



CHORD CONSTRUCTION

There are 12 pitches or notes in the western music system known as the chromatic scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A	A#	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#
	B \flat			D \flat		E \flat			G \flat		A \flat

NB: some of the notes in this scale have two names making them **ENHARMONIC**, e.g. A# & B \flat .

To work out major scales and their associated chords, there are only 7 notes selected from the chromatic scale, with the eighth note being the same as the 1st but an **OCTAVE** higher. The distance from one note to the other is called a **SEMI-TONE** (eg. A – A#) or **HALF STEP**, whereas notes two steps apart are called a **TONE** or **FULL STEP** (eg: A – B). The distances for working out major scales are:

TONE, TONE, SEMI-TONE, TONE, TONE, TONE, SEMI-TONE

All **MAJOR** chords are made up of the 1st, 3rd and 5th note of any major scale. To see how the rest of the chords from the Major scale are constructed, see the chart below.



Chord Type	Symbol	Scale degrees	Example (C root)	Chord tones
Major	(no symbol)	1 3 5	C	C E G
Minor	m	1 \flat 3 5	Cm	C E \flat G
7 th (dominant 7 th)	7	1 3 5 \flat 7	C7	C E G B \flat
Minor 7 th	m7	1 \flat 3 5 \flat 7	Cm7	C E \flat G B \flat
Major 7 th	M7, maj7, Δ 7	1 3 5 7	C Maj 7	C E G B
Augmented	+	1 3 #5	C ⁺	C E G#
Diminished	°	1 \flat 3 \flat 5	C°	C E \flat G \flat
Diminished 7 th	°7	1 \flat 3 \flat 5 $\flat\flat$ 7	C°7	C E \flat G \flat B $\flat\flat$
Half diminished 7 th (minor 7 th \flat 5)	° \flat , °7, m7 \flat 5	1 \flat 3 \flat 5 \flat 7	C°7	C E \flat G \flat B \flat
Suspended 4 th	sus, sus4	1 4 5	C sus	C F G
Suspended 2 nd	sus2	1 2 5	C sus2	C D G
6 th	6	1 3 5 6	C6	C E G A
Minor 6 th	m6	1 \flat 3 5 6	Cm6	C E \flat G A
9 th	9	1 3 5 \flat 7 9	C9	C E G B \flat D
Added 9 th	add 9 (add2)	1 3 5 9	C add9	C E G D
Minor 9 th	m9	1 \flat 3 5 \flat 7 9	Cm9	C E \flat G B \flat D
Major 9 th	M9, maj9	1 3 5 7 9	C maj9	C E G B D
6 th added 9	6/9	1 3 5 6 9	C6/9	C E G A D
7 th sharp 5	7#5	1 3 #5 \flat 7	C7#5	C E G# B \flat
7 th flat 5	7 \flat 5	1 3 \flat 5 \flat 7	C7 \flat 5	C E G \flat B \flat



CHORD SHAPES ROOTED IN C

All chords illustrated below match the chord constructs from the chart. Once you learn these shapes, you will find that most of them are moveable shapes so you can learn how to play them in any key by switching fret positions and adding a bar when required.

				
				
				
				