

Core Voicings 101

(Key of C)

Basic Major 7:
1 3 5 7

Basic Dominant 7:
1 3 5 b7

Basic Minor 7:
1 b3 5 b7

Cmaj7 C7 Cm7

Musical notation for the first three voicings. Each is shown in a grand staff (treble and bass clef). The bass clef has a whole rest. The treble clef shows the chord voicing: Cmaj7 (C4, E4, G4, B4), C7 (C4, E4, G4, Bb4), and Cm7 (C4, Eb4, G4, Bb4).

Basic Minor7(b5), also
known as Half-Diminished:
1 b3 b5 b7

Basic Diminished 7:
1 b3 b5 bb7

4 Cø7 C°7

Musical notation for the next two voicings. Each is shown in a grand staff. The bass clef has a whole rest. The treble clef shows the chord voicing: Cø7 (C4, Eb4, Fb4, Bb4) and C°7 (C4, Eb4, Fb4, Gb4).

Basic Major 9:
1 3 5 7 9

Basic Dominant 9:
1 3 5 b7 9

Basic Minor 9:
1 b3 5 b7 9

6 Cmaj7 C7 Cm7

Musical notation for the next three voicings. Each is shown in a grand staff. The bass clef has a whole rest. The treble clef shows the chord voicing: Cmaj7 (C4, E4, G4, B4, D5), C7 (C4, E4, G4, Bb4, D5), and Cm7 (C4, Eb4, G4, Bb4, D5).

Basic Minor9(b5), also
known as Half-Diminished:
1 b3 b5 b7 9

Basic Diminished 9:
1 b3 b5 bb7 9

9 Cø7 C°9

Musical notation for the final two voicings. Each is shown in a grand staff. The bass clef has a whole rest. The treble clef shows the chord voicing: Cø7 (C4, Eb4, Fb4, Bb4, D5) and C°9 (C4, Eb4, Fb4, Gb4, Ab4).

Major 7 Voicings

Basic Major7:
1 3 5 7

Basic Two-Hand
Rooted Major7:
Voicing No. 1

Basic Two-Hand
Rooted Major7:
Voicing No. 2

11 Cmaj7

Cmaj7

1 7 3 5

1 5 3 7

Pro Tip: Use "left-hand" voicings when you need your right hand free.

Basic Major7:
Left-Hand Voicing 1
3 5 7 1

Basic Major7:
Left-Hand Voicing 2
5 7 1 3

Basic Major7:
Left-Hand Voicing 3
7 1 3 5

14

Cmaj7

Cmaj7

Cmaj7

A voicing is considered "rootless" when the root of the chord is not on the bottom.

Pro Tip: Use "rootless" voicings when you're playing with a bassist who is covering the roots for you.

Basic Major7:
Rootless Voicing No. 1
5 1 3 7

Basic Major7:
Rootless Voicing No. 2
3 7 1 5

17

Major 9 Voicings

Basic Major9:
1 3 5 7 9

Basic Two-Hand
Rooted Major9:
Voicing No. 1

Basic Two-Hand
Rooted Major9:
Voicing No. 2

19 Cmaj9

Cmaj9 1 5 9 3 7

Cmaj9 1 5 3 7 9

Pro Tip: In most cases,
when you see a simple Major 7 chord,
like "CMaj7" written on the page,
you can ALSO use a 9 voicing, like
"CMaj9"!

Basic Major9:
Left-Hand Voicing 1
3 5 7 9

Basic Major9:
Left-Hand Voicing 2
5 7 9 3

Basic Major9:
Left-Hand Voicing 3
7 9 3 5

22

Cmaj9

Cmaj9

Cmaj9

Pro Tip: When a Major7 chord
also contains both a 6 and 9,
it is written as a 6/9 chord as
seen in the chord symbol here.

