

What is this?

A step-by-step guide on how to create chord sheets with ChordSheet.com.

What is ChordSheet.com?

ChordSheet is an easy to use online tool to create PDF files of song chord progressions.

It is by no means a "real" layout or professional musical notation tool. But you can create simple chord charts really fast and efficiently.

Start

My first idea was to create an instructional video. But then I thought it would be easier and more fun to do a simple step-by-step guide with chordsheet.com itself.

So think of the following as a screenplay. Each page of this PDF illustrates one step.

As an example, and to walk you through the tool, we will create a chart sheet of the famous jazz standard Autumn Leaves by Joseph Kosma That will showcase the most important features.

Don't be scared that this guide has 11 pages. They are really short and easy to follow along.

so here we go ...(last edited 10th of February 2019)

Adding chords

To add the chords just use capital letters A-G.

We start with the first 8 bars of the A-section.

|| C | F | B | E | A | D | G | G ||

Every chord gets on its own bar by default.

So you don't have to use any delimiters.

The line above is entered as:

C F B E A D G G

So we entered 8 chords ...

... one chord results in one bar ...

... that makes a total of 8 bars.

pro tip

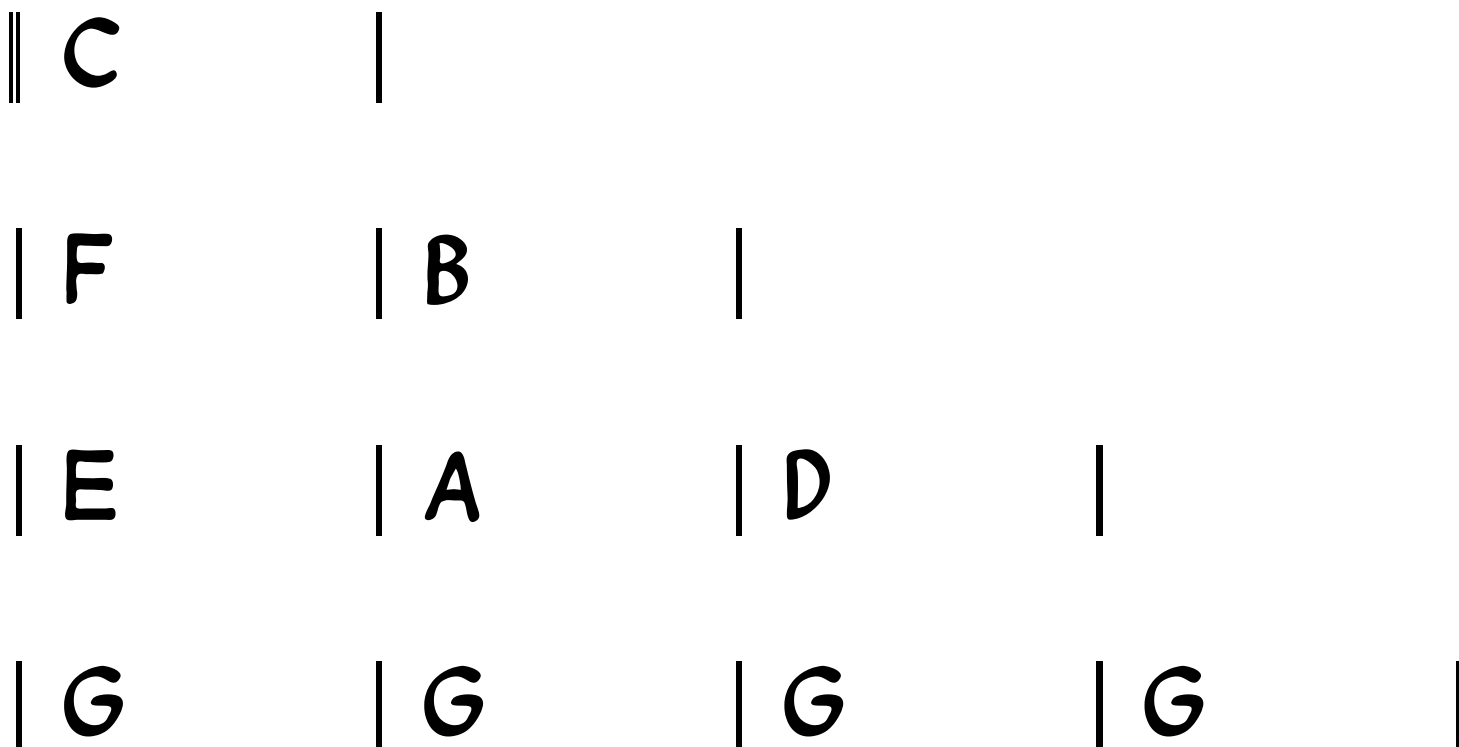
Use any amount of whitespace if you like.

