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# Learn How to Play <br> <br> Piano / Keyboard <br> <br> Piano / Keyboard <br> Chords <br> Including 9ths \& 13ths Etc. With Charts in Keyboard View 



Martin Woodward

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## Introduction

Included in this book is the following:

- Chord construction (extensive);
- Chord substitution;
- Inversions;
- Chord fingering;
- Diatonic chords;
- Chord charts in keyboard view showing just about every chord that you will ever need including 7ths, 9ths, augmented, diminished etc. and how to play an effective 13th chord with just four notes;
- Free music notation and recording software;
- Audio links for the examples;
- Free printable download.

Note that all of this information plus an enormous amount more is also included in my paperback book or printable eBook: Learn How to Play Electronic Keyboard or Piano In a week!

But if you are just looking for chords then look no further - it's all here!

## Get the Best from this Book

Writing a book which is suitable for every different device is nigh on impossible especially when using music graphics; certainly, the ePub and Mobi versions are not ideal for these, although I believe that I have succeeded to a great degree and probably better than most. But obviously I want you to get the very best from this book so with this in mind I recommend that you download the pdf version which can be found towards the end of the book - to get there quickly just click here. This can be printed out (for your own use) as and when required.

There are audio links throughout the book which can be accessed two ways:

- by using the free external link given at the end of the appropriate chapters which gives access to all the links in the order in which they appear; or
- by using the links throughout the book which will work best in the pdf version.

Even if you have the printed version, you may still wish to download the pdf version in order to gain easy access to the links as they appear in the book.

## Using the in Book Links

Quite probably you may only need to listen to some of the audio links, but several are included for your convenience.

To access the links easily, if you are viewing this on a laptop or PC first of all go to your browser and click the restore down button in order to reduce the view size to something like the image below to the right (by dragging the bottom and sides).


Then click on the link which should then appear in front of the document enabling you to move it out of the way of anything that you may wish to see at the same time.

If you are viewing this on an Android tablet as soon as you click on the link you will lose the book view until you push the 'Back' button (shown below).


If you want to you can have a trial run now by clicking on the following graphic which actually is 'Pop Goes the Weasel'!


Note that the links may not work if you are viewing this in a Google or Amazon sample. Please go to $\mathrm{http}: / / l$ learn-keyboard.co.uk/chords.html for a free working pdf sample.

Note also that each link will open a new page in your browser, so you will eventually need to cancel them (or just close the browser).

## Chord Construction

Every musical piece (in classical, jazz and pop) is formed around a progression of chords, sometimes simple and sometimes very complicated. Either way learning all of the basic chords is absolutely essential and even more so if using auto accompaniment features. Understanding how chords are constructed is essential for correct theoretical understanding - particularly for composition and improvisation.

The basic triad chords are constructed by piling notes of the scale on top of each other a third apart and playing them simultaneously. Using the scale of $\mathbf{C}$ major and referring to the diagram below you can see that the first and most important chord of the key is made as follows: $\mathbf{C}$ (root note - the tonic), $\mathbf{E}$ (3rd note of the scale - the mediant) and $\mathbf{G}$ (5th note of the scale - the dominant). This is the root position of the C major chord.


Moving up the scale, starting on $\mathbf{D}$, we achieve a $\mathbf{D}$ minor triad, and then $\mathbf{E}$ minor, $\mathbf{F}$ major, G major, A minor and $\mathbf{B}$ diminished. These chords are the 'diatonic' triads in the key of $\mathbf{C}$ major, which means that they are all derived from the notes of the $\mathbf{C}$ major scale and as such contain white notes only, (as there are no black notes in the $\mathbf{C}$ major scale).

Practice these with each hand separately and notice how they sound.
Notice that the difference between a major and minor triad is that the intervals in a major triad are a 'major 3rd' followed by a 'minor 3 rd', whereas the minor triad has a 'minor $3 r d$ ' followed by a 'major $3 r d$ '. The diminished triad consists of two 'minor $3 r d s$ ' and the augmented ( +5 ) triad has two 'major $3 r d s$ '.

The Roman Numerals shown signify the degree of the scale which each chord starts on. In all cases the diatonic chords of a major scale contain major chords at the I, IV and $\mathbf{V}$ degrees minor chords at the ii, iii and vi degrees and diminished at the vii degree. Usually (but not always) the minor and diminished chords are signified with lower case Roman Numerals (ii, iii, vi \&vii.).