Basic Major9:
Rootless Voicing No. 1
5 9 3 7

Basic Major9:
Rootless Voicing No. 2
3 6 9 5 7

Basic Major9:
Rootless Voicing No. 3
3 7 1 5 9

25 Cmaj9

C%

Cmaj9

Dominant 7 Voicings

Basic Dominant 7: 1 3 5 b7	Basic Two-Hand Rooted Dominant 7: Voicing No. 1 1 b7 3 5	Basic Two-Hand Rooted Dominant 7: Voicing No. 2 1 5 3 b7
28 C ⁷	C ⁷	C ⁷

Pro Tip: For Dominant 7th chords, you'll sound more advanced if you use the Dominant 9 or 13 left-hand voicings, but these 7th chords are still important to know.

Basic Dominant 7: Left-Hand Voicing 1 3 5 b7 1	Basic Dominant 7: Left-Hand Voicing 2 5 b7 1 3	Basic Dominant 7: Left-Hand Voicing 3 b7 1 3 5
31		

Pro Tip: The same is true of the rootless voicings here: These basic 7th chords are important to understand, but they'll sound more rich when you use the rootless Dominant 9 and 13 voicings.

Basic Dominant 7: Rootless Voicing No. 1 5 1 3 b7	Basic Dominant 7: Rootless Voicing No. 2 3 b7 1 5
34 C ⁷	C ⁷

Dominant 9 Voicings

Basic Dominant 9: 1 3 5 7 9	Basic Two-Hand Rooted Dominant 9: Voicing No. 1 1 5 9 3 7	Basic Two-Hand Rooted Dominant 9: Voicing No. 2 1 5 3 7 9
--------------------------------	--	--

36 C⁹

Pro Tip: In most cases,
 when you see a simple Dominant 7 chord,
 like "C7" written on the page,
 you can ALSO use a 9 voicing, like
 "C9"!

Basic Dominant 9: Left-Hand Voicing 1 3 5 7 9	Basic Dominant 9: Left-Hand Voicing 2 5 7 9 3	Basic Dominant 9: Left-Hand Voicing 3 7 9 3 5
---	---	---

39

Basic Dominant 9: Rootless Voicing No. 1 5 9 3 7	Basic Dominant 9: Rootless Voicing No. 2 3 6 9 5 7	Basic Dominant 9: Rootless Voicing No. 3 3 7 1 5 9
--	--	--

42 C⁹

Dominant 13 Voicings

Basic Dominant 13:
1 3 5 7 9 13

Basic Two-Hand
Rooted Dominant 13:
Voicing No. 1

Basic Two-Hand
Rooted Dominant 13:
Voicing No. 2

45 C¹³ C¹³ C¹³

Pro Tip: In most cases,
when you see a simple Dominant 7 chord,
like "C7" written on the page,
you can ALSO use a 13 voicing, like
"C13"!

Basic Dominant 13:
Left-Hand Voicing 1
3 13 b7 9

Basic Dominant 13:
Left-Hand Voicing 2
13 b7 9 3

Basic Dominant 13:
Left-Hand Voicing 3
b7 9 3 13

48 C¹³ C¹³ C¹³

Basic Dominant 13:
Rootless Voicing No. 1
3 b7 9 13

Basic Dominant 13:
Rootless Voicing No. 2
b7 9 3 13 9

Basic Dominant 13:
Rootless Voicing No. 3
b7 3 13 9 5

51 C¹³ C¹³ C¹³

Minor 7 Voicings

Basic Minor 7:
1 b3 5 b7

Basic Two-Hand
Rooted Minor 7:
Voicing No. 1

Basic Two-Hand
Rooted Minor 7:
Voicing No. 2

54 Cm⁷ Cm⁷ 1 b7 b3 5 Cm⁷ 1 5 b3 b7

Pro Tip: Use "left-hand" voicings when you need your right hand free.

Basic Minor 7:
Left-Hand Voicing 1
b3 5 b7 1

Basic Minor 7:
Left-Hand Voicing 2
5 b7 1 b3

Basic Minor 7:
Left-Hand Voicing 3
b7 1 b3 5

57 Cm⁷ Cm⁷ Cm⁷

A voicing is considered "rootless" when the root of the chord is not on the bottom.

