

11th Chords

11th chords are achieved by adding the 11th interval to any of the 7th chords. The 11th interval is the same note as the 4th interval. The 11th interval is typically played an octave above the 4th, but it is not necessary. In fact, many of the 11th chords played on guitar are easier when playing the 11th interval in the lower octave.

You CAN have the 9th interval in an 11th chord, but it is NOT necessary. We guitar players have to choose the most important intervals to be played in the chords we want given our limited note choices due to how our instrument is set up.

The following formulas are various 11th chords that can occur. The 11th chords that appear in the Major Scale will have roman numerals underneath them indicating where in the Major Scale they occur.

Starting with the Major 7 chord formula:

$$\underline{1, 3, 5, 7} + 11 = \text{Major 11}$$

I

$$\underline{1, 3, 5, 7} + \#11 = \text{Major \#11}$$

IV

Starting with the Dominant 7 chord formula:

$$\underline{1, 3, 5, b7} + 11 = \text{Dominant 11 (can just be written as 11)}$$

V

$$\underline{1, 3, 5, b7} + \#11 = \text{Dominant 7 \#11}$$

Starting with the Minor 7 chord formula:

$$\underline{1, b3, 5, b7} + 11 = \text{Minor 11}$$

ii – iii – vi

$$\underline{1, b3, 5, b7} + \#11 = \text{Minor \#11}$$

Starting with the Minor 7 b5 formula (or half diminished 7)

$$\underline{1, b3, b5, b7} + 11 = \text{Minor 11 b5}$$

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Here are the 11th chords in order as they appear in the Major Scale:

Major 11 – Minor 11 – Minor 11 – Major #11 – Dominant 11 – Minor 11 – Minor 11 b5
I ii iii IV V vi vii