By adding further thirds above each triad, CM7 is achieved, then Dm7, Em7, FM7, G7, Am7, Bm7b 5. By adding further notes at third intervals more complicated chords like 9 ths and 13ths etc. will be created; these will be covered shortly.


In the keyboard views below I have only shown the 7th chords; to see the triads, simply omit the 7ths (the last note of each chord). Please also notice that some of the 7 th chords are signified with a capital ' $\mathbf{M}$ ' and others with a lower case ' $\mathbf{m}$ ', this is vitally important and will be explained shortly.


Additional chords can be created from the relative minor scales due to the harmonic and melodic (scales) differences although we are not going to go into these in this book.

Note that it's important to remember that while many musical compositions will use only the diatonic chords (found naturally in the relevant scale) and no other, it's by no means necessarily the case. You can use any chord in any key if you can make it work, but the diatonic chords (as found in the scale) are more likely to work!

## A Few Important points about 7th Chords

Major 7th (M7) chords must not be confused with what is generally called a 'normal' 7th (7) chord (which really should be called a dominant 7th but often isn't). Major 7th chords have a major 7th (one semitone down from the octave) whereas the 'normal' (dominant) 7th chords are the same major triad with a minor 7th (2 semitones down from the octave). Minor 7th (m7) chords are like the 'normal' dominant 7th chords but have a minor 3rd. And a minor chord with a major 7th,
would be written (C)mM7 although I have to say that this one is the least common, but it needs mentioning nevertheless.


And again, in keyboard view.


The only 'normal' 7th chord naturally occurring in the major scales (diatonic) is the dominant 7th (which is G7 in the $\mathbf{C}$ major scale). The dominant 7th chord resolving to the tonic chord $(\mathbf{V 7} \mathbf{- I})$ is the strongest of all progressions and is used repeatedly in all types of music (classical, pop, jazz etc.). Notice the difference in the sounds of these chords and that they are totally different and can $\boldsymbol{N E V E R}$ be substituted with one another.

The same applies to 9 ths. What is normally known as a 9th, is a dominant 7th (major triad with minor 7th) with an added 9th, but a major 9th is a major 7th with the same added 9th and is be written (C)M9.

So, to make this completely clear:

- C7 is a major chord with a minor 7th;
- CM7 is a major chord with a major 7th:
- $\mathbf{C m} 7$ is a minor chord with a minor 7th;
- CmM7 is a minor chord with a major 7th.

And the only one of the above chords to appear in the notes of the $\mathbf{C}$ major scale is CM7 and as such is the only one which is diatonic in the key of $\mathbf{C}$ major.
Play these now and hear the difference.

## Suspended 2nd and 4th Chords

The 'suspended 2nd' (also known as 'sus9') and 'suspended 4th' (also known as 'sus') chords desperately want to resolve to the major chord as shown here. These are used extensively in all types of music, but perhaps more so in country music.


Note that these chords do not have a 3rd and as such are neither major nor minor, but as they generally resolve to the major chord, they can perhaps be considered more major than minor, but they could be either.

## Diminished 7th Chords

You may be confused about the difference between a true diminished 7th chord and what is often called a 'half diminished 7th', (if not now you probably will be at some point).

Both have the diminished triad which is $\mathbf{B}, \mathbf{D} \& \mathbf{F}$ ( $\mathbf{B}$ diminished, the only diminished triad in C major). You should notice that the triad consists of two minor 3rd intervals.


If we add the 7th this will put an ' $\mathbf{A}$ ' at the top (which is a major 3rd interval above $\mathbf{F}$ ) and this is often known as $\mathbf{B}$ (half) dim7. But this chord could also be known as Bm7b5-( $\mathbf{B m} 7$ flattened 5th $)$, because that is exactly what it is! Put a G at the
bottom of this chord and it would become G9, which means that $\mathbf{B m 7 b} 5$ could be used as a substitute for $\mathbf{G} 9$ with no problem.

