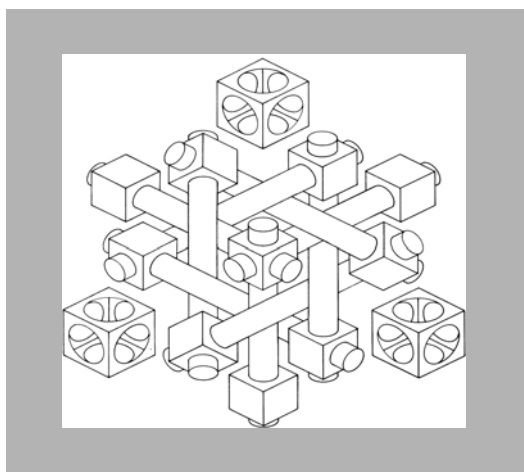
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CHAPTER
28

TRIADS

*Music
Which can be made anywhere, is invisible
And does not smell.*

— W.H. Auden

In This Chapter

- General Chord Information
- The Triad
- Major Triad
- Minor Triad
- Diminished Triad
- Augmented Triad

General Chord Info

The use of the word chord began, according to Webster's, around 1608, and is short for *accord*, which means to be in harmony, as in agreeing. It's a good word for a musical chord, because the notes in most chords tend to agree with each other. They sound good together.

A chord is three or more notes sounded simultaneously. A chord can be played on one instrument like guitar or piano, or a chord can be played by many instruments at once, like a woodwind quintet, or a brass quartet, or a choir. As long as there are three or more notes sounding simultaneously, it's a chord.

There are many types of chords, and many different chord symbols that tell you which notes to use in a chord. Just like with scales, there are Major chords, minor chords, but unlike scales, there are also diminished chords and augmented chords. ***The quality of a chord is determined by the intervals within the chord.***

There are also other types of chords with more than three notes and several different treatments of chords, but I'll save those for the next two chapters.

While you're learning these chords, if you have access to a keyboard, you really should try playing them to hear what they sound like.

Naming Chords

A chord has two names. One is a number, a Roman numeral. The other is a letter name. Both the letter name and the Roman numeral have with them abbreviations or symbols to show the chord qualities of Major, minor, diminished, and augmented.

Roman Numerals

Each chord has a Roman numeral which corresponds to the degree of the scale on which the chord is built. Take a look at example 28.2 on page 248 to see this. The upper case Roman numerals denote Major triads, and lower case denotes minor triads.

In addition, there are other symbols to show diminished and augmented triads. You'll see those soon.

Letter Names

Chords also have a letter name which comes from the root (the bottom note) of the chord. Example 27.1 shows you what a root is.

If a chord is named with only a capital letter, this means the chord is Major. A minor chord will have “min” written next to the letter.

Another method for showing minor is to use lower case letters, though it's more common to use the “min” next to the letter.

In addition, the symbols for augmented and diminished are also used with the letter. We'll get to diminished and augmented chords in a few more pages.

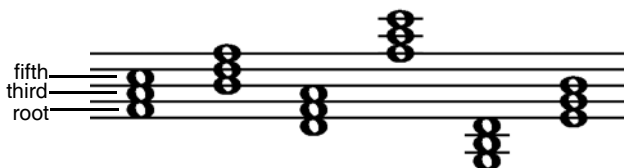
When you say the notes in a chord, you're *spelling the chord*. For example, to spell the C chord I'd say, “C, E, G.”

The Triad

A triad consists of three notes stacked in a specific order, ***a root (or bottom note and usually the letter name of the chord), a third, and a fifth***. As you'll see in the examples, each triad is built on all lines or all spaces.

The parts of a triad get their name from their interval above the root note.

Example 28.1 Triads in various positions on the staff.



Triads in a Major Key

In the following example, you'll see a triad stacked on each degree of the C Major scale. Triads stacked in this way will have a quality of either Major, minor, or diminished (there's only one naturally occurring diminished chord in a Major scale).

Notice the little circle to the right of the vii. This symbol tells you the chord is a diminished chord. I'll show you why it's diminished coming up.

Example 28.2 Triads built upon the degrees of the C Major scale, with Roman numerals.

Diagram illustrating the triads built upon the degrees of the C Major scale, with Roman numerals. The chords are shown in both treble and bass clefs.

Treble Clef: C (I), Dmin (ii), Emin (iii), F (IV), G (V), Amin (vi), B[°] (vii[°]), C (I)

Bass Clef: C (I), Dmin (ii), Emin (iii), F (IV), G (V), Amin (vi), B[°] (vii[°]), C (I)

Major Triads

Major triads have a happy, bright sound quality.

A Major triad consists of a note a Major third above the root and another note a Perfect fifth above the root.

In a Major key, there are three naturally occurring Major triads, those built upon the first, fourth, and fifth degrees of the scale, or the I, IV, and V chords.

Example 28.3 Breakdown of the Major triads in the key of C.

Diagram illustrating the breakdown of the Major triads in the key of C. The chords are shown in the treble clef, with intervals labeled: min3 (minor third) and M3 (Major third) for the I chord; min3 (minor third) and P5 (Perfect fifth) for the IV chord; and min3 (minor third) and P5 (Perfect fifth) for the V chord.

