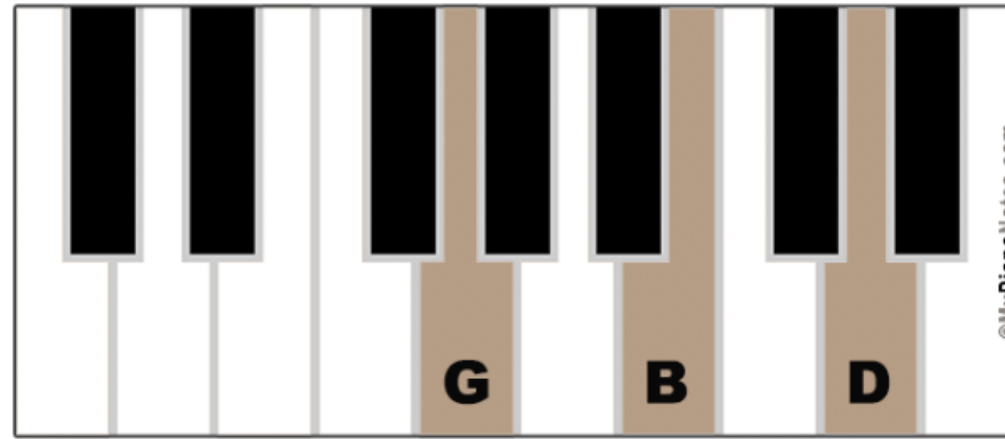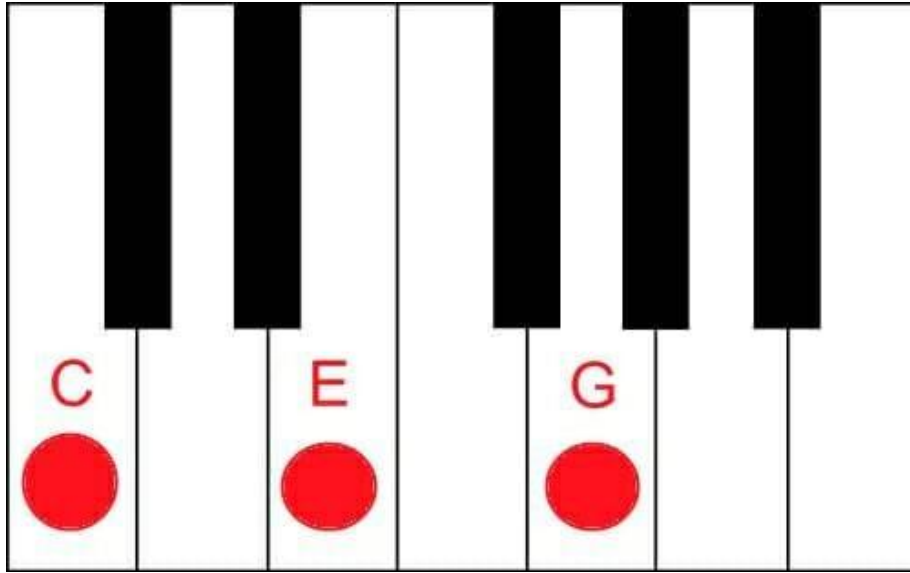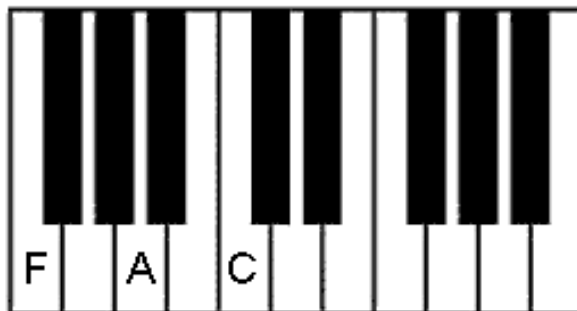# Intro to Pop Harmony

