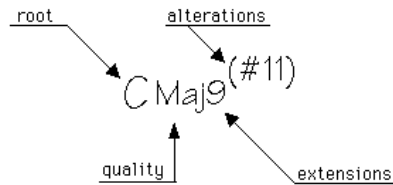


CHORDS

"How do I translate a chord symbol into an actual chord?"

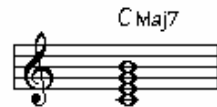
Here is a common chord symbol, diagrammed to show its elements:



major (mode: ionian)

recommended

Cma7
Cmaj7



also used, not recommended

comments

- CM7 hand-drawn capital M can be mistaken for lower-case m, a minor chord symbol
- CΔ7 hand-drawn triangle (if not crisp) can be mistaken for diminished chord symbol
- C7 not everyone recognizes this symbol to mean "major seventh" - also, it is not uncommon for people to draw their 7s with a dash, simply out of habit

minor (mode: aeolian)

recommended

Cmi7
Cmin7



also used, not recommended

comments

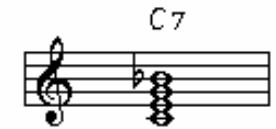
- Cm7 hand-drawn lower-case m can be mistaken for capital M, a major chord symbol
- C-7 hand-drawn dash occasionally makes "C" look like a "G"

dominant (mode: mixolydian)

recommended

comments

C7



augmented

recommended

comments

C⁺

augmented triad, but when used on lead sheets often implies the use of a dominant chord

also used, not recommended

comments

C⁺7

This common symbol leaves some ambiguity whether the "+" sign defines the chord as augmented, or if it is meant to somehow indicate a major seventh interval. "C7(#5)" is a much clearer way to notate this same chord.



half-diminished (mode: lydian #2)

recommended

comments

Cmi7(b5)

C^ø7

Both are common, either is acceptable. Some avoid the ø symbol to avoid confusion with the symbol for a diminished chord. Also, some prefer the "min7(b5)" symbol to emphasise the chord's function as a ii chord in a minor key.



diminished

recommended

comments

C^o7

Cdim7

