

Triadic Concepts for Guitar

Version 1

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Foreword

The intent of this book is to help guitar players to achieve a certain commodity with the fretboard and with simple triadic shapes. This book can be used either by a beginner that is learning the notes and chords all over the fretboard as well as by an advanced player that feels the need to fill in the gaps of his understanding of triads.

Most of the intermediate and advanced players usually lack some sort of depth in their knowledge of triads. We tend to rush through triads because they are perceived as simple. As guitar players we tend to learn 4 or 5 note voicings and neglect learning a variety of triads that are more complex than our standard shapes. Being comfortable with triad inversions and with open triads will reveal many possibilities of how to play the same chord all over the fretboard. Open and inverted triads are very rich by themselves and can also work extremely well as the upper extension of chords or as rootless voicings when playing with a bass player.

In this book I will present an organized way to study triads all over the guitar neck. Once the basics have been covered, we will study superimposition of triads, the use of synthetic triads and other advanced devices that will help us apply the use of triads to our playing.

I have decided to cover 4 different scales in this book: Major/Minor, Harmonic Minor, Melodic Minor and Harmonic Major. When harmonized, some of these scales may share the same chords in exactly the same location and others may be completely different. The only consistency is that all of the chords produced will be triadic forms that spell either a major, minor, diminished or augmented chord.

There is not a proper way to use this book and I advise each reader to use their own discretion when learning out of this material. I think it makes no sense that a student trying to learn how to play pop and rock spends half of his practice time working on Harmonic Major instead of solidifying his knowledge of a Major tonality and learning various inversions and idiomatic vocabulary of the style he or she is trying to learn.

For practical purposes I have decided to work with the simplest keys at first and progress towards less common keys. I would highly encourage working this material on all keys. The guitar is a very visual instrument and transposing should be a skill all guitarists develop not only to facilitate the technical aspect of playing but also to help the ear understand tonal relationships.

Technically speaking, most of the material requires an advanced right-hand technique. Either fingerpicking or the use of hybrid picking is needed to play most of the material presented in this book.

Last but not least I dedicate this book to my friends and family for all of their support and to my wife for all of her love and patience.

Chapter 1: C Major Scale

C major scale



If we harmonize a C major scale in thirds we will create 7 different chords illustrated below.

C major scale harmonized



The 7 chords created are part of the C major tonality. Each chord has a distinctive function and relationship with the tonic. The intent of this book is not to discuss or to teach harmony, so if any doubt towards harmony is presented I highly recommend studying other texts that will solidify that aspect of your musical knowledge.

The chords created by stacking thirds consist of a root note, a third and a fifth. We can see these chords in root position, meaning that they are in their natural order of root, third and fifth from low to high.

When the notes are shifted we create different chord inversions, which is a re-spelling of the same structure.

Root position 1st inversion 2nd inversion



One of the simplest ways to alter the sound of a chord is by inverting it. The different relationship between the notes as well as the range in which the chord is presented creates a new and fresh sound when compared to root position chords. As guitarists, we tend to avoid inverting chords and we learn chords from low to high, basing a lot of our knowledge on the root of the chord and neglecting the possible inversions that are available.

In the following example I have organized the chords of the C major scale in root position. I have provided chords with bass in the 6th, 5th, 4th and 3rd strings. The first chord of each group is the lowest possible chord that can be constructed in that particular string set.

R on 6th String

G Am B^o C Dm Em F G

T	0	2	3	5	7	9	10	12
A	2	3	5	7	8	10	12	14
B	3	5	7	8	10	12	13	15

R on 5th String

3 C Dm Em F G Am B^o C

T	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12
A	2	3	5	7	9	10	12	14
B	3	5	7	8	10	12	14	15

R on 4th String

5 Em F G Am B^o C Dm Em

T	0	1	3	5	6	8	10	12
A	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	2	3	5	7	9	10	12	14

R on 3rd String

7 Am B^o C Dm Em F G Am

T	0	1	3	5	7	8	10	12
A	1	3	5	6	8	10	12	13
B	2	4	5	7	9	10	12	14

In this example I have organized the chords of the C major scale in first inversion.

R on 6th String

9 Dm/F Em/G F/A G/B Am/C B°/D C/E Dm/F

T								
A	0	2	3	5	7	9	10	12
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	10	12
	1	3	5	7	8	10	12	13

R on 5th String

11 G/B Am/C B°/D C/E Dm/F Em/G F/A G/B

T								
A	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	12	14

R on 4th String

13 C/E Dm/F Em/G F/A G/B Am/C B°/D C/E

T	1	3	5	6	8	10	12	13
A	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	2	3	5	7	9	10	12	14

R on 3rd String

15 Em/G F/A G/B Am/C B°/D C/E Dm/F Em/G

T	0	1	3	5	7	8	10	12
A	0	1	3	5	6	8	10	12
B	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12

In this example I have organized the chords of the C major scale in 2nd inversion.

R on 6th String

17 B[°]/F C/G Dm/A Em/B F/C G/D Am/E B[°]/F

T								
A	0	2	3	5	7	9	10	12
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	12	14
	1	3	5	7	8	10	12	13

R on 5th String

19 Em/B F/C G/D Am/E B[°]/F C/G Dm/A Em/B

T								
A	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	12	14

R on 4th String

21 G/D Am/E B[°]/F C/G Dm/A Em/B F/C G/D

T	0	1	3	5	6	8	10	12
A	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	0	2	3	5	7	9	10	12

R on 3rd String

23 C/G Dm/A Em/B F/C G/D Am/E B[°]/F C/G

T	0	1	3	5	7	8	10	12
A	1	3	5	6	8	10	12	13
B	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12

Exercise 1: Diatonic triads of C major in Position

The goal of this exercise is to connect the triads that were produced throughout the neck and limit them to a position (a certain space or area on the neck of the guitar). These are not all of the possibilities but just a glance at how to build triads and base them on shapes.

C/G C C/E C/G Dm/A Dm Dm/F Dm/A

T	4	0	1	0			
A	2	2	0	3	2	2	3
B	3	3	2	5	3	3	2

3 Em/B Em Em/G Em/B F/C F F/A F/C

T		4	5	3			
A	5	5	4	5	7	5	6
B	7	7	5	4	8	8	7

5 G/D G G/B G/D Am/E Am Am/C Am/E B°/F B° B°/D B°/F

T			7	7			8					
A	9	7	7	8	10	9	10	9	12	10	10	10
B	10	10	9	7	12	10	10	9	14	12	12	10

Exercise 2: Diatonic triads of C major on single string sets.

The goal of this exercise is to provide the opposite view than the one provided in the previous exercise. Most guitarists are good with visualizing vertical shapes, but we sometimes lack a better horizontal view of the fretboard. Mastering vertical and horizontal movement on the instrument is key for any up and coming guitar player.

2

8 C/G C C/E C/G Dm/A Dm Dm/F Dm/A

T									
A	2	5	10	14	3	7	12	15	
B	3	7	10	15	5	8	12	17	
B	3	8	12	15	5	10	13	17	

10 Em/B Em Em/G Em/B F/C F F/A F/C

T									
A	0	4	9	12	2	5	10	14	
B	2	5	9	14	3	7	10	15	
B	2	7	10	14	3	8	12	15	

12 G/D G G/B G/D Am/E Am Am/C Am/E B°/F B° B°/D B°/F

T	0	3	8	12	1	5	10	13	3	6	12	15
A	0	4	7	12	2	5	9	14	4	7	10	16
B	0	5	9	12	2	7	10	14	3	9	12	15

Both exercises as well as the previous examples should be practiced in all 12 keys. For this I would recommend going through the circle of 5ths and 4ths.

