

# Chord Types

Here is an overview of the *basic chord types* necessary for a working knowledge of music. This list will contain two groups:

- Triads, which are made of three notes: the 1, the 3, and the 5
- Seventh chords, which have four notes: the 1, the 3, the 5, and the 7

## Triads

Major..... 1     3     5

**C** chord..... C     E     G

minor..... 1      $\flat$ 3     5

**Cm** chord ..... C      $E\flat$      G

Diminished ..... 1      $\flat$ 3      $\flat$ 5

**C<sup>o</sup>** chord ..... C      $E\flat$       $G\flat$

Augmented..... 1     3      $\sharp$ 5

**C+** chord..... C     E      $G\sharp$

You could also say sus4 and sus2 chords are triads:

Sus4..... 1     4     5

**Csus4** ..... C     F     G

Sus2..... 1     2     5

**Csus2** ..... C     D     G

Both Sus4 and Sus2 have the tendency to want to *resolve* to a major or minor chord by simply moving the 4 downward to a 3, or the 2 upward to a 3. Note that I said they have the *tendency*. In many cases they are used without resolving, especially the Sus2. If you listen to contemporary Christian music, and a lot of pop in general, you'll hear many Sus2 chords substituting for major or minor chords without resolving. If you listen to a lot of jazz, you will hear a lot of both Sus4 and Sus2 with no resolution. In most classical and in a lot of pop songwriting, the Sus2 or Sus4 is typically followed by a resolution to a major or minor chord.

## 7th Chords

Major 7 .....1     3     5     7

**Cmaj7**..... C     E     G     B

Dominant 7 .....1     3     5     b7

**C7**..... C     E     G     B $\flat$

Minor 7 .....1     b3     5     b7

**Cm7** ..... C     E $\flat$      G     B $\flat$

Half Diminished.....1     b3     b5     b7

**C $\circ$**  ..... C     E $\flat$      G $\flat$      B $\flat$

Fully Diminished.....1     b3     b5      $\flat\flat$ 7 (same note as 6)

**C $\circ$** ..... C     E $\flat$      G $\flat$      A

Notice a C7 chord is a C *Dominant 7* chord. Any time you see just the letter name (C) plus the number seven (C7), it means Dominant 7 (the 3rd is natural, so it's like a 'major', but the seventh is flatted).

## Power Chords

One other group that could be summarized pretty easily are power chords, which only contain a root and a fifth. They are written with the letter name followed by the number five.

Power Chord .....1     5

**C5**..... C     G

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From here we could talk about extended and altered chords, and that would give you a more complete list. You ultimately want to be able to play any chord by name, or solo over any chord by knowing the scale possibilities that match each chord.