

# Lecture 4: Chord Recognition

Li Su

# Recap: short-time Fourier transform

- Given a discrete-time signal  $x(t)$  sampled at a rate  $f_s$ . Let window size  $N$  samples, hop size  $H$  samples, then the short-time Fourier transform  $X(n, k)$  is:

$$X(n, k) = \sum_{m=0}^{N-1} x(m + nH)h(m)e^{-\frac{j2\pi km}{n}}$$

$$\bullet k: \text{frequency index}, f(k) := \frac{kf_s}{N} \quad (\text{linear scale!})$$

$$\bullet n: \text{time index}, t(n) := \frac{nH}{f_s}$$

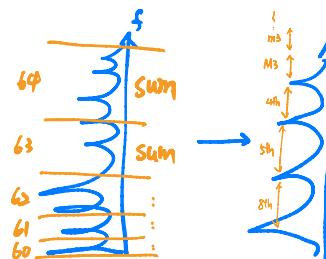
$$\bullet \text{Spectrogram: } |X(n, k)|^2$$

*Li Su : hop size = 10% or 25% window size*

*最高不超過 50% · 即 window 要有重疊*

*window function : Hann, Hamming*

MIDI number  
 $\frac{P-60}{12} A0$   
 $f = 440 \times 2^{\frac{P-60}{12}}$



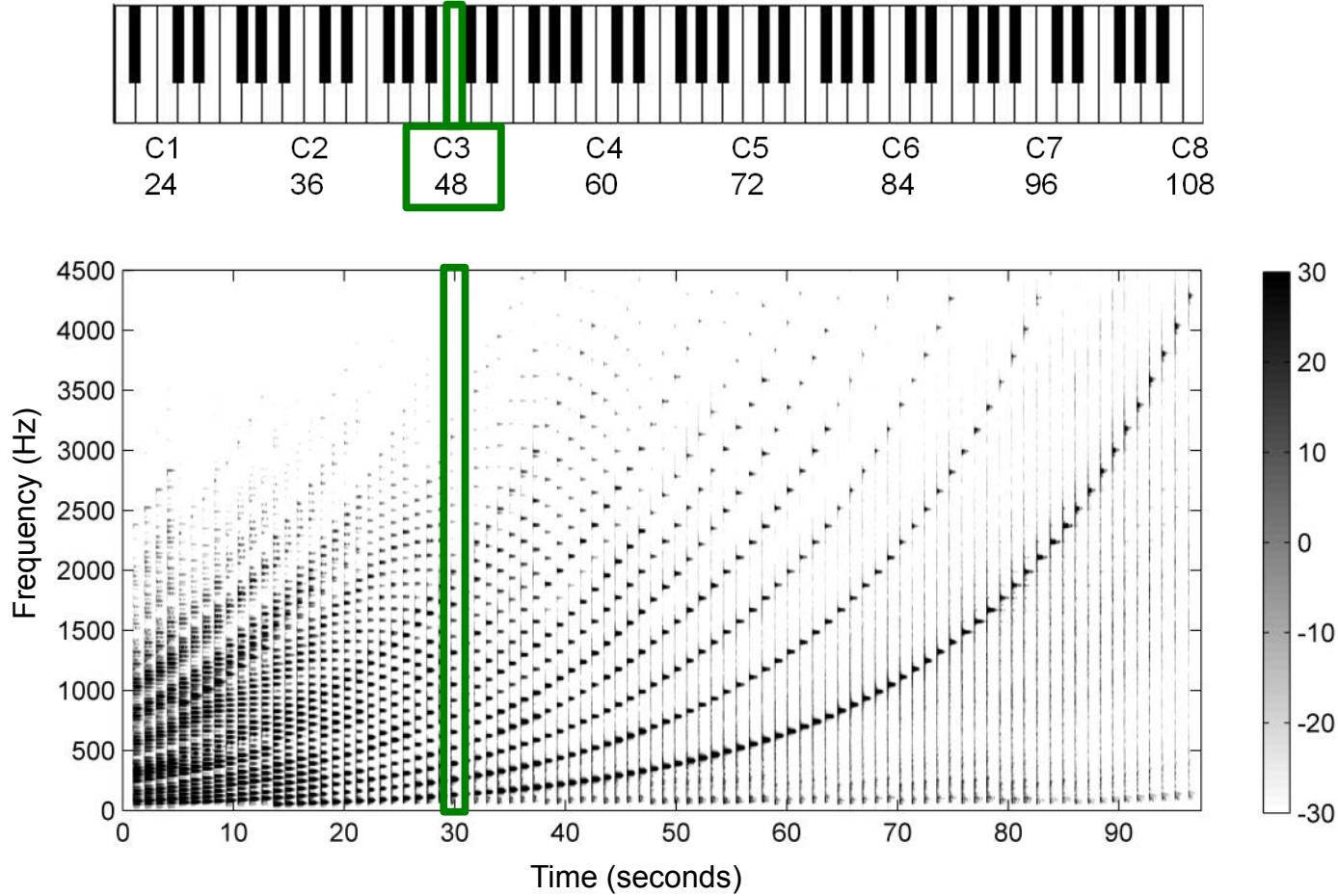
即 linear frequency

轉 log frequency (pitch)

亦可用 filter bank for weighted sum ex:



# Spectrogram 時頻圖



From: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 3, Springer 2015

# Log-frequency spectrogram

- Basic idea: merge the bins (usually larger than one) within  $\pm 0.5$  semitones from each pitch center frequency into one bin

- $F_{\text{pitch}}(p) = 440 \times 2^{\frac{p-69}{12}}$

- $P(p) = \{k: F_{\text{pitch}}(p - 0.5) < k < F_{\text{pitch}}(p + 0.5)\}$

- The log-frequency spectrogram:

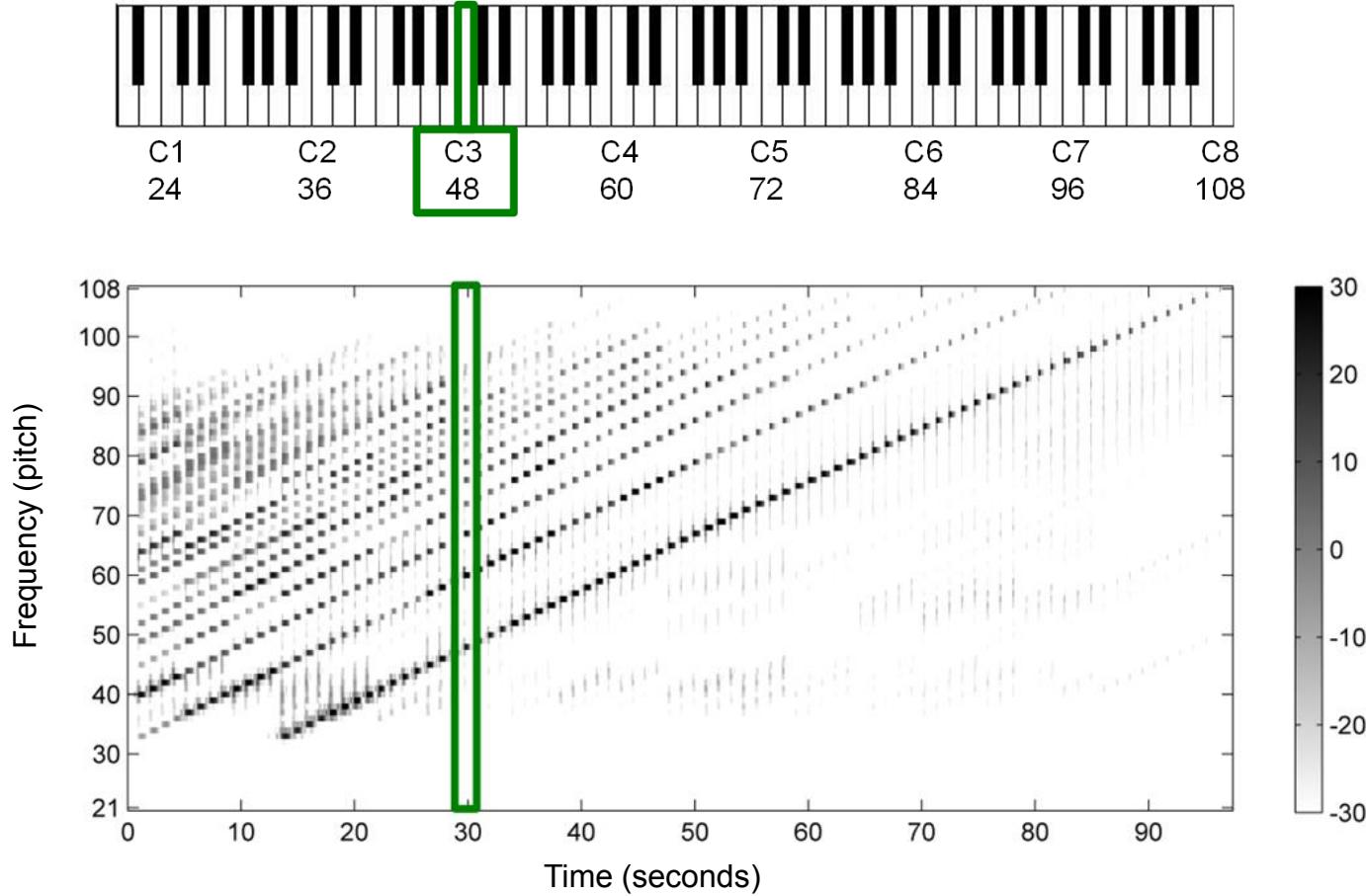
- $Y(n, p) = \sum_{k \in P(p)} |X(n, k)|^2$

# Example: pitch scale and frequency

Note	$p$	$F_{\text{pitch}}(p)$	$F_{\text{pitch}}(p - 0.5)$	$F_{\text{pitch}}(p + 0.5)$	$\text{BW}(p)$
C4	60	261.63	254.18	269.29	15.11
C♯4	61	277.18	269.29	285.30	16.01
D4	62	293.66	285.30	302.27	16.97
D♯4	63	311.13	302.27	320.24	17.97
E4	64	329.63	320.24	339.29	19.04
F4	65	349.23	339.29	359.46	20.18
F♯4	66	369.99	359.46	380.84	21.37
G4	67	392.00	380.84	403.48	22.65
G♯4	68	415.30	403.48	427.47	23.99
A4	69	440.00	427.47	452.89	25.41
A♯4	70	466.16	452.89	479.82	26.93
B4	71	493.88	479.82	508.36	28.53
C5	72	523.25	508.36	538.58	30.23

From: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 3, Springer 2015

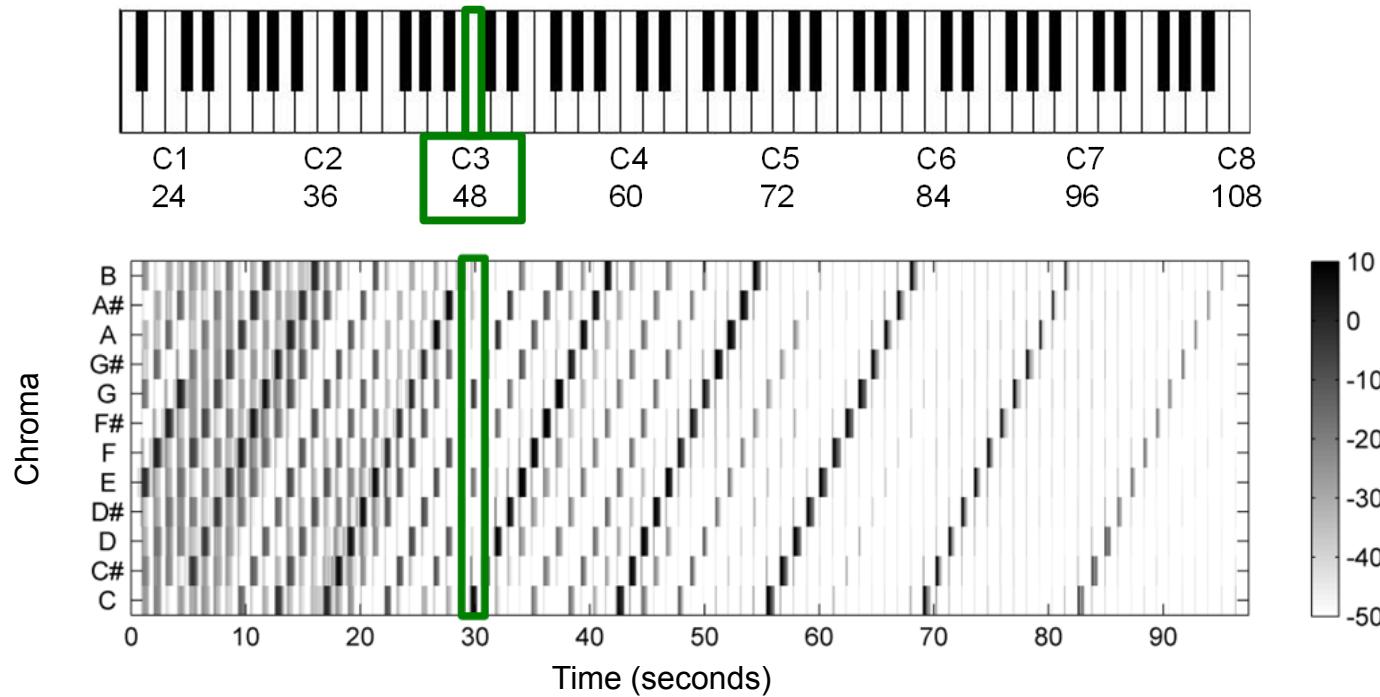
# Conversion into pitch scale



From: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 3, Springer 2015

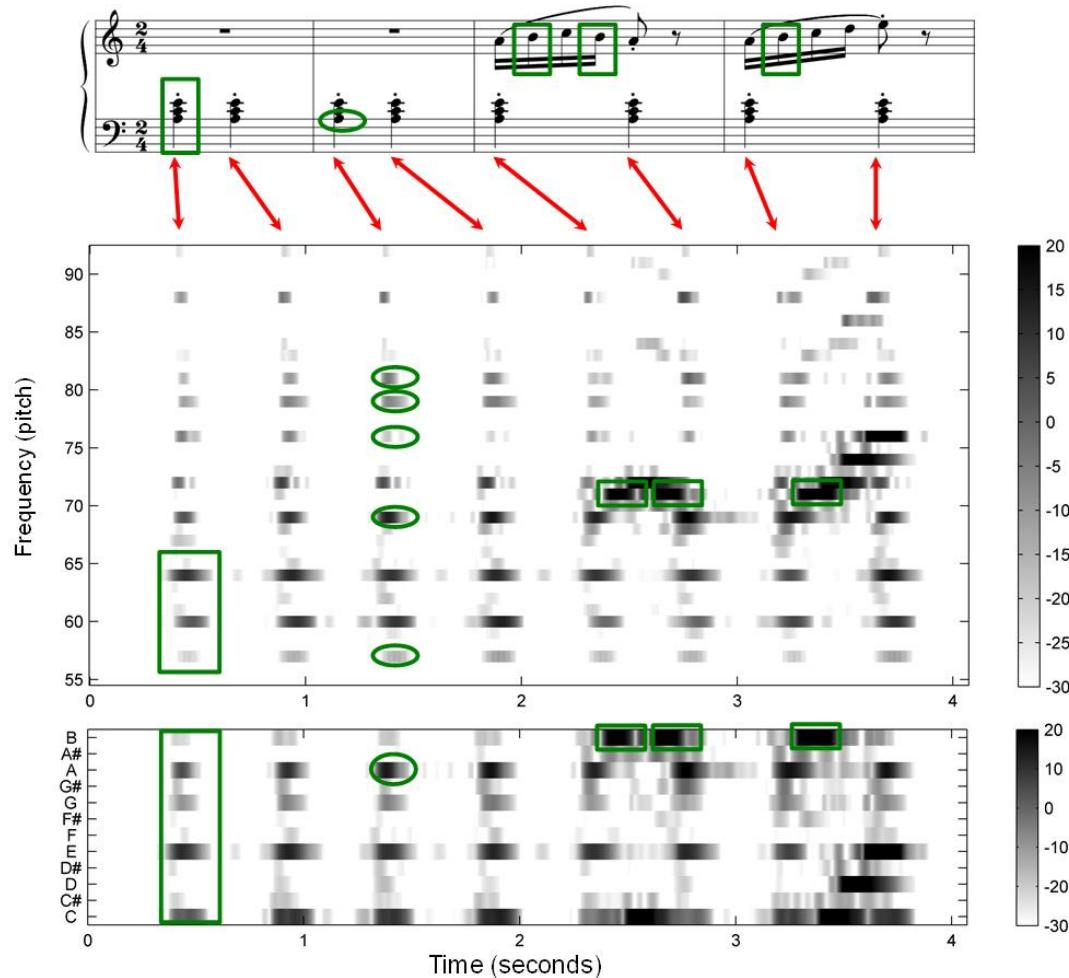
# Chromagram

- Basic idea: merge all the bins with the same note name of all octaves together 不區分八度音，把每隔12格的數字加起來
- 12-dimensional vector for each time index