Chapter 2: Open Triads

In the previous chapter we learned how to construct triads from a scale and how to invert them to produce a richer and fuller sound. All of the previous triads that we learned were closed triads, which are triads that remain within an octave. Open triads are triads that cover more than an octave of spacing. The most common way to open a triad is by “raising” one of the voices to the next higher octave.

The image shows a musical staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. It is divided into two sections. The first section, labeled 'Inversion', contains two chords: a C major triad in root position (C) and a C major triad in first inversion (C/E). The second section, labeled 'Open triads', contains three C major triads in root position (C), each with one voice raised to the next higher octave, creating an open triad. The notes are: C4, E4, G4; C4, E5, G4; C4, E4, G5.

In the following exercise I have organized the open chords from the C major tonality in Root position, 1st and 2nd inversion. Note that 2 possible fingerings are provided (on most cases). Due to the openness of the chords, we are now dealing with chords with bass in 2 or 3 strings and with string sets that cover 4 or 5 strings, diminishing the number of voicings possible. The fingerings provided offer a uniform fingering over the same string set. It should be noted that players rarely opt for only one fingering solution and usually build the chords that are more comfortable and work better in the musical passage that they are playing.

Root Position

2

Bass on 6th string

3

Em	F	G	Am	B ^o	C	Dm	Em	
T	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12
A	2	3	5	7	8	10	12	14
B	0	1	3	5	7	8	10	12
T	3	5	7	8	10	12	12	
A	4	5	7	8	10	12	12	
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

5

Am	B ^o	C	Dm	Em	F	G	Am	
T	1	3	5	6	8	10	12	13
A	2	3	5	7	4	10	12	9
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	10	12
T	5	6	8	10	12	13	13	
A	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	9
B	3	5	7	8	10	12	12	

Bass on 4th string

7

Dm	Em	F	G	Am	B ^o	C	Dm	
T	1	3	5	7	8	10	12	13
A	2	4	5	7	9	10	12	14
B	0	2	3	5	7	9	10	12
T	3	5	7	8	10	12	13	
A	0	1	3	5	6	8	10	10
B	2	3	5	7	9	10	12	12

1st Inversion

Bass on 6th string

9 C/E Dm/F Em/G F/A G/B Am/C B^o/D C/E

T	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12
A	3	5	7	8	10	12	14	15
B	0	1	3	5	7	8	10	12

T	1	3	5	7	9	10	12
A	2	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	10

Bass on 5th string

11 F/A G/B Am/C B^o/D C/E Dm/F Em/G F/A

T	1	3	5	6	8	10	12	13
A	3	5	7	9	10	12	14	15
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	10	12

T	3	5	6	8	10	12	13
A	0	2	4	5	7	9	10
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 4th string

13 B^o/D C/E Dm/F Em/G F/A G/B Am/C B^o/D

T	1	3	5	7	8	10	12	13
A	4	5	7	9	10	12	14	16
B	0	2	3	5	7	9	10	12

T	1	3	5	7	8	10	12	13
A	0	1	3	5	6	8	10	12
B	0	2	3	5	7	9	10	12

2nd Inversion

Bass on 6th string

15 Am/E B[°]/F C/G Dm/A Em/B F/C G/D Am/E

T	2	4	5	7	9	10	12	14
A	3	5	7	8	10	12	14	15
B	0	1	3	5	7	8	10	12

T	4	5	7	9	10	12	14
A	0	2	3	5	7	9	10
B	1	3	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

17 Dm/A Em/B F/C G/D Am/E B[°]/F C/G Dm/A

T	3	5	6	8	10	12	13	15
A	3	5	7	9	10	12	14	15
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	10	12

T	5	6	8	10	12	13	15
A	0	2	4	5	7	9	10
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 4th string

19 G/D Am/E B[°]/F C/G Dm/A Em/B F/C G/D

T	3	5	7	8	10	12	13	15
A	4	5	7	9	10	12	14	16
B	0	2	3	5	7	9	10	12

T	3	5	7	8	10	12	13	15
A	0	1	3	5	6	8	10	16
B	0	2	3	5	7	9	10	12

The main difference between the previous example and the following example is that the spreading in the following chord shapes is wider than that on the previous example. We are now “raising” 2 notes instead of only one note. Notice how we now have a separate third moving with a bass note completing the triad.

Root Position (3rd and 5th up)

Bass on 6th string

21 Em F G Am B° C Dm Em

T	0	1	3	5	6	8	10	12
A	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	0	1	3	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

23 Am B° C Dm Em F G Am

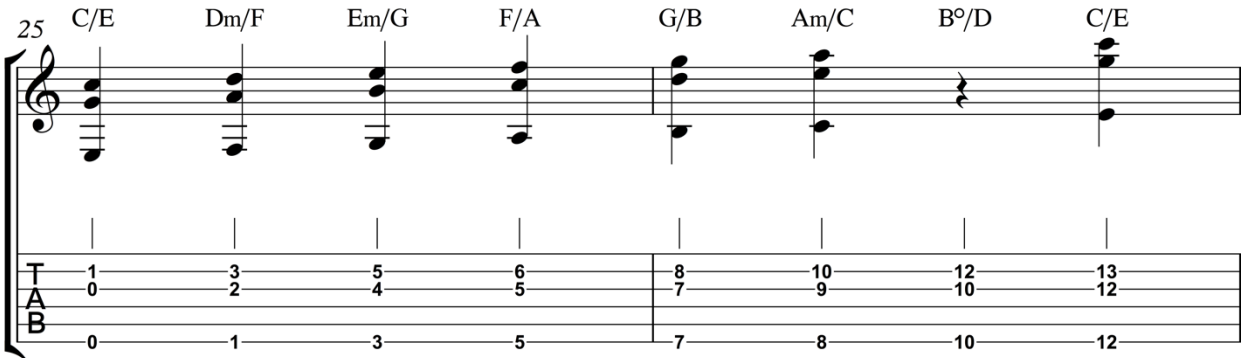
T	0	1	3	5	7	8	10	12
A	1	3	5	6	8	10	12	13
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	10	12

1st Inversion (3rd and 5th up)

Bass on 6th string

25

C/E Dm/F Em/G F/A G/B Am/C B^o/D C/E

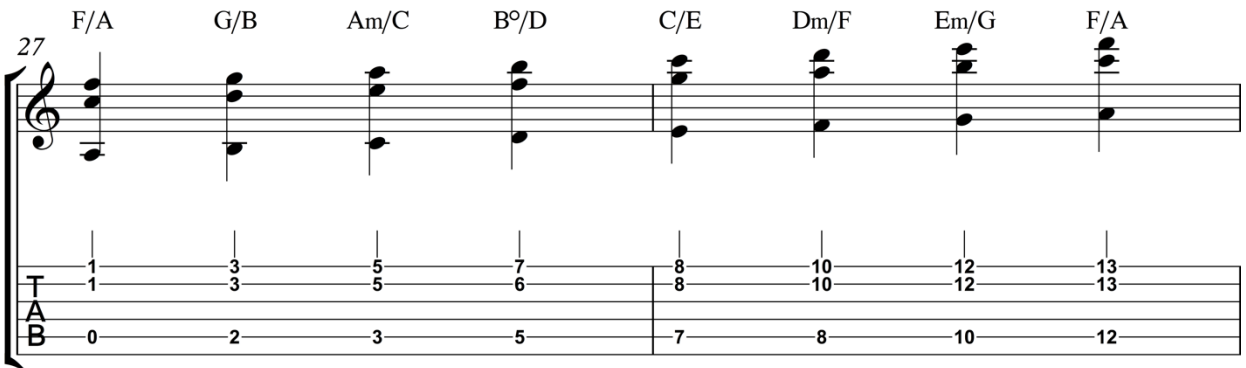


T	1	3	5	6	8	10	12	13
A	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	0	1	3	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

27

F/A G/B Am/C B^o/D C/E Dm/F Em/G F/A



T	1	3	5	6	8	10	12	13
A	1	3	5	6	8	10	12	13
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	10	12

In this example we now have an interval of a fourth in the upper region of the triad with a bass note completing the chord.

