

7th Chords

7th chords are made by adding a 7 or b7 interval to any of the triads.

The quickest way to find the 7 is to go back a half step (1 fret) from the root note of the chord. If you need a b7 then go back a whole step (2 frets). Typically, you will look for an octave of the root note of the chord and lower that. You CAN change the root note, but it's not common, and changing the bass note (root note) of a chord can change the character of the chord in a way less than desirable... usually.

The following chord formulas that have a roman numeral underneath are the 7th chords that occur in the Major Scale. *Just because a chord formula doesn't occur in the Major Scale does not mean it doesn't exist.*

Starting with the Major Triad of 1, 3, 5

1, 3, 5 + 7 = Major 7
I – IV

1, 3, 5 + b7 = Dominant 7 – usually just written as 7
V

Starting with the Minor Triad of 1, b3, 5

1, b3, 5 + b7 = Minor 7
ii – iii – vi

1, b3, 5 + 7 = Minor \flat 7

Starting with the Diminished Triad of 1, b3, b5

1, b3, b5 + b7 = Minor 7 b5 (aka \emptyset 7 which means half diminished 7)
vii

1, b3, b5 + 7 = Minor \flat 7 b5

1, b3, b5 + bb7 = $^{\circ}$ 7 (which means diminished 7)

Starting with the Augmented Triad of 1, 3, #5

1, 3, #5 + 7 = Major 7 #5

1, 3, #5 + b7 = +7 (which means Augmented 7)
Can be used as a substitute for the V chord.

When played in order as they occur in the Major Scale the 7th chords will go like this:

Major 7 – Minor 7 – Minor 7 – Major 7 – Dominant 7 – Minor 7 – Minor 7 b5
I ii iii IV V vi vii