

LESSON 7 ■ Group 1 Seventh Chords

SEVENTH CHORDS are constructed by stacking an additional pitch—a seventh—on top of a triad. The quality of the seventh chord is determined by the quality of the triad combined with the seventh’s interval relationship to the root.

Let’s divide seventh chords into two groups based on usage, beginning with the most common—referred to as Group 1 seventh chords. This first group is the backbone of jazz harmony:

The **MAJOR SEVENTH CHORD** is constructed by adding a major seventh above the root of a major triad.

Other common chord symbols for “C major seven” include **Cmaj7**, **CM7**, and **CΔ7**.

Chord symbols

CMA7

major triad

major 7th above root

CMA7

major triad

major 7th above root

C major seven

The **DOMINANT SEVENTH CHORD** is constructed by adding a minor seventh above the root of a major triad.

C7

major triad

minor 7th above root

C7

major triad

minor 7th above root

C dominant seven

The **MINOR SEVENTH CHORD** is constructed by adding a minor seventh above the root of a minor triad.

Other common chord symbols include **Cm7**, **C-7**, and **Cmin7**.

Cmi7

minor triad

minor 7th above root

Cmi7

minor triad

minor 7th above root

C minor seven

Just like triads, seventh chords can be constructed on any root. Remember that chord quality is determined by intervals and not the key signature.

Bbmaj7

Gmi7

F7

Emaj7

A7

Bmi7

Gmaj7

C7

Ami7

Fmaj7

Eb7

Bbmi7

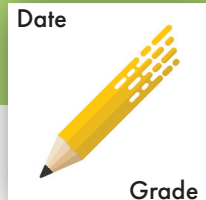
CHORD VOICING refers to the order in which the pitches of a chord are stacked. The previous triad and seventh chord examples have all appeared in **ROOT POSITION**, meaning that the root of the chord is the lowest pitch of the voicing. When a note other than the root is the lowest pitch in the voicing, the chord is in **INVERSION**. The chord symbol usually remains the same even when the voicing is inverted.

CMA7

C7

Cmi7

A complete listing of seventh chords in root position and inversion is included in the **IPS**.



1 Write the chord symbol above each Group 1 seventh chord. Observe the clef and assume no sharps or flats in the key signature.

2 Write each Group 1 seventh chord in root position. Observe the clef and assume no sharps or flats in the key signature.

C^MA7 A^b7 G^Mmi7 D^bM^A7 E7 B^bmi7

3 Write the chord symbol above each Group 1 seventh chord. Pay close attention to the clef and key signatures.

4 Write each Group 1 seventh chord in root position. Pay close attention to the clef and key signatures.

D^Mmi7 C7 A^Mmi7 E^bM^A7 A7

5 Write the chord symbols. Since the treble clef voicings are inverted, it may be helpful to rewrite the chords in root position by restacking the notes in thirds in the space next to each chord. The chord roots are given in the bass clef staff for reference. Pay close attention to the key signatures.

Ear Training Complete the exercises included in the **IPS**.

Go to page 18 to continue the **BASIC** course.

LESSON 13 ■ Major Scale Modes—Parallel

Modes of the major scale can also be described as **PARALLEL**. Parallel scales share the same tonic pitch, but have different patterns of intervals. If we begin with a major scale, then apply accidentals in a pattern that creates the proper sequence of intervals for each different mode (see page 26), learning Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, etc. can seem a lot less intimidating.

C Major (Ionian) Scale **C Dorian Scale**

DORIAN scale: major scale with third and seventh degrees lowered one half step (b3, b7).

C Phrygian Scale

PHRYGIAN scale: major scale with second, third, sixth, and seventh degrees lowered one half step (b2, b3, b6, b7).

C Lydian Scale

LYDIAN scale: major scale with fourth degree raised one half step (#4).

C Mixolydian Scale

MIXOLYDIAN scale: major scale with seventh degree lowered one half step (b7).

C Aeolian Scale

AEOLIAN scale: major scale with third, sixth, and seventh degrees lowered one half step (b3, b6, b7). Also called the **NATURAL MINOR** scale.

C Locrian Scale

LOCRIAN scale: major scale with second, third, fifth, sixth, and seventh degrees lowered one half step (b2, b3, b5, b6, b7).

Depending on the key signature, lowering or raising a note by one half step may require the use of a natural symbol instead of a flat or sharp.

When it comes to building scales, understanding the relationships of both relative and parallel scales offers two paths to the same destination.

For example, D Dorian may be realized as **RELATIVE** to the C major scale, built starting on the second degree...

...or as **PARALLEL** to the D major scale, with lowered third and seventh degrees.

Chords and scales work together to provide the harmonic and melodic framework of music. In this chapter, we will be learning which scale or scales identify most closely with the chords you know. Understanding these relationships provides powerful tools when improvising, composing, arranging, and conducting.

For a chord and scale to work together, the scale should include most or all of the chord tones, and in most cases, the tonic of the scale should match the root of the chord—as seen below with the Group 1 seventh chords and commonly associated scales.

The major seventh chord is most commonly associated with the major scale.

C^MA7 Extensions 9 11 13

C Major (Ionian) Scale

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

R 9 3 11 5 13 7

Scale degrees (scales are constructed in steps so scale degrees are consecutive).

Chord tones (chords are constructed in thirds so chord tones are nonconsecutive).

MAJOR SEVENTH CHORD ↔ MAJOR SCALE

Extensions are sometimes added to a chord for additional color, and correspond to particular scale degrees. Just like the third, fifth, and seventh of a chord, their names match the interval above the chord root. See page 20 for more information on extensions.

The pentatonic scale may also be used with the major seventh chord.

C^MA7 Extensions 9 11 13

C Pentatonic Scale

1 2 3 5 6

R 9 3 5 13

MAJOR SEVENTH CHORD ↔ PENTATONIC SCALE

The dominant seventh chord is most commonly associated with the Mixolydian scale.

C⁷ Extensions 9 11 13

C Mixolydian Scale

1 2 3 4 5 6 \flat 7

R 9 3 11 5 13 \flat 7

DOMINANT SEVENTH CHORD ↔ MIXOLYDIAN SCALE

The minor seventh chord is most commonly associated with the Dorian scale.

C^mi7 Extensions 9 11 13

C Dorian Scale

1 2 \flat 3 4 5 6 \flat 7

R 9 \flat 3 11 5 13 \flat 7

MINOR SEVENTH CHORD ↔ DORIAN SCALE

The Aeolian scale may also be used with a minor seventh chord.

C^mi7 Extensions 9 11 13

C Aeolian Scale

1 2 \flat 3 4 5 (\flat 6) \flat 7

R 9 \flat 3 11 5 (\flat 13) \flat 7

MINOR SEVENTH CHORD ↔ AEOLIAN SCALE

Sometimes chord tones are altered (lowered or raised by one half step) to add flavor or tension to the music. The sixth degree of the Aeolian scale corresponds to the altered thirteenth (\flat 13) when it is added to a C^mi7 chord. See page 22 for more information on alterations.