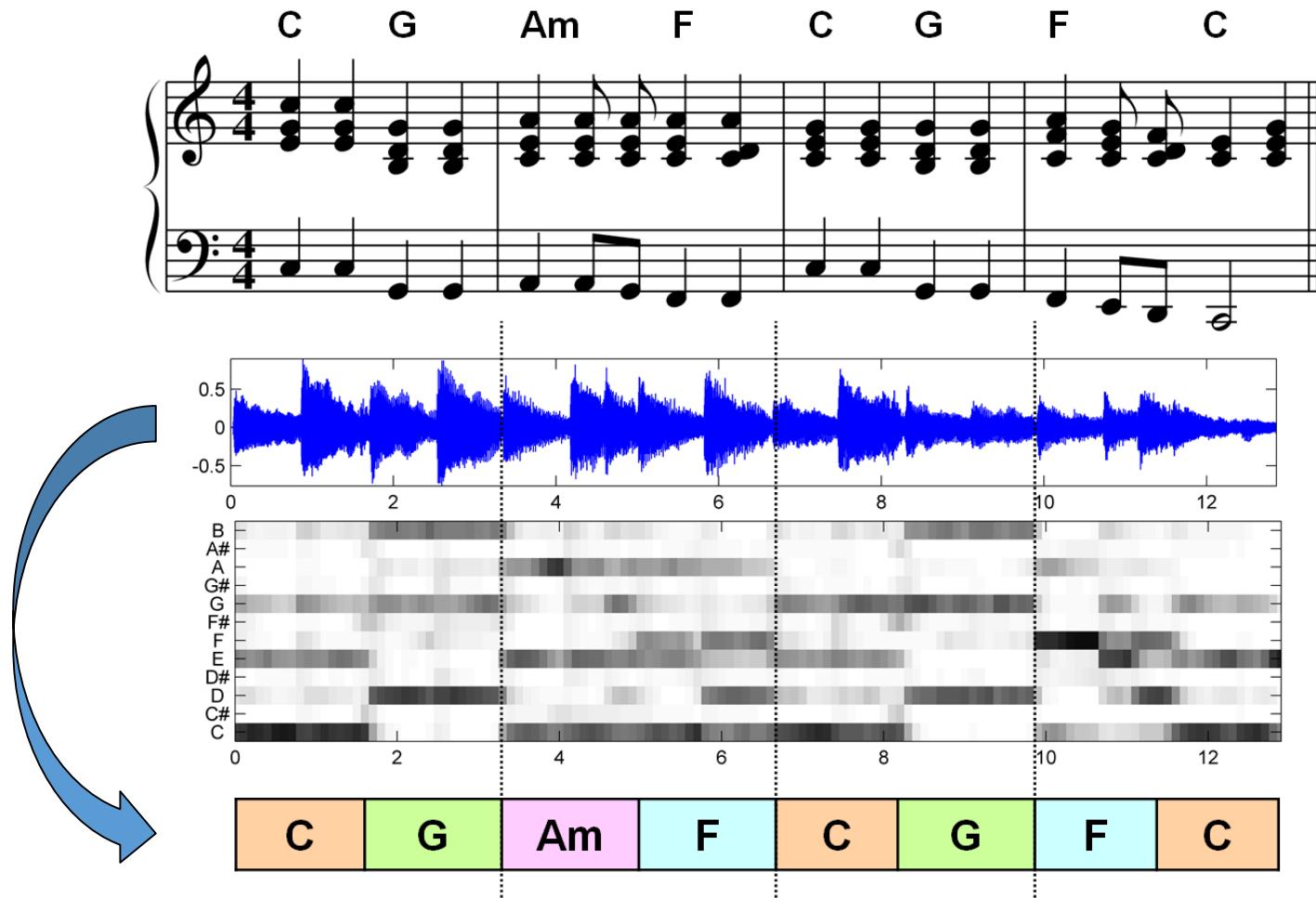
From: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 3, Springer 2015

# An example



From: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 3, Springer 2015

# Our goal: chord recognition



From: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 5, Springer 2015

# The chromatic scale

- One semitone: a half step; two semitones: a whole step
- One semitone = 100 cents = frequency ratio of  $2^{\frac{1}{12}} \approx 1.059$
- Enharmonic equivalence: C# = Db (we only discuss equal temperament here)



# Diatonic scales

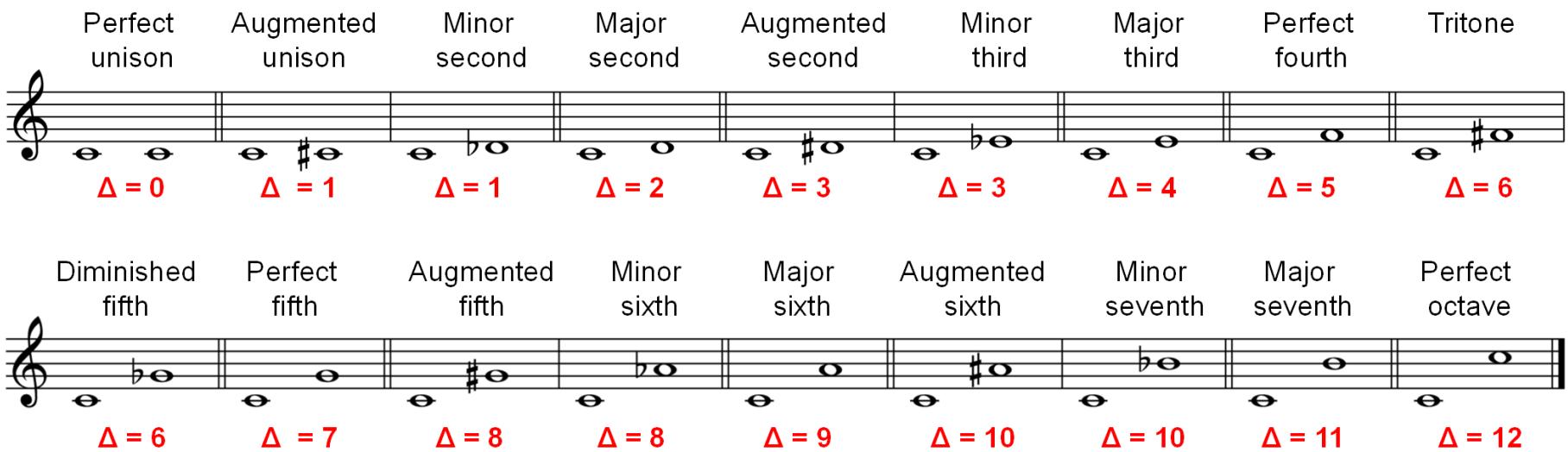
- “Tonal music”:
  - There is one (and only one) “home” pitch, called tonal center
  - Use the 7-note diatonic scales with the following relationship:

The diagram illustrates three staves of musical notation. The top staff shows the C major scale on a treble clef staff with five black notes. Above the staff, the notes are labeled: Tonic (open circle), Supertonic (filled circle), Mediant (open circle), Subdominant (open circle), Dominant (open circle), Submediant (open circle), and Leading tone (open circle). Below the staff, the notes are labeled: Supertonic, Subdominant, Submediant, and Leading tone. Red弓形 lines indicate the intervals between consecutive notes: a whole step between the tonic and supertonic, a whole step between the supertonic and mediant, a half step between the mediant and subdominant, a whole step between the subdominant and dominant, a whole step between the dominant and submediant, a whole step between the submediant and leading tone, and a half step between the leading tone and tonic. The middle staff shows the same C major scale with identical note patterns and interval markings. The bottom staff shows the C minor scale on a treble clef staff with six black notes. Red弓形 lines indicate the intervals between consecutive notes: a whole step between the tonic and supertonic, a half step between the supertonic and mediant, a whole step between the mediant and subdominant, a whole step between the subdominant and dominant, a half step between the dominant and submediant, a whole step between the submediant and leading tone, and a half step between the leading tone and tonic.

From: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 5, Springer 2015

# Intervals

- Abundant information here
  - Relations of note (musical approach)
  - Relations of harmonic frequencies (physical approach)
  - Relation of geometry (mathematical approach)
- Twelve-tone equal-tempered scale



From: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 1, Springer 2015

# Intervals and their ratios of frequency

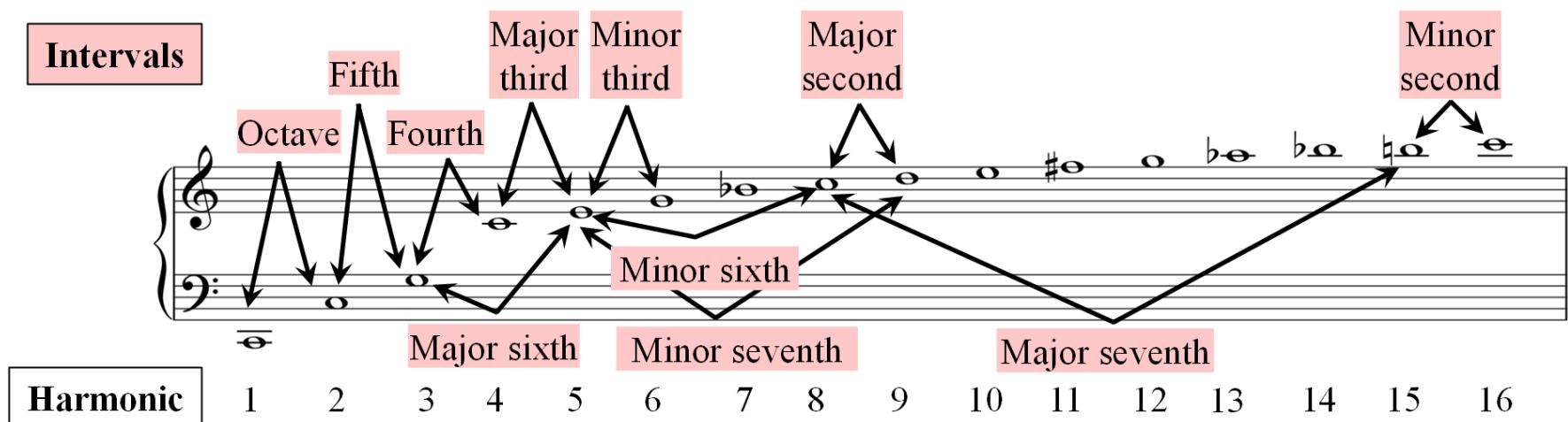
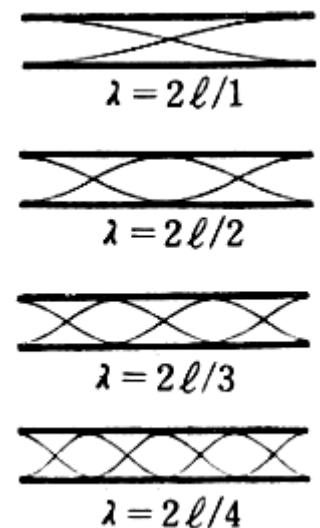
- Pythagorean tuning: only 2:3
- Just intonation: evolution from some basic ratios
- Equal-tempered: exponential scale

$\Delta$	Interval name	Interval	JI ratio	Pyt. ratio	E-T
0	(Perfect) unison	C4 – C4	1:1	1:1	1: 1
1	Minor second	C4 – D <sup>b</sup> 4	15:16	3 <sup>5</sup> :2 <sup>8</sup>	1: 2 <sup>1/12</sup>
2	Major second	C4 – D4	8:9	2 <sup>3</sup> :3 <sup>2</sup>	1: 2 <sup>2/12</sup>
3	Minor third	C4 – E <sup>b</sup> 4	5:6	3 <sup>3</sup> :2 <sup>5</sup>	1: 2 <sup>3/12</sup>
4	Major third	C4 – E4	4:5	2 <sup>6</sup> :3 <sup>4</sup>	1: 2 <sup>4/12</sup>
5	(Perfect) fourth	C4 – F4	3:4	3:2 <sup>2</sup>	1: 2 <sup>5/12</sup>
6	Tritone	C4 – F <sup>#</sup> 4	32:45	2 <sup>9</sup> :3 <sup>6</sup> or 3 <sup>6</sup> :2 <sup>10</sup>	1: 2 <sup>6/12</sup>
7	(Perfect) fifth	C4 – G4	2:3	2:3	1: 2 <sup>7/12</sup>
8	Minor sixth	C4 – A <sup>b</sup> 4	5:8	3 <sup>4</sup> :2 <sup>7</sup>	1: 2 <sup>8/12</sup>
9	Major sixth	C4 – A4	3:5	2 <sup>4</sup> :3 <sup>3</sup>	1: 2 <sup>9/12</sup>
10	Minor seventh	C4 – B <sup>b</sup> 4	5:9	3 <sup>2</sup> :2 <sup>4</sup>	1: 2 <sup>10/12</sup>
11	Major seventh	C4 – B4	8:15	2 <sup>7</sup> :3 <sup>5</sup>	1: 2 <sup>11/12</sup>
12	(Perfect) octave	C4 – C5	1:2	1:2	1: 2

Modified from: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 5, Springer 2015

# Related to the harmonic series

- Natural harmonics corresponds to musical pitch
- Utilized by many brass/woodwind instruments