Common Triads

Inversions

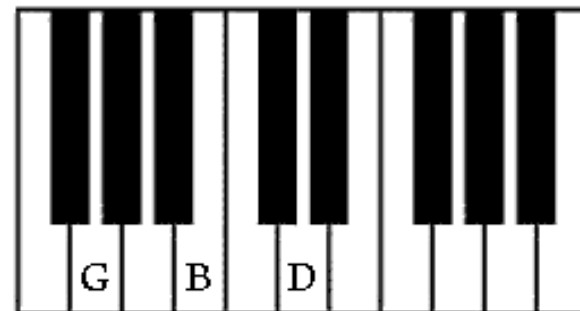Inversions can make chord progressions smoother

Rather than jumping around on the keyboard

Keeping common tones throughout the progression
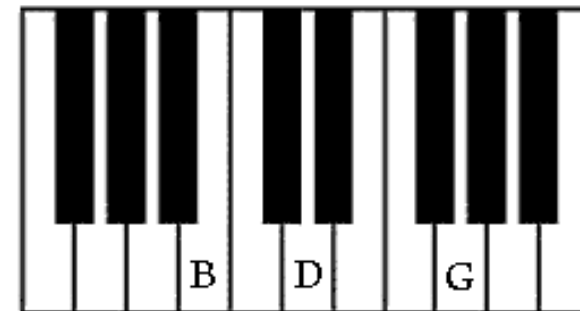
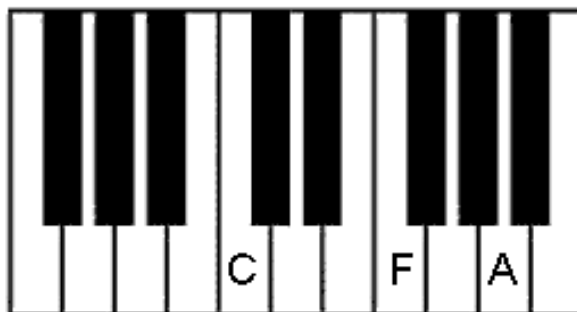**F Major Chord - Root Position**
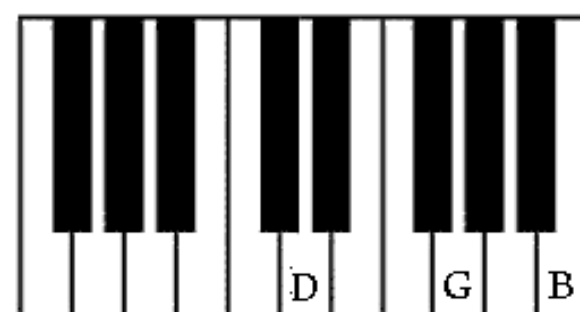
F A C