2nd Inversion (3rd and 5th up)

Bass on 6th string

29 Am/E B[°]/F C/G Dm/A Em/B F/C G/D Am/E

The diagram shows a treble clef staff with a bass line on the 6th string. The chords and their fingerings are as follows:

T	1	3	5	6	8	10	12	13
A	2	4	5	7	9	10	12	14
B	0	1	3	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

31 Dm/A Em/B F/C G/D Am/E B[°]/F C/G Dm/A

The diagram shows a treble clef staff with a bass line on the 5th string. The chords and their fingerings are as follows:

T	1	3	5	7	8	10	12	13
A	3	5	6	8	10	12	13	15
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	10	12

We find again the interval of a third on the higher voices completed with a lower bass note.

The following examples present what I call spread triads. I define a spread triad as a triad that skips strings between notes. On a 6-string guitar we can only play 2 types of "spread" triads; with bass on the sixth string and the remaining notes on the 4th and 2nd string and with bass on the 5th string and with the remaining notes on the 3rd and 1st string. Some of the shapes are very wide and hard to fret but should be studied nonetheless (the more possibilities, the merrier). The spreading over different strings is also a good technical challenge for the right hand and the purpose of this book is to explore many possibilities and to challenge the reader.

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Root Position "Spread" Triads

Bass on 6th string

33 G Am B^o C Dm Em F G

T	0	1	3	5	6	8	10	12
A	0	2	3	5	7	9	10	12
B	3	5	7	8	10	12	13	15

Bass on 5th string

35 C Dm Em F G Am B^o C

T	0	1	3	5	7	8	10	12
A	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	3	5	7	8	10	12	14	15

1st Inversion Spread Triads

Bass on 6th string

37 Em/G F/A G/B Am/C B^o/D C/E Dm/F Em/G

T	0	1	3	5	6	8	10	12
A	2	3	5	7	9	10	12	14
B	3	5	7	8	10	12	13	15

Bass on 5th string

39 Am/C B^o/D C/E Dm/F Em/G F/A G/B Am/C

T	0	1	3	5	7	8	10	12
A	2	4	5	7	9	10	12	14
B	3	5	7	8	10	12	14	15

2nd Inversion Spread Triads

Bass on 6th string

41 B^o/F C/G Dm/A Em/B F/C G/D Am/E B^o/F

T	0	1	3	5	6	8	10	12
A	0	2	3	5	7	9	10	12
B	1	3	5	7	8	10	12	13

Bass on 5th string

43 Em/B F/C G/D Am/E B^o/F C/G Dm/A Em/B

T	0	1	3	5	7	8	10	12
A	0	2	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	12	14

Chapter 3: Minor

Every scale can be restructured and start and end on a different pitch within that scale to be reinterpreted as a mode of the parent scale.

If we re-spell a C major scale by starting on the 2nd degree (D) we will produce a different scale with a different name, color and with different functions within itself. That new scale would be called D Dorian and considered a mode of the C major scale.

One of the most relevant scales that we can produce from a Major scale is its own relative Minor scale. Every major tonality has a relative minor tonality and the chords presented in both cases are the same but since the context has now shifted, the role of the chords within that new conception has changed.

The A minor scale is the relative minor scale of the C Major scale. The Minor scale has different variations to some of its notes that create other types of minor scales (or modes) like Melodic and Harmonic minor. All of these should be considered as part of a big minor family that has different variations but function as part of a big picture.

The following diagram shows the relationship between A minor and C major and different scales and the chords that result from those scales (in order from top to bottom: C Major, A Minor, A Harmonic Minor, A melodic Minor and C Harmonic Major).

A Minor and Relationship to C major

The diagram illustrates the relationship between A minor and C major through five scales and their corresponding chords. Each scale is written on a treble clef staff in 4/4 time. The scales are: 1. C Major (C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C), 2. A Natural Minor (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, A), 3. A Harmonic Minor (A, B, C, D, E, F, G#, A), 4. A Melodic Minor (A, B, C, D, E, F#, G, A), 5. C Harmonic Major (C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C). Chords are indicated above the notes.

Scale 1 (C Major): C, Dm, Em, F, G, Am, B^o, C

Scale 2 (A Natural Minor): Am, B^o, C, Dm, Em, F, G, Am

Scale 3 (A Harmonic Minor): Am, B^o, C⁺, Dm, E, F, G#^o, Am

Scale 4 (A Melodic Minor): Am, Bm, C⁺, D, E, F#^o, G#^o, Am

Scale 5 (C Harmonic Major): C, D^o, Em, Fm, G, Ab⁺, B^o, C

A minor is a re-spelling of C Major, so I won't address all of the possible chords of this tonality since we have already studied all of the possible chords in a different order.

The next minor scale or mode to study is harmonic minor, which solves an issue of tonality. By raising the 7th degree of a natural minor scale a V7 chord is produced on the 5th degree instead of a minor V chord, creating a dominant-tonic relationship between I and V7. This solved many harmonic issues (hence the name harmonic minor) and provides very rich voicings and melodies that are common to be seen in music all the way from Bach to Bebop.

Again, if any harmonic concept is beyond the readers ability please refer to a music theory book. In the following examples I have organized the closed chords from A harmonic minor throughout the neck.

Root Position

R on 6th String

4/4

G#° Am B° C+ Dm E F G#°

T	0	2	3	6	7	9	10	12
A	2	3	5	7	8	11	12	14
B	4	5	7	8	10	12	13	16

R on 5th String

3

B° C+ Dm E F G#° Am B°

T	1	2	4	5	7	9	10	13
A	2	3	6	7	9	10	12	14
B	3	5	7	8	11	12	14	15

R on 4th String

5

E F G#° Am B° C+ Dm E

T	0	1	3	5	6	9	10	12
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	10	13
B	2	3	6	7	9	10	12	14

R on 3rd String

7

Am B° C+ Dm E F G#° Am

T	0	1	4	5	7	8	10	10
A	1	3	5	6	9	10	12	12
B	2	4	5	7	9	10	13	13

1st Inversion

R on 6th String

9 Dm/F E/G# F/A G#°/B Am/C B°/D C+/E Dm/F

T							
A	0	2	3	6	7	9	10
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	11
	1	4	5	7	8	10	12

R on 5th String

11 G#°/B Am/C B°/D C+/E Dm/F E/G# F/A G#°/B

T							
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	10
B	2	3	5	7	8	11	12
							13

R on 4th String

13 C+/E Dm/F E/G# F/A G#°/B Am/C B°/D C+/E

T	1	3	5	6	9	10	12
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	10
B	2	3	6	7	9	10	12
							13

