

3rds Explained

Music Theory for the Ukulele



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Key of Lesson: C

Harmony: C, Dm, Em, F, G, Am, Bdim

BPM of Backing Track: 70 BPM

Video Tutorial: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVT9W7wvugg>

Key of today's lesson is C because C has no sharps or flats, making it the easiest to learn these theoretical concepts.

C Major Scale - Shape 1

The image shows two musical staves for the C Major Scale. The first staff is labeled "C Major Scale - Shape 1" and shows a treble clef with a 3-measure scale: C4 (open), D4 (2), E4 (0), F4 (1), G4 (3), A4 (0), B4 (2), C5 (3). The second staff is labeled "C Major Scale - Shape Used for Playing 3rds" and shows a treble clef with an 8-measure scale: C4 (open), D4 (2), E4 (4), F4 (1), G4 (3), A4 (5), B4 (7), C5 (8). Below the staves are two guitar string diagrams. The first diagram shows frets 0, 2, 0, 1, 3, 0, 2, 3 for strings T, A, B. The second diagram shows frets 0, 2, 4, 1, 3, 5, 7, 8 for strings T, A, B.

- Here in addition to shape 1 there is also another shape that was created for today's lesson that places the entire scale on the C and E strings, that is because we need the extra strings to harmonize the notes. If the scale is on the A string we can't add the 3rd because we don't have the extra string we need to play the 3rd interval.

What is an interval?

- An interval is a measure of distance between two notes.

How far are 3rds?

- There are two types of 3rds.
 - o Major 3rd - 4 frets apart, aka two whole steps
 - o Minor 3rd - 3 frets apart, aka A step and a half

Two examples

The image shows two musical staves illustrating intervals. The first staff is labeled "Major 3rd - 4 Frets" and shows a treble clef with a 2-measure scale: C4 (open), G4 (4). The second staff is labeled "Minor 3rd - 3 frets" and shows a treble clef with a 2-measure scale: C4 (open), E4 (3). Below the staves are two guitar string diagrams. The first diagram shows frets 0 and 4 for strings T and B. The second diagram shows frets 2 and 5 for strings T and B.

How do you find the 3rds?

- The easiest way is with the play a note skip a note technique

Here we have the C major scale, to find the first 3rd we play the first note, skip a note, then play the next.

C D E F G A B

So here we can the first third is the C and E notes. From the C to the E note is 4 frets, so this is also a major 3rd, or simply known as a 3rd.

Lets take a look at the next 3rd interval.

C D E F G A B

Here we see the next 3rd is from the D to the F. Because the D to the F is only 3 frets, this is a minor 3rd, also known as a b3rd or the flat 3rd. Here are all the 3rds.

Musical notation showing intervals C&E, D&F, E&G, F&A, G&B, A&C, B&D, and C&E on a guitar fretboard. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a common time signature. The intervals are shown as pairs of notes on a single staff. Below the staff, the fret numbers for each note are indicated: C (0), D (1), E (2), F (3), G (3), A (5), B (7), and C (8).

The order of our thirds goes major, minor, minor, major, major, minor, minor. That is why the chords in the key of C are

- C Major - I
- D Minor - ii
- E Minor - iii
- F Major - IV
- G Major - V
- A Minor - vi
- B Diminished - vii° (The reason B is a diminished chord is because it actually has TWO minor 3rds, meaning it is built with a Root, b3rd, b5th while all the other chords have just a 5th interval.)

3rds as a tool of rhythm - Our Base Strum

Musical notation showing a base strum pattern for chords C, G, F, and Am. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a common time signature. The chords are shown as pairs of notes on a single staff. Below the staff, the fret numbers for each note are indicated: C (0), G (3), F (1), and Am (0). The strumming pattern is indicated by a series of 'V' marks above the staff, representing downstrokes.

- This will be the foundation of what we will use for our rhythm ideas.
- Our progression is C G F Am, one measure each
- The strum pattern goes D DU UDU

3rds for rhythm

Musical notation for '3rds for rhythm' showing a chord progression of C, G, F, and Am. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth notes and rests. The bass line shows fingerings for the left hand on the strings.

- When you are the second Ukulele you can make something much more interesting than just playing the same exact thing.
- Here over the chord that is being strummed we use the 3rds that imply the chord.
- The rhythm is almost the same as well with the exception of stopping at the 4th beat. This slight variation adds interest without completely taking away from the idea.

Adding One More Note

Musical notation for 'Adding One More Note' showing a chord progression of C, G, F, and Am. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth notes and rests. The bass line shows fingerings for the left hand on the strings.

- A chord is called a triad because it is made up of 3 notes.
 - o a Major Triad is Root, 3rd, 5th
 - C Major - C (root) E (3rd) G (5th)
 - o a minor triad is Root, b3rd, 5th
 - D Minor - D (root) F (b3rd) A (5th)
 - o A diminished triad is Root, b3rd and b5th
 - B Diminished - B (Root) D (b3rd) F (b5th)
- This rhythm idea here is using the full triad as a rhythmic concept, you can also call these arpeggios. By adding the 5th interval to each one of these we get the full chord and it sounds really nice.
- These arpeggio ideas can be extended to include the 7th interval, 2nd, ect, depending on the chords in the chord progression. That is why chord construction is such a valuable tool to have.
- In the play along here you will here me add some slides for effect. Ornamentation goes a long way.

Soloing with 3rds

35 C 36 G 37 F 38 Am 39 C

- In the video I just jammed a little bit so you could see what the idea sounded like but here I give you a full phrase
- Here I am mixing 3rds with the C major pentatonic scale
- The 3rds are used over the C chord and over the Am chord
 - o Over the C chord they are used in 8ths with a cool $\frac{1}{4}$ bend
 - o Over the Am they are used as triplets to really bring up the energy at the end of the solo.
- At the end the very last notes played are full triad, with E in the bass, making it a C/E to finish the solo. The use of triads as a strong finishing tool is underrated and sounds amazing.

Harmonizing Melody - The Base Melody

17 Phrase 1 - Without 3rds 18 19 20

- This is the first phrase to a famous children's song. Once you play it and you know it feel free to yell the name as loud as you can. If you can yell it so loud that I hear it in Medellín, Colombia I will be very impressed, very, very impressed. In fact I would suggest maybe singing opera.

21 Phrase 1 - With 3rds 22 23 24

- Here we take that same phrase and simply stack the 3rd interval on top of the base melody.
- This is something that people do with their voices all the time.
- 4 part harmony is when you get a band like the beach boys, or the four guys on the corner in the evening with smooth sweet voices laying down some loving tunes. Think summer time in the 60s and guys like Frankie Valli and his friends layering their voices over each other. It is really beautiful.

Home work

Harmonize the G Major Scale in 3rds

G A B C D E F# G

Name the chords of the key of G

I -
ii -
iii -
IV -
V -
vi -
vii -

This is the 2nd phrase to Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, harmonize it with the C major scale using 3rds

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a guitar fretboard diagram below it. The staff contains a sequence of notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5. The fretboard diagram shows the following fingerings: 3, 3, 1, 1 for the first two notes; 4, 4, 2 for the next two notes; 3, 3, 1, 1 for the next two notes; and 4, 4, 2 for the final two notes. The notes are numbered 25, 26, 27, and 28 above the staff.

Good luck!