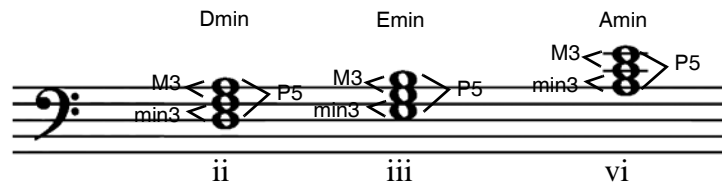
Minor Triads

Minor triads have a dark, sad sound quality.

A minor triad consists of a note a minor 3rd above the root and another note a Perfect 5th above the root.

In a Major key, there are three naturally occurring minor triads, those built upon the second, third, and sixth degrees of the Major scale, or the ii, iii, and vi chords.

Example 28.4 Breakdown of the minor triads in the key of C.



Diminished Triads

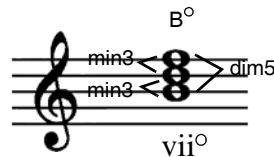
Diminished triads are less common than the Major or minor triads and have a suspenseful sound quality. This is the chord you hear when the damsel in distress is tied to the railroad tracks by Dastardly Dan as an approaching train hoots in the near distance.

A diminished triad consists of a note a minor 3rd above the root and another note a diminished 5th above the root.

In a Major key, there is only one naturally occurring diminished triad, the one built on the seventh degree of the Major scale.

Don't forget to put the little circle next to the lowercase Roman numeral. We'll get into more chord symbols in the next chapter.

Example 28.5 Breakdown of the diminished triad on the 7th degree of the Major scale.



Augmented Triads

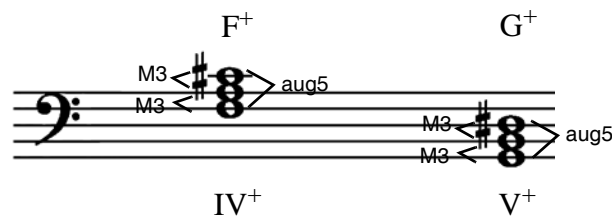
There aren't any naturally occurring augmented triads in the key of C, or in any major key, so we'll have to throw in an accidental to get one. The augmented triad has a vaguely unsettling sound, and is usually the type of chord played just before the knife-wielding psycho jumps out from behind the couch and scares the cooties off your head.

An augmented triad consists of a note a Major 3rd above the root and another note an augmented 5th above the root.

Since there aren't any augmented triads occurring naturally in the key of C, I'll just make a couple up.

The chord symbol for an augmented chord is a plus symbol (+), or the abbreviation "aug."

Example 28.6 Breakdown of two augmented triads in the key of C.



Moving On

Triads are the most basic chord form and it's important to know the difference between Major, minor, diminished and augmented triads, so don't go on until you've got it.

In the next Chapter we'll add another note on top of the chord to make the triad a seventh chord, a type of chord extension. We'll also discuss other chord extensions. But first, the review.

Chapter 28 Review

1. What is the definition of a chord?
 1. *Three or more notes played simultaneously*
2. What determines the quality of a chord?
 2. *The intervals within the chord*
3. How are chords named?
 3. *With a Roman numeral, a letter, and a quality of Major, minor, diminished or augmented*
4. What are the parts of a triad?
 4. *Root, third, fifth*
5. Why are they called this?
 5. *Root is the bottom note of the chord; the third is a 3rd above the root; the fifth is a 5th above the root*
6. How do you tell if a triad is Major?
 6. *Capital Roman numeral, or a capital letter only*
7. How do you tell if a triad is minor?
 7. *Lowercase Roman numeral, lowercase letter, or "min" next to the letter name*
8. What are the intervals in a Major triad?
 8. *A note a Major 3rd above the root and another a Perfect 5th above the root*

9. What are the intervals in a minor triad?

9. A note a minor 3rd above the root, and another a Perfect 5th above the root

10. What are the intervals in a diminished triad?

10. A note a minor 3rd above the root and another a diminished 5th above the root

11. What are the intervals in an augmented triad?

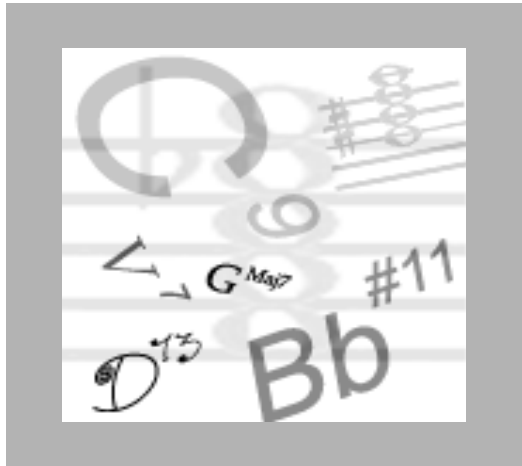
11. A note a Major 3rd above the root and another an augmented 5th above the root

12. What are the sound qualities of the different types of triads?

*12. Major = happy;
minor = sad;
diminished = suspenseful;
augmented = unsettling*

Practical Use

1. Write out triads above the notes C, D, E, F and G. Sing or play these chords in an arpeggio (look this word up in the glossary if you don't know it) until you can hear each note in the chord easily. Play these notes as a chord on a piano or guitar. Identify which chords are Major and which chords are minor. Identify by singing or playing the minor thirds and Major thirds within these triads.



CHAPTER 29

CHORD EXTENSIONS

I don't care too much about music. What I like is sounds.

— Dizzy Gillespie (1917 - 1993)

In This Chapter

- General Chord Extension Information
- The Seventh Chord
- The Ninth Chord
- The 11th and 13th Chords
- Other Chords

General Chord Extension Info

A chord extension is a note that isn't in the triad. It's extra. Notes are added to triads to change their flavor, their feel, and in many cases the extension changes how the chord is used.