From: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 5, Springer 2015

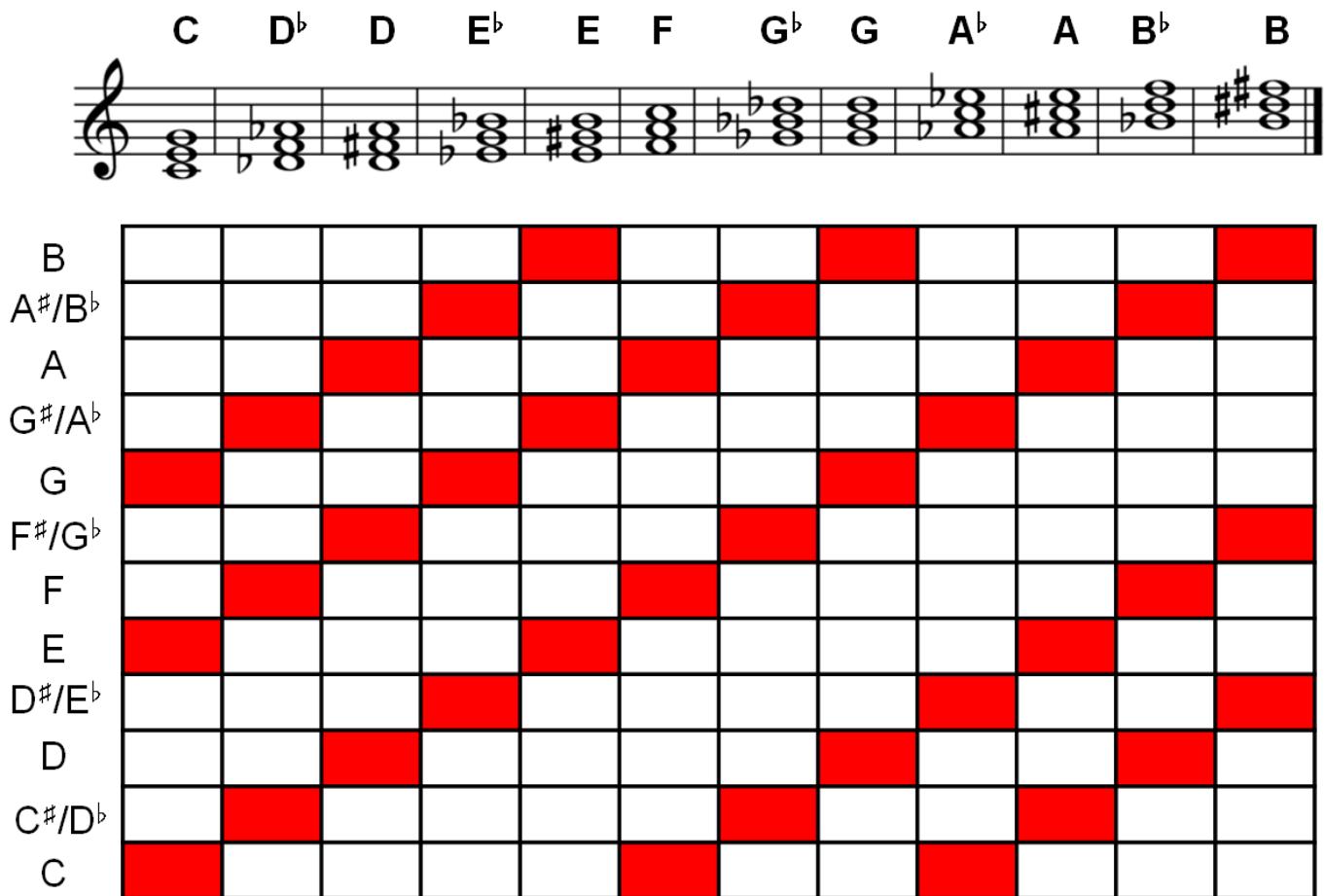
# Basic chords: triad

- 1+3+5

	Major	Root note	Major third	Fifth
Major triad				
	Minor	Root note	Minor third	Fifth
Minor triad				
	Diminished	Root note	Minor third	Diminished fifth
Diminished triad				
	Augmented	Root note	Major third	Augmented fifth
Augmented triad				

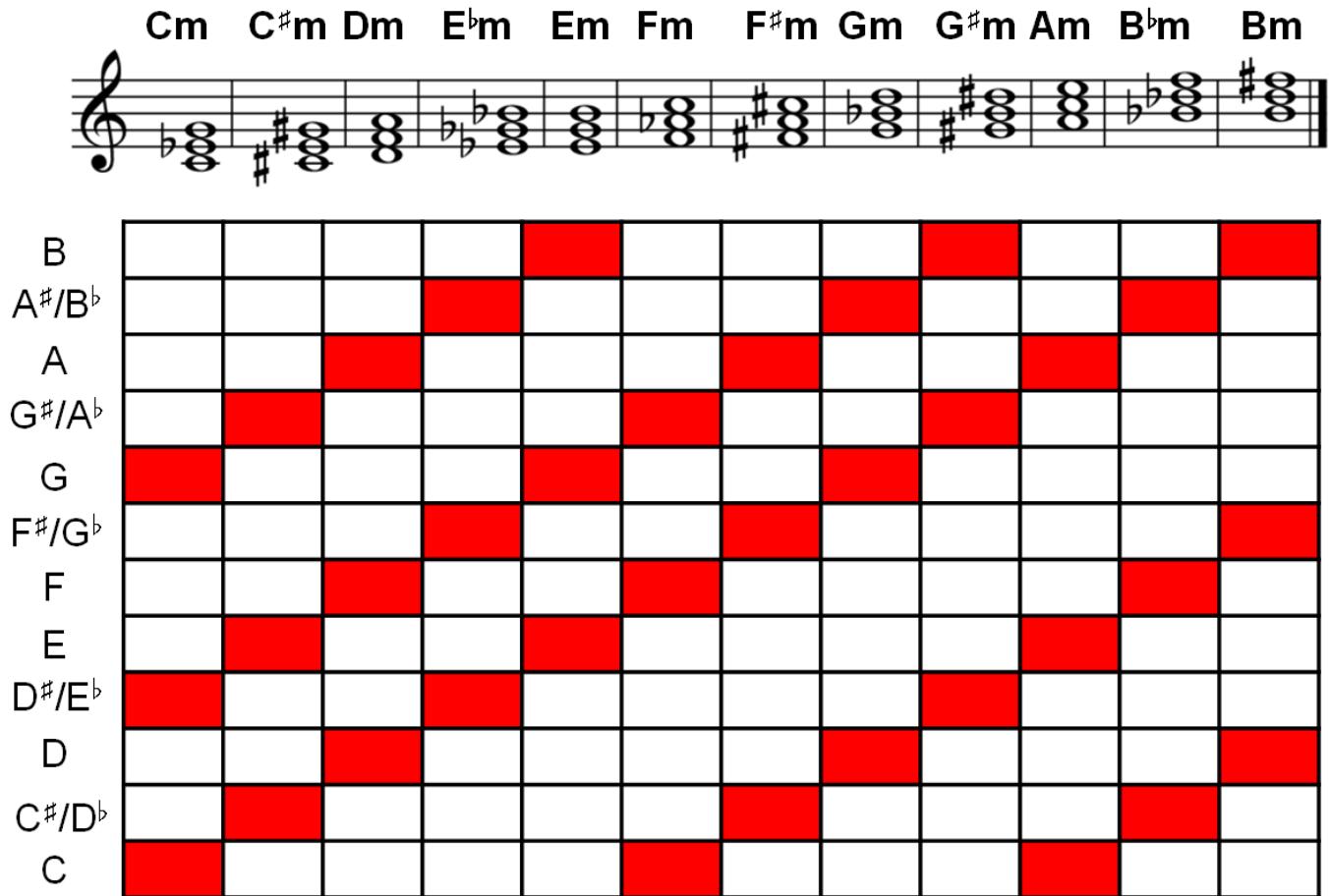
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# Ideal chromograms of major triads



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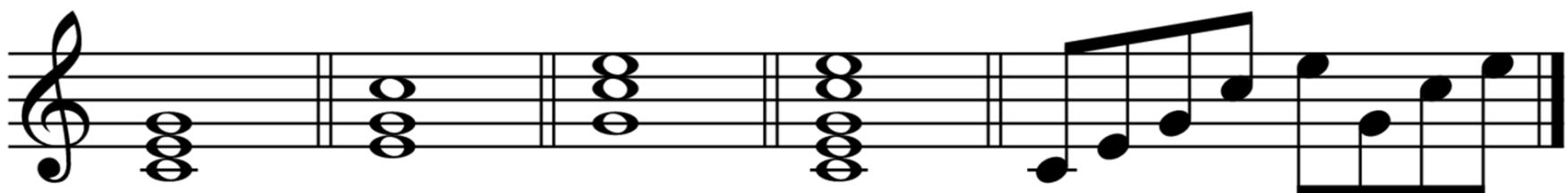
# Ideal chromograms of minor triads



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# Inversion of chords

- (a) Root position
- (b) First inversion
- (c) Second inversion
- (d) Octave doubling
- (e) Broken chord



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The diagram shows a C chord and its arpeggio:

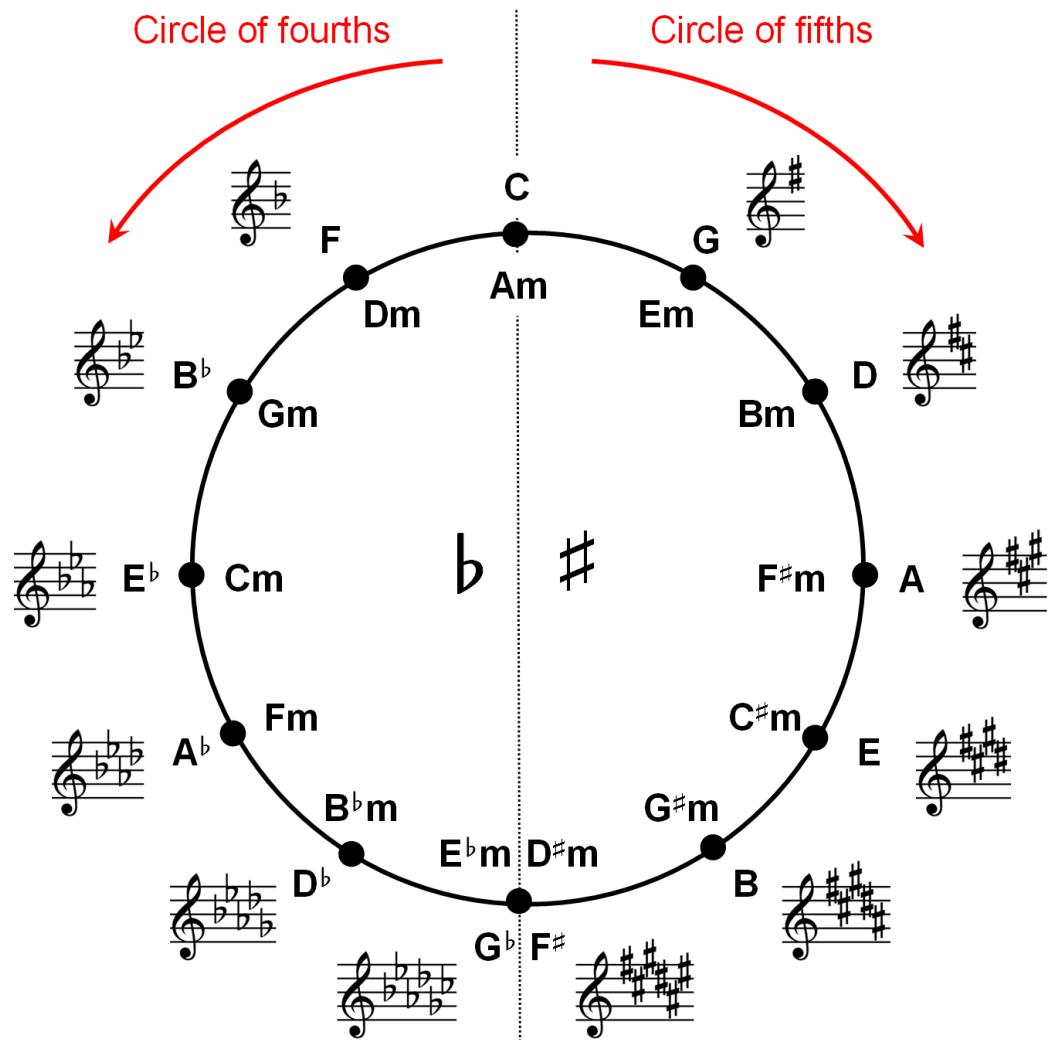
**C Chord**

**C Arpeggio**

The staff shows the notes C, E, and G. The guitar neck shows the strings T (Treble), A, and B, with fingerings 0, 1, 0; 0, 2, 3; and 1, 0, 3 respectively.

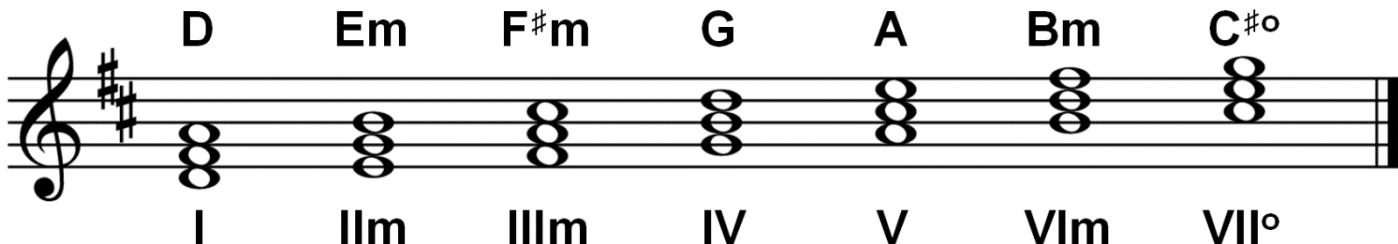
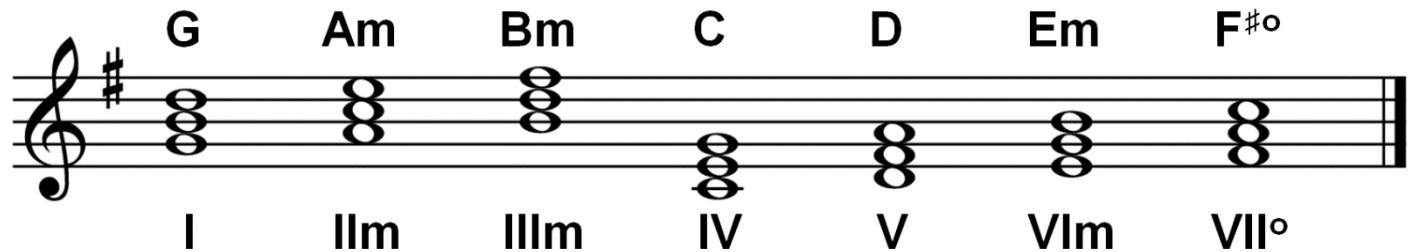
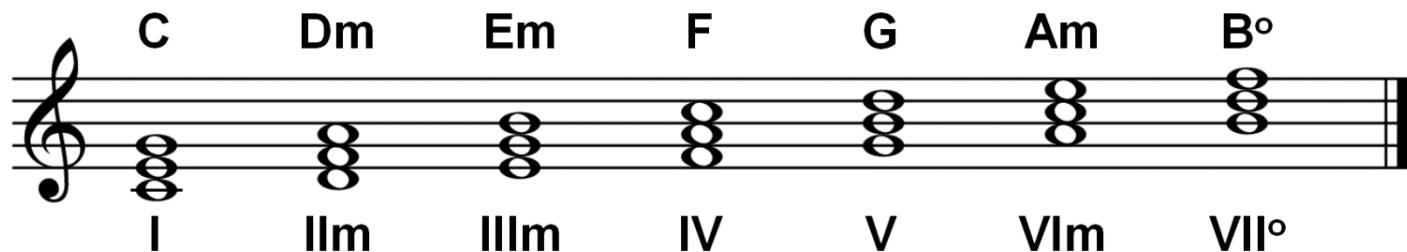
# Circle of fifths

- The diatonic scale can be obtained from a chain of 6 successive perfect fifths
- Transposition
- The circle of fifths generates different keys