Pro Tip: Use "rootless" voicings when you're playing with a bassist who is covering the roots for you.

Basic Minor 7:
Rootless Voicing No. 1
5 1 b3 b7

Basic Minor 7:
Rootless Voicing No. 2
b3 b7 1 5

60 Cm⁷ Cm⁷

Minor 9 Voicings

Basic Minor 9:
1 b3 5 b7 9

Basic Two-Hand
Rooted Minor 9:
Voicing No. 1
1 5 9 b3 b7

Basic Two-Hand
Rooted Minor 9:
Voicing No. 2
1 5 b3 b7 9

62 Cm⁹

Pro Tip: In most cases,
when you see a simple Minor 7 chord,
like "Cm7" written on the page,
you can ALSO use a 9 voicing, like
"Cm9"!

Basic Minor 9:
Left-Hand Voicing 1
b3 5 b7 9

Basic Minor 9:
Left-Hand Voicing 2
5 b7 9 b3

Basic Minor 9:
Left-Hand Voicing 3
b7 9 b3 5

65 Cm⁹

Basic Minor 9:
Rootless Voicing No. 1
b7 b3 5 9

Basic Minor 9:
Rootless Voicing No. 2
5 9 b3 b7

Basic Minor 9:
Rootless Voicing No. 3
b3 b7 1 5 9

68 Cm⁹

Half-Diminished 7 Voicings

9

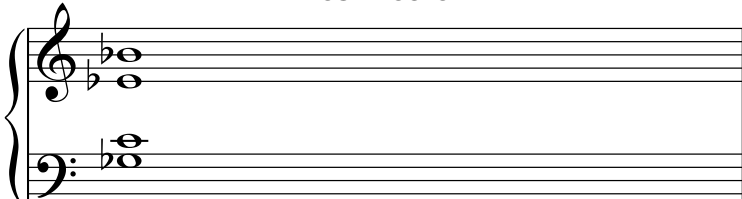
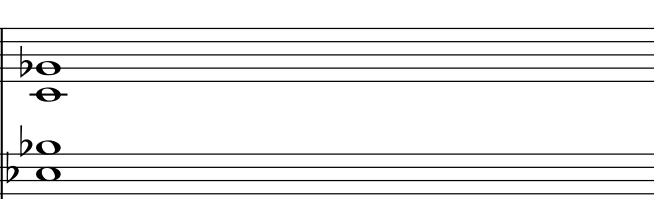
<p>Basic Half-Diminished 7: 1 b3 b5 b7</p>	<p>Basic Two-Hand Rooted Half-Diminished 7: Voicing No. 1 1 b7 b3 b5</p>	<p>Basic Two-Hand Rooted Half-Diminished 7: Voicing No. 2 1 b5 b3 b7</p>
<p>71 C\emptyset7</p> 	<p>C\emptyset7</p> 	<p>C\emptyset7</p> 

Pro Tip: Use "left-hand" voicings when you need your right hand free.

<p>Basic Half-Diminished 7: Left-Hand Voicing 1 b3 b5 b7 1</p>	<p>Basic Half-Diminished 7: Left-Hand Voicing 2 b5 b7 1 b3</p>	<p>Basic Half-Diminished 7: Left-Hand Voicing 3 b7 1 b3 b5</p>
<p>74</p> 		

A voicing is considered "rootless" when the root of the chord is not on the bottom.

Pro Tip: Use "rootless" voicings when you're playing with a bassist who is covering the roots for you.