Some notes added to triads are: 7ths, 9ths, 11ths, and 13ths. We haven't talked about intervals higher than octaves (called *compound intervals*), so now's the time.

If you look at a scale, the 8th note is the same letter as the bottom note. Therefore, the 9th note is the same letter as the 2nd note of the scale, only it's an octave higher. The 11th is like a 4th, but an octave higher; the 13th is like a 6th, but an octave higher.

Chords with extensions are written with the number of the extension above and to the right of the chord letter, like so: A⁷, G⁹, C^{#11}, F¹³, D^{Maj7}, and so on. Extensions can also be used with Roman numerals, like V⁷, IV⁹, etc.

The number tells you which note you're adding to the triad. The number represents the interval from the root of the chord to the extension.

An extension can be altered a half step up or down to give yet another type of chord. In the examples I gave you above, there was a #11, and a Maj7. In these two cases you would raise the 11th a half step or use a Major 7th above the root, respectively.

On to some specifics.

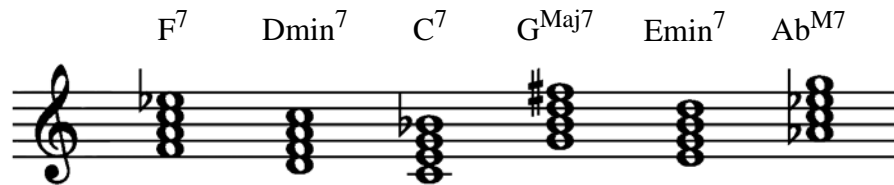
Seventh Chords

Seventh chords are an important type of chord in Western music. They are essential to most chord progressions, and give progressions the quality our ears are used to hearing. But we'll get more into chord progressions in Chapter 31.

The seventh chords have a property that other extensions don't have. When you see *a seven next to a chord symbol, it's always a minor 7th above the root.*

If you want a Major seventh above the root, you have to specify it in the extension by putting an “M” or a “Maj” or a small triangle “ \triangle ” in front of the extension number.

Example 29.1 Some seventh chords.



As you can see in the above examples, the quality of the chord itself is written in larger letters next to the letter of the chord (except for Major chords which are just the letter), and any alterations to the 7th are written in small letters before the 7.

The Dominant Seventh Chord

There is a special kind of seventh chord which appears in a huge majority of chord progressions and it's called the *dominant seventh chord*.

The dominant seventh chord symbol looks like this: V^7 .

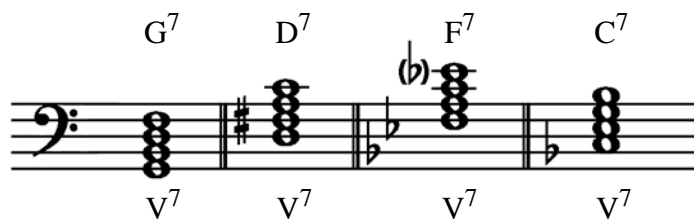
Because you know how Roman numerals are used, you know that the above symbol means that the chord is built on the 5th degree of the scale and it's got a minor seventh in it.

I didn't tell you each scale degree had a name when we went over scales because you had enough to worry about without me giving you more information than was necessary, but now it's necessary.

Each scale degree has a name, and it just so happens that the name of the 5th degree of the scale is “dominant.” So there you go. That's why a chord built on the 5th is called a dominant chord, and one with a seventh is called a dominant seventh chord.

The dominant seventh chord is an important chord because it pulls our ears back toward the tonic chord, or the I chord. But more on that in Chapter 30.

Example 29.2 Dominant seventh chords in the keys of C, G, Bb, and F.



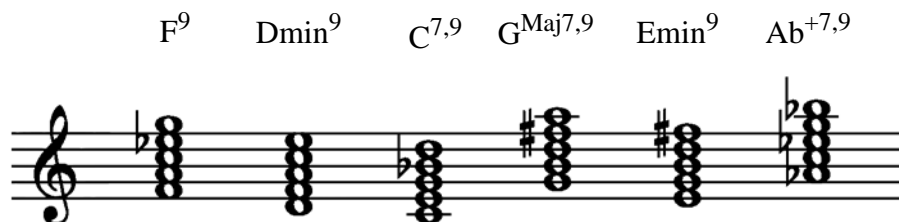
Notice above that each measure is in a different key signature. When you build a chord on the 5th degree of the scale in any Major key, the seventh of V⁷ will automatically be a minor seventh because of the key signature.

Ninth Chords

Ninth chords have 5 chord tones: Root, third, fifth, seventh, and ninth.

As before, the quality of the chord is written in larger letters next to the chord letter, and the extensions are written in smaller letters above and to the right. If all you see is a “9”, the 7 is assumed. However, if you want a *Major 7th* in there (remember the 7th is always minor), you must specify it, as in the G^{M7,9} and the Ab^{+7,9} below.

Example 29.3 Some ninth chords.



Other Chords

Eleventh and Thirteenth Chords

The process for these chords is very similar to what you already know. An eleventh chord will have a root, third, fifth, seventh, ninth and eleventh.

A thirteenth chord will have a root, third, fifth, seventh, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth.

Chords Not Covered

There are several other types of chord which this book won't cover, though I'll tell you what some are and you can discover them on your own if you'd like.