Now instead of adding the $\mathbf{A}$ (7th) at the top, if we add $\mathbf{G} \#$ (a minor 3rd interval above $\mathbf{F})$ we will end up with a true diminished 7th chord. Although $\mathbf{G \#}(\mathbf{A b})$ is not in the $\mathbf{C}$ major scale, it is in the relative A minor, both in the harmonic and melodic scales and is therefore a diatonic degree in the key of $\mathbf{A}$ minor.

The symbols shown below are often used to signify the diminished 7th and the half diminished 7th chords.

## Diminished 7th Symbols

O Full Diminished 7th Symbol
Ø Half Diminished 7th Symbol

You may notice that the $\mathbf{B}, \mathbf{D}, \mathbf{F} \& \mathbf{G} \#$ diminished $\mathbf{7}$ chords are all the same - the only difference being in the bass notes!

A beautiful example of the use of diminished 7th chords and arpeggios can be heard in Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata' - a superb timeless piece of music!

## Augmented Chords

Augmented chords are often used 'en passant', i.e. stepping up from $\mathbf{C}-\mathbf{A m}$ as shown here or from $\mathbf{C - F}$.

The augmented triad consists of two major 3rd intervals.


C+ (augmented)

But similar to the diminished chords you may notice that $\mathbf{C}, \mathbf{E} \& \mathbf{G} \#$ augmented are all the same chords, being identified apart only by the bass notes.

## Inversions

By moving the $\mathbf{C}$ to the top of the first $\mathbf{C}$ major triad and making the $\mathbf{E}$ the bottom note, the '1st inversion' is created. Similarly, by moving both the $\mathbf{C}$ and $\mathbf{E}$ above, the '2nd inversion' is constructed. This works the same with full four note chords as well as with triads as shown below.


Using inversions can be useful when changing chords with the minimum amount of finger movements. For instance, the $\mathbf{C}$ major 'root position' can be altered to an $\mathbf{E}$ minor triad simply by changing the $\mathbf{C}$ to $\mathbf{B}$, or to an $\mathbf{A}$ minor triad by changing the $\mathbf{G}$ to $\mathbf{A}$. And by moving only two fingers a short distance $\mathbf{C}$ major can be easily changed to $\mathbf{F}$ major or $\mathbf{G}$ major as shown below.



If using auto accompaniment, you'll find that most keyboards will identify the various inversions, but you will almost certainly find that there will also be a function which allows you to choose which note is sounded in the bass which would be the root note by default.

## Chord Substitution

As you progress you'll see that many chords are very similar, some even identical and as such can be used as substitutions if required.

For instance, Am7 and C6 consist of exactly the same notes - ( $\mathbf{C}, \mathbf{E}, \mathbf{G} \& \mathbf{A})$ and therefore the only thing that could identify them as being different is which note is used in the bass. It's more common (but not essential) to use the root note in the bass. So, remember that every major 6th is identical to the relative minor 7th.

Similarly, Am7sus4 and C6/9 are totally identical and these are very important chords in relation to improvisation as they form the notes of the pentatonic scales.

As already shown $\mathbf{B m 7 b} 5$ can be substituted for $\mathbf{G 9}$ as they are the same chord except for the ' $\mathbf{G}$ ' as is Bdim7 and $\mathbf{G 7 b}$ 9. Just a few other possible substitutions are shown below.


In fact, any two chords which share at least two common notes can often be substituted. As shown in the last example $\mathbf{G 7}$ and $\mathbf{D} b 7$ (above) are in fact harmonically as far apart as it gets, but as they share two common notes - $\mathbf{F}$ and $\mathbf{B}$ (or
$\mathbf{C b}$ to be theoretically correct for the $\mathbf{D} b 7$ ) are often substituted particularly as a blues finale - $\mathbf{D} b \mathbf{7 - C}$. Note that $\mathbf{G} 7 b \mathbf{5}$ and $\mathbf{D} b 7 b \mathbf{5}$ are exactly the same $(\mathbf{C} b$ is $\mathbf{B}$ and $\mathbf{A b} b$ is G). And this applies to all $7 b 5$ chords which are a 'tritone' ( 3 tones) apart.

You will find that many similar substitutions can be made so don't be afraid to experiment, but always remember that a 'M7' chord can never be substituted for a normal 'dominant' ' 7 ' chord as they have no relationship whatsoever. Similarly, a 'minor' chord could never be substituted for a 'major' chord (of the same name) for the same reason.