<p>Basic Half-Diminished 7: Rootless Voicing No. 1 b5 1 b3 b7</p>	<p>Basic Half-Diminished 7: Rootless Voicing No. 2 b3 b7 1 b5</p>
<p>77 C\emptyset7</p> 	<p>C\emptyset7</p> 

Half-Diminished 9 Voicings

Basic Half-Diminished 9: 1 b3 b5 b7 9	Basic Two-Hand Rooted Half-Diminished 9: Voicing No. 1 1 b5 9 b3 b7	Basic Two-Hand Rooted Half-Diminished 9: Voicing No. 2 1 5 b3 b7 9
79 C \emptyset 7	C \emptyset 7	C \emptyset 7

Pro Tip: In most cases,
when you see a simple Half-Diminished 7 chord,
like "Cm7(b5)" written on the page,
you can ALSO use a 9 voicing, like
"Cm9(b5)"!

Basic Half-Diminished 9: Left-Hand Voicing 1 b3 5 b7 9	Basic Half-Diminished 9: Left-Hand Voicing 2 5 b7 9 b3	Basic Half-Diminished 9: Left-Hand Voicing 3 b7 9 b3 5
82 C \emptyset 7	C \emptyset 7	C \emptyset 7

Basic Half-Diminished 9: Rootless Voicing No. 1 b7 b3 b5 9	Basic Half-Diminished 9: Rootless Voicing No. 2 b5 9 b3 b7	Basic Half-Diminished 9: Rootless Voicing No. 3 b3 b7 1 b5 9
85 C \emptyset 7	C \emptyset 7	C \emptyset 7

Diminished 7 Voicings

11

Basic Diminished 7:
1 b3 b5 bb7

Basic Two-Hand
Rooted Diminished 7
Voicing No. 1:
1 bb7 b3 b5

Basic Two-Hand
Rooted Minor 7
Voicing No. 2:
1 b5 b3 bb7

88 C^{o7}

Pro Tip: Diminished chords are tricky. When you add a 9th, it really changes the sound. In this course, we'll stick with normal Diminished 7 and chords and skip adding 9s.

Pro Tip: Rather than writing the "bb7" as a Bbb, we just write it as an A because it's easier to read.

Basic Minor 7:
Left-Hand Voicing 1
b3 b5 bb7 1

Basic Minor 7:
Left-Hand Voicing 2
b5 bb7 1 b3

Basic Minor 7:
Left-Hand Voicing 3
bb7 1 b3 b5

91 C^{o7}

A voicing is considered "rootless" when the root of the chord is not on the bottom.

Pro Tip: Use "rootless" voicings when you're playing with a bassist who is covering the roots for you.

Basic Diminished 7:
Rootless Voicing No. 1
b5 1 b3 bb7

Basic Diminished 7:
Rootless Voicing No. 2
b3 bb7 1 b5

94 C^{o7}

Understanding Basic Progressions: The "II-V-I"

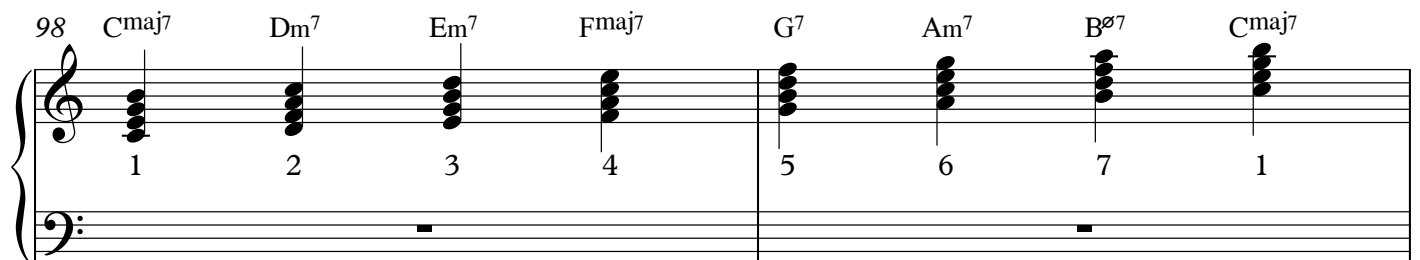
Each note in a Major scale has a number, or "degree."
For example, D (2) is the 2nd degree of C, and G (5) is the fifth.



