

Week 6: Triads

What is a Triad?

- A **triad** is a chord made up of **three notes**.
 - It consists of a **root note**, a **third**, and a **fifth**.
 - Triads are the basic building blocks of harmony in Western music.
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Structure of a Triad

- **Root:** The starting note or the base of the triad.
- **Third:** The note that is a third interval above the root.
- **Fifth:** The note that is a fifth interval above the root.

In a **root position triad**, the notes are stacked in thirds:

- The **third** is above the root.
 - The **fifth** is above the third.
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Types of Triads in Root Position

1. Major Triad

- Structure: Root + Major 3rd + Perfect 5th
- Semitones: 4 semitones (root to third) + 3 semitones (third to fifth)
- Sound: Bright and happy
- Example: C - E - G
 - C to E = Major 3rd (4 semitones)
 - E to G = Minor 3rd (3 semitones)

2. Minor Triad

- Structure: Root + Minor 3rd + Perfect 5th
- Semitones: 3 semitones (root to third) + 4 semitones (third to fifth)
- Sound: Sad or melancholic

- Example: A - C - E
 - A to C = Minor 3rd (3 semitones)
 - C to E = Major 3rd (4 semitones)

3. Diminished Triad

- Structure: Root + Minor 3rd + Diminished 5th
- Semitones: 3 semitones + 3 semitones
- Sound: Tense, unstable
- Example: B - D - F
 - B to D = Minor 3rd (3 semitones)
 - D to F = Minor 3rd (3 semitones)

4. Augmented Triad

- Structure: Root + Major 3rd + Augmented 5th
- Semitones: 4 semitones + 4 semitones
- Sound: Unusual, mysterious
- Example: C - E - G#
 - C to E = Major 3rd (4 semitones)
 - E to G# = Major 3rd (4 semitones)

Summary Table of Triads

Triad Type	Intervals Above Root	Semitones	Sound Characteristic	Example Notes
Major	Major 3rd + Perfect 5th	4 + 3	Bright, happy	C - E - G
Minor	Minor 3rd + Perfect 5th	3 + 4	Sad, melancholic	A - C - E
Diminished	Minor 3rd + Diminished 5th	3 + 3	Tense, unstable	B - D - F
Augmented	Major 3rd + Augmented 5th	4 + 4	Mysterious, unusual	C - E - G#

How to Build a Triad:

1. Choose the **root note**.
2. Count up **3 or 4 semitones** to find the third (minor or major).
3. Count up **7 or 6 semitones** from root to find the fifth (perfect, diminished, or augmented).
4. Play the three notes together in the order root-third-fifth for root position.