G Major Chord - Root Position

G B D

F Major Chord - 1st Inversion

A C F

G Major Chord - 1st Inversion

B D G

F Major Chord - 2nd Inversion

C F A

G Major Chord - 2nd Inversion

D G B

Major Scales

C MAJOR SCALE

C D E F G A B C

F Major Scale

F G A C D E F

Bb

Notes of the G major scale

G A B C D E G

F#

- Bb is B flat, F# is F sharp
- Half step is the closest possible note
- Whole step skips a note
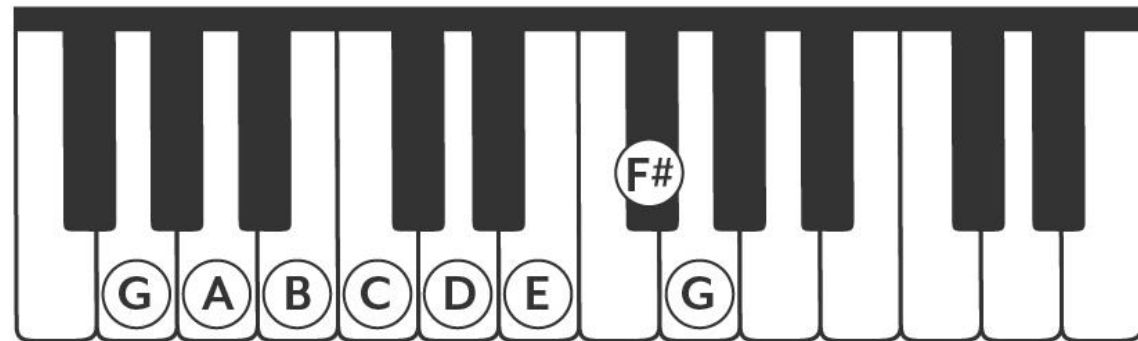
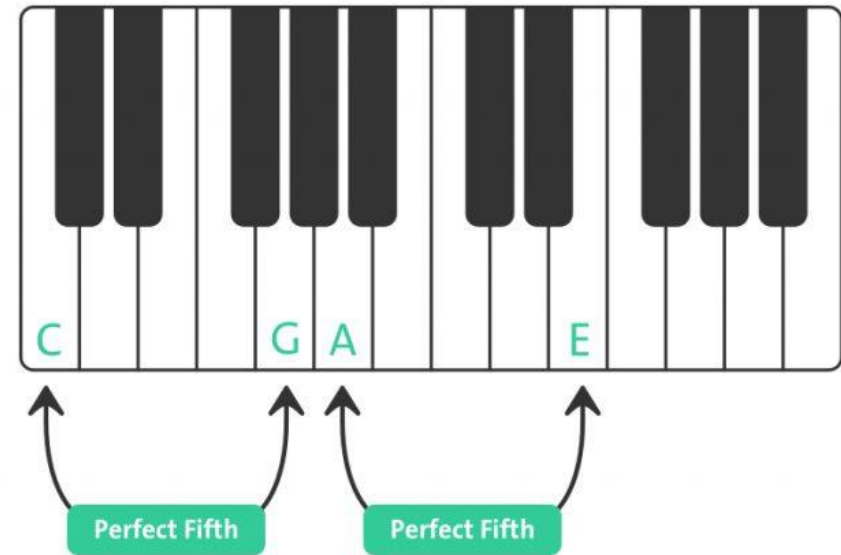# Counting Intervals

Count starting on the note as "one"

So, C to G is a 5th (you count, CDEFG which is 5 notes)

You're counting letter names

So don't count an E and an Eb!

Half step is the closest possible note. Ex: C to the black key above (C#)

Intervals

4th, 5th, and 8ths (or octaves) counted from the root are the same in both major and minor chords

The 3rd, 6th, and 7th change most often between major and minor

The 2nd change in certain scales and modes but not major or minor

Lower/flatted (b) means down a half step

Raised/sharped (#) means up a half step

Natural minor scales lower the 3rd, 6th, and 7th from major

Harmonic minor lowers only the 3rd and 6th

Roman Numerals

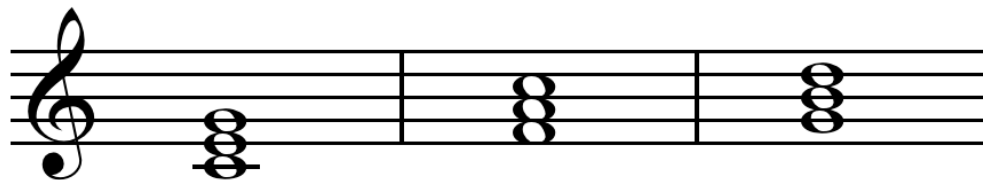In the key of C, the C triad is I or the "one chord"

F is IV or the four, and G is V or the five

C F G, is I IV V, which are the building blocks of many pop songs and most blues

If the numeral is capital numeral, it's major. If it's lowercase, it's minor.