R on 3rd String

15 E/G# F/A G#°/B Am/C B°/D C+/E Dm/F E/G#

R on 3rd String

T	0	1	4	5	7	8	10
A	0	1	3	5	6	9	10
B	1	2	4	5	7	9	10
							12

2nd Inversion

R on 6th String

17 B^o/F C⁺/G# Dm/A E/B F/C G#^o/D Am/E B^o/F

T								
A	0	2	3	6	7	9	10	12
B	2	3	5	7	8	11	12	14
	1	4	5	7	8	10	12	13

R on 5th String

19 E/B F/C G#^o/D Am/E B^o/F C⁺/G# Dm/A E/B

T								
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	10	13
B	2	3	6	7	9	10	12	14
	2	3	5	7	8	11	12	14

R on 5th String

21 Am/E B^o/F C⁺/G# Dm/A E/B F/C G#^o/D Am/E

T								
A	1	3	5	6	9	10	12	13
B	2	3	6	7	9	10	13	14
	2	3	6	7	9	10	12	14

R on 4th String

23 C⁺/G# Dm/A E/B F/C G#^o/D Am/E B^o/F C⁺/G#

T								
A	0	1	4	5	7	8	10	12
B	1	3	5	6	9	10	12	13
	1	2	4	5	7	9	10	13

In the following example I have organized the open chords from the A harmonic minor scale. Like in the case of the previous C Major Scale, 2 fingerings are provided for most chords.

Root Position

Bass on 6th String

E F G#° Am B° C+ Dm E

T	1	2	4	5	7	9	10	13
A	2	3	5	7	8	11	12	14
B	0	1	4	5	7	8	10	12

T	4	5	7	9	10	13
A	0	2	3	6	7	9
B	4	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th String

3 Am B° C+ Dm E F G#° Am

T	1	3	5	6	9	10	12	13
A	2	3	6	7	9	10	12	14
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	11	12

T	5	6	9	10	12	13
A	1	2	4	5	7	9
B	3	5	7	8	11	12

Bass on 4th String

5 Dm E F G#° Am B° C+ Dm

T	1	4	5	7	8	10	12	13
A	2	4	5	7	9	10	13	14
B	0	2	3	6	7	9	10	12

T	4	5	7	8	10	12	13
A	0	1	3	5	6	9	10
B	2	3	6	7	9	10	12

1st Inversion

Bass on 6th String

7 C+/E Dm/F E/G# F/A G#°/B Am/C B°/D C+/E

T	1	2	4	5	7	9	10	13
A	3	5	7	8	11	12	14	15
B	0	1	4	5	7	8	10	12

T	1	2	4	5	7	9	10	13
A	3	5	7	8	11	12	14	15
B	0	1	4	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th String

9 F/A G#°/B Am/C B°/D C+/E Dm/F E/G# F/A

T	1	3	5	6	9	10	12	13
A	3	6	7	9	10	12	14	15
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	11	12

T	1	3	5	6	9	10	12	13
A	3	6	7	9	10	12	14	15
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	11	12

Bass on 4th String

11 B°/D C+/E Dm/F E/G# F/A G#°/B Am/C B°/D

T	1	4	5	7	8	10	12	13
A	4	5	7	9	10	13	14	16
B	0	2	3	6	7	9	10	12

T	1	4	5	7	8	10	12	13
A	4	5	7	9	10	13	14	16
B	0	2	3	6	7	9	10	12

2nd Inversion

Bass on 6th String

13 Am/E B^o/F C⁺/G# Dm/A E/B F/C G#^o/D Am/E

T	2	4	5	7	9	10	13	14
A								
B	0	1	4	5	7	8	10	12

T	4	5	7	9	10	13	14
A	0	2	3	6	7	9	10
B	1	4	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th String

15 Dm/A E/B F/C G#^o/D Am/E B^o/F C⁺/G# Dm/A

T	3	5	6	9	10	12	13	15
A	3	6	7	9	10	12	14	15
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	11	12

T	5	6	9	10	12	13	15
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	10
B	2	3	5	7	8	11	12

Bass on 4th String

17 G#^o/D Am/E B^o/F C⁺/G# Dm/A E/B F/C G#^o/D

T	4	5	7	8	10	12	13	16
A	4	5	7	9	10	13	14	16
B	0	2	3	6	7	9	10	12

T	4	5	7	8	10	12	13	16
A	0	1	3	5	6	9	10	12
B	0	2	3	6	7	9	10	12

4

Root Position (3rd and 5th up)

Bass on 6th string

19 E F G[°] Am B[°] C⁺ Dm E

T	0	1	3	5	6	9	10	12
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	10	13
B	0	1	4	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

21 Am B[°] C⁺ Dm E F G[°] Am

T	0	1	4	5	7	8	10	12
A	1	3	5	6	9	10	12	13
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	11	12

1st Inversion (3rd and 5th up)

Bass on 6th string

23 C⁺/E Dm/F E/G[°] F/A G[°]/B Am/C B[°]/D C⁺/E

T	1	3	5	6	9	10	12	13
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	10	13
B	0	1	4	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

25 F/A G[°]/B Am/C B[°]/D C⁺/E Dm/F E/G[°] F/A

T	1	4	5	7	8	10	12	13
A	1	3	5	6	9	10	12	13
B	0	2	3	0	7	8	11	12

2nd Inversion (3rd and 5th up)

Bass on 6th string

27 Am/E B^o/F C⁺/G# Dm/A E/B F/C G#^o/D Am/E

T	1	3	5	6	9	10	12	13
A	2	4	5	7	9	10	13	14
B	0	1	4	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

29 Dm/A E/B F/C G#^o/D Am/E B^o/F C⁺/G# Dm/A

T	1	4	5	7	8	10	12	13
A	3	5	6	9	10	12	13	15
B	0	2	3	5	7	8	11	12

Root Position Spread Triads

Bass on 6th string

31 G#^o Am B^o C⁺ Dm E F G#^o

T	0	1	3	5	6	9	10	12
A	0	2	3	6	7	9	10	12
B	4	5	7	8	10	12	13	16

Bass on 5th string

33 C⁺ Dm E F G#^o Am B^o

T	0	1	4	5	7	8	10	12
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	10	13
B	3	5	7	8	11	12	14	15

1st Inversion Spread Triads

Bass on 6th string

35 E/G# F/A G#^o/B Am/C B^o/D C⁺/E Dm/F E/G#

T	0	1	3	5	6	9	10	12
A	2	3	6	7	9	10	12	14
B	4	5	7	8	10	12	13	16

Bass on 5th string

37 Am/C B^o/D C⁺/E Dm/F E/G# F/A G#^o/B Am/C

T	0	1	4	5	7	8	10	12
A	2	4	5	7	9	10	13	14
B	3	5	7	8	11	12	14	15

2nd Inversion Spread Triads

Bass on 6th string

39

	B ^o /F	C ⁺ /G [#]	Dm/A	E/B	F/C	G ^{#o} /D	Am/E	B ^o /F
T	0	1	3	5	6	9	10	12
A	0	2	3	6	7	9	10	12
B	1	4	5	7	8	10	12	13

Bass on 5th string

41

	E/B	F/C	G ^{#o} /D	Am/E	B ^o /F	C ⁺ /G [#]	Dm/A	E/B
T	0	1	4	5	7	8	10	12
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	10	13
B	2	3	5	7	8	11	12	14

The melodic minor scale produces very rich and dense harmonies that are widely used in Jazz. Some of the modes of this scale are very important to Jazz harmony. The 3rd degree (Lydian Augmented) the 4th degree (Lydian dominant) and the 7th degree (Altered Scale or Super Locrian) are all very common in Jazz harmony. We will now explore the Melodic minor scale on the upcoming examples.