Each degree has a chord associated with it.

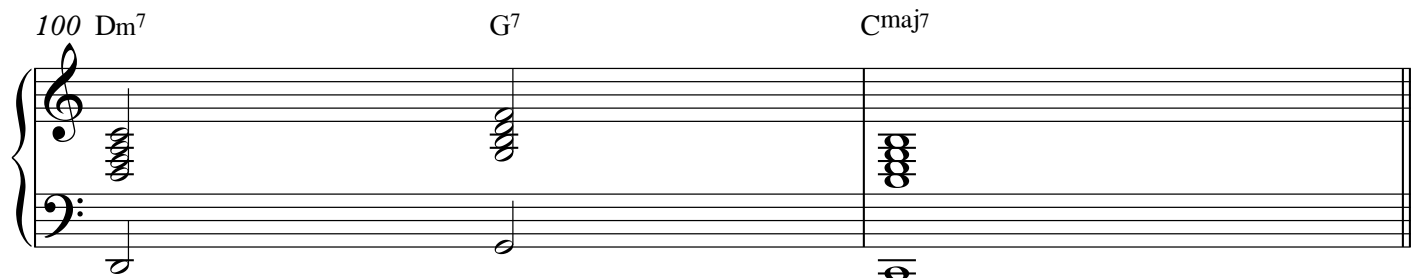
As we have seen, CMaj7 is built with 1 3 5 7, C E G B.

We can move this shape up the Major scale to find other chords, as shown below:



If we take the II (2) chord, the V (5) chord, and the I (1) chord and use them to make a progression, we get a II-V-I progression. This is the single most common progression found in jazz songs, and is quite useful to know for almost any type of music.

This progression looks like this:



Voicings In Context:

13

Major II-V-I's

Pro Tip: We put an A13 at the end of this progression because A is the V (5) of D. In other words, if you are in D Major, A is the 5th degree. Putting an A gives us a cadence of V-I: A to D.

Left-Hand Voicings In Context 1

102 Dm⁹ G¹³ Cmaj⁹ A¹³

Left-Hand Voicings In Context 2

104 Dm⁹ G¹³ Cmaj⁹ A¹³

Rootless Voicings In Context 1

106 Dm⁹ G¹³ Cmaj⁹ A¹³

Rootless Voicings In Context 2

108 Dm⁹ G¹³ Cmaj⁹ A¹³

Two-Hand Rooted Voicings In Context 1

14

110 Dm⁹ G¹³ Cmaj⁹ A¹³

Musical notation for exercise 110, showing four measures of piano accompaniment for the chords Dm⁹, G¹³, Cmaj⁹, and A¹³. The notation is in treble and bass clef, with a key signature of one flat (Bb).

Two-Hand Rooted Voicings In Context 2

112

112 Dm⁹ G¹³ Cmaj⁹ A¹³

Musical notation for exercise 112, showing four measures of piano accompaniment for the chords Dm⁹, G¹³, Cmaj⁹, and A¹³. The notation is in treble and bass clef, with a key signature of one flat (Bb).

Voicings In Context:

15

Minor ii-V-i's

Left-Hand Voicings In Context 1

114 D^ø9 G¹³ Cm⁹ A¹³

This musical notation shows four measures of left-hand voicings for a minor ii-V-i progression. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 114 (D^ø9) has a bass clef with notes B-flat, D-flat, and F. Measure 115 (G¹³) has notes G, B-flat, and D. Measure 116 (Cm⁹) has notes B-flat, D-flat, and F. Measure 117 (A¹³) has notes A, C-sharp, and E. The right hand is indicated by a slash in each measure.