## Chord Substitutions as against Chord Alternatives

I feel that I must clarify exactly what I mean by 'substitution' here, as there is a fear of being misunderstood.

By substitution I mean what you can play against what other band members are playing in a way that doesn't clash.

For instance, if the rest of the band (or even your auto accompaniment) was / is playing a C7 chord and you played a $\mathbf{G}$ minor - it would work, as most of the $\mathbf{G}$ minor notes are also in $\mathbf{C}$, the only exception being the ' $\mathbf{D}$ ' which would in effect change the $\mathbf{C 7}$ into a $\mathbf{C 9}$ but this wouldn't clash.
But if other band members (or your auto accompaniment) played a C7 and you tried playing a CM7 or $\mathbf{C m} 7$ or $\mathbf{C m M} 7$ etc. against this, it would sound terrible for the following reasons:

- The 'B natural' in CM7 and $\mathbf{C m M}$ 7 would clash against the ' $\mathbf{B} b$ ' in $\mathbf{C 7}$; and
- the ' $\mathbf{E} b$ ' in $\mathbf{C m} 7$ and $\mathbf{C m M}$ 7 against the ' $\mathbf{E}$ natural' in $\mathbf{C} 7$;

Try it and you'll see what I mean.
Now on the other hand what I would call an 'alternative chord', is what you might use if you were playing on your own with no auto accompaniment, (maybe composing or arranging) and perhaps choosing a chord to go with the notes ' $\mathbf{C}$ ' and ' $\mathbf{G}$ '. In this instance you would have many potential alternative choices including the four chords that I said previously could never be used as substitutes, i.e. CM7, C7, Cm7 and CmM7. Any of these could work because they all contain the notes ' $\mathbf{C}$ ' and ' $\mathbf{G}$ ' in their makeup. As do Am7, Gsus4, Ab M7 and no doubt many other chords.
Which chord would be best, would be determined by which chord comes before and after and to a certain extent also the key signature (diatonic chords are more likely to fit). Clearly you would need to experiment.

In all cases the chords must fit the melody notes and any substituted chords must be compatible with one another and the melody and with what any other band member (or auto accompaniment) is playing.

## Extensions Beyond the 7ths

Going back to the M7 chord extension; if we carry on adding notes to this chord at diatonic 3rd intervals above the root chord, the M9th, M11th and M13th chords would be created as shown below:


CM1 3

The fact that the M7th is used also makes the 9th, 11th and 13th extensions 'Major'! And here's some playable inversions.


CM1 3

But, I have to say that the M11th and M13th are very uncommon. The majority of chord extensions are built on the dominant 7th (V7) chord which of course is G7 in
the key of $\mathbf{C}$ major. And the most common extensions created are the 9th, 11th and 13th as shown next.


Look carefully and you'll see that CM13th and G13th are actually different inversions of the same chords and if re-organised are also the notes of the $\mathbf{C}$ major scale; and as such also contain within them all the other 'diatonic' triads and chords of C major - think about it!

Here's some playable inversions.


If playing with a band, you only need to play the right-hand notes as shown here in the treble clef, which although don't include the tonic or 5th do create the sounds of the chords - try them - they work great!


G13

Notice how the G13 (V13) followed by G9 (V9) resolves beautifully to the tonic C major (I), shown next.


What is the difference between a 6th and a 13th?
Clearly the $\mathbf{1 3}$ th is a $\mathbf{6 t h}$. I suppose you could say that a 6th is a cheap, simple way of playing a 13th and it works, but the difference is the fact that the 13th also contains the all-important 7th and 9th and is a completely different sounding chord experiment and hear the difference!

See: http://www.learn-keyboard.co.uk/chord construction.html for the audio link to this section, or click on the applicable graphics.

## Chord Fingering

The fingering for the various chords depends very much on whether you are playing triads or full chords and which chord (or passage) is going to follow, and of course to a certain extent it depends on which chord you are playing.

If I was to outline the fingering for each individual chord in every inversion in every circumstance it would bore you senseless apart from taking months to produce.

But what I can do more sensibly is to give you a few valuable general examples which work in most instances. But as always, whatever you do - if it works, it's ok.

To keep things simple, we'll start with the $\mathbf{C}$ major.
If I was asked to play a $\mathbf{C}$ major triad or a $\mathbf{C}$ major full chord with my right hand, off the top of my head without thinking, the fingerings that I would use are as follows.