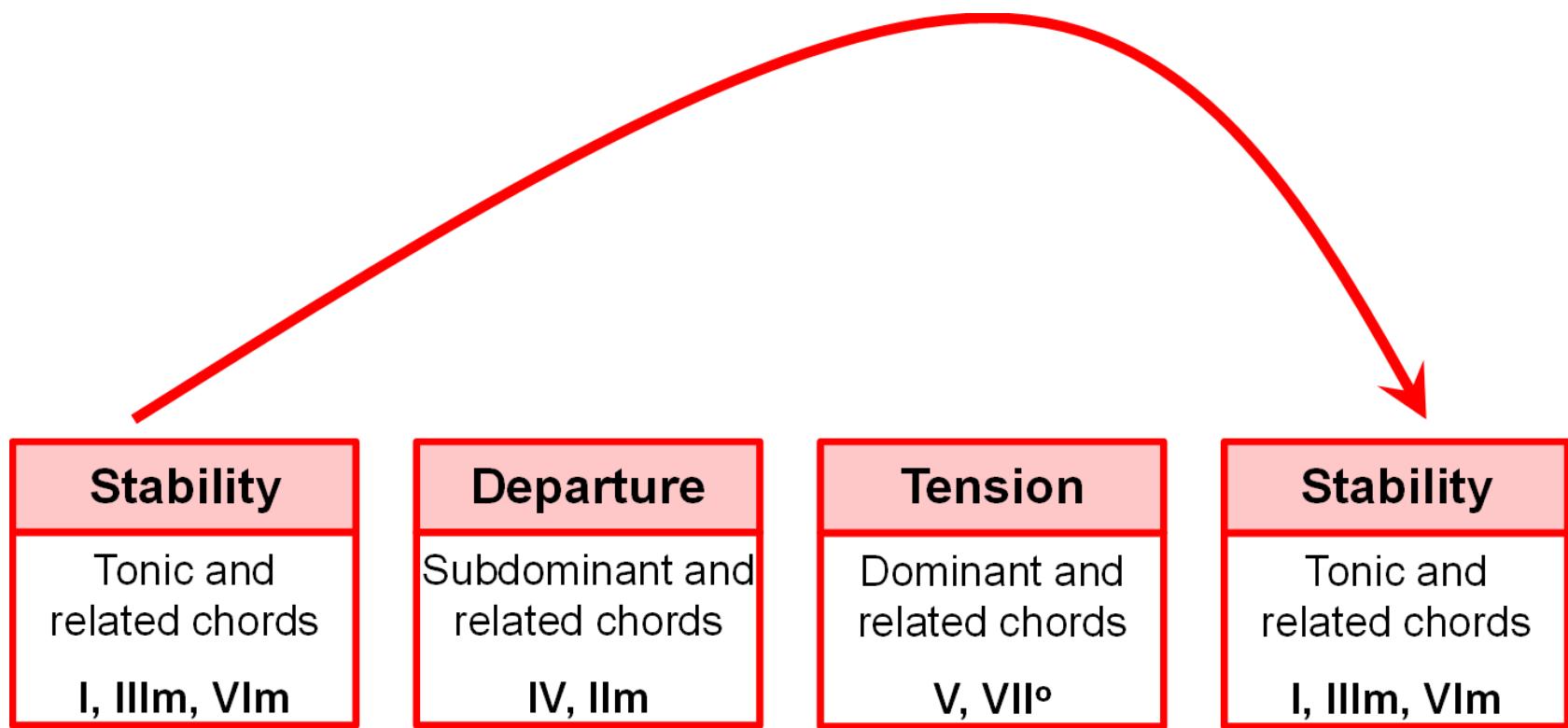
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# Functional harmony



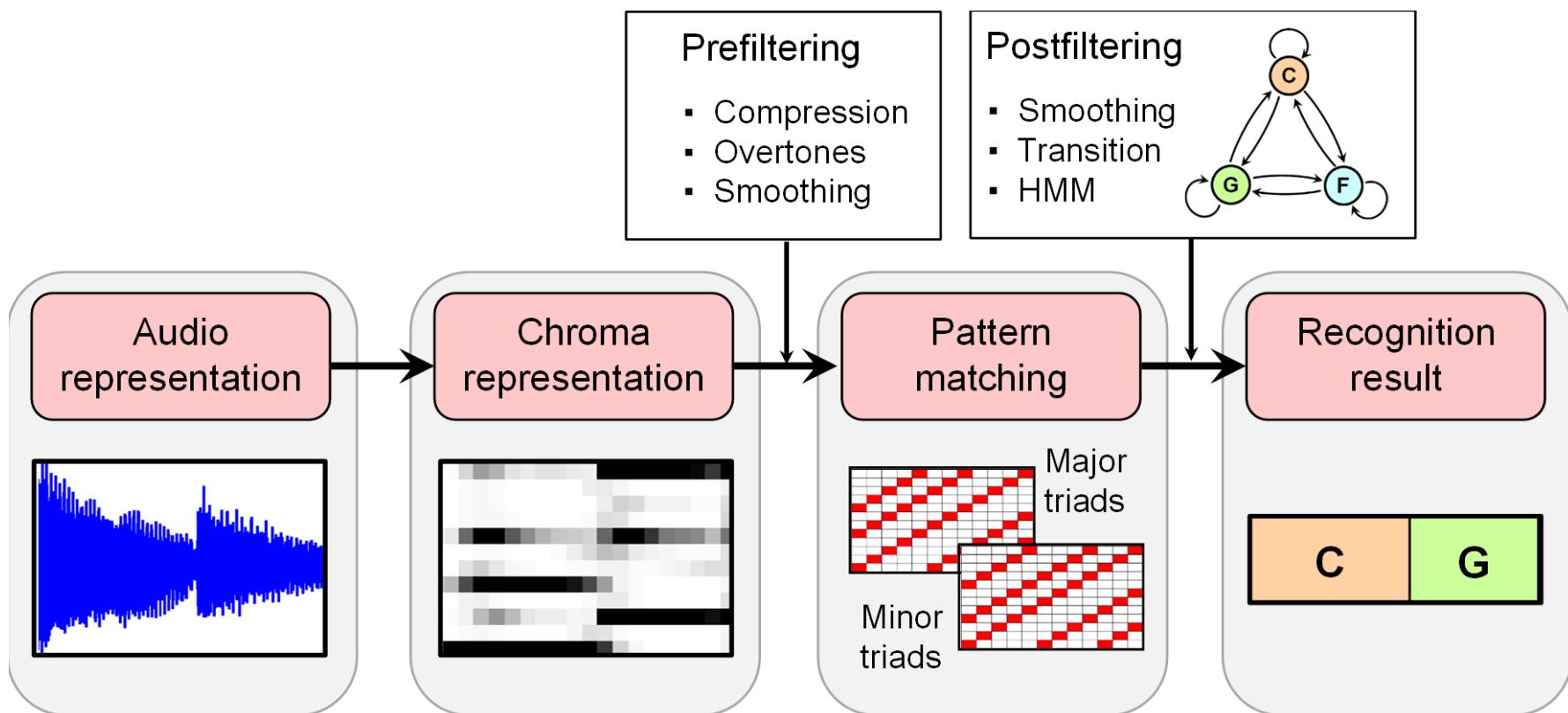
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# Chord progressions



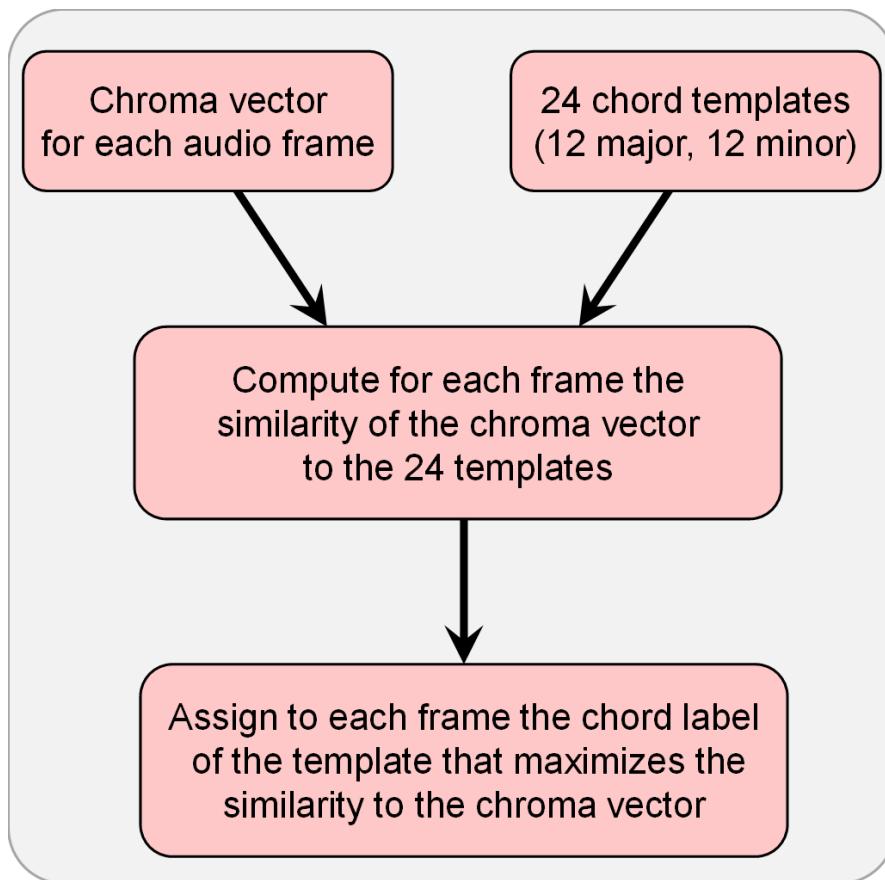
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# Chord recognition system



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# Template-based chord recognition



Template ↴

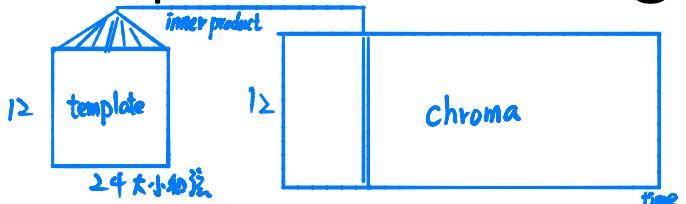
	C	C <sup>#</sup>	D	...	Cm	C <sup>#</sup> m	Dm	...
B	0	0	0	...	0	0	0	...
A <sup>#</sup>	0	0	0	...	0	0	0	...
A	0	0	1	...	0	0	1	...
G <sup>#</sup>	0	1	0	...	0	1	0	...
G	1	0	0	...	1	0	0	...
F <sup>#</sup>	0	0	1	...	0	0	0	...
F	0	1	0	...	0	0	1	...
E	1	0	0	...	0	1	0	...
D <sup>#</sup>	0	0	0	...	1	0	0	...
D	0	0	1	...	0	0	1	...
C <sup>#</sup>	0	1	0	...	0	1	0	...
C	1	0	0	...	1	0	0	...

From: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 5, Springer 2015

# Template-based chord recognition

- Chord labels: 12 major triads and 12 minor triads
- $\Lambda := \{\mathbf{C}, \mathbf{C\#}, \mathbf{D}, \dots, \mathbf{B}, \mathbf{Cm}, \mathbf{C\#m}, \mathbf{Dm}, \dots, \mathbf{Bm}\}$
- A chroma feature: a 12-dimensional vector  $x_n = [x(0), x(1), x(2), \dots, x(11)]$  at time index  $n$
- Chroma templates:
  - $t_{\mathbf{C}} = (1, 0, 0, 0, 1, 0, 0, 1, 0, 0, 0, 0)$
  - $t_{\mathbf{A_m}} = (1, 0, 0, 0, 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1, 0, 0)$
  - $t_{\mathbf{G}} = (0, 0, 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1, 0, 0, 0, 1) \dots\dots$
- Find the chord template that maximize the similarity measure and assign the chord label

# Template matching



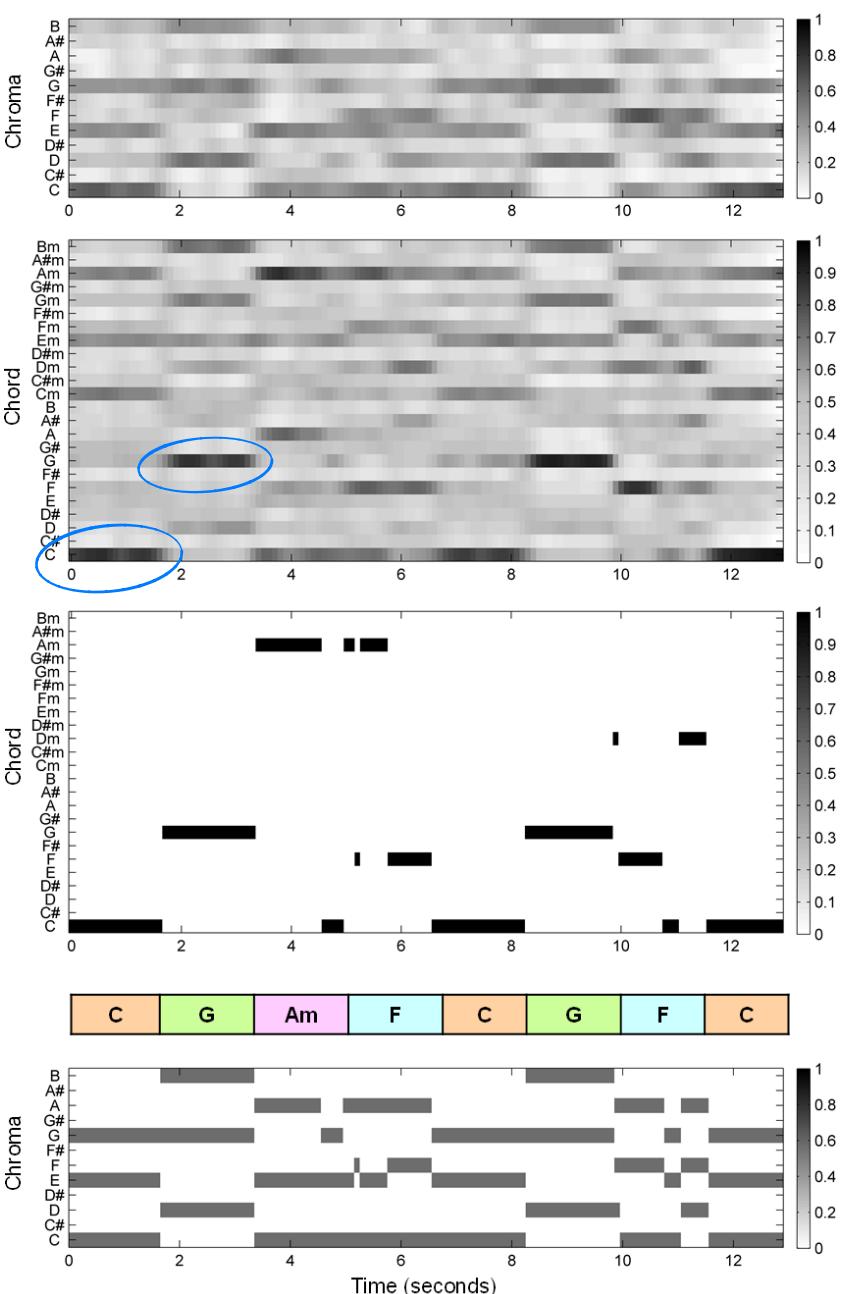
- **Cosine similarity:**

$$\bullet s(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y}) = \frac{\langle \mathbf{x} | \mathbf{y} \rangle}{\|\mathbf{x}\| \|\mathbf{y}\|}$$

- Find the chord template maximizing the similarity:

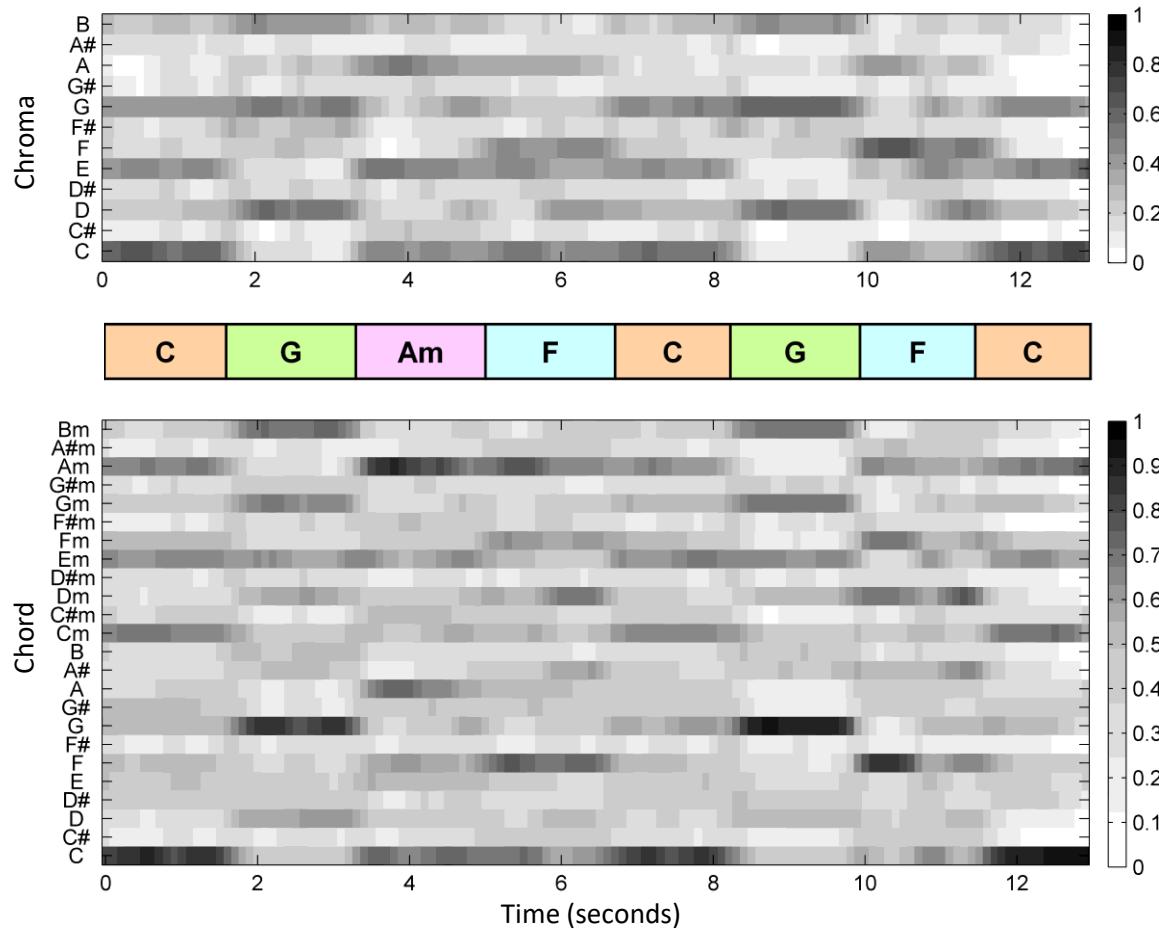
$$\bullet \lambda_n := \operatorname{argmax}_{\lambda \in \Lambda} s(\mathbf{t}_\lambda, \mathbf{x}_n)$$

- Time-chord representation



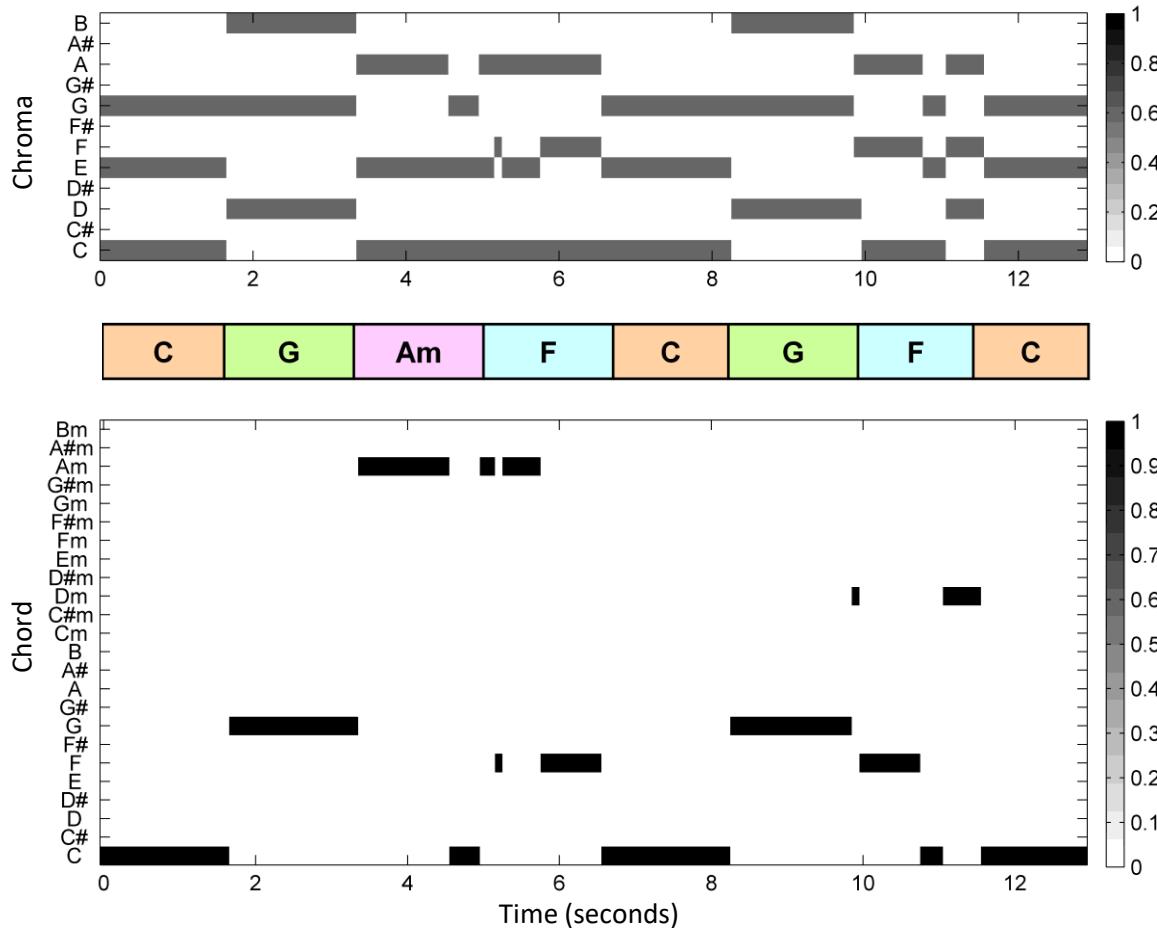
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# A closer look (1)



From: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 5, Springer 2015

## A closer look (2)



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# Evaluation

expert's  
✓

- Annotation

- Chord annotation (by experts) is not 100% objective
- Chord annotation could be complicated (e.g., seventh chords, ninth chords, ...)
- Potential issues: passing notes, suspended notes, ...

- Figure-of-merit:

- True positive (TP), false positive (FP), false negative (FN)
- Precision (P), recall (R), and F-measure (F), *and accuracy*

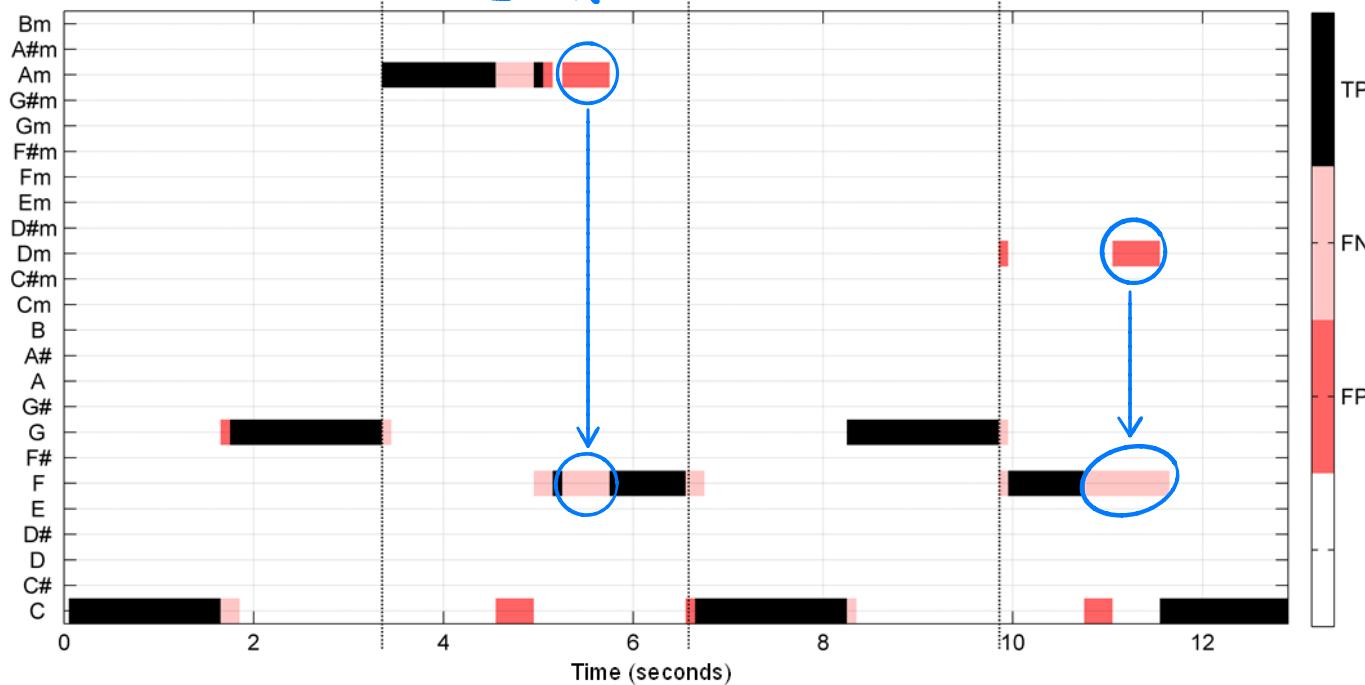
$$P = \frac{\#TP}{\#TP + \#FP}, \quad R = \frac{\#TP}{\#TP + \#FN}, \quad F = \frac{2PR}{P + R}$$

# Evaluation

Human Annotation



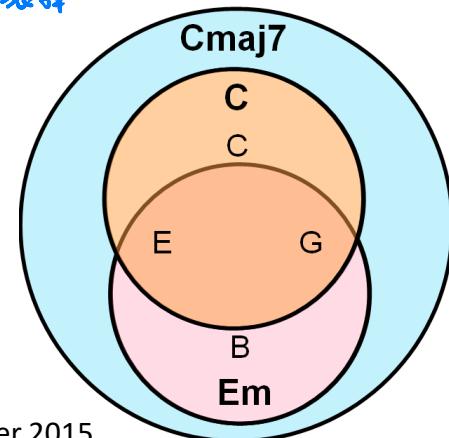
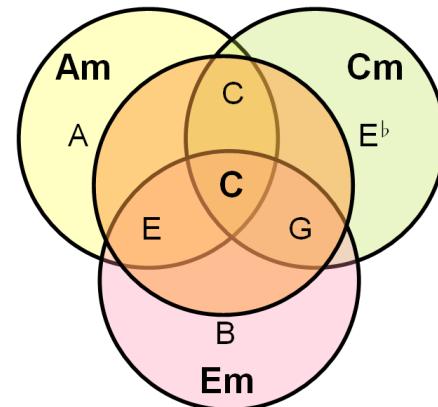
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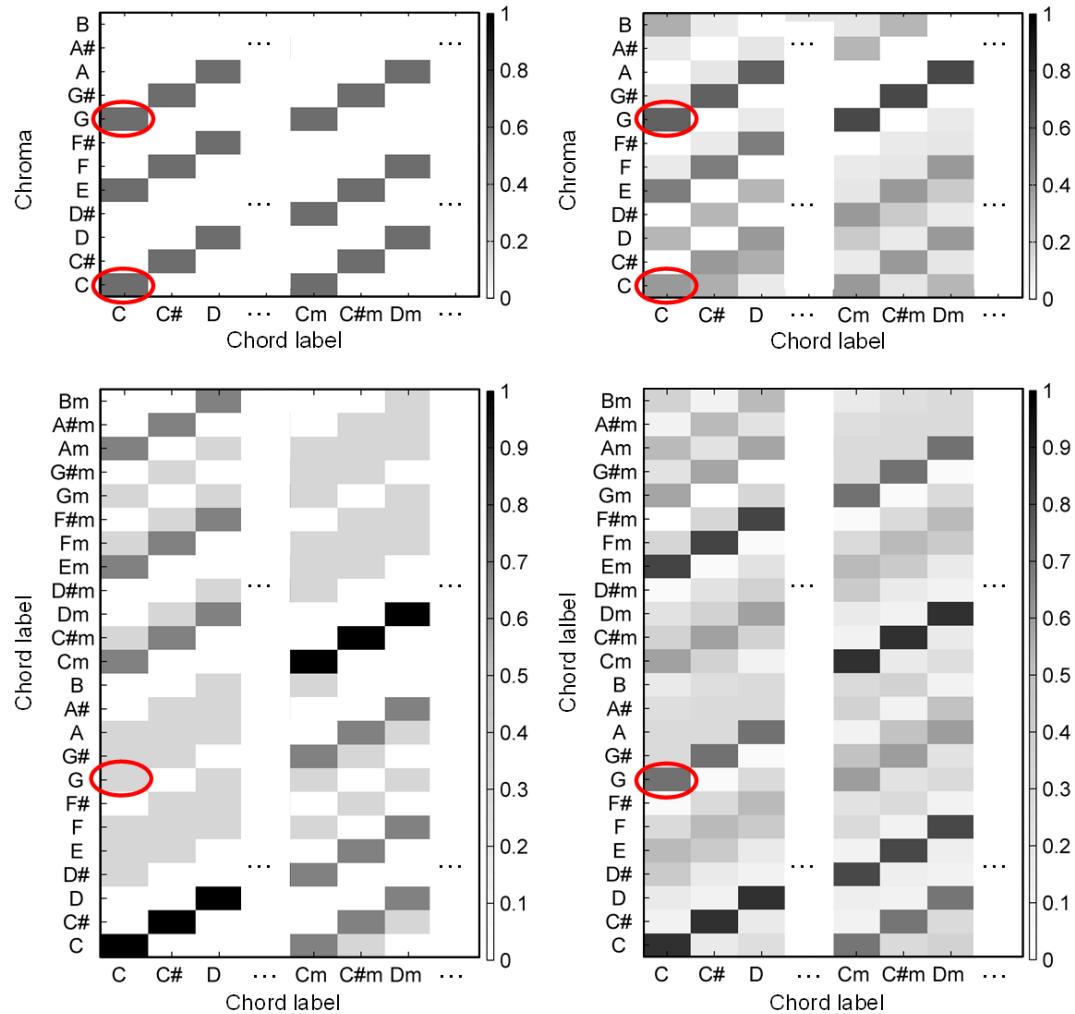
# Ambiguities in chord recognition (1): chord ambiguities

- Different chords could be closely related by sharing some of their notes
  - Am: A+C+E
  - Cm: C+E<sup>b</sup>+G
  - Em: E+G+B
- If there is a “Major 7” chord ...
  - CMaj7: C+E+G+B
  - $s(t_{CMaj7}, t_C) = s(t_{CMaj7}, t_{Em})$