Left-Hand Voicings In Context 2

116 D^ø9 G¹³ Cm⁹ A¹³

This musical notation shows four measures of left-hand voicings for a minor ii-V-i progression. The key signature has two sharps (F-sharp and C-sharp). Measure 116 (D^ø9) has a bass clef with notes F-sharp, A-sharp, and C. Measure 117 (G¹³) has notes G, A-sharp, and C. Measure 118 (Cm⁹) has notes F-sharp, A-sharp, and C. Measure 119 (A¹³) has notes A, C-sharp, and E. The right hand is indicated by a slash in each measure.

Rootless Voicings In Context 1

118 D^ø9 G¹³ Cm⁹ A¹³

This musical notation shows four measures of rootless voicings for a minor ii-V-i progression. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 118 (D^ø9) has notes E-flat and G in the right hand, and B-flat in the left hand. Measure 119 (G¹³) has notes A-flat and B in the right hand, and D in the left hand. Measure 120 (Cm⁹) has notes D-flat and F in the right hand, and B-flat in the left hand. Measure 121 (A¹³) has notes C-sharp and E in the right hand, and A in the left hand.

Rootless Voicings In Context 2

120 D^ø9 G¹³ Cm⁹ A¹³

This musical notation shows four measures of rootless voicings for a minor ii-V-i progression. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 120 (D^ø9) has notes E-flat and G in the right hand, and B-flat in the left hand. Measure 121 (G¹³) has notes A-flat and B in the right hand, and D in the left hand. Measure 122 (Cm⁹) has notes D-flat and F in the right hand, and B-flat in the left hand. Measure 123 (A¹³) has notes C-sharp and E in the right hand, and A in the left hand.

Two-Hand Rooted Voicings In Context 1

16

122 D^ø9 G¹³ Cm⁹ A¹³

This musical example shows four measures of piano accompaniment. Each measure contains a triad in the right hand and a single note in the left hand, all rooted on the same pitch. The chords are D^ø9, G¹³, Cm⁹, and A¹³. The notation is in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of one flat (B-flat).

Two-Hand Rooted Voicings In Context 2

124 D^ø9 G¹³ Cm⁹ A¹³

This musical example shows four measures of piano accompaniment, similar to the first example. Each measure contains a triad in the right hand and a single note in the left hand, all rooted on the same pitch. The chords are D^ø9, G¹³, Cm⁹, and A¹³. The notation is in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the fourth measure.

Voicings In Context:

Using Diminished Chords

17

Left-Hand Voicings In Context

126

This musical example shows four measures of left-hand voicings. The right hand is represented by a treble clef staff with four diagonal slashes, indicating it is not played. The left hand is in a bass clef. Measure 126 has a Cmaj7 chord (C4, E4, G4, Bb4). Measure 127 has a C°7 chord (C4, Eb4, Fb4, Ab4). Measure 128 has a Cmaj7 chord (C4, E4, G4, Bb4). Measure 129 has a G7 chord (G4, Bb4, D5, F5).

Cmaj7 C°7 Cmaj7 G7

Two-Hand Rootless Voicings In Context

128

This musical example shows four measures of two-hand rootless voicings. The right hand is in a treble clef and the left hand is in a bass clef. Measure 128 has a Cmaj9 chord (C4, E4, G4, Bb4, D5). Measure 129 has a C°7 chord (C4, Eb4, Fb4, Ab4). Measure 130 has a Cmaj9 chord (C4, E4, G4, Bb4, D5). Measure 131 has a G9 chord (G4, Bb4, D5, F5, Ab5).

Cmaj9 C°7 Cmaj9 G9

Two-Hand Rooted Voicings In Context

130

This musical example shows four measures of two-hand rooted voicings. The right hand is in a treble clef and the left hand is in a bass clef. Measure 130 has a Cmaj7 chord (C4, E4, G4, Bb4). Measure 131 has a C°7 chord (C4, Eb4, Fb4, Ab4). Measure 132 has a Cmaj7 chord (C4, E4, G4, Bb4). Measure 133 has a G13 chord (G4, Bb4, D5, F5, Ab5, Cb6).

Cmaj7 C°7 Cmaj7 G13