There are suspended fourth chords, Neapolitan sixth chords, German sixth chords, half diminished seventh chords, fully diminished seventh chords, and many more.

Moving On

This chapter should allow you to understand and spell most chords you'll come across. Again, the concepts you're now learning are more complex than previous ones and they may take some time before they're understood well, so keep at it.

All the chords in this chapter have been in root position, the most basic form of a chord. In the next chapter, you'll learn about chord inversions, which is a chord with a note other than the tonic as the bottom note.

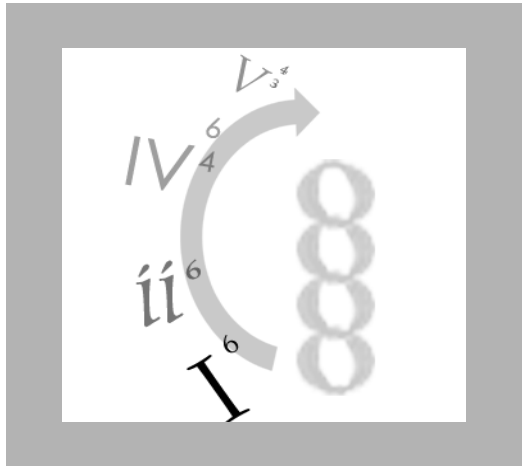
Chapter 29 Review

1. What is a chord extension?
 1. *A note that doesn't appear in the triad*
2. How are chord extensions notated?
 2. *With a number equal to the note's interval above the root*
3. What is a compound interval?
 3. *An interval greater than an octave*
4. When you see a ⁷ to the right of a chord letter, what kind of a 7th is it?
 4. *A minor 7th above the root*

- | | |
|---|---|
| 5. How would you indicate a Major 7 above the root? | 5. <i>With a small triangle, a small "M", or a small "Maj" before the 7</i> |
| 6. What kind of chord is a V ⁷ ? | 6. <i>A dominant seventh chord</i> |
| 7. Why are V ⁷ chords so important? | 7. <i>They draw the ear to the tonic (I) chord, and appear in nearly all chord progressions</i> |
| 8. Spell the V ⁷ chord in the key of G. | 8. <i>D, F#, A, C</i> |
| 9. Which chord tones are in a 9th chord? | 9. <i>Root, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th</i> |
| 10. Which chord tones are in an 11th chord? | 10. <i>Root, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th, 11th</i> |

Practical Use

1. Write out the triads above C, A, B-flat, and A-flat. Put the chord name underneath (don't forget Major/minor distinctions). Place the seventh in each of the chords and alter the chord symbol as necessary to make it correct. Place the ninth in each chord and again correct the chord symbol.
2. Sing or play (both is best) a Major triad. Any starting note will do but try to make it in a comfortable range. As you are singing one note of the chord, try to hear the others simultaneously. Once the Major triad is in your ear, add the seventh until you can sing or play a seventh easily. Do the same with the ninth chord.
3. Spend some time messing around with triads and extensions on the piano. It's fun and will help your understanding.



CHAPTER 30

CHORD INVERSIONS

*See deep enough, and you see musically;
the heart of nature being everywhere
music, if you can only reach it.*

— Thomas Carlyle, *Heroes and
Hero Worship*

In This Chapter

- More General Chord Information
- Close and Open Harmony
- First Inversion
- Second Inversion
- Third Inversion

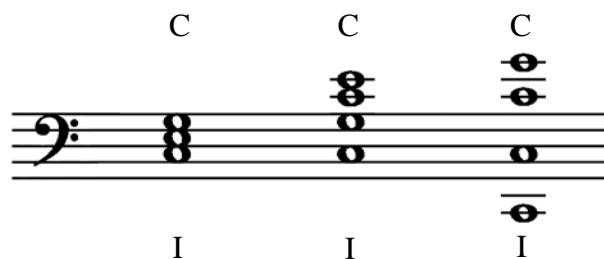
More General Chord Info

We've been working with chords which have been in what is called **root position**, which is the most basic form of a chord. In root position the notes are stacked neatly together as close as they can be.

There is a broader definition of root position. ***If the lowest note of a chord is also the letter name of the chord, then that chord can be said to be in root position.***

For instance, with a C chord, as long as the C is the lowest note, it doesn't matter where the 3rds and 5ths are above that C; the chord will still be in root position.

Example 30.1 Three versions of a C chord in root position.



In the chords above, you'll find a C in the root, and above that root somewhere an E and a G. There could be three Es and seven Gs but as long as that C stays in the root position, it's a root position C chord. *Any doubling of chord tones doesn't affect the quality of the chord.*

Voice

Any note of a chord can be said to be a voice of the chord. For example, in a triad there are three voices: the bottom voice, the middle voice and the top voice. The term *voice* is used even for music in which there is no vocal part.

Open and Close Harmony

What is different about the chords above is how they are spaced. When a chord's tones are written as closely together as possible, as in the first

Second Inversion

A second inversion chord has the fifth of the chord as the bottom note.

To make a second inversion chord from a first inversion chord, simply move the third up an octave. This leaves the fifth in the bottom voice.

In harmonic analysis, this inversion is shown by a 6 over a 4 next to the Roman numeral. Again, these numbers represent the intervals above the bottom note. In the second inversion C chord, it's a 6th from G to E, and a 4th from G to C.

Because the 6 and 4 are only used in a harmonic analysis, when you see a chord, you have to figure for yourself which inversion it's in. Not to fear; at the end of the chapter is a step-by-step process to find out what any type of chord is.