Furthermore, the above fingering would work for every root position major and minor chord. Generally speaking if a scale begins on a black note, you would usually use the 2nd or 3rd finger at the root, but not so with chords - the above fingering would still work for every major and minor root position chord.

Now staying with the root position, as we add the 7ths, which finger that is used at the top (the 7th) is determined by whether it's a white note or not as shown below.


And if we look at G7 and GM7 as below, you will see that it's the other way around with the 5 th finger being used on the G7 and the 4 th on the major 7th as it's a black note.


I must stress that these are not 'rules', just 'guidelines'. If you feel more comfortable using your 5th finger on the black 7th keys, then do so. But in all cases when the span is a full octave as in the full ( 4 note), chords then the 5th finger will generally be used at the top on both white and black notes.
Ok, so now we'll look at some alternatives which are commonly used when changing to other chords. The example below shows the $\mathbf{C}$ major triad changing to $\mathbf{F}$ major the common I-IV progression. By using this fingering, a smooth change can be made, particularly if sustaining the ' $\mathbf{C}$ ' throughout.


But for $\mathbf{C}$ minor to $\mathbf{F}$ minor, the fingering would alter as shown next. This is not because the chords are minor rather than major, but simply because of the way the black notes fall.


Notice that the fingering for $\mathbf{E}$ major to $\mathbf{A}$ major is exactly the same due to the black notes falling in the same relative positions - remember it's nothing to do with the major / minor difference!


Another most common progression is the $\mathbf{I}-\mathbf{V}$ as shown below using $\mathbf{C}$ major 'root position' to G major '1st inversion'.


If progressing to the '2nd inversion' as shown next, notice that using a different fingering on the first triad is more suitable.


In all the progression examples given, note that at least one of the notes between the two chords remains the same, which assists a smooth transition. Obviously, this is not always possible, but whenever it is, it's a good idea.

Another way of ensuring a smooth transition is to 'place' unused fingers over one or more notes of the next chord in preparation. For instance, the 5th finger could be hovering over the ' $\mathbf{B}$ ' in the last example which means only the 1 st finger has to do any movement!

And finally, the root positions of the $\mathbf{C}$ diminished 7th and $\mathbf{C}$ augmented triad.


C Diminished 7 Root Position


C Augmented Root Position

## Left-Hand Chord Fingering

Now obviously your left-hand is going to be completely different. The same sort of variations will apply - but differently. You might think that the fingering is simply 'mirrored', but it's not, as although your hands are mirrored, the keyboard is not!

Here's the same chords and progressions but with suggested left-hand fingering.



If you've been paying attention, you will have noticed that there are not so many variations with the left-hand fingerings as with the right hand. This is something that surprised me, and that I was not consciously aware of until I wrote this section.

Anyway, so hopefully now you've got the idea and can now relate all this information to other chords. But remember it's not written in blood, these fingerings work well for me, but to be honest I've seen other really good musicians who use what appears (to me) to be crazy fingering, but it works for them.

There are no audio files for this chapter.

## Chord Sequences

As already mentioned every musical piece is constructed around a sequence of chords which may be extremely complex or very simple consisting of as few as two or three chords. But do remember that just because a piece may be complex with many chords this would certainly not necessarily make it more pleasing to listen to. In fact, very often simple is best! Even some of the greatest classical compositions are based around only a few chords.

You've no doubt heard the term 'three chord wonders' referring to songs with only three chords, and if this is the case you can more or less guess that they will be the tonic (I), the subdominant (IV) and the dominant (V) - C, F and G in the key of C major.

The most common sequence using these three chords is the ' 12 Bar Blues' which is shown below, but note that there are many variations of this.


Whether you are aware of it or not you will have heard this sequence thousands of times.

As previously mentioned the strongest of all progressions is V7-I (G7-C in C major) and the second strongest is $\mathbf{I V}-\mathbf{I}(\mathbf{F}-\mathbf{C})$, hence the reason that these three chords are used so often. Now if you think about it, I-IV (C-F in C major) is also a $\mathbf{V}$ - I progression in the key of $\mathbf{F}$ major. Or to put it another way the progression is the interval of a perfect 5th descending or a perfect 4th ascending, which amounts to the same thing.

