

SEVENTH CHORDS

Seventh chords

A **seventh chord** is a four-note chord built using stacked thirds. The four notes are the **root**, **third**, **fifth** and **seventh** from bottom to top. There are five basic types. A **major seventh chord** has a **major** triad and a **major** seventh. A **minor seventh chord** has a **minor** triad and a **minor** seventh.

Major seventh, Minor seventh

M7 major 7th chord

major triad + major seventh = M7 chord

major third on top

m7 minor 7th chord

minor triad + minor seventh = m7 chord

minor third on top

Major-minor (dominant) seventh

A **major-minor seventh chord** has a **major** triad and a **minor** seventh. Mm7 chords function as dominant chords. “Mm7...dominant?”

Mm7

major triad + minor seventh = Mm7 chord

minor third on top

Half-diminished Fully-diminished

A **half-diminished seventh** has a **diminished** triad and a **minor** seventh. A **fully-diminished seventh chord** is a **diminished** triad plus a **diminished** seventh. Fully-diminished seventh chords are a stack of **all minor thirds**.

ø7 half-dim.

dim. triad + minor seventh = ø7 chord

major third

°7 fully-dim.

dim. triad + diminished seventh = °7 chord

minor third

Inversions

Inversions may be **root position** (root on bottom), **1st inversion** (3rd on bottom), **2nd inversion** (5th on bottom), or **3rd inversion** (7th on bottom).