Example 30.3 Second inversion chords in the key of C in close and open harmony.

The image shows three C major chords in second inversion on a treble clef staff. The first chord is in close harmony with notes G4, E4, and C5. The second is in open harmony with notes G4, E4, and C5. The third is in open harmony with notes G4, E4, and C6. Roman numerals I 6/4 are written below each chord. Arrows indicate the 6th interval (G to E) and the 4th interval (G to C) for the first chord.

To keep things simple, I've only used the I chord, but these inversions can be applied to any chord, the IV, the ii, the vi⁰, anything.

If chords are stacked in close harmony, it's pretty easy to tell at a glance whether it's a root position triad (three notes stacked one atop the other), a first inversion (two stacked on the bottom), or a second inversion (two stacked on the top).

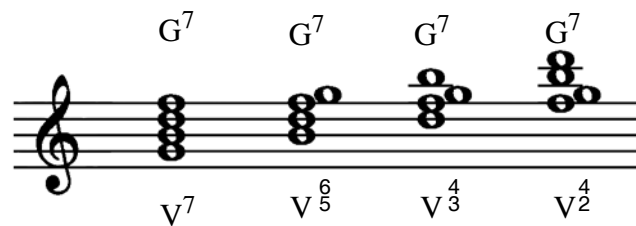
Keep in mind that I've used simple chords in only one clef, and chords are often spread out over two clefs, but the same rules apply.

Inverting Seventh Chords

Seventh chords may also be inverted, and the symbols used for this in harmonic analysis are a little different but the concept is the same; the numbers tell you chord tone intervals above the bottom note.

With the extra note of the seventh chord, we get another inversion, called a third inversion.

Example 30.4 The dominant seventh chord in the key of C; root position and inversions.



How to Find a Chord's Name

- 1 Know the key signature you are working in.
- 2 Spell the chord using the letters in the chord. Ignore duplicate letters.
- 3 Stack the chord in close harmony, with the **same root as the original chord**. This is important because if you don't use the same root note you won't know if the chord is an inversion or not.
- 4 Determine what the tonic of the chord is. This will tell you the chord's letter name and Roman numeral in relation to the key you are in.
- 5 Determine if the chord is a first, second, or third (for 7th chords only) inversion.
- 6 Use the correct letters, Roman numerals and symbols to name the chord.

Moving On

Now that you can identify a chord and its inversion, you're ready for information about chord progressions, or how one chord moves to another chord.

The next chapter covers some of the most common chord progressions.

Chapter 30 Review

1. What is a root position chord?
 1. A chord with the tonic of the chord as the lowest voice of the chord.
2. What is close harmony?
 2. When the notes of a chord are placed as close together as possible.
3. What is open harmony?
 3. A chord spread over more than an octave with space between chord tones.
4. What is harmonic analysis?
 4. A technique of identifying chord names and types, using Roman numerals and the symbols for chord inversions.
5. What is a first inversion chord?
 5. A chord with the 3rd of the chord as the lowest voice.
6. What is the symbol for a first inversion chord?
 6. A small ⁶ to the right of the letter or Roman numeral.
7. Why is this symbol used?
 7. It tells the interval between the third and the tonic, a 6th.
8. What is a second inversion chord?
 8. A chord with the 5th of the chord as the lowest voice.

9. What is the symbol for a second inversion chord?

9. $\overset{6}{4}$ above and to the right of the letter or Roman numeral

10. Why is this symbol used?

10. It tells the interval between the fifth and tonic (a 4th), and between the fifth and third (a 6th).

11. What is the name and Roman numeral for this chord in the key of C?



11. F, IV⁶

12. What is the name and Roman numeral for this chord in the key of B flat?



12. Dmin, iii⁶₄

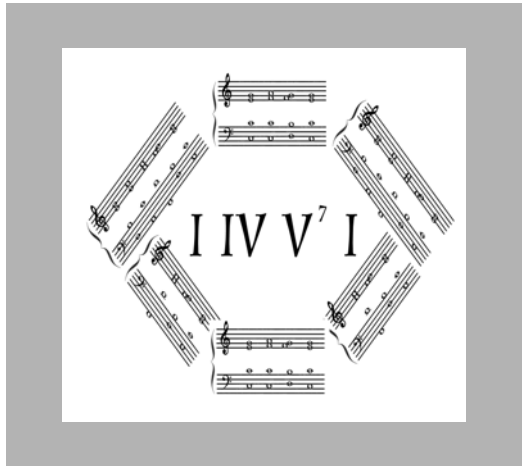
13. What is the name and Roman numeral for this chord in the key of G?



13. G, I

Practical Use

1. Write out all the inversions for Bb^{M7} . Don't forget root position. Sing/play each inverted chord until it feels comfortable.
2. Identify at least 3 chords. Piano music, guitar music, and band or orchestra scores are excellent sources for many chords. Once you identify the chord name and quality of the chord, identify how that chord fits into the key signature of the song. Give the chord its Roman Numeral.
3. Mess around on the piano with inverted triads, and inverted chords with extensions.



CHAPTER
31

CHORD PROGRESSIONS

*Do you know that our soul is composed
of harmony?*

— Leonardo da Vinci

In This Chapter

- What is a Chord Progression?
- General Chord Progression Guidelines
- The I IV V⁷ I Progression
- The ii V⁷ I Progression
- The iii vi ii V⁷ I Progression
- The 12 Bar Blues Progression

What is a Chord Progression?