# Ambiguities in chord recognition (2): acoustic ambiguities

- Example: the harmonics of C2
  - C2, C3, G3, C4, E4, G4, Bb4, C5, ...
    - C2 note already contains G, E, Bb
- Major-minor confusion
  - **Cm** chord (C+ Eb + G) contains **C** (C + E + G)



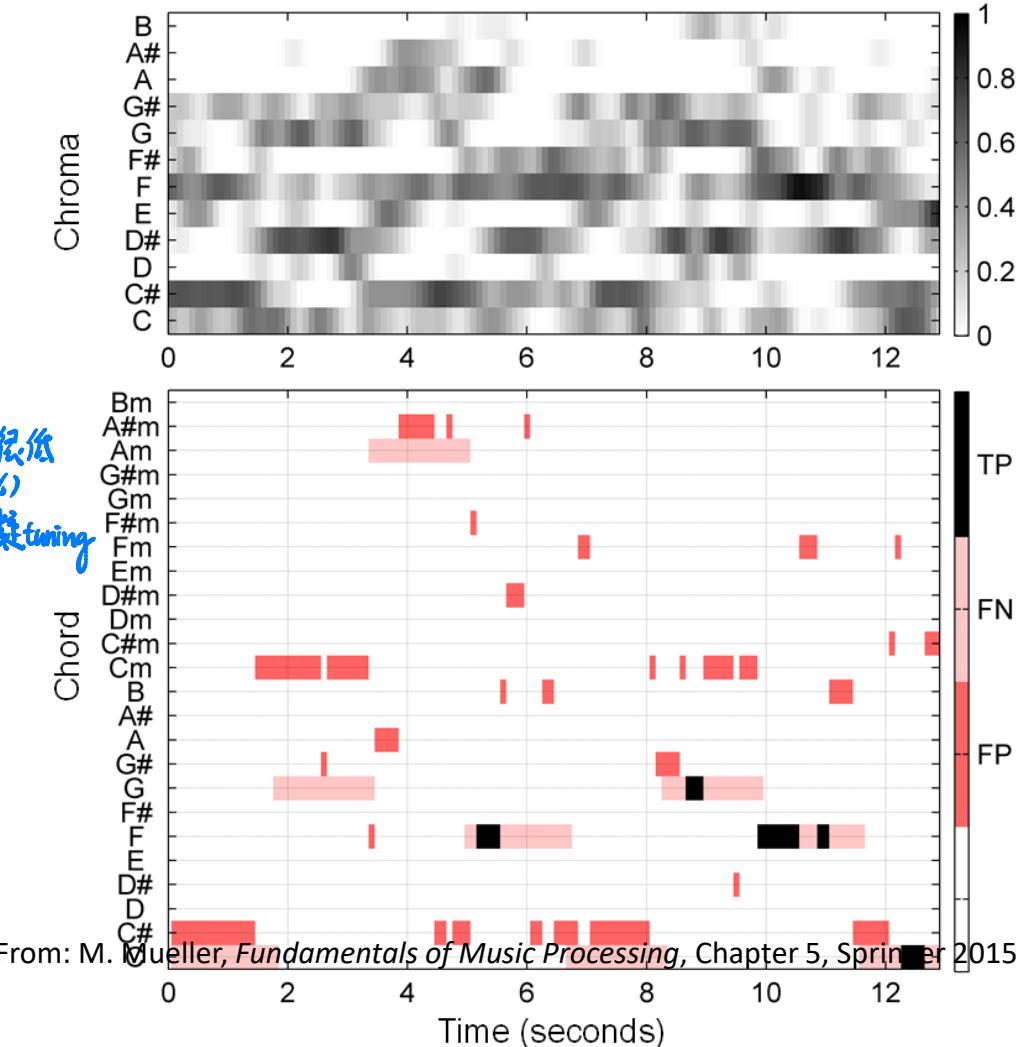
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# Ambiguities in chord recognition (3): Tuning

音調 A4=440,442 Hz ...

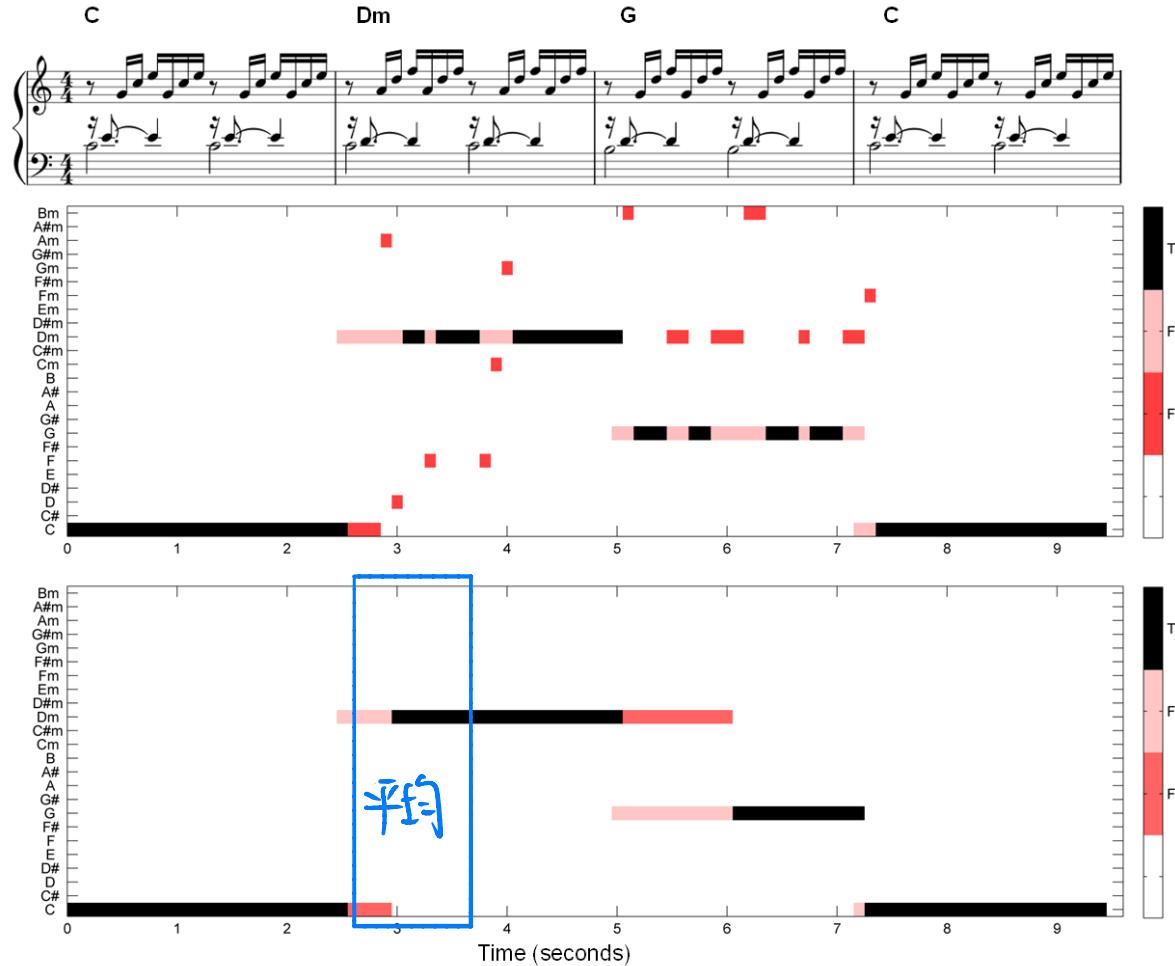
- Recorded audio may not be in standard tuning
- Example: pitch shifted upward by 50 cents (half a semitone)

音調偏低  
(<10%)  
虚假 tuning



# Ambiguities in chord recognition (4): Segmentation ambiguities

- Broken chord 分解和弦

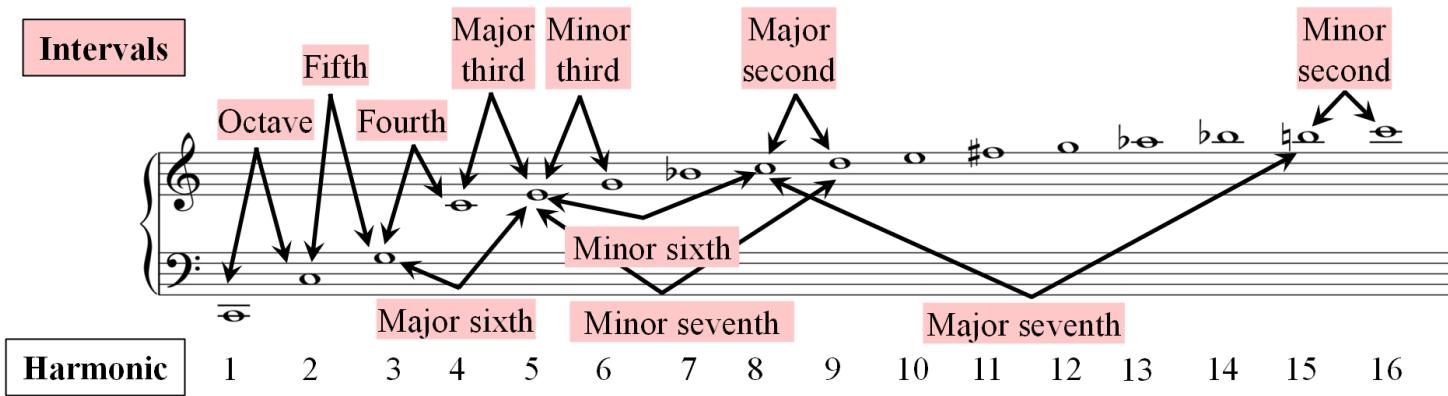


一次看一帧  
的 chroma

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# Enhancement strategies (1): templates with harmonics

- The original chord template:
  - $t_c = (1,0,0,0,1,0,0,1,0,0,0,0)$
- Assume the energy of the  $k$ -th partial is  $\alpha^{k-1}$  for some  $\alpha \in [0, 1]$ 
  - $u_c^h = (1 + \alpha + \alpha^3 + \alpha^7, 0, 0, 0, \alpha^4, 0, 0, \alpha^2 + \alpha^5, 0, 0, \alpha^6, 0)$
  - $t_c = u_c^h + u_E^h + u_G^h$



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## Enhancement strategies (2): templates from examples or learning

真實世界的音

- Supervised learning: use labeled training data to determine chroma templates
- Exemplar-based: just samples chroma features from train data as templates (can be many templates for one chord label) 例：錄取鍵音，再合成 chord template
- Take average among the chord templates
- Clustering, dictionary learning, ...

從很多 C 的 template 選出比較有代表性的  
“  
真實方法

音量問題

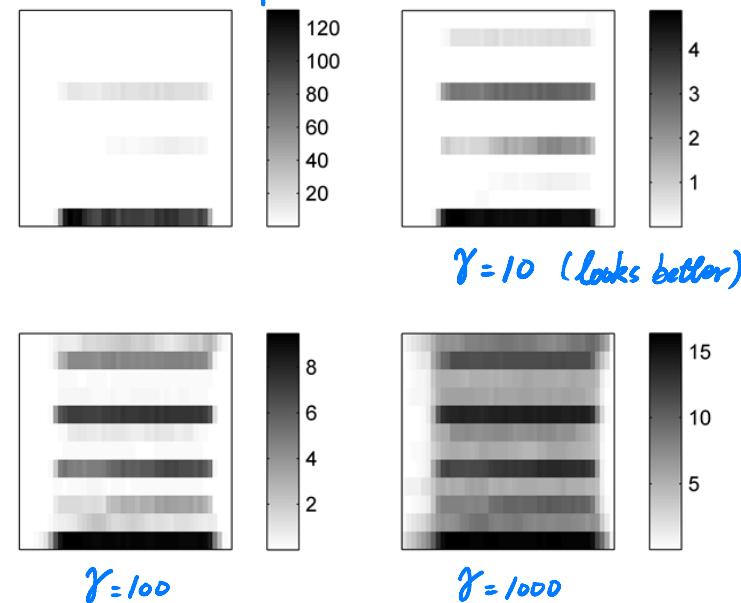
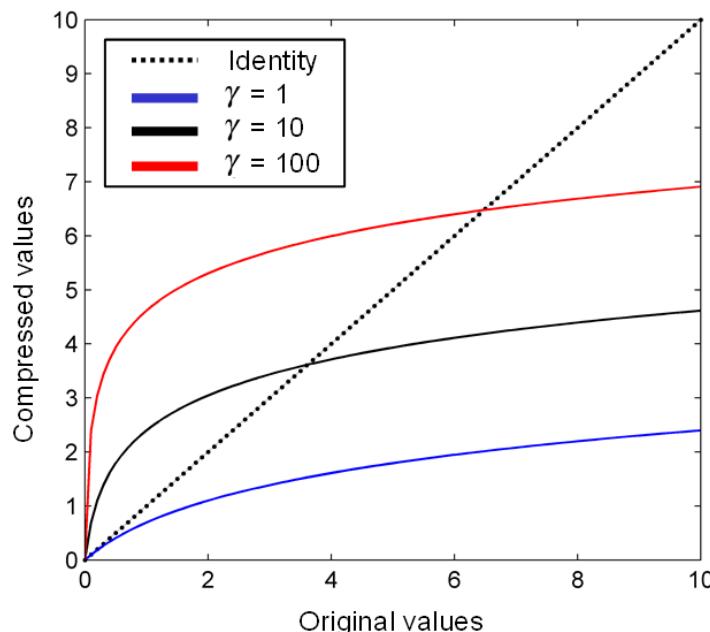
# Enhancement strategies (3): nonlinear mapping

大小聲適合的 template 可能不同

- Our perception of sound intensity is log-scale
  - But taking logarithm is unfeasible in some cases (taking logarithm maps 0 to  $-\infty$ )
- Solution: taking  $\Gamma_\gamma(x) := \log(1 + \gamma|x|)$ , or power scale  $|x|^\gamma$



