

How Chords Are Built

Music Theory for Ukulele Players



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Key:

Harmony:

BPM:

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

The chromatic scale

- The Chromatic scale is all the notes in western music.
- The first thing you have to determine is your tonic, also known as a root note, that is your starting point. Every distance measured needs a starting point, music, intervals, are no exception.
- In western music we only have 12 notes
- Scales are 7 notes, so they use 7 of the 12 notes to create a scale
- A triad is a 3 note chord
- Extended chords are any chord with more than 3 notes.

All chords of this exercise will be based on a root note, or a tonic note, of C

Major Chord (C Major)

- Interval formula is root, 3rd, 5th

Minor Chord (C Major)

- Interval formula is root, b3rd, 5th

9 Root b3rd 10 5th Cm

Suspended 4 chord (Csus4)

- Interval formula is root, 4th, 5th

11 12 Csus4

Suspended 2 chord (Csus2)

- Interval formula is root, 2nd, 5th

13 Root 2nd 14 5th Csus2

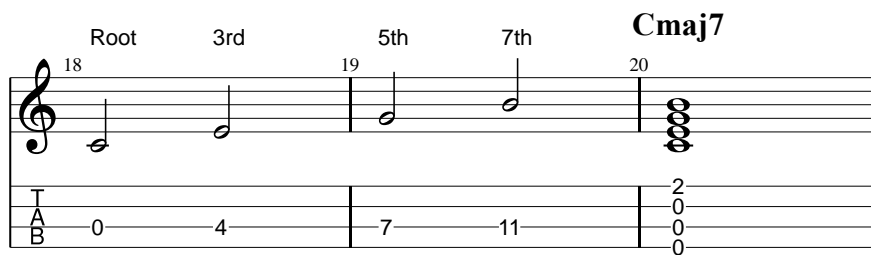
7 chord aka Dominant 7 (C7)

- Interval formula is root, 3rd, 5th, b7th

15 Root 3rd 16 5th b7th C7

Major7 chord aka Maj7 (Cmaj7)

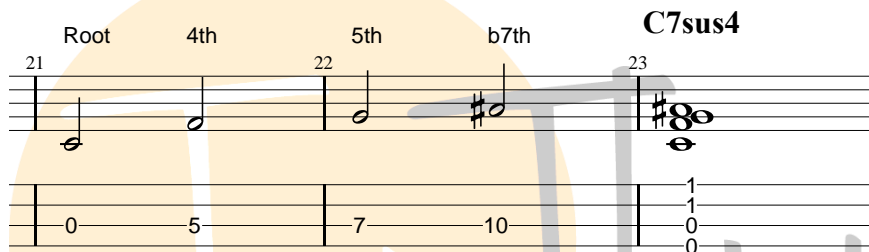
- Interval formula is root, 3rd, 5th, 7th



Musical notation for the Cmaj7 chord. The treble clef shows the notes C (18), E (19), G (19), and Bb (20). The bass clef shows the notes C (0), E (4), G (7), and Bb (11). The chord symbol Cmaj7 is written above the staff.

Dominant Sus4 chord aka 7sus4 (C7sus4)

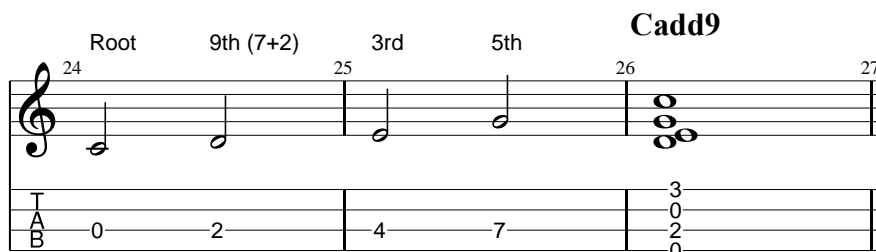
- Interval formula is root, 4th, 5th, b7th



Musical notation for the C7sus4 chord. The treble clef shows the notes C (21), F (22), G (22), and Bb (23). The bass clef shows the notes C (0), F (5), G (7), and Bb (10). The chord symbol C7sus4 is written above the staff.

Add 9 Chord - add9 (Cadd9)

- Interval formula is root, 3rd, 5th, 9th
- This one needs some extra explanation, we didn't see a 9 in the chromatic scale, so what is it? There are intervals that are larger than an octave, one is a 9th, which is a 2nd plus an octave
- The larger intervals that you will see are 9, 11, 13
- If you don't know what it is, subtract the number 7 to see what it is
- $9 - 7 = 2$. The 9th is a 2nd on octave past the root
- You can still just use a 2nd instead, you don't need to add a full octave
- Add9 means you take the triad and add the note, add9 is a major chord with a 9th (or a 2nd)



Musical notation for the Cadd9 chord. The treble clef shows the notes C (24), E (25), G (25), and A (26). The bass clef shows the notes C (0), E (2), G (4), and A (7). The chord symbol Cadd9 is written above the staff.

Dominant 9 Chord - aka 9 (C9)

- Interval formula is root, 3rd, 5th, b7th, 9th
- So, how is this different? Well here we aren't adding a 9 to major chord, we are adding a 9 to a dominant chord, and a dominant chord has to have a 3rd and a b7th
- This chord has 5 notes, so do you play it on a 4 stringed instrument?
- The least important notes in a chord are the root and the 5th, I know the root sounds a little surprising but if you look at all these chords they all have a root, and a 5th, meaning those notes do the least to define the color, or sound, of the chord.
- In the shape we use we actually cut out the root note
- A lot of time the bass player plays the root and 5th making it much easier for you to focus on the color tones of the chord

Root 9th (7+2) 3rd 5th b7th C9

27 28 29

5
3
4
3

0 2 4 7 10

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