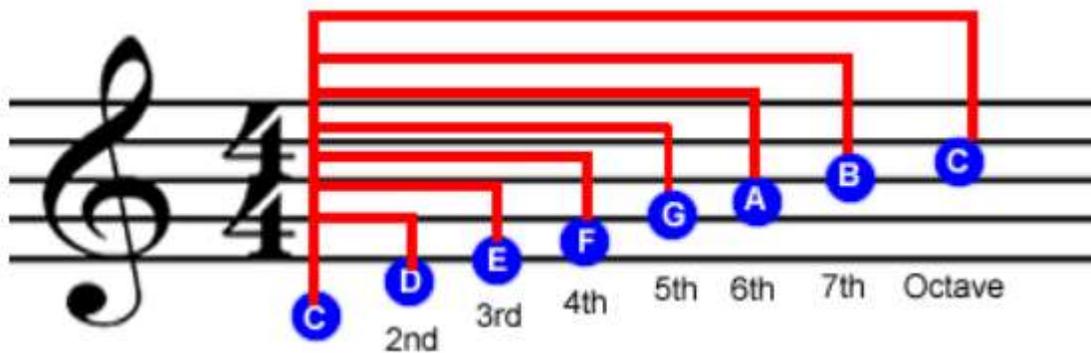


# Chord Construction

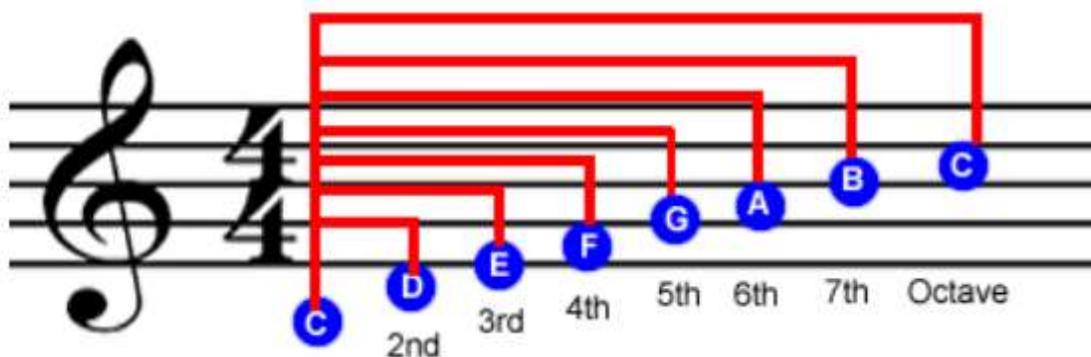


Chords are a fundamental element in music. One of the reasons that the guitar is such a popular instrument is its ability to play chords. If you think about it, most instruments don't have this ability. Of course keyboard instruments like pianos have this ability, but what about trumpets, or saxophone, etc.? This tutorial will shed light on the origins of chords and show you how chords are constructed.

## Constructing Major Chords

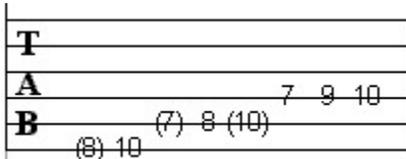
Chords can be constructed from the steps of the major scale. The most common chords are 3 note chords called triads. Major chords are the most common triad. For a major chord you take the Root, the 3rd and 5th steps of any major scale.

For example, let's take a look at the C Major Scale:



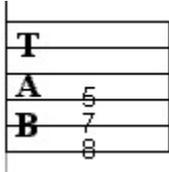
T								
A						7	8	10
B	8	10	7	8	10			
	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C

Now let's take the Root (1st step), 3rd step, and 5th step of the scale (in parentheses below).



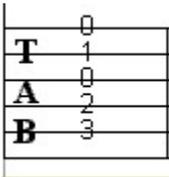
steps: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1(Octave)

Playing these 3 notes simultaneously will produce a C Major chord. For fingering purposes in the picture below I've taken the 5th step note and moved it to the 4th string instead of the 5th.

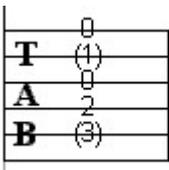


Since there are six strings on the guitar, you can double up on some, or all of the notes to create a more full sound.

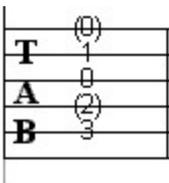
For example let's take a look at the C Major chord in the Open Position:



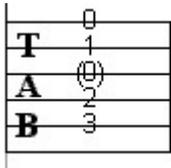
We have the Root (which is C) appearing twice (in parenthesis):



The 3rd step (which is E) appears twice also:



The lonely 5th step (G) appears only once:



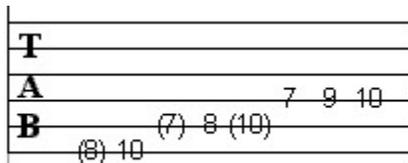
## Constructing Minor Chords

Minor Chords are constructed using using the Root (1st step), a flatted 3rd step and the 5th step of the Major Scale.

For example take a look at the C Major Scale:

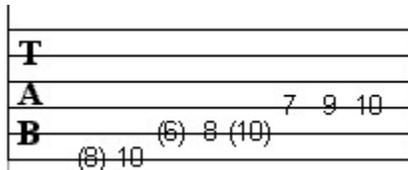


Now we'll take the 1st, 3rd, and 5th step like we did in constructing a Major Chord:

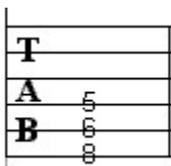


steps: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1(Octave)

Now all you have to do is flat the 3rd, which just means we'll drop the note down one fret:



Playing these 3 notes simultaneously will produce a C Minor chord. For fingering purposes in the picture below I've taken the 5th step note and moved it to the 4th string instead of the 5th.



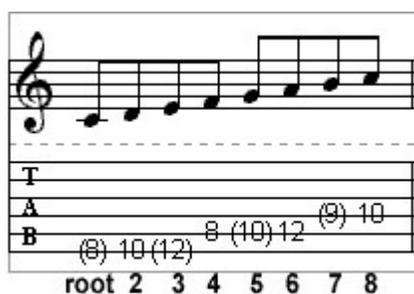
## Major 7th Chord Construction

Where major and minor triads have 3 different notes, 7th chords have 4. Dominant 7th chords (the most common 7th chord) are constructed using the root, 3rd, 5th, and the 7th scale step flattened.

For example, let's take a look at the C Major Scale:



Now let's take the Root (1st step), 3rd step, and 5th step of the scale (in parentheses below):



In order to create a Dominant 7th chord we combine these 4 notes, except we flatten the 7th step (drop it down 1 fret).