A Melodic Minor (Closed) Root Position

R on 6th String

4/4

G#° Am Bm C+ D E F#° G#°

T							
A	0	2	4	6	7	9	10
B	2	3	5	7	9	11	12
	4	5	7	8	10	12	14
							16

R on 5th String

3 C+ D E F#° G#° Am Bm C+

T							
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	11
B	2	4	6	7	9	10	12
	3	5	7	9	11	12	14
							15

R on 4th String

5 E F#° G#° Am Bm C+ D E

T							
A	0	1	3	5	7	9	10
B	1	2	4	5	7	9	11
	2	4	6	7	9	10	12
							13
							14

R on 3rd String

7 Am Bm C+ D E F#° G#° Am

T							
A	0	2	4	5	7	8	10
B	1	3	5	7	9	10	12
	2	4	5	7	9	11	13
							14

1st Inversion

R on 6th String

9 D/F E/G# F#°/A G#°/B Am/C Bm/D C+/E D/F#

T							
A	0	2	4	6	7	9	10
B	0	2	3	5	7	9	11
	2	4	5	7	8	10	12

R on 5th String

11 G#°/B Am/C Bm/D C+/E D/F# E/G# F#°/A G#°/B

T							
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	11
B	0	2	4	6	7	9	10
	2	3	5	7	9	11	12

R on 4th String

13 C+/E D/F# E/G# F#°/A G#°/B Am/C Bm/D C+/E

T							
A	1	3	5	7	9	10	12
B	1	2	4	5	7	9	11
	2	4	6	7	9	10	12

R on 3rd String

15 G#°/B Am/C Bm/D C+/E D/F# E/G# F#°/A G#°/B

T							
A	0	2	4	5	7	8	10
B	0	1	3	5	7	9	10
	1	2	4	5	7	9	11

2nd Inversion

R on 6th String

17 Bm/F# C+/G# D/A E/B F#°/C G#°/D Am/E Bm/F#

T							
A	0	2	4	6	7	9	10
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	12
	2	4	5	7		10	14

R on 5th String

19 E/B F#°/C G#°/D Am/E Bm/F# C+/G# D/A E/B

T							
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	11
B	2	4	6	7	9	10	12
	2	3	5	7	9	11	14

R on 5th String

21 G#°/D Am/E Bm/F# C+/G# D/A E/B F#°/C G#°/D

T	0	1	3	5	7	9	10
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	11
B	0	2	4	6	7	9	10
		2	4	6	7	9	12

R on 4th String

23 C+/G# D/A E/B F#°/C G#°/D Am/E Bm/F# C+/G#

T	0	2	4	5	7	8	10
A	1	3	5	7	9	10	12
B	1	2	4	5	7	9	11
		2	4	5	7	9	13

A Melodic Minor Open Triads Root Position

Bass on 6th String

E F#° G#° Am Bm C+ D E

TAB 4/4

T	1	2	4	5	7	9	11	13
A	2	3	5	7	9	11	12	14
B	0	2	4	5	7	8	10	12

TAB 4/4

T	4	5	7	8	10	12		
A	4	5	7	8	10	12		
B	4	5	7	8	10	12		

Bass on 5th String

3 Am Bm C+ D E F#° G#° Am

TAB 4/4

T	1	3	5	7	9	10	12	13
A	2	4	6	7	9	10	12	14
B	0	2	3	5	7	9	11	12

TAB 4/4

T	5	7	9	10	12	13		
A	1	2	4	5	7	9		
B	3	5	7	9	11	12		

Bass on 4th String

5 D E F#° G#° Am Bm C+ D

TAB 4/4

T	2	4	5	7	8	10	12	14
A	2	4	5	7	9	11	13	14
B	0	2	4	6	7	9	10	12

TAB 4/4

T	4	5	7	8	10	12	14	
A	0	1	3	5	7	9	10	
B	2	4	6	7	9	10	12	

1st Inversion

Bass on 6th String

7 C+/E D/F# E/G# F#°/A G#°/B Am/C Bm/D C+/E

T	1	2	4	5	7	9	11	13
A								
B	3	5	7	9	11	12	14	15
	0	2	4	5	7	8	10	12

T	2	4	5	7	9	11	13
A	0	2	4	6	7	9	10
B	2	4	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th String

9 F#°/A G#°/B Am/C Bm/D C+/E D/F# E/G# F#°/A

T	1	3	5	7	9	10	12	13
A								
B	4	6	7	9	10	12	14	16
	0	2	3	5	7	9	11	12

T	3	5	7	9	10	12	13
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	11
B	2	3	5	7	9	11	12

Bass on 4th String

11 Bm/D C+/E D/F# E/G# F#°/A G#°/B Am/C Bm/D

T	2	4	5	7	8	10	12	14
A								
B	4	5	7	9	11	13	14	16
	0	2	4	6	7	9	10	12

T	2	4	5	7	8	10	12	14
A	0	1	3	5	7	9	10	12
B	0	2	4	6	7	9	10	12

2nd Inversion

Bass on 6th String

13 Am/E Bm/F C+/G# D/A E/B F#°/C G#°/D Am/E

T	2	4	5	7	9	11	13	14
A	3	5	7	9	11	12	14	15
B	0	2	4	5	7	8	10	12

T	4	5	7	9	11	13	14
A	0	2	4	6	7	9	10
B	2	4	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th String

15 D/A E/B F#°/C G#°/D Am/E Bm/F C+/G# D/A

T	3	5	7	9	10	12	13	15
A	4	6	7	9	10	12	14	16
B	0	2	3	5	7	9	11	12

T	5	7	9	10	12	13	15
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	11
B	2	3	5	7	9	11	12

Bass on 4th String

17 G#°/D Am/E Bm/F C+/G# D/A E/B F#°/C G#°/D

T	4	5	7	8	10	12	14	16
A	4	5	7	9	11	13	14	16
B	0	2	4	6	7	9	10	12

T	4	5	7	8	10	12	14	16
A	0	1	3	5	7	9	10	12
B	0	2	4	6	7	9	10	12

4

Root Position (3rd and 5th up)

Bass on 6th string

19 E F^o G^o Am Bm C⁺ D E

T 0 1 3 5 7 9 10 12
A 1 2 4 5 7 9 11 13
B 0 2 4 5 7 8 10 12

21 Am Bm C⁺ D E F^o G^o Am

T 0 2 4 5 7 8 10 12
A 1 3 5 7 9 10 12 13
B 0 2 3 5 7 9 11 12

1st Inversion (3rd and 5th up)

Bass on 6th string

23 C⁺/E D/F^o E/G^o F^o/A G^o/B Am/C Bm/D C⁺/E

T 1 3 5 7 9 10 12 13
A 1 2 4 5 7 9 11 13
B 0 2 4 5 7 8 10 12

Bass on 5th string

25 F^o/A G^o/B Am/C Bm/D C⁺/E D/F^o E/G^o F^o/A

T 2 4 5 7 8 10 12 14
A 1 3 5 7 9 10 12 13
B 0 2 3 5 7 9 11 12

2nd Inversion (3rd and 5th up)

Bass on 6th string

27 Am/E Bm/F# C+/G# D/A E/B F#°/C G#°/D Am/E

T	1	3	5	7	9	10	12	13
A	2	4	5	7	9	11	13	14
B	0	2	4	5	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