"Borrowed" means taken from the minor mode if it's in major (or vice versa)
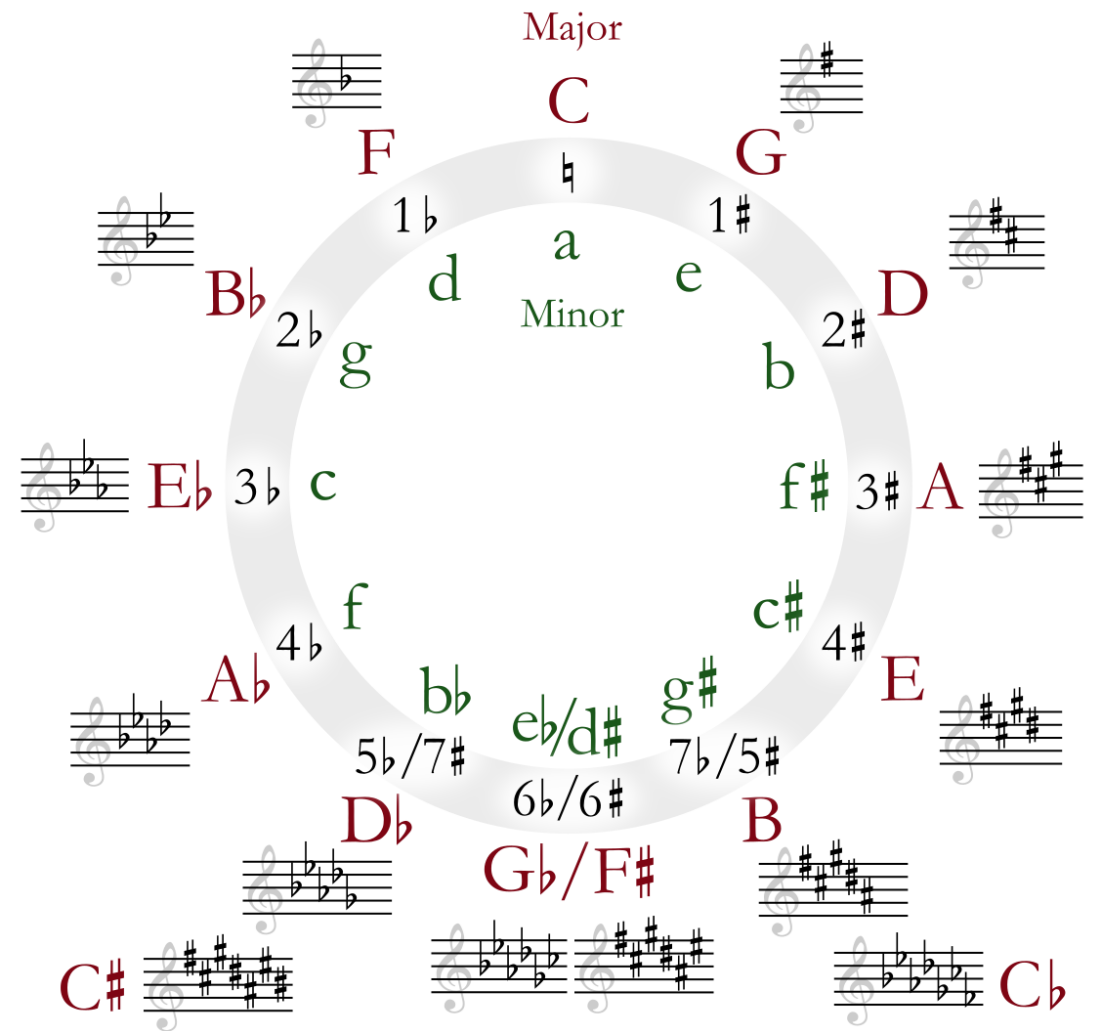
Key of C major