A chord progression is a pattern of movement from one chord to another.

Any piece of music has a chord progression. And even if it's a melody without chords at all, there is still a chord progression implied by that melody.

Chord progressions are often very simple, involving only a few chords, but they can also be quite complex. The chord progressions we'll be going over will be of the simple variety.

Chord progressions, especially the ones we'll be looking at, are repeated often many times throughout a piece of music. All of the progressions we'll be going over, with the exception of the 12 Bar Blues, can be found most often at the end of sections or songs.

Chord Progression General Guidelines

Voice Leading

Remember all those pesky details about chord inversions you learned in Chapter 30? Well, now you get to put that information to work, because inversions can make chord progressions sound more smooth.

Voice leading is how one chord tone (or voice) moves to another. There are certain general rules which, if you follow them, will give you a clean, clear chord progression. These aren't laws, but general guidelines. Feel free to experiment with them.

Doubling

Chord tones may be doubled without affecting the general quality of the chord. Voices which are usually doubled are tonics and fifths. Thirds are doubled less often, and extensions are rarely doubled. For our examples, I'll keep doubling to a minimum.

No Leaps

One of the first general rules is to *avoid large interval skips from one chord tone to the next*. This is called *disjunct motion*.

The bass, or lowest part, can pretty much ignore this rule without harming the sound of the chord progression.

For the purpose of a clear example, we'll ignore this rule for the introduction of each chord progression.

Keep the Common Tone

There will often be notes which two chords have in common. If at all possible, you'll want to *keep these similar notes in the same voice from one chord to the next*.

For example, from a C chord (C-E-G) to an F chord (F-A-C), there is a C which the chords have in common. If this C is in the top voice of the first chord, it should also be in the top voice of the second chord. This makes the chord change sound smooth, and is also much easier to sing or play.

Resolve Toward the Half Step

An essential component of chord progressions is the movement of half steps between chords. These are called leading tones and lead our ear from one note to another. You'll see these most—and they're most important—from the V⁷ to the I chord.

If there is a half step from one chord to the next, move the appropriate voice toward the half step.

For example, in the key of C, the V⁷ chord (G-B-D-F) moves to the I chord (C-E-G). The third and seventh (B and F) in the V⁷ chord should move to the tonic and third (C and E) in the I chord, because they are a half step apart.

Similar Motion

Similar motion is when two or more parts move in the same direction.

Parallel Motion

Parallel motion is a special type of similar motion in which *the interval between the two parts remains the same from one chord to another*. An example of parallel motion would be a Major third between the upper two voices in one chord moving down (or up) to a Major third in the top two voices of the following chord.

Most parallel motion sounds fine, but parallel fifths, fourths, and octaves are usually frowned upon by our ears and by those who adhere to the strict rules of counterpoint. Experiment with them to hear for yourself what they sound like.

Contrary Motion

Contrary motion is when two or more voices move in opposite directions.

A Word on the Examples

Again, to keep things simple and uncluttered, we'll use the key of C for all our examples, but these progressions can (and do!) happen in any key.

The first examples you'll see will be simple chords in root position in the treble clef. Once you've been exposed to the basic chord progression I'll then subject you to a more complex version with both treble and bass clef, and chords in inverted positions.

Now you know all you need to know, for the moment anyway, about chord progressions, so let's get to some actual examples.

The I IV V⁷ I Progression

This progression is probably the most common of all progressions in Western music. When you hear it, you'll most likely recognize it. It can be found in nearly every style of music, and though it will appear in other parts of a piece, it's most common at the end of a song or section.

Even if you don't consider yourself a piano player, sit down at one and play through these progressions. It might take some effort (and perhaps a review of the bass or treble clef), but it'll be worth it.

Example 31.1 The I IV V⁷ I progression in C with chords in root positions.

The diagram shows a single treble clef staff with four chords in root position: C (I), F (IV), G⁷ (V⁷), and C (I). The notes are: C (C4), F (F4), G (G4), B (B4), C (C5) for the first chord; C (C4), F (F4), A (A4), C (C5) for the second; F (F4), G (G4), B (B4), D (D5) for the third; and C (C4), E (E4), G (G4), C (C5) for the fourth.

The above example follows few rules of voice leading, but is simple and clear so you can see what the basic chord progression looks like. In the following example, you'll see bass and treble clef staves connected with a bracket. This is called the *grand staff* and is what piano music looks like.

The example which follows has the same notes as example 31.1, though often in different octaves, or in a different clef, and some chord tones are doubled.

Example 31.2 I IV V⁷ I in the key of C.

The diagram shows a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with four chords: C (I), F (IV⁶₄), G⁷ (V⁴₃), and C (I). Annotations include: 'common tones' connecting the C and F notes between the first and second chords; 'voice doubling' pointing to the C4 note in the bass clef; and 'half step motion' pointing to the F4 to E4 and B4 to C5 resolutions between the third and fourth chords.

Notice that the IV chord is in the second inversion so that the common tone—the C—remains in the bottom voice; the F remains in the same voice from the IV to the V⁷. The V⁷ chord is also in the second inversion so that the bottom voice only moves a whole step from chord to chord.

And from the V⁷ to the I, the leading tones resolve toward the half step. The F goes down to the E, and the B in the bass clef goes up to the C.

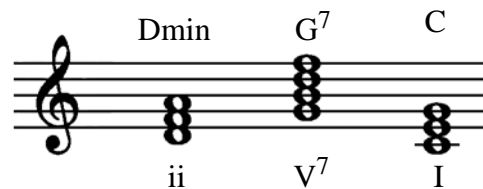
See if you can pick out some of the parallel motion, and some of the contrary motion. It's in there.