29 D/A E/B F#°/C G#°/D Am/E Bm/F# C+/G# D/A

T	2	4	5	7	8	10	12	14
A	3	5	7	9	10	12	13	15
B	0	2	3	5	7	9	11	12

Root Position Spread Triads

Bass on 6th string

31 G#^o Am Bm C⁺ D E F#^o G#^o

T	0	1	3	5	7	9	10	12
A	0	2	4	6	7	9	10	12
B	4	5	7	8	10	12	14	16

33 C⁺ D E F#^o G#^o Am Bm C⁺

T	0	2	4	5	7	8	10	12
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	11	13
B	3	5	7	9	11	12	14	15

1st Inversion Spread Triads

Bass on 6th string

35 E/G# F#^o/A G#^o/B Am/C Bm/D C⁺/E D/F# E/G#

T	0	1	3	5	7	9	10	12
A	2	4	6	7	9	10	12	14
B	4	5	7	8	10	12	14	16

Bass on 5th string

37 Am/C Bm/D C⁺/E D/F# E/G# F#^o/A G#^o/B Am/C

T	0	2	4	5	7	8	10	12
A	2	4	5	7	9	11	13	14
B	3	5	7	9	11	12	14	15

2nd Inversion Spread Triads

Bass on 6th string

39

	Bm/F#	C+/G#	D/A	E/B	F#°/C	G#°/D	Am/E	Bm/F#
T	0	1	3	5	7	9	10	12
A	0	2	4	6	7	9	10	12
B	2	4	5	7	8	10	12	14

41

	E/B	F#°/C	G#°/D	Am/E	Bm/F#	C+/G#	D/A	E/B
T	0	2	4	5	7	8	10	12
A	1	2	4	5	7	9	11	13
B	2	3	5	7	9	11	12	14

Chapter 4: Harmonic Major

Although Harmonic Major is probably the most obscure and least present scale in Jazz Harmony of the ones explored in this book, various chords are borrowed from this scale. Harmonic Major provides modes like Ionian b6, Locrian natural 2 (also called Dorian diminished) Mixolydian b9 and Lydian minor. All of these modes provide interesting chords that are present in Jazz literature. Like in the previous chapters, the following examples will show closed, open and “spread” triads.

C Harmonic Major Scale Closed Triads Root Position

R on 6th String

G Ab⁺ B[°] C D[°] Em Fm G

T	0	2	3	5	6	9	10	12
A	2	3	5	7	8	10	11	14
B	3	4	7	8	10	12	13	15

R on 5th String

3 C D[°] Em Fm G Ab⁺ B[°] C

T	0	1	4	5	7	9	10	12
A	2	3	5	6	9	10	12	14
B	3	5	7	8	10	11	14	15

R on 4th String

5 Em Fm G Ab⁺ B[°] C D[°] Em

T	0	1	3	5	6	8	9	12
A	0	1	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	2	3	5	6	9	10	12	14

R on 3rd String

7 Ab⁺ B[°] C D[°] Em Fm G Ab⁺

T	0	1	3	4	7	8	10	12
A	1	3	5	6	8	9	12	13
B	1	4	5	7	9	10	12	13

1st Inversion

R on 6th String

9 Em/G Fm/Ab G/B Ab+/C B°/D C/E D°/F Em/G

T							
A	2	3	5	6	9	10	12
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	11
	3	4	7	8	10	12	13
							14
							14
							15

R on 5th String

11 G/B Ab+/C B°/D C/E D°/F Em/G Fm/Ab G/B

T							
A	0	1	4	5	7	9	10
B	0	2	3	5	6	9	10
	2	3	5	7	8	10	11
							12
							12
							14

R on 4th String

13 C/E D°/F Em/G Fm/Ab G/B Ab+/C B°/D C/E

T							
A	1	3	5	6	8	9	12
B	0	1	4	5	7	9	10
	2	3	5	6	9	10	12
							12
							14

R on 3rd String

15 Em/G Fm/Ab G/B Ab+/C B°/D C/E D°/F Em/G

T							
A	0	1	3	4	7	8	10
B	0	1	3	5	6	8	9
	0	1	4	5	7	9	10
							12
							12
							12

2nd Inversion

R on 6th String

17 B[°]/F C/G D[°]/A^b Em/B Fm/C G/D A^b+/E B[°]/F

T							
A	0	2	3	5	6	9	10
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	11
	1	3	4	7	8	10	12

19 Em/B Fm/C G/D A^b+/E B[°]/F C/G D[°]/A^b Em/B

T							
A	0	1	4	5	7	9	10
B	2	3	5	6	8	10	12

21 G/D A^b+/E B[°]/F C/G D[°]/A^b Em/B Fm/C G/D

T	0	1	3	5	6	8	9
A	0	1	4	5	7	9	10
B	0	2	3	5	6	9	10

23 C/G D[°]/A^b Em/B Fm/C G/D A^b+/E B[°]/F C/G

T	0	1	3	4	7	8	10
A	1	3	5	6	8	9	12
B	0	1	4	5	7	9	10

Root Position

Bass on 6th string

	Em	Fm	G	Ab ⁺	B [°]	C	D [°]	Em
T	0	1	4	5	7	9	10	12
A								
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	11	14
B	0	1	3	4	7	8	10	12
T			4	5	7	9	10	12
A			0	2	3	5	6	9
B			3	4	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

	B [°]	C	D [°]	Em	Fm	G	Ab ⁺	B [°]
T	3	5	6	8	9	12	13	15
A								
B	3	5	6	9	10	12	14	15
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	11	14
T			6	8	9	12	13	15
A			1	4	5	7	9	10
B			5	7	8	10	11	14

Bass on 4th string

	D [°]	Em	Fm	G	Ab ⁺	B [°]	C	D [°]
T	1	3	4	7	8	10	12	13
A								
B	1	4	5	7	9	10	12	13
B	0	2	3	5	6	9	10	12
T		3	4	7	8	10	12	13
A		0	1	3	5	6	8	9
B		2	3	5	6	9	10	12

1st Inversion

Bass on 6th string

7 C/E D^o/F Em/G Fm/Ab G/B Ab⁺/C B^o/D C/E

T	0	1	4	5	7	9	10	12
A	3	5	7	8	10	11	14	15
B	0	1	3	4	7	8	10	12

T	1	4	5	7	9	10	12
A	0	2	3	5	6	9	10
B	1	3	4	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

9 G/B Ab⁺/C B^o/D C/E D^o/F Em/G Fm/Ab G/B

T	3	5	6	8	9	12	13	15
A	5	6	9	10	12	14	15	17
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	11	14

T	3	5	6	8	9	12	13	15
A	0	6	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	11	14

Bass on 4th string

11 B^o/D C/E D^o/F Em/G Fm/Ab G/B Ab⁺/C B^o/D

T	1	3	4	7	8	10	12	13
A	4	5	7	9	10	12	13	16
B	0	2	3	5	6	9	10	12

T	1	3	4	7	8	10	12	13
A	0	1	3	5	6	8	9	12
B	0	2	3	5	6	9	10	12

2nd Inversion

Bass on 6th string

13 $A\flat^+/E$ B°/F C/G $D^\circ/A\flat$ $E\flat m/B$ $F\flat m/C$ G/D $A\flat^+/E$

T	1	4	5	7	9	10	12	13
A								
B	3	5	7	8	10	11	14	10
	0	1	3	4	7	8	10	12

T	4	5	7	9	10	12	13
A							
B	0	2	3	5	6	9	10
	1	3	4	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

15 $E\flat m/B$ $F\flat m/C$ G/D $A\flat^+/E$ B°/F C/G $D^\circ/A\flat$ $E\flat m/B$