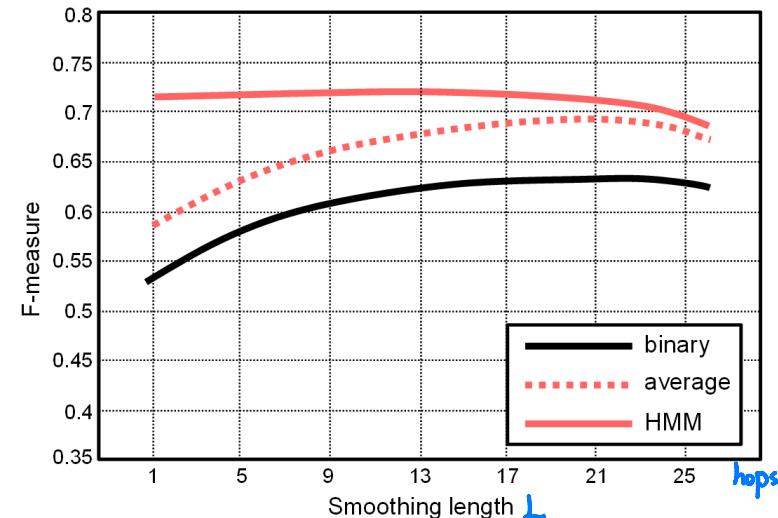
power transformation



## Enhancement strategies (4): pre-filtering

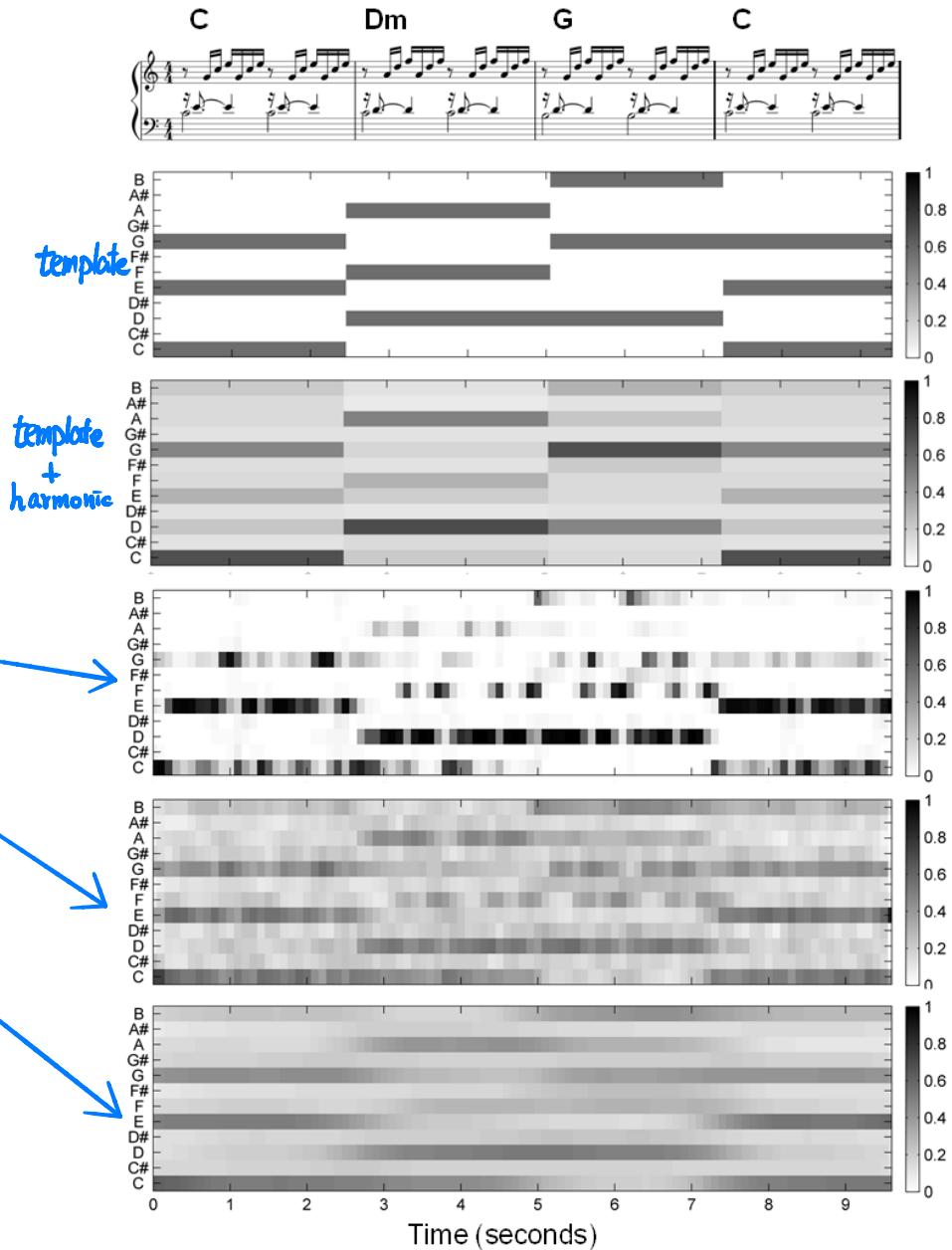
*before template matching*

- Logarithmic compression can be viewed as a type of *spectral smoothing*
- *Temporal smoothing*: taking average or low-pass filtering on each of the twelve component of the sequence along time axis
  - Mean filter 平滑
  - Median filter 去極端值 ex: 鼓聲
- Smoothing length  $L$  看幾組換一次會強
  - $x_n^L(i) := \frac{1}{L} \sum_{l=0}^{L-1} x_{n+l-\left\lfloor \frac{L-1}{2} \right\rfloor}(i)$
- Experiment evidence:



# Comparison

- 1) Musical score and annotation
- 2) Binary chord template
- 3) Average chord templates obtained from training data
- 4) Original chroma features obtained from audio recording (feature rate = 10 Hz)
- 5) Chroma feature from (4) after  $\log(1 + \gamma|x|)$ ,  $\gamma = 10$
- 6) Chroma feature from (5) after smoothing ( $L = 20$ )

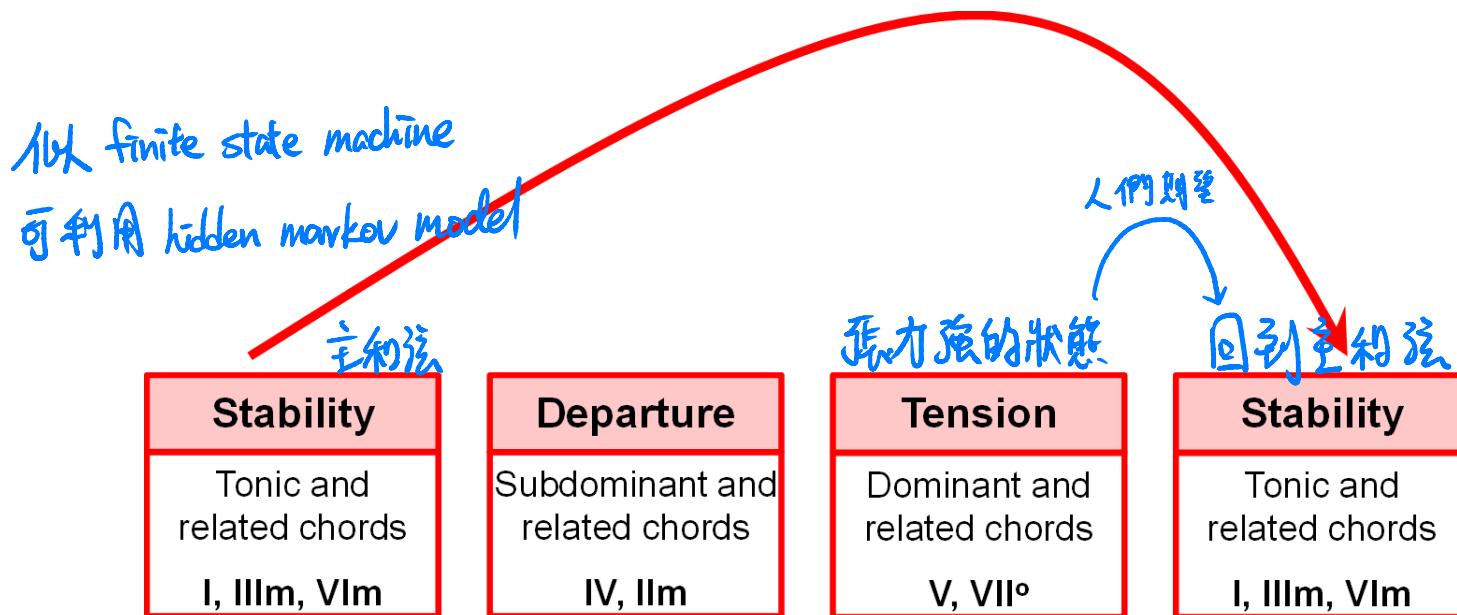


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# Chord progressions (context)

和弦的進行有規則可循

- Chord progressions are not arbitrary
  - Example 1: I-IV-I-V-I (C-F-C-G-C)
  - Example 2: I-V-VI-III-IV-I-II-V (C-G-Am-Em-F-C-Dm-G)



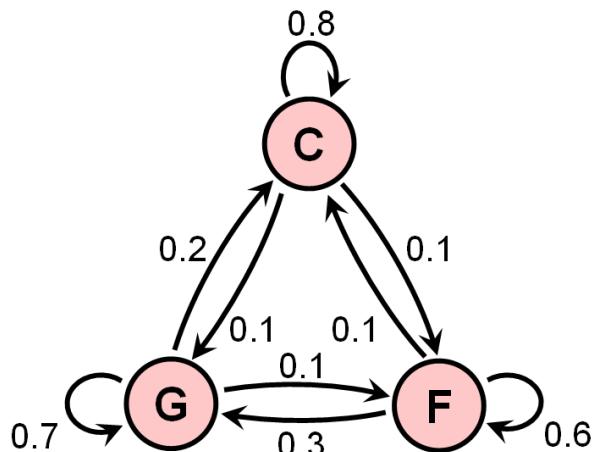
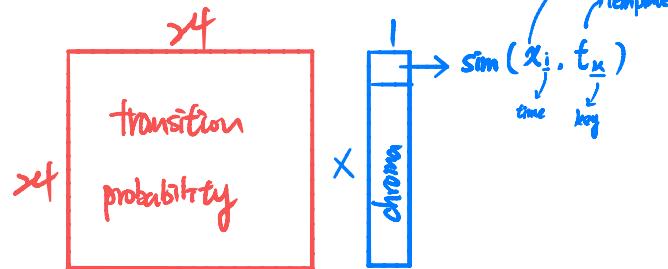
From: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 5, Springer 2015

# Markov chains of chord progressions

- Markov states  $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \alpha_3$  in a sequence  $s_1 s_2 s_3 \dots$
- Markov property:

$$\begin{aligned} & P(s_{n+1} = \alpha_j | s_n = \alpha_i, s_{n-1} = \alpha_k, \dots) \\ &= P(s_{n+1} = \alpha_j | s_n = \alpha_i) \end{aligned}$$

假設:  $t=n+1$  的狀態 只和  $t=n$  的狀態有關



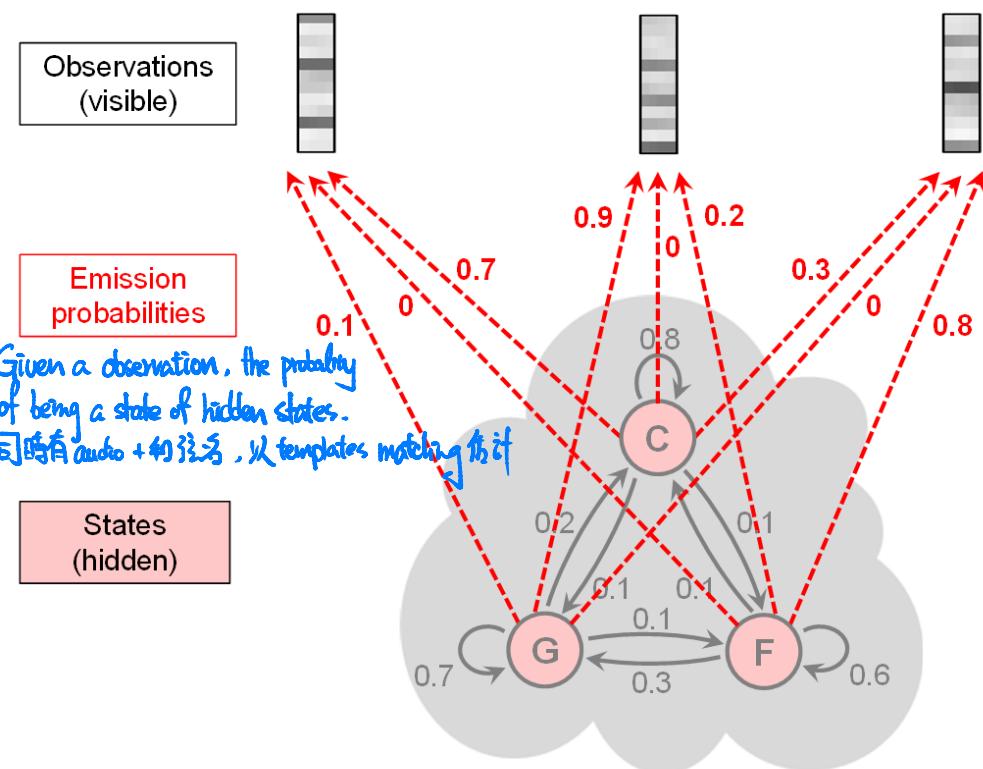
transition probability (可從網上找其他譜來建)

	$\alpha_1 = C$	$\alpha_2 = G$	$\alpha_3 = F$
$\alpha_1 = C$	$a_{11} = 0.8$	$a_{12} = 0.1$	$a_{13} = 0.1$
$\alpha_2 = G$	$a_{21} = 0.2$	$a_{22} = 0.7$	$a_{23} = 0.1$
$\alpha_3 = F$	$a_{31} = 0.1$	$a_{32} = 0.3$	$a_{33} = 0.6$

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# HMM model

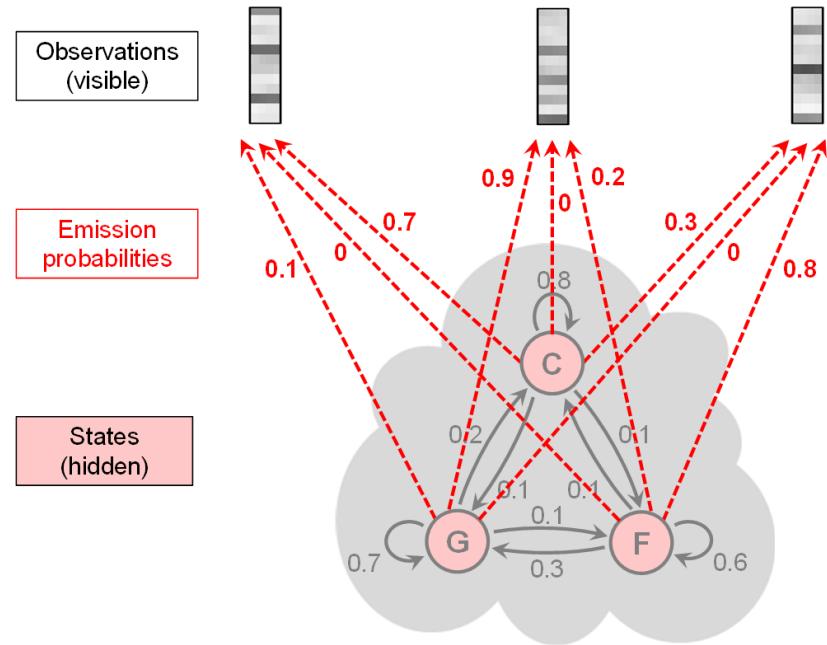
- Observations
  - Chroma features *observation*
  - Or template-based result
- Hidden states *target*
  - “Refined” chord sequence
  - The answer we want
- Transition probability
  - From training data
- Emission probability
  - From training data



From: M. Mueller, *Fundamentals of Music Processing*, Chapter 5, Springer 2015

# Discrete HMM components

- Map an arbitrary chroma features in the test data to one of a finite set of prototype vectors (codebook)
  - Quantization: map the feature
  - Clustering: train the codebook



Component	Meaning	Reference
$\mathcal{A}$	Set of states $\alpha_i$ for $i \in [1 : I]$	(5.18)
$A$	State transition probabilities $a_{ij}$ for $i, j \in [1 : I]$	(5.20)
$C$	Initial state probabilities $c_i$ for $i \in [1 : I]$	(5.22)
$\mathcal{B}$	Set of observation symbols $\beta_k$ for $k \in [1 : K]$	(5.25)
$B$	Emission probabilities $b_{ik}$ for $i \in [1 : I]$ and $k \in [1 : K]$	(5.26)

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↑ chroma (observation) → chord (state)

# A naïve HMM model training method

- $I$  states (e.g.,  $I = 24$ ),  $K$  observation symbols
- For the training data:

$c_i$  = number of transition from  $\alpha_i$  at time ( $n = 1$ )

$$a_{ij} = \frac{\text{number of transitions from } \alpha_i \text{ to } \alpha_j}{\text{number of transitions from } \alpha_i}$$

$$b_{ik} = \frac{\text{number of transitions from } \alpha_i \text{ and observing } \beta_k}{\text{number of transitions from } \alpha_i}$$

