



# 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**.

To work out scales and chords there are only 7 notes selected from the chromatic scale, with the eighth note being the same as the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> note of any major scale. To see how the rest of the chords from the Major scale are constructed, see the chart below.

		T	-	T	-	ST	-	T	-	T	-	ST
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8				
	<u>C</u>	D	<u>E</u>	F	<u>G</u>	A	B	C				

Work out which notes are in each chord using the chart below. This same system works for all scales so to find out what notes are in other scales please refer to your Key Signature chart.

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 <sup>th</sup> (dominant 7 <sup>th</sup> )	7	1 3 5 $\flat$ 7	C7	C E G B $\flat$
Minor 7 <sup>th</sup>	m7	1 $\flat$ 3 5 $\flat$ 7	Cm7	C E $\flat$ G B $\flat$
Major 7 <sup>th</sup>	M7, maj7, $\Delta$ 7	1 3 5 7	C Maj 7	C E G B
Augmented	+	1 3 #5	C <sup>+</sup>	C E G#
Diminished	°	1 $\flat$ 3 $\flat$ 5	C°	C E $\flat$ G $\flat$
Diminished 7 <sup>th</sup>	°7	1 $\flat$ 3 $\flat$ 5 $\flat$ 7	C°7	C E $\flat$ G $\flat$ B $\flat$
Half diminished 7 <sup>th</sup> (minor 7 <sup>th</sup> $\flat$ 5)	° $\flat$ 7, m7 $\flat$ 5	1 $\flat$ 3 $\flat$ 5 $\flat$ 7	C° $\flat$ 7	C E $\flat$ G $\flat$ B $\flat$
Suspended 4 <sup>th</sup>	sus, sus4	1 4 5	C sus	C F G
Suspended 2 <sup>nd</sup>	sus2	1 2 5	C sus2	C D G
6 <sup>th</sup>	6	1 3 5 6	C6	C E G A
Minor 6 <sup>th</sup>	m6	1 $\flat$ 3 5 6	Cm6	C E $\flat$ G A
9 <sup>th</sup>	9	1 3 5 $\flat$ 7 9	C9	C E G B $\flat$ D
Added 9 <sup>th</sup>	add 9 (add2)	1 3 5 9	C add9	C E G D
Minor 9 <sup>th</sup>	m9	1 $\flat$ 3 5 $\flat$ 7 9	Cm9	C E $\flat$ G B $\flat$ D
Major 9 <sup>th</sup>	M9, maj9	1 3 5 7 9	C maj9	C E G B D
6 <sup>th</sup> added 9	6/9	1 3 5 6 9	C6/9	C E G A D
7 <sup>th</sup> sharp 5	7#5	1 3 #5 $\flat$ 7	C7#5	C E G# B $\flat$
7 <sup>th</sup> flat 5	7 $\flat$ 5	1 3 $\flat$ 5 $\flat$ 7	C7 $\flat$ 5	C E G $\flat$ B $\flat$



## CHORDS IN THE KEY OF C

All chords illustrated below match the chord constructs from the chart above. We will be exploring a good range of the newer chords this term but as you can see some of the actual chord names are much scarier than the actual chord shapes. Once you learn these shapes you will find that most of them are moveable so you can learn how to play them in any key by switching fret positions.