If after making this progression ( $\mathbf{G}-\mathbf{C}$ ), we continue with this interval again, we'd get $\mathbf{C}-\mathbf{F}$, then $\mathbf{F}$ - B flat etc. Carry on doing this and it will take you through the 'chromatic 'circle of 5ths' as shown below. And this takes us through the full spectrum of major chords and keys and eventually returns to $\mathbf{C}$ major.


Portions of the circle of 5ths are used in numerous compositions due to the strength of the resolutions. But as the full circle goes through every key, it's doubtful that the full circle would be used.

Below is the circle of 5ths again in music notation form, although in every case I've added the dominant 7th before each resolution (which makes the resolutions stronger). Listen to this and you should not fail to notice that each dominant 7th chord wants to resolve to the next chord in the circle (a 5th below).


To see all of these chords in keyboard view, please see the charts further on.

Now, by making a very small modification to the circle and using chords only found in the scale we end up with the following diatonic resolutions which you'll hear extensively either in total or partially in all types of music from classical to pop.

The next two examples are in $\mathbf{C}$ major / A minor and the slight modification incidentally is that the interval from $\mathbf{F}-\mathbf{B}$ is a diminished (or flattened) 5th. All the others are perfect 5ths. Also, we've used the minor and diminished chords as they appear in the scale, shown previously in the chord construction chapter.


The extra (alternative) chords in the 'minor' circle below, are due to the differences in the melodic / harmonic scales. Again, these were shown in the chord construction chapter.


The notation example below shows just one of the several possible variations.


Other very common sequences (shown below) are Dm7-G7-C - (ii7, V, I) and C Am - Dm7 (or F major) - G7- (I, vi, ii7, V), both of which incorporate a portion of the circle of 5ths which is why these sequences are so strong. Try and notice how often part of the circle is used in other compositions - it's very common.


The audio link for this section is: http://learn-keyboard.co.uk/chord sequences.html

## Diatonic Chords

The next few pages show the diatonic chords in the most used keys.
I know I've said this before, but to make it perfectly clear: - 'diatonic chords' are chords which are derived from the notes of the relevant scale and as such all diatonic chords are related - think of them as 'families' of chords.

Due to the relationship, it's likely that many compositions will use only diatonic chords, but this is not necessarily the case!

Here I have listed the major and relative minor chords on the same page.
Note that there are more diatonic chords in the minor keys due to the ascending / descending difference in the melodic scale. They are listed here in the order in which they are recommended to be practised / understood.

Only the basic, Major 7th, Dominant 7th, diminished and augmented chords are listed (as well as the 6ths and $\mathbf{6} / \mathbf{9}$ ths) progressing up the scale to show how they come into being. But please note that more complicated chords can also be created by adding further extensions. For instance, all of the notes of the $\mathbf{C}$ major scale can be rearranged to form G13th and as such this is also a diatonic chord in the key of $\mathbf{C}$ major.

The following pages also form a good starting base for composition, i.e. knowing which chords are most likely to fit together - but remember there are always exceptions and anything is ok if it sounds ok!

As this section as is simply for reference, no audio links are included.
All of these chords can be seen in keyboard view in the next section.

## C Major Diatonic Chords



## A Minor Diatonic Chords

Note that the relative major diatonic chords listed above are also diatonic chords of the minor scale below.


## F Major Diatonic Chords



## D Minor Diatonic Chords

Note that the relative major diatonic chords listed above are also diatonic chords of the minor scale below.


## G Major Diatonic Chords



## E Minor Diatonic Chords

Note that the relative major diatonic chords listed above are also diatonic chords of the minor scale below.


## Bb Major Diatonic Chords



## G Minor Diatonic Chords

Note that the relative major diatonic chords listed above are also diatonic chords of the minor scale below.



## D Major Diatonic Chords



## B Minor Diatonic Chords

Note that the relative major diatonic chords listed above are also diatonic chords of the minor scale below.


## Eb Major Diatonic Chords



## C Minor Diatonic Chords

Note that the relative major diatonic chords listed above are also diatonic chords of the minor scale below.


## A Major Diatonic Chords



## F\# Minor Diatonic Chords

Note that the relative major diatonic chords listed above are also diatonic chords of the minor scale below.