This progression is in relatively close harmony, and is only one of many, many, many possibilities.

The ii V⁷ I Progression

This is another very common chord progression, used in everything from pop songs, to country to jazz and beyond.

Example 31.3 The ii V⁷ I progression in the key of C, root position, treble clef.

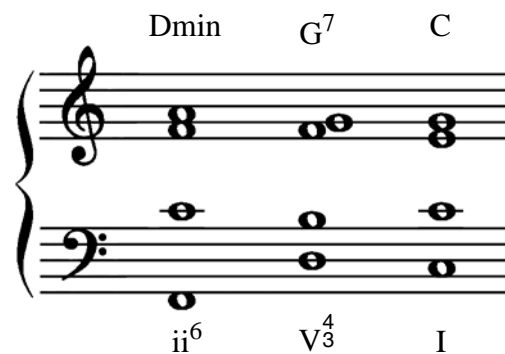


And now for the same progression, but following more of the guidelines for voice leading.

This time, see if you can spot the voice doublings, the common chord tones, and the half step motion.

As I began to write out the example below, a tune came on my stereo and it caught my ear because it used the ii V I progression over and over for several measures, and it sounded good, so I swiped it and put it below.

Example 31.4 ii V⁷ I in the key of C.



Play this one on the piano too, and try it in other keys as well as with other voicings and other inversions. Once you get the sound in your head, you'll recognize this progression all over the place.

The iii vi ii V⁷ I Progression

This is another very common chord progression which is simply a variation on the ii V⁷ I progression. The difference of course is the added iii and vi chords before the ii V⁷ I.

Because I'm sure you get how this works, this time I'm going to skip the basic chords in root position and go right to the good stuff.

See if you can pick out the chord tones of the iii and vi chords, and all the other stuff: voice doubling, parallel and contrary motion, half step motion, and common chord tones.

Example 31.5 iii vi ii V⁷ I progression in C.

The musical notation shows a progression of five chords in C major: Emin, Amin, Dmin, G⁷, and C. The chords are written in a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The bass clef part shows a significant stretch in the ii⁶ chord (Dmin), with the bass note on the second line (F) and the other notes on the first, second, and third lines (A, B, C). Below the staff, the chords are labeled as iii⁶, vi, ii⁶, V⁴, and I.

Always be aware of what instrument(s) you're writing for. The bass clef part in the example above has quite a stretch in the ii chord, something only a big-handed piano player would be capable of.

The 12 Bar Blues

Remember the blues scale? If not, take a look back at "The Blues Scale" on page 222. It's the scale that is associated with the 12 bar blues form.

There have been volumes and volumes written on the blues, and if you're looking for in-depth coverage, this ain't the place. This section will give you the vanilla version of the 12 bar blues.

Some artists, dead and living, who play and/or sing the blues are: Buddy Guy, Muddy Waters, Robert Johnson, Stevie Ray Vaughn, B.B. King,

John Lee Hooker... The list is nearly endless and these are just a few of the big names of the blues. Many many other artists also dabble in the blues forms, from Eric Clapton to James Taylor.

The 12 bar blues is basically a 12 measure chord progression repeated over and over for the entire song. There are variations, but 12 bars is so standard that it's safe to say 95% of blues songs follow this format.

Each Roman numeral represents one measure, and if you count them, there are 12. Try playing these chords in this order, and you'll most likely recognize the sound.

Example 31.6 The basic pattern of the 12 bar blues.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--|-----------------|--|----------------|--|----------------|
| I ⁷ | | I ⁷ | | I ⁷ | | I ⁷ |
| IV ⁷ | | IV ⁷ | | I ⁷ | | I ⁷ |
| V ⁷ | | IV ⁷ | | I ⁷ | | I ⁷ |

To find the right chord, simply put the chord letter in place of the Roman numeral. In the below example, if we did it in the key of C, the chords would be I⁷ = C⁷, IV⁷ = F⁷, V⁷ = G⁷.

Moving On

So there you have it: four of the most common chord progressions in one easy chapter. Be sure to try all of these chord changes in as many keys as you can stomach, in as many different ways as you can think of. You'll be a much better musician for it if you do.

Coming up next, after the review for this chapter, is the review for all of Part VI.

The next Part (and the last one!) covers more information on subjects you already know, like dots after a note, faster types of notes, more accidentals, and some different meters.

Chapter 31 Review

1. What is a chord progression?
 1. *The movement from one chord to another*
2. What is the rule about doubling chord tones?
 2. *Doubling the octave and fifth is common; doubling the 3rd less so; and doubling the extensions is rare*
3. What is disjunct motion?
 3. *A leap of more than a second*
4. What is the rule about disjunct motion?
 4. *Keep it to a minimum. Okay in the bass voice*
5. What is the rule about common tones from one chord to another?
 5. *Keep the common tones in the same voice*
6. What is contrary motion?
 6. *One voice goes up, the other goes down, or vice-versa*
7. What is parallel motion?
 7. *Both voices moving in the same direction with the same interval*
8. Which types of parallel motion should be avoided?
 8. *Parallel fourths, fifths and octaves*
9. Which chords are used for the I IV V⁷ I progression in the key of Bb?
 9. *Bb Eb, F⁷, Bb*
10. Where would you be likely to find this progression?
 10. *At the end of a section or song*