T	5	6	8	4	12	13	15	17
A								
B	5	6	9	2	12	14	15	17
	2	3	5		8	10	11	14

T	5	6	8	9	12	13	15	17
A								
B	0	1	4	5	7	9	10	12
	2	3	5	7	8	10	11	14

Bass on 4th string

17 G/D $A\flat^+/E$ B°/F C/G $D^\circ/A\flat$ $E\flat m/B$ $F\flat m/C$ G/D

T	3	4	7	8	10	12	13	15
A								
B	4	5	7	9	10	12	13	16
	0	2	3	5	6	9	10	12

T	3	4	7	8	10	12	13	15
A								
B	0	1	3	5	6	8	9	16
	0	2	3	5	6	9	10	12

Root Position (3rd and 5th up)

Bass on 6th string

19 Em Fm G Ab⁺ B[°] C D[°] Em

T	0	1	3	5	6	8	9	12
A	0	1	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	0	1	3	4	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

21 B[°] C D[°] Em Fm G Ab⁺ B[°]

T	1	3	4	7	8	10	12	13
A	3	5	6	8	9	12	13	15
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	11	14

1st Inversion (3rd and 5th up)

Bass on 6th string

23 C/E D[°]/F Em/G Fm/Ab G/B Ab⁺/C B[°]/D C/E

T	1	3	5	6	8	9	12	13
A	0	1	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	0	1	3	4	7	8	10	12

Bass on 5th string

25 G/B Ab⁺/C B[°]/D C/E D[°]/F Em/G Fm/Ab G/B

T	3	4	7	8	10	12	13	15
A	3	5	6	8	9	12	13	15
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	11	14

2nd Inversion (3rd and 5th up)

Bass on 6th string

27 $A\flat^+/E$ B°/F C/G $D^\circ/A\flat$ Em/B Fm/C G/D $A\flat^+/E$

T	1	3	5	6	8	9	12	13
A	1	4	5	7	9	10	12	13
B	0	1	3	4	7	8	10	12

29 Em/B Fm/C G/D $A\flat^+/E$ B°/F C/G $Fm/A\flat$ Em/B

T	3	4	7	8	10	12	13	15
A	5	6	8	9	12	13	15	17
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	11	14

Root Position Spread Triads

Bass on 6th string

31 G Ab⁺ B[°] C D[°] Em Fm G

T	0	1	3	5	6	8	9	12
A	0	2	3	5	6	9	10	12
B	3	4	7	8	10	12	13	15

Bass on 5th string

33 C D[°] Em Fm G Ab⁺ B[°] C

T	0	1	3	4	7	8	10	12
A	0	1	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	3	5	7	8	10	11	14	15

1st Inversion Spread Triads

Bass on 6th string

35 Em/G Fm/Ab G/B Ab⁺/C B[°]/D C/E D[°]/F Em/G

T	0	1	3	5	6	8	9	12
A	2	3	5	6	9	10	12	14
B	3	4	7	8	10	12	13	15

Bass on 5th string

37 Ab⁺/C B[°]/D C/E D[°]/F Em/G Fm/Ab G/B Ab⁺/C

T	0	1	3	4	7	8	10	12
A	1	4	5	7	9	10	12	13
B	3	5	7	8	10	11	14	15

2nd Inversion Spread Triads

Bass on 6th string

39 B°/F C/G D°/A^{\flat} E_m/B F_m/C G/D $A^{\flat+}/E$ B°/F

T	0	1	3	5	6	8	9	12
A	0	2	3	5	6	9	10	12
B	1	3	4	7	8	10	12	13

Bass on 5th string

41 E_m/B F_m/C G/D $A^{\flat+}/E$ B°/F C/G D°/A^{\flat} E_m/B

T	0	1	3	4	7	8	10	12
A	0	1	4	5	7	9	10	12
B	2	3	5	7	8	10	11	14

Chapter 5: Non-Triadic 3 Note Structures

Suspended Triads

Until now we've been focusing on triads that are formed by stacking thirds. Constructing these types of triads has given us various triadic shapes all over the fretboard, but this is just the beginning. In this chapter we'll explore some of the different triads that can be built in the 4 tonalities that we are exploring.

The most common example of non-tertian triads are suspended chords. A suspended chord replaces the third of a chord for either the 2nd or the 4th. It should be noted that some suspended triads can be respelled and for practical purposes triads names will be consistent with the previous chord played (For example, C D G can be either analyzed as Csus2 or as Gsus4 in first inversion)

This exercise shows closed triads of G major with motion between the 3rd and the suspensions. The voice movement is in the inner voice of the chords, while on the next exercise the movement will be on the top voice.

G Major triads with suspensions

Bass on 4th string

5

D Major triads with motion

Roots on 4th and 5th String

2 0 2 3 | 3 2 3 5 | 5 3 5 7 | 7 5 7 9

T 4/4 2 2 2 2 | 4 4 4 4 | 6 6 6 6 | 7 7 7 7

A 4/4 0 0 0 0 | 2 2 2 2 | 4 4 4 4 | 5 5 5 5

B

7 5 7 8 | 8 7 8 10 | 10 8 10 12 | 12 10 12 14

T 4/4 7 7 7 7 | 9 9 9 9 | 11 11 11 11 | 12 12 12 12

A 4/4 5 5 5 5 | 7 7 7 7 | 9 9 9 9 | 10 10 10 10

B

5

9 7 9 10 | 10 9 10 12 | 12 10 12 14 | 14

T 9 9 9 9 | 11 11 11 11 | 12 12 12 12 | 14

A 7 7 7 7 | 9 9 9 9 | 11 11 11 11 | 12

B

14 12 14 15 | 15 14 15 17 | 17 15 17 19 | 19

T 14 14 14 14 | 16 16 16 16 | 17 17 17 17 | 19

A 12 12 12 12 | 14 14 14 14 | 16 16 16 16 | 17

B

We saw that when diatonically moving some of the notes to the 2nd or 4th of the chord intervals that are not a perfect 4th or a natural 2nd can be created. The first time we see this is on the B minor triad, where the suspension to the second is to a flat 2nd. This chord (1 b2 5) will be called a Phrygian triad (based on the mode). The next chord in G major that presents a different interval is C which produces a Lydian triad (1 #4 5). The other two possibilities are produced on the F#dim chord; Locrian susb2 (1 b2 b5) and Locrian sus4 (1 4 b5).

The tonalities of Melodic Minor, Harmonic Minor and Harmonic Major share the quality that different 3 note structures that are not based on stacked thirds can generate chords that enharmonically spell triads. The third chord of harmonic major is a minor chord (1 b3 5) but 2 other chords can be created; a major triad (1 b4 5) and an augmented triad (1 b4 b6). Notice how the enharmonic notes of b4 and b6 provide the note to create different triads based on the same root. If we combine this with the suspended triads we can have 21 different triads in Harmonic Major. For simplicity we will only dig into the triads that resemble a major, minor, diminished or augmented triad.

The following example shows the extended triads of G Harmonic Minor, G Melodic Minor and G Harmonic Major. Notice that no suspended triads are presented and that we are dealing with closed voicings in root position. Students should move this example to all keys and learn the inversions as well as the open triads.