Chord I   Chord IV   Chord V

Sharps, Flats, Major, and Minor

Common Chord Progressions in Pop

I V vi IV (No Woman No Cry /Let It Be) C G a F

IV I V vi (Bad Blood) F C G a

I vi IV I (People Get Ready) C a F C

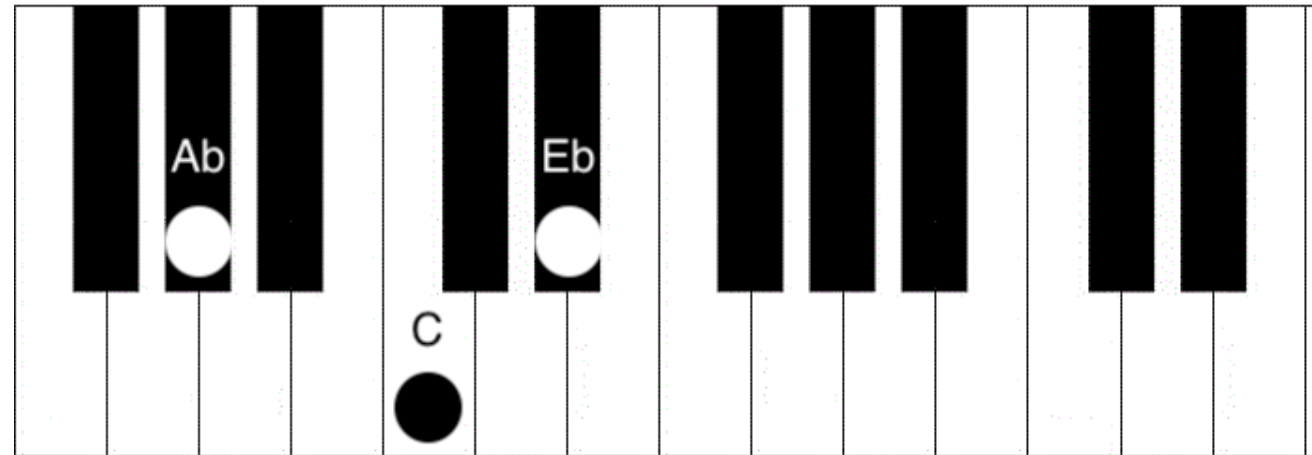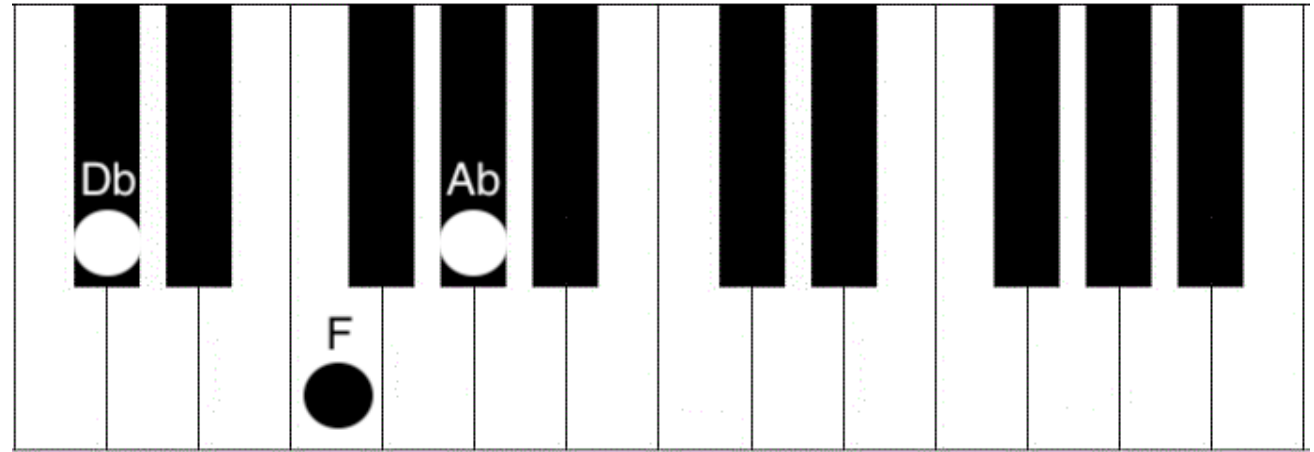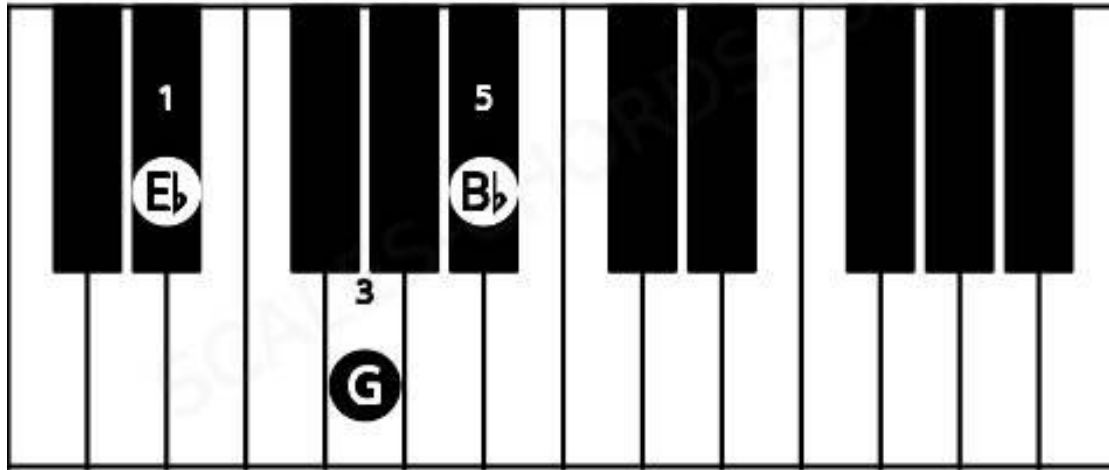I II ii I (All I Need to Get By)-borrowed II- C D d C

