1 12 Major Scales & Chords

M7 = Major 7, m7 = minor 7, D7 = dominant 7, m7b5 = minor 7 with a b5

	I	W	ii	W	iii	½	IV	W	V7	W	vi	W	vii	½	VIII	
CHORD QUALITY	M7		m7		m7		M7		D7		m7		m7b5		M7	KEY SIG
C Major	C		D		E		F		G		A		B		C	0
F Major	F		G		A		Bb		C		D		E		F	1) Bb
Bb Major	Bb		C		D		Eb		F		G		A		Bb	2) Bb Eb
Eb Major	Eb		F		G		Ab		Bb		C		D		Eb	3) Bb Eb Ab
Ab Major	Ab		Bb		C		Db		Eb		F		G		Ab	4) Bb Eb Ab Db
Db Major	Db		Eb		F		Gb		Ab		Bb		C		Db	5) Bb Eb Ab Db Gb
Gb Major	Gb		Ab		Bb		Cb		Db		Eb		F		Gb	6) Bb Eb Ab Db Gb Cb
F# Major	F#		G#		A#		B		C#		D#		E#		F#	6) F# C# G# D# A# E#
B Major	B		C#		D#		E		F#		G#		A#		B	5) F# C# G# D# A#
E Major	E		F#		G#		A		B		C#		D#		E	4) F# C# G# D#
A Major	A		B		C#		D		E		F#		G#		A	3) F# C# G#
D Major	D		E		F#		G		A		B		C#		D	2) F# C#
G Major	G		A		B		C		D		E		F#		G	1) F#
MODES	Ionian		Dorian		Phrygian		Lydian		Mixolydian		Aeolian		Locrian			

Relative (Natural) Minor Key

Three Important Chords:

Three important chords. I, IV & V7 chords are the most important chords.

The one (I) chord is the **TONIC**. Can be substituted with the three (iii) or the six (vi) chord.

The four (IV) chord is the **SUB-DOMINANT**. Can be substituted with the two (ii) chord.

The five (V7) chord is the **DOMINANT**. Can be substituted with the seven (vii) chord.

Common Chord Progressions:

(Practise in all keys)

I - IV - V7	C - F - G
I - vi - ii - V7	C - Am - Dm - G7
I - vi - IV - V7	C - Am - F - G7
I - VI7 - ii - V7	C - A7 - Dm - G7
ii - V7 - I - vi	Dm - G7 - C - Am
ii - V7 - I - VI7	Dm - G7 - C - A7
IV - V7 - 1	F - G7 - C
ii - V7 - I	Dm - G7 - C
iii - vi - ii -V7 - I	Em - Am - Dm - G7 - C

12 Bar Blues Progression

(Practise in all keys)

| I7 / / / | IV7 / / / | I7 / / / | I7 / / / |

| IV7 / / /| IV7 / / / | I7 / / / | I7 / / / |

| V7 / / / | IV7 / / / | I7 / / / | V7 / / / |

NOTE:

Lower case numerals mean “minor” chords.

Capital numerals mean “major” chords.

e.g. vi = minor chord, VI = major chord.

LEARN THIS OFF BY HEART: C E G B D F A

2

Intervals (Very Important!)

An "interval" is the distance between two notes.

Knowing intervals helps us build chords.

Knowing intervals also helps us to hear certain notes as colour tones against the harmony. E.g. A sixth interval has a certain sound, just as a maj7th interval has a certain sound. As does a #9 or #4 or b5.

It also helps us "hear" chord progressions.

Two Components of Intervals: *number & quality...*

Intervals have a *number* (e.g. 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th (octave) 9th, 10th (same as 3rd), 11th, 12th (same as 5th) and 13th.

The also have a *quality*. I.e. They can be major, minor, perfect, diminished or augmented.

Minor intervals are usually described as "flat" (b) intervals. b3, b5, b7, b9, b13.

Augmented intervals are usually called "sharp" (#) intervals. E.g. #4, #5, #9, #11.

Compound Intervals

Intervals are numbered USING THE MAJOR SCALE AS OUR STARTING POINT.

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**A**	**B**	**C**
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**

Notice that the C major scale above is written out twice. Intervals are numbered from 1 to 15. The intervals above 7 (in bold) are called "**compound"** intervals.

Note that a 2nd is also a 9th. a 4th is also an 11th. A 6th is also a 13th. A handy trick to find a **simple** interval is to deduct 7 from a compound interval. E.g. An 11th: take away 7 from 11 and you get 4. Or 13 - 7 = 6. Or, if you want to know the compound interval of a **simple** interval, just add 7. E.g. A 2nd: add 7 to 2 and you get 9. Or, 4 + 7 = 11.