Component	Meaning	Reference
$\mathcal{A}$	Set of states $\alpha_i$ for $i \in [1 : I]$	(5.18)
$A$	State transition probabilities $a_{ij}$ for $i, j \in [1 : I]$	(5.20)
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# The uncovering problem of HMM

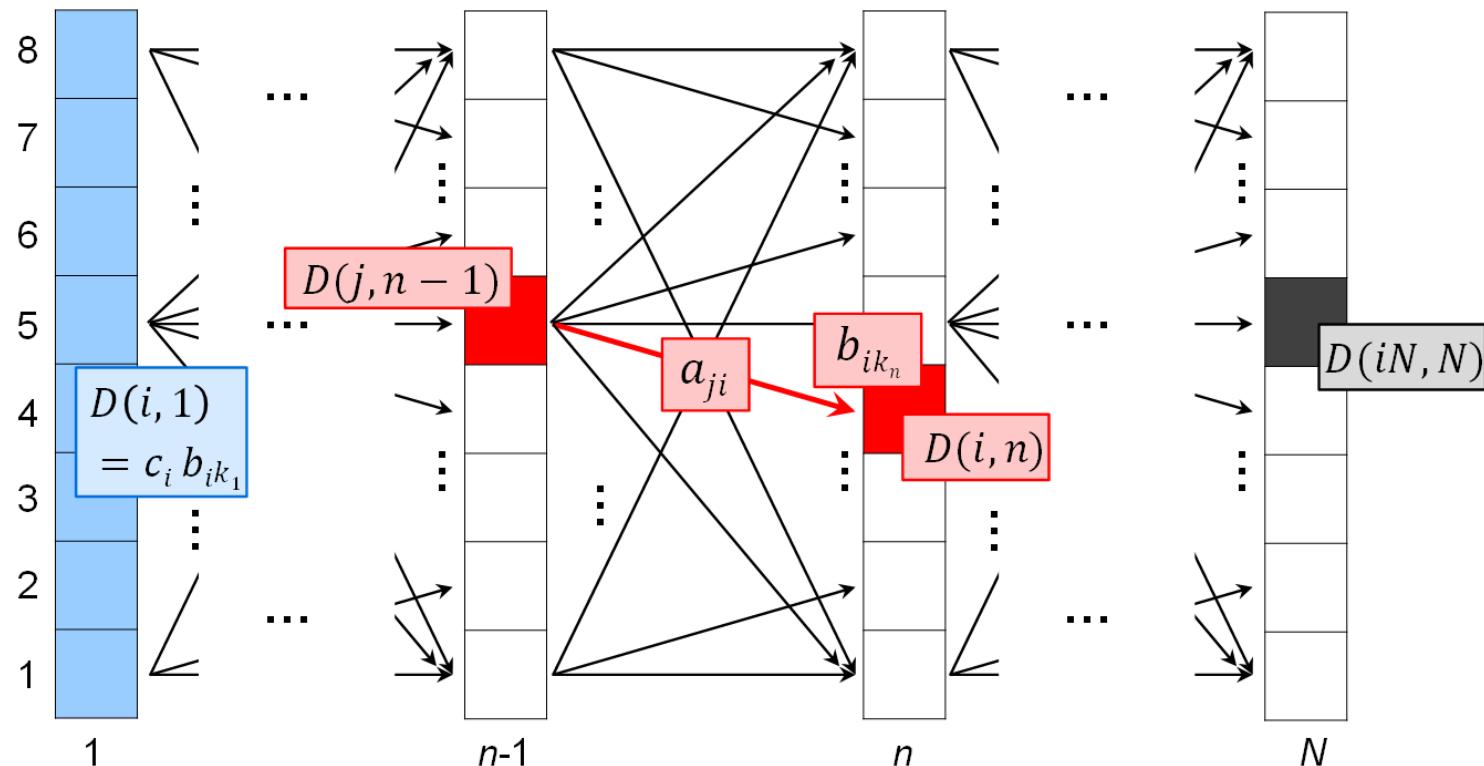
available in Scikit

- Given:
  - An HMM specified by  $\Theta = (\mathbf{A}, \mathbf{A}, \mathbf{C}, \mathbf{B}, \mathbf{B})$
  - An observation sequence  $O = (o_1, o_2, \dots, o_N)$
- Find:
  - The single state sequence  $S = (s_1, s_2, \dots, s_N), s_i \in \mathbf{A}$  that “best explain” the observation sequence
$$S^* = \operatorname{argmax}_S P(O, S | \Theta)$$
  - $I$  states,  $N$  time frames  $\rightarrow$  total  $I^N$  possible paths
  - How to solve this problem?

# Viterbi's algorithm (1)

- Based on **dynamic programming**: the optimal result for a problem is built on the optimal result for the sub-problems

Let  $I = 8$ ,



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# Viterbi's algorithm (2)

**Algorithm:** VITERBI

**Input:** HMM specified by  $\Theta = (\mathcal{A}, A, C, \mathcal{B}, B)$

Observation sequence  $O = (o_1 = \beta_{k_1}, o_2 = \beta_{k_2}, \dots, o_N = \beta_{k_N})$

**Output:** Optimal state sequence  $S^* = (s_1^*, s_2^*, \dots, s_N^*)$

**Procedure:** Initialize the  $(I \times N)$  matrix  $\mathbf{D}$  by  $\mathbf{D}(i, 1) = c_i b_{ik_1}$  for  $i \in [1 : I]$ . Then compute in a nested loop for  $n = 2, \dots, N$  and  $i = 1, \dots, I$ :

$$\begin{aligned}\mathbf{D}(i, n) &= \max_{j \in [1:I]} (a_{ji} \cdot \mathbf{D}(j, n-1)) \cdot b_{ik_n} \\ \mathbf{E}(i, n-1) &= \operatorname{argmax}_{j \in [1:I]} (a_{ji} \cdot \mathbf{D}(j, n-1))\end{aligned}$$

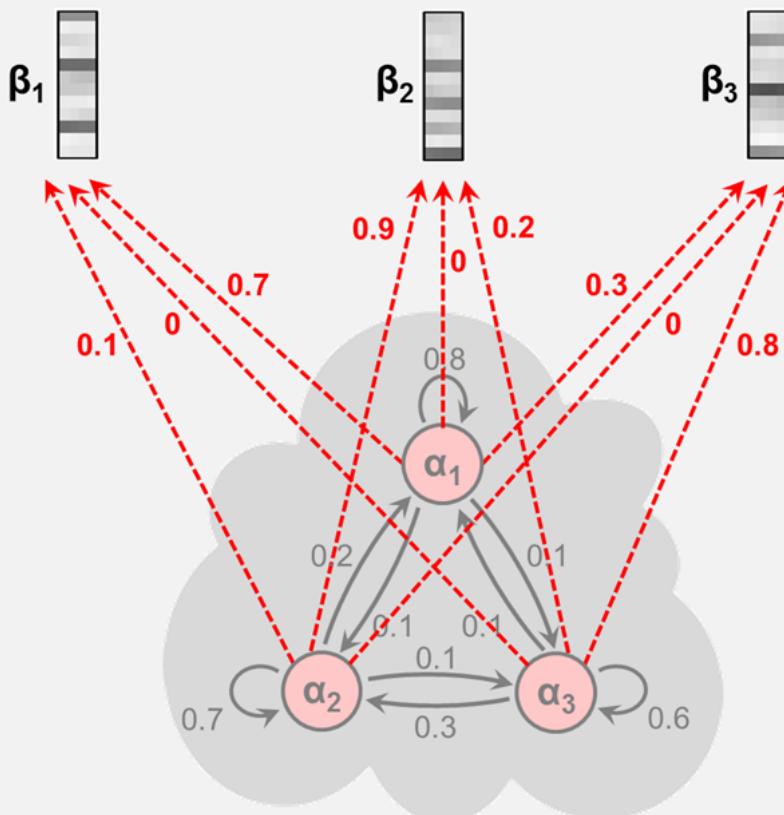
For backtracking

Set  $i_N = \operatorname{argmax}_{j \in [1:I]} \mathbf{D}(j, N)$  and compute for decreasing  $n = N-1, \dots, 1$  the maximizing indices

$$i_n = \operatorname{argmax}_{j \in [1:I]} (a_{ji_{n+1}} \cdot \mathbf{D}(j, n)) = \mathbf{E}(i_{n+1}, n).$$

The optimal state sequence  $S^* = (s_1^*, \dots, s_N^*)$  is defined by  $s_n^* = \alpha_{i_n}$  for  $n \in [1 : N]$ .

# An example of Viterbi's algorithm (1)



State transition probabilities

A	$\alpha_1$	$\alpha_2$	$\alpha_3$
$\alpha_1$	0.8	0.1	0.1
$\alpha_2$	0.2	0.7	0.1
$\alpha_3$	0.1	0.3	0.6

Initial state probabilities

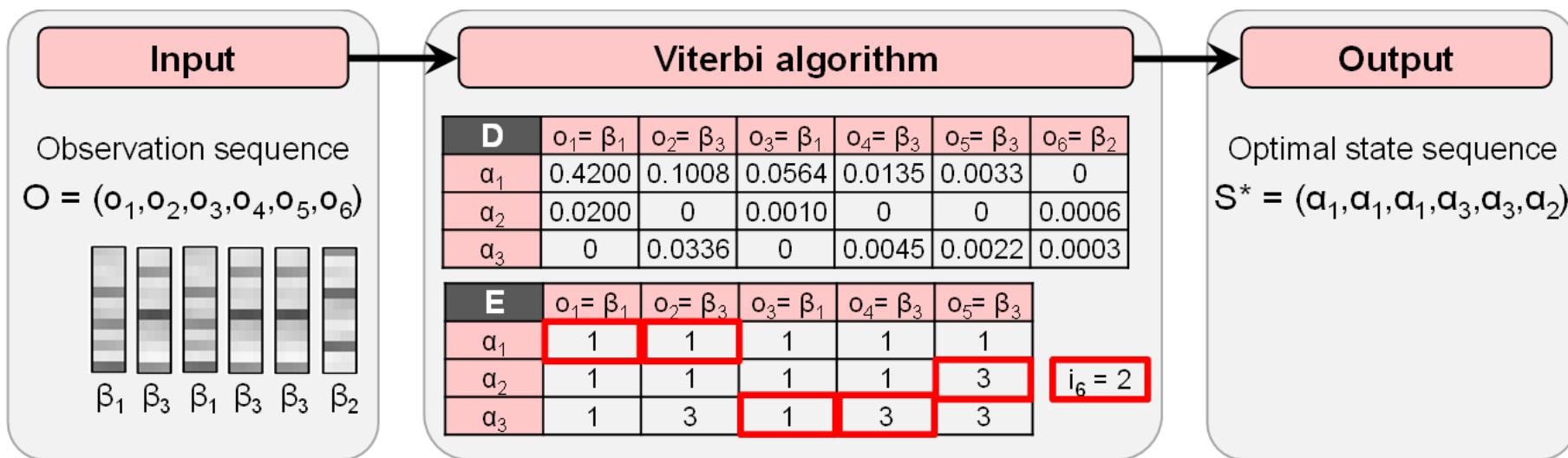
C	$\alpha_1$	$\alpha_2$	$\alpha_3$
	0.6	0.2	0.2

Emission probabilities

B	$\beta_1$	$\beta_2$	$\beta_3$
$\alpha_1$	0.7	0	0.3
$\alpha_2$	0.1	0.9	0
$\alpha_3$	0	0.2	0.8

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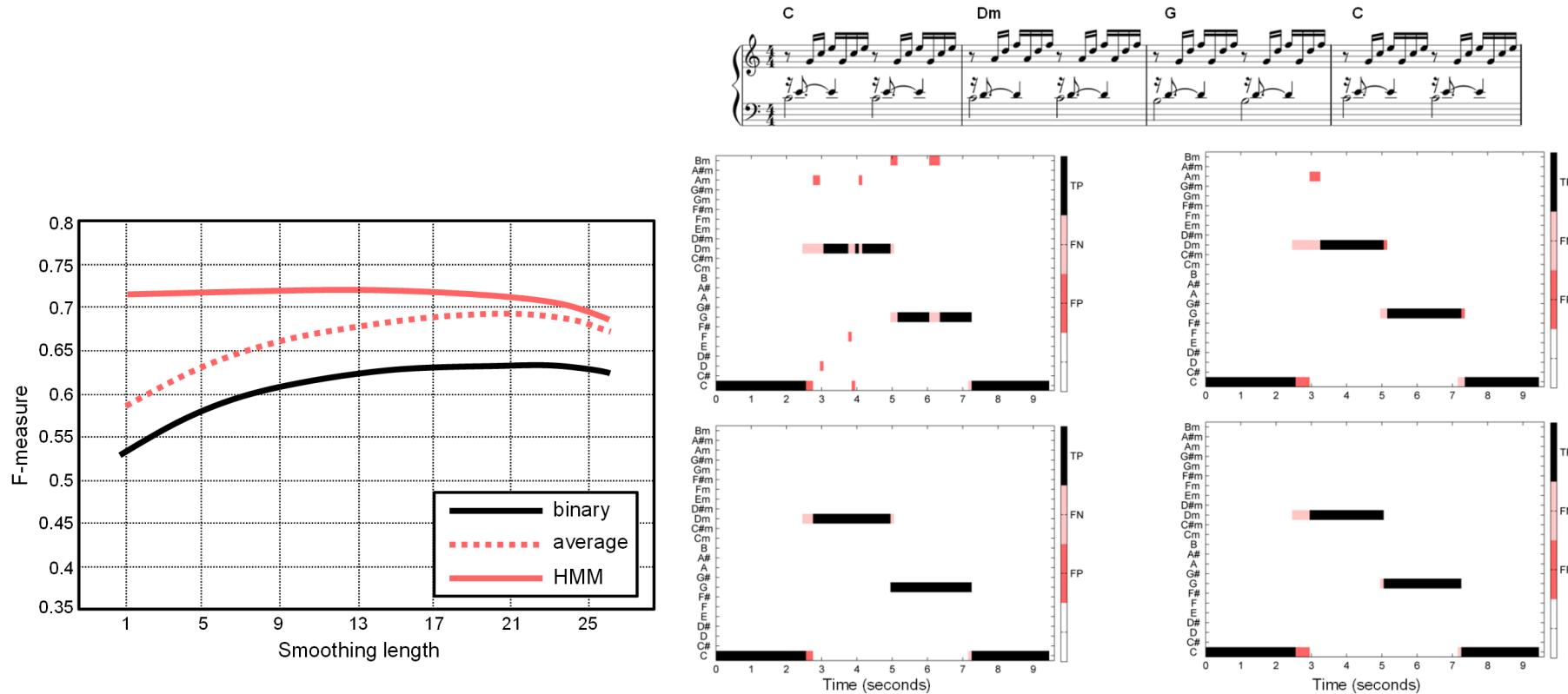
# An example of Viterbi's algorithm (2)



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# Result

- Better than temporal smoothing



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# Tools and Datasets

- Chroma toolbox V. 2.0 (in MATLAB)
- Supervised Chord Recognition for Music Audio in Matlab
- MIREX Chord Recognition 有很多 MIR 的情報

# Online Chord Recognition

已成熟很難再 improve 的 research topic

Remaining challenge : key + chord 功能和聲

三和弦已做的差不多，七和弦，特殊和弦難做

- Chordify
- RiffStation
- Chord tell → YouTube to chord

# Online Chord Recognition

- [Chordify](#)
- [RiffStation](#)
- [Chord tell](#)