I IV V vi / I IV III vi- (Pat Metheny "James")- borrowed III- C F G a / C F E a

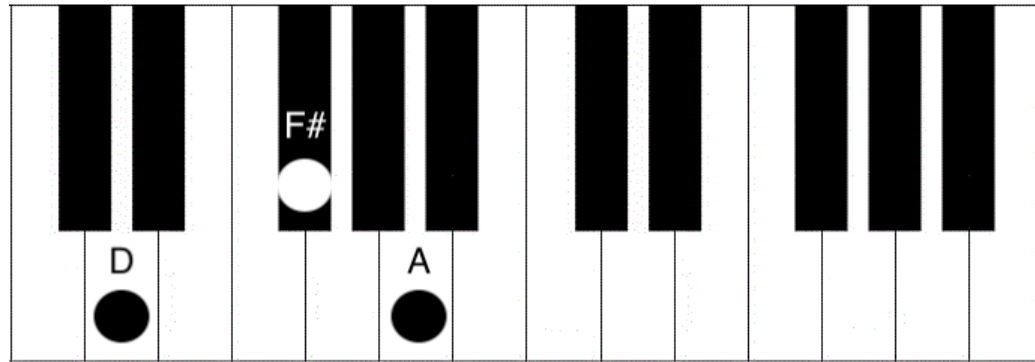I bIII bVI bII- Giant Steps changes (John Coltrane)- C Eb Ab Db
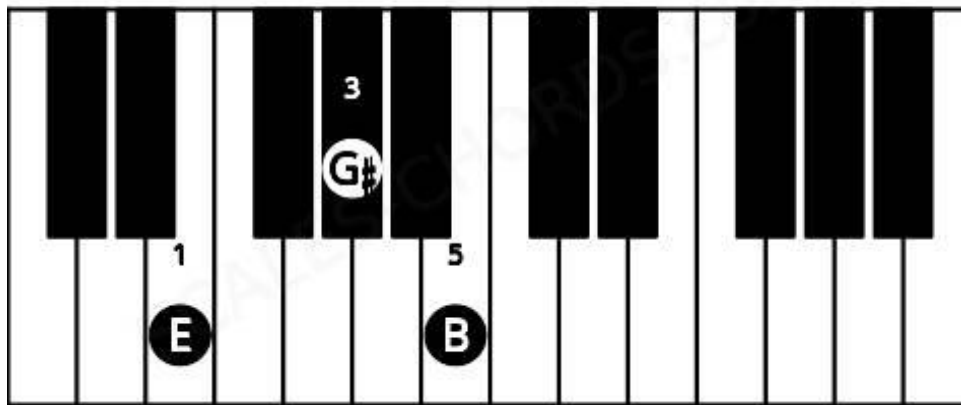   Similar to "Everything In Its Right Place" which is F C Db Eb