It has no effect on the result.

The "grid system"

There is an underlying "grid system" to align the bars nicely.

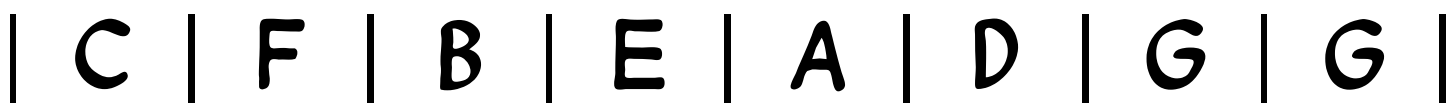
It consists of 4 bars a row.



So a row with just one bar/chord gets only a quarter of the page width.

two bars use half the width and so on.

If you add more than 4 bars they get narrower ...



And if you add too many bars in a single row it gets unreadable ...



To avoid this just use more lines.

Your best bet is to use 4 bars/chords a row.

Sharps and flats

To add flats use a "b"

E.g. "Bb" and "Eb"

| C | F | B^b | E^b |

| A | D | G | G |

To add sharps use a "#"

E.g. "F#", "C#" and "G#"

| B | E | A | D |

| G# | C# | F# | F# ||

Minor chords

To add a minor chord add an "m"

E.g. "Cm"

|| Cm | F | Bb | Eb |
| A | D | G | G ||

pro tip

You have several options how to denote a minor chord.

You could write "Am" "Ami" "A-" or just a lowercase "a".

|| Am | Am | Am | Am ||

the line above is entered as

a Am Ami A-

But the output is rendered in the same style.

In your user profile you can set your preferred rendering style
of some of the chord types.

Some chord types use a specialized font which has
some extra glyphs for nicer notation.

Seventh chords

Add "m7" for minor seven and a "7" for dominant chords ...

|| Cm⁷ | F⁷ | B^b | E^b |

| A | D⁷ | Gm | Gm |

Add a "j7" or "maj7" for major seven chords ...

| Cm⁷ | F⁷ | B^b_{MA}⁷ | E^b_{MA}⁷ |

| A | D⁷ | Gm | Gm |

And for halfdiminished chords add "m7b5" ...

| Cm⁷ | F⁷ | B^b_{MA}⁷ | E^b_{MA}⁷ |

| A^{ø7} | D⁷ | Gm | Gm ||

the lines above are entered as

Cm7 F7 Bbj7 Ebmaj7

Am7b5 D7 Gm Gm

Section Titles

There are three types of section titles.

They start with "-", ":" or "=".

A simple text line starts with a "-"

E.g. "- Verse"

Verse

To add a border use a ":"

E.g. ": Chorus"

Chorus

To add a section delimiter use a "="

E.g. "= B"

B

It looks the same as the ":"-type.

But the preceding and following bars get a double line.

|| A[♭]7 | D7 | Gm | Gm ||

B

|| A[♭]7 | D7 | Gm | Gm ||

Repeat

To add repeat markers to sections enclose them with parentheses.

E.g. "(A B C D)"

A

||: Cm⁷ | F⁷ | B^b_{MA}⁷ | E^b_{MA}⁷ |
| A^ø⁷ | D⁷ | Gm | Gm :||

You can also specify the number of repetitions.

E.g. "(A B C D)x5"

||: A | B | C | D :|| ^{x5}

pro tip

If you want to you can use pipe and colon to make it look more like the real thing in the source as well.

E.g. "|:|" and " :|"

But it is perfectly fine to go with simple parentheses.

In the PDF it looks the same.

Split Bars

If you got two chords in a bar.

|| G | C | F | B |

| G C | F B ||

There is a special char "_" used to glue chords together.

So they get together in a single bar.

the lines above are entered as

G C F B

G_C F_B

The B section

To proceed in creating our chart we just have to add the B section.

Nothing new here.

A**B****pro tip**

It's not always advisable to use repeat sections.

So in the final chart sheet we print the full 16 bars of the A section.

This can easily be done by just copying+pasting.

the final chart

Autumn Leaves

Joseph Kosma

A

|| Cm⁷ | F⁷ | Bb_{MA}⁷ | Eb_{MA}⁷ || A^{ø7} | D⁷ | Gm | Gm || Cm⁷ | F⁷ | Bb_{MA}⁷ | Eb_{MA}⁷ || A^{ø7} | D⁷ | Gm | Gm ||

B

|| A^{ø7} | D⁷ | Gm | Gm || Cm⁷ | F⁷ | Bb_{MA}⁷ | Eb_{MA}⁷ || A^{ø7} | D⁷ | Gm C⁷ | Fm⁷ Bb⁷ || Eb_{MA}⁷ | A^{ø7} D⁷ | Gm | G⁷ ||