Some of the above intervals are no use to us at this stage. We won't worry about 10, 12, 14 and 15. The only intervals you need to learn are, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13.

The intervals we will work at understanding first will be 2, 3, 4 (also known as 'sus'), 5, 6, 7. We will learn to understand intervals in relation to chords. The chords will be basic triads, add2 (or sus2) chords, sus chords, 6th chords and 7th chords.

But first, here's an interval chart which shows the distance between 2 notes. Distance being the number of whole and half steps between each note. Remember, we are looking at just the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th intervals at this stage.

Firstly we will just look at the distance (whole & ½ steps) from C to the other notes in the scale. **Remember, an interval is based on the number of letter names used. C-F = 4**.

	C	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**A**	**B**	**C**
Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Quality	Perfect	Major	Major	Perfect	Perfect	Major	Major	Perfect
½ steps	-	2	4	5	7	9	11	12
whole steps	-	1	2	2½	3½	4½	5½	6

Take your time with all this. It can be tricky to understand.

All you need to know at this stage is that:
C to D is a major 2nd. **C to E** is a major 3rd. **C to F** is a perfect 4th. **C to G** is a perfect 5th. **C to A** is a major 6th. And **C to B** is a major 7th.

3 Chords (Their Construction)

A chord is 3 (or more) notes played (plucked or strummed) at the same time.

Chords are made up of 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7 notes.

A 3 note chord is usually called a triad. A 4 note chord is usually called a 6th, or a 7th chord. A 5 note chord is usually called a 9th. A 6 note chord is usually called an 11th chord. A 7 note chord is usually called a 13th chord.

We are going to start with triads (3 note chords).

Learning about chords, how they are constructed, how they are used etc is a very interesting and extremely worthwhile pursuit. A good chord player is a very much in-demand commodity in the recording and back-up business. Learn as much as you can about them. After all, most guitar playing involves playing chords probably about 90% of the time. It's a pity so many young players focus too much on learning to play lines (solos) and tend to neglect chords. Learning about chords helps enormously with playing good solos too. Much more than you'd ever think.

CHORD CONSTRUCTION

We will look at how chords are constructed. All chords we look at will be C chords.

Here's the C major scale:

C	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**A**	**B**	**C**
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
perf	maj	maj	perf	perf	maj	maj	perf

Chord Formulas in relation to the C Major scale.

Triads: (3 note chords) 4 types - major, minor, augmented and diminished triads.

C major	1	major 3rd	perfect 5th	-	1, 3, 5	-	C	E	G
C minor	1	minor 3	perfect 5th	-	1, b3, 5	-	C	Eb	G
C augmented	1	maj 3rd	aug 5th	-	1, 3, #5	-	C	E	G#
C diminished	1	min 3rd	dim 5th	-	1, b3, b5	-	C	Eb,	Gb

7th Chords: (4 note chords) 5 types - major7th, minor7th, dom7th and min7b5 chords.

C major 7th	1	3	5	7	-	C	E	G	B
C minor 7th	1	b3	5	b7	-	C	Eb	G	Bb
C dominant 7th	1	3	5	b7	-	C	E	G	Bb
C min7b5	1	b3	b5	b7	-	C	EB	Gb	Bb

Sus Chords: Suspended chords are usually dom7 chords (V7) with a 'suspended' 4th instead of a 3rd. There are exceptions such as the I triad with a 4th instead of 3rd. More later.

C7sus	1	4	5	b7	-	C	F	G	Bb

You can also have sus2 chords. This is where the 3rd is usually replaced with a 2nd.

Csus2	1	2	5	-	C	D	G

CHORD SYMBOLS:

C Major 7	-	CM7	CMaj7	C7	CD
C Minor 7	-	Cmin7	Cm7	C-7	
C Dominant 7	-	C7			
C Dom 7 sus	-	C7sus	Csus		

4 Chords Continued

More Symbols:

C diminshed	Cdim		C^{o}	
C diminished 7th		Cdim7	C^{o}	$C^{o}7$
C Augmented	C+		Caug	
C Augmented 7		C+7	Caug7	
C Minor 7 Flat5		C-7b5	Cmin7b5	$C^{\varnothing}$

- (This chord is the vii chord of a major scale and is also known as a “half-diminished” chord.)

More chord symbols will nbe explained later on when we get to chords with **compound** intervals. 9th’s, 11th’s and 13th’s.