## Ab Major Diatonic Chords



## F Minor Diatonic Chords

Note that the relative major diatonic chords listed above are also diatonic chords of the minor scale below.


## A Simple Chord / Arpeggio Composition

The next example is a composition comprised 'entirely' of arpeggios (and no passing notes). Putting it another way, every single note in the piece is part of the chord itemised above the staff.

I know I've said previously that most compositions are based around diatonic chords (found naturally in the scale) which is true, but to prove that this is not always the case the following example entitled 'Flo' contains one non-diatonic chord - B flat major. which is repeated regularly, demonstrating that non-diatonic chords can work very effectively even though theoretically perhaps they shouldn't. All the other chords are diatonic chords in the key of A minor (see page 29).

Just listen to the next example or play it if you can - it's not as difficult as it looks; then try and create some of your own in a similar way - just using arpeggios changing direction at any time you choose.

If using auto accompaniment with the example, use $\mathbf{B} \operatorname{dim} 7$ instead of the $\mathbf{E 7 b} \mathbf{9}$ as this is more likely to be recognised. Also, D7 and E7 can be used instead of the F\# $\mathbf{d i m}$ and $\mathbf{G \#} \mathbf{d i m}$ if you prefer.

Just click on the music notation to get the audio link.

Flo



sed. sed. * sed. * sed.

sed.
*


## Chord Charts in Keyboard View

The next few pages show the following chords in keyboard view in each of the twelve keys:

- Major (including 6th, 7th and M7th);
- Minor (including 6th, 7th, mM7th and m7b 5th);
- Diminished (including 7th);
- Augmented (including 7th);
- Suspended 4th (also called just 'sus');
- Suspended 9th (2nd).

These form a good starting point and all of them should be recognised by auto accompaniment features. So, if you intend using these features, knowing all these chords will be extremely useful.

More complicated extensions such as 9ths, 11ths and 13ths etc. are often not correctly recognised by auto accompaniment and these are shown in the next section Why do I need to learn chords?

As I've said before, all music is based around chords, so you will be playing them in a roundabout way whether you like it or not. But if you understand which chords you are playing, it makes the whole process easier. Furthermore, if you intend using auto accompaniment or playing from a 'fake book', they are essential.

When I first took classical lessons, I was never taught anything about chords, even though I was playing them, - maybe I was too young. But I actually learnt much more about chords as a 'pop' musician.

As this chapter is for reference only, there are no hyperlinks.

## C Chords



All chords shown are in Root position only. To find the 1 st inversions simply move the bottom note of each chord to the top. Repeat for the 2nd and (where applicable) 3rd inversions.

C\# Chords


All chords shown are in Root position only. To find the 1 st inversions simply move the bottom note of each chord to the top. Repeat for the 2nd and (where applicable) 3rd inversions.

## D Chords



All chords shown are in Root position only. To find the 1 st inversions simply move the bottom note of each chord to the top. Repeat for the 2nd and (where applicable) 3rd inversions.

## Eb Chords



All chords shown are in Root position only. To find the 1 st inversions simply move the bottom note of each chord to the top. Repeat for the 2nd and (where applicable) 3rd inversions.

## E Chords



All chords shown are in Root position only. To find the 1 st inversions simply move the bottom note of each chord to the top. Repeat for the 2nd and (where applicable) 3rd inversions.

## F Chords



All chords shown are in Root position only. To find the 1 st inversions simply move the bottom note of each chord to the top. Repeat for the 2nd and (where applicable) 3rd inversions.

## F\# Chords



All chords shown are in Root position only. To find the 1 st inversions simply move the bottom note of each chord to the top. Repeat for the 2nd and (where applicable) 3rd inversions.

## G Chords



All chords shown are in Root position only. To find the 1 st inversions simply move the bottom note of each chord to the top. Repeat for the 2nd and (where applicable) 3rd inversions.

## Ab Chords



All chords shown are in Root position only. To find the 1 st inversions simply move the bottom note of each chord to the top. Repeat for the 2nd and (where applicable) 3rd inversions.

## A Chords



All chords shown are in Root position only. To find the 1 st inversions simply move the bottom note of each chord to the top. Repeat for the 2nd and (where applicable) 3rd inversions.