- | | |
|--|---|
| 11. Which chords are used for the ii V ⁷ I progression in the key of G? | 11. Amin, D ⁷ , G |
| 12. Which chords are used for the iii vi ii V ⁷ I progression the key of F? | 12. Amin, Dmin, Gmin C ⁷ , F |
| 13. What is the basic progression for the 12 Bar Blues? | 13. I I I I IV IV I I V ⁷ IV I I |
| 14. Did you sit down at the piano and try to play these chords? | 14. Please say yes. |

Practical Use

1. In the key of F Major, write out an arrangement for piano, guitar, multiple voices, or instruments using the I, IV, V⁷, I chord progression. Play or sing the progression as a group until it feels comfortable. Use the correct accidentals to change the progression to i, iv, V⁷, i. Play the minor progression until it feels comfortable. Switch chord voicings.
2. Write out a chord progression in the key of C Major and try to break every rule of motion talked about in this Chapter. Play the example (if it's playable), and listen carefully to it. Why are certain changes of sound frowned upon?
3. Pick your favorite key signature. Outline the I chord by either playing or singing each chord tone. Try to hear the whole chord in your head as you do this. Do the same for the IV chord, and then the V⁷. Try to do this exercise with two or more people at once. Be sure to specify a meter/beat and the length of each chord so you can change chords together.



PART VI REVIEW

Whew! You Made It.

These pages can be used to test your memory about what you've learned in Part VI, and if some of the information hasn't stuck, you can go back and check it out on the page indicated below the question.

As with the chapter reviews, use your keyboard to cover up the answers while you test yourself.

The Review

1. What is the definition of a chord?
page 246

1. *Three or more notes played simultaneously*

2. What determines the quality of a chord?
page 246

2. *The intervals within the chord*

3. How are chords named?

page 246

4. What are the parts of a triad?

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5. Why are they called this?

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6. How do you show a triad is Major?

page 248

7. How do you show a triad is minor?

page 249

8. What are the intervals in a Major triad?

page 248

9. What are the intervals in a minor triad?

page 249

3. *With a Roman numeral, a letter, and a quality of Major, minor, diminished or augmented*

4. *Root, third, fifth*

5. *Root is the bottom note of the chord; the third is a 3rd above the root; the fifth is a 5th above the root*

6. *Capital Roman numeral, or a capital letter only*

7. *Lower case Roman numeral, lowercase letter, or the abbreviation "min" next to the letter name*

8. *A note a Major 3rd above the root and another a Perfect 5th above the root*

9. *A note a minor 3rd above the root, and another a Perfect 5th above the root*

10. What are the intervals in a diminished triad?
page 249

*10. A note a minor 3rd
above the root
and another a
diminished 5th
above the root*

11. What are the intervals in an augmented triad?
page 250

*11. A note a Major 3rd
above the root
and another an
augmented 5th
above the root*

12. What are the qualities of the different types of
triads?
page 248, page 249, page 249, page 250

*12. Major = happy;
minor = sad;
dim = suspenseful
aug = unsettling*

13. What is a root position chord?
page 260

*13. A chord with the
tonic of the chord
as the lowest
voice of the chord*

14. What is close harmony?
page 260

*14. When the notes of
a chord are placed
as close together
as possible*

15. What is open harmony?
page 260

*15. A chord spread
over more than an
octave with space
between chord
tones*

16. What is a first inversion chord?

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17. What is the symbol for a first inversion chord?

page 261

18. Why is this symbol used?

page 261

19. What is a second inversion chord?

page 262

20. What is the symbol for a second inversion chord?

page 262

21. Why is this symbol used?

page 262

22. What is the name and Roman numeral for this chord in the key of C Major?



page 263

16. A chord with the 3rd of the chord as the lowest voice

17. A small ⁶ to the right of the letter or Roman numeral

18. It tells the interval between the third and the tonic, a 6th

19. A chord with the 5th of the chord as the lowest note

20. ⁶/₄ above and to the right of the letter or Roman numeral

21. It tells the interval between the fifth and tonic (a 4th), and between the fifth and third (a 6th)

22. F, IV⁶

23. What is the name and Roman numeral for this chord in the key of B flat Major?



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23. *Dmin, iii⁶₄*

24. What is the name of this chord?



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24. *G, I*

25. What is a chord progression?

page 268

25. *The movement from one chord to another*

26. What is the rule about doubling chord tones?

page 268

26. *Doubling the octave and fifth is common; doubling the 3rd less so; and doubling the extensions is rare*

27. What is disjunct motion?

page 269

27. *A leap of more than a second*

28. What is the rule about disjunct motion?

page 269

28. *Keep it to a minimum. Okay in the bass voice*

29. What is the rule about common tones from one chord to another?
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29. *Keep the common tones in the same voice*
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31. *Two or more voices moving in the same direction*
32. What is parallel motion?
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32. *Both voices moving in the same direction with the same interval between them*
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33. *Parallel fourths, fifths and octaves*
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34. *Bb Eb, F⁷, Bb*
35. Where would you be likely to find this progression?
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35. *At the end of a section or song*
36. What are the chord names for the ii V⁷ I progression in G?
page 272
36. *Amin, D⁷, G*

37. What are the chord names for the iii vi ii V⁷ I progression in F?
page 273

37. *Amin, Dmin,
Gmin C⁷, F*

38. What is the basic progression for the 12 Bar Blues?
page 273

38. *I I I I
IV IV II
V⁷ IV II*

Learning Center

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