Flat Key Chords

Other Useful Chords
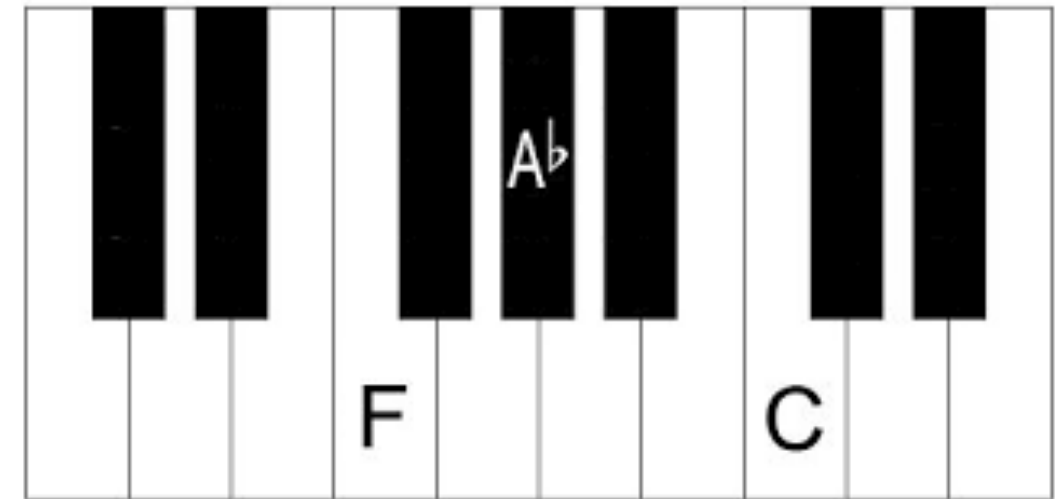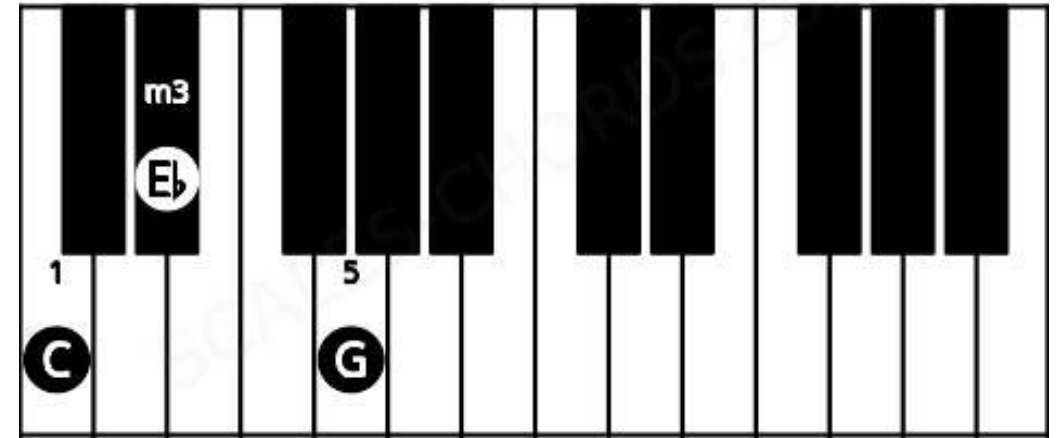
Harmonic Compositional Tools

Try toggling between two chords with a common note in the bass

Try changing bass notes to be the third or fifth (or something weirder!)

Try adding rests (space or silence)

Try adding cycles longer than a 4-measure loop (4 measures is 4 groups of 4 beats)

Add a longer buildup of the V chord back into chorus for more effect

*If you want to know what someone is doing, try to transcribe the chords by ear!