## Bb Chords



All chords shown are in Root position only. To find the 1 st inversions simply move the bottom note of each chord to the top. Repeat for the 2nd and (where applicable) 3rd inversions.

## B Chords



All chords shown are in Root position only. To find the 1 st inversions simply move the bottom note of each chord to the top. Repeat for the 2nd and (where applicable) 3rd inversions.

## Extended Chords in Keyboard View

The next twelve pages show the following chords in keyboard view in each of the twelve keys:

- 6/9th, m6/9th, m7sus4th;
- 9th, m9th, M9th \& 7b 9th;
- 11th \& m11th;
- 13th, b 13th \& 13b 9th;
- b10th.

With the exception of the first three chords of each page, the two lowest notes (the root and 5th) are to be played with the left hand.

Note that if playing the short (right-hand) version of these chords, it's doubtful, that they would be recognised by auto accompaniment. In this event, just play the relevant major (or minor if applicable) chord with your left hand and the more complicated extension (as shown) with your right hand. It will work - try it! But also note that the chords shown are my suggestions which have served me well, but there are of course others - the possibilities are endless! As you get to understand how chords are constructed, you will be able to figure out different inversions.

If playing with a band, you would only need to play the right-hand parts, omitting the tonic and 5th which will be dealt with by the bass player.

## C Extended Chords



## C\# Extended Chords



## D Extended Chords



## Eb Extended Chords

Eb6/9 Ebm6/9


EbM9


Eb11


Eb1 3

$E b(b 10)$

Eb7b9


Ebm11

$E b(b 13)$


Eb1 3b9

## E Extended Chords



## F Extended Chords





FM9


F11


F13


F(b10)


Fm9


Fm11


F(b1 3)


F13b9

## F\# Extended Chords



## G Extended Chords



## Ab Extended Chords



## A Extended Chords



## $B^{b}$ Extended Chords



## B Extended Chords



## Finally

Thank you sincerely for reading this. I hope that you've enjoyed it and have found it good value for money which has been my main aim; if so your positive feedback would be very much appreciated! Click here for Amazon.co.uk, or here for Amazon.com.

And remember that I am a real live person who you can contact (via the website contacts page) if you have any problems that you think I can help with.

## Download Links

The download link for the pdf printable version of this book is: http://gonkmusic.com/chords.html, but please honour my copyright and the hard work I've put into this by using this for your own use only. Thank you!

Quick return link to introduction page. If you have any trouble with the download link, I'll be happy to assist.

## Further Reading

There's plenty of information here regarding chords etc., but if you'd like much more information I recommend the following books all of which are easy to read:

- Learn How to Play Electronic Keyboard or Piano In a week! - Yours Truly http://www.gonkmusic.com/learn in a week.html
- Learn to Play Piano / Keyboard for Absolute Beginners - Yours Truly http://learn-keyboard.co.uk/absolute beginners.html
- Learn How to Play Piano / Keyboard BY EAR! Without Reading Music Everything Shown in Keyboard View - Chords - Scales - Arpeggios etc. http://learn-keyboard.co.uk/learn by ear.html
- Learn How to Play Piano / Keyboard Scales \& Arpeggios - In Music Notation \& Keyboard View - Yours Truly http://learn-keyboard.co.uk/scales arpeggios.html
- Learn to Play Piano / Keyboard with Filo \& Pastry - A Beginners Book For Children \& Very Silly Adults - Yours Truly http://www.gonkmusic.com/filos music.html
- New Easy Original Piano / Keyboard Music - Yours Truly http://learn-keyboard.co.uk/sheet music.html
- Jazz from Scratch - Charles Beale
- Hanon the Virtuoso Pianist in 60 Exercises - Allan Small
- Boogie Woogie Hanon, Blues Hanon \& Jazz Hanon - Leo Alfassy


## Free Software

I've messed with loads of music notation software, much of which is expensive and very complicated. But 'Melody Assistant' is neither of these and the basic version is free. This guide was produced using Melody Assistant.

Another excellent piece of free software is 'Anvil Studio' which is good for both recording and music notation. Again, the basic version is free.

And for recording only and also free is 'Audacity'.

- Melody Assistant - http://www.myriad-online.com/en/index.htm
- Anvil Studio - http://www.anvilstudio.com
- Audacity - http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/windows

Have Fun and thanks again.
Best Regards - Martin