Extended Triads

G Harmonic Minor

Gm A^o B^{b+} C^o Cm D D⁺ E^{b^o} E^bm Eb F^{#^o} F^{#+} Gm

T	3	4	7	7	8	10	11	10	11	11	13	15	15
A	3	5	7	8	8	11	11	11	11	11	12	14	15
B	5	7	8	10	10	12	12	13	13	13	16	16	17

G Melodic Minor

5 Gm Am B^{b+} C D D⁺ E^o F^{#^o} F^{#+} Gm

T	3	5	7	8	10	11	11	13	15	15
A	3	5	7	9	11	11	12	14	15	15
B	5	7	8	10	12	12	14	16	16	17

G Harmonic Major

8 G G⁺ A^o Bm B B⁺ C^o Cm D E^{b^o} E^{b+} F^{#^o}

T	3	4	4	7	7	8	7	8	10	10	12	13
A	4	4	5	7	8	8	8	8	11	11	12	14
B	5	5	7	9	9	9	10	10	12	13	13	16

Synthetic 3 note structures

For our own studying purposes, synthetic 3 note structures will be defined as 3 note structures that can't be created by stacking thirds diatonically or by the different variations of suspended chords. In other words, a synthetic 3 note structure can be any 3 note combination that we create. The most common use of this structures can be seen in different voicings that discard certain notes to emphasize notes considered more important.

The next following examples show different synthetic voicings that I consider useful. I have paired them with a couple of fingering options for the student to explore different possibilities around the neck.

The first example is a chord that is derived from a Major7 Chord. In this case we omit the 5th and end with a R37 shape. This chord can also be used over different harmonies to create different sounds. If, for example, used over a minor chord we produce a rootless voicing with the 3rd, 5th and 9th.

Bb R37

The image shows musical notation for a Bb R37 chord in 4/4 time. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The chord is represented by three notes: Bb (3rd fret), D (5th fret), and F (7th fret). Below the staff are two alternative fingerings for the T (thumb), A (annular), and B (basil) fingers. The first fingering is: T (2), A (0), B (1) for the first measure; T (3), A (7), B (5) for the second measure; T (7), A (8), B (12) for the third measure; T (5), A (3), B (3) for the fourth measure; T (6), A (10), B (7) for the fifth measure; T (10), A (11), B (14) for the sixth measure; T (17), A (15), B (15) for the seventh measure. The second fingering is: T (3), A (7), B (5) for the first measure; T (10), A (8), B (12) for the second measure; T (11), A (14), B (12) for the third measure; T (7), A (7), B (8) for the fourth measure; T (11), A (14), B (12) for the fifth measure; T (11), A (14), B (12) for the sixth measure; T (11), A (14), B (12) for the seventh measure.

The second example follows a chord that follows the same principle with a Dominant Chord. The result is a R3b7 voicing.

2

3 Bb R3b7

T	1	3	7	9	6	10	16
A	0	6	8	7	9	11	15
B	1	5	11	8	7	13	15

T			3	9	11		
A			3	7	13		
B	6	8	6	8	12		
	5	11					
	6	10					

The third example is a variation of the previous chord but replacing the Root of the chord with the major 13th, resulting in a rootless 13th voicing consisting of the flat 7th, 3rd and 13th. Although the order seems strange, these shapes comes from a very common Dominant 13th voicing. The 4th example is a variation of the previous voicing consisting of flat 7th, 3rd and flat 13th.

Bb R37

T	2	3	7	5	6	10	17
A	0	7	8	3	10	11	15
B	1	5	12	3	7	14	15

T			3	10	11		
A			3	7	14		
B	7	8	7	8	12		
	5	12					
	6	10					

One last thing that can be done to create non-triadic 3 note structures is stacking different intervals other than thirds. Since the guitar is an instrument tuned mostly in fourths, creating chords that stack 2nds would be counterproductive and would generate chords that would be extremely difficult to play (if not impossible) in their closed position. Thirds are discarded and so are 6ths and 7ths (the inversion of 3rds and 2nds will produce the same chords). We are left with chords made up of stacking 4ths and 5ths. Like I mentioned before, the guitar is tuned in 4ths so the chords made up of fourths will fit very nicely in the guitar neck. 5ths will be more complex since the intervals start to get wider but are achievable.

The sound of fourths is a very strong part of Jazz harmony. Many iconic players have created great blocked chord solos and chord melodies by combining chords made up of fourths into their musical palette. A very common technique is to build a quartal voicing that fit in the tonality with the melody on top. This will provide a strong support to the melodic line and add a different sound to that of stacked thirds. In reality, most advanced players build chords that might contain different intervals inside the chord and pick carefully the chord tone and interval to create different textures. A closer interval will produce a richer sound with clashes. Wider intervals will produce a more “open” sound in most cases.

The following examples show a C major scale harmonized with 4ths and 5ths in closed position. The student should be able to transpose and invert these chords and explore other areas of the neck.

C major stacked in 4ths

Closed triads with root on 5th, 4th and 3rd string

	4	5	7	9	10	12	14	16
T	4	5	7	9	10	12	14	16
A	3	5	7	9	10	12	14	15
B	3	5	7	8	10	12	14	15

3

	3	5	6	8	10	12	13	15
T	3	5	6	8	10	12	13	15
A	2	4	5	7	9	10	12	14
B	2	3	5	7	9	10	12	14

5

	3	5	7	8	10	12	13	15
T	3	5	7	8	10	12	13	15
A	3	5	6	8	10	12	13	15
B	2	4	5	7	9	10	12	14

C major stacked in 5ths

Closed triads with root on 5th, 4th and 3rd string

7

	7	9	10	12	14	16	17	19
T								
A	5	7	9	10	12	14	15	17
B	3	5	7	8	10	12	14	15

9

	8	10	12	13	15	17	18	20
T								
A	5	7	9	10	12	14	16	17
B	3	5	7	9	10	12	14	15

11

	8	10	12	13	15	17	19	20
T								
A	6	8	10	12	13	15	17	18
B	4	5	7	9	10	12	14	16

Chapter 6: Triadic super-imposition

In this chapter we will study how to super-impose triads to generate different sonorities over certain chords. The possibilities are very extent, so we will take a quick glance to certain useful super-impositions. To super-impose a triad means to play the notes of a triad over a different harmony to create a rich sound. Staying close to the triad provides better phrasing (when playing melodically) and precise and simple voicings (when playing harmonically). Super-imposing triads is a very common technique used by horn players, piano players as well as by arrangers to create voicings that are familiar and highlight specific chord tones.

The following examples show what happens when triads are super-imposed over a specific sound. The different charts will show the chord tones produce and in which situation the created chords work over existing harmonies. Note that we are only considering harmonic structures created from the harmonization of the Major Scale, Melodic Minor Scale, Harmonic Minor Scale and Harmonic Major Scale. Some of the chord tones might be re-spelled for a better understanding of the created triad (For example a b3 can be respelled as a #9 to suggest a different chord or sound).

Major triads over a root note.

Chord	Triad over I	Chord tones	Works over
C/C	I	1-3-5	
Db/C	bII	b9-4-b13	Sus7b9b13
D/C	II	9-#11-6	Lydian
Eb/C	bIII	b3-5-m7	Minor7
E/C	III	3-#5-maj7	Major7#5
F/C	IV	4 – 6 – R	Sus13
Gb/C	bIV	#11 – b7 – b9	Dom7b9#11
G/C	V	5 – maj7 – 9	C69
Ab/C	bVI	b13 – R – b3	Minb6
A/C	VI	6 – b9 – 3	Maj6b9
Bb/C	bVII	b7 – 9 – 4	9 Sus4
B/C	VII	7 – b3 (#9) – b5 (#11)	Min/maj7b5 , Dom7#9#11

Minor triads over a root note.

Chord	Triad over I	Chord tones	Works over
Cm/C	I _m	1-b3-5	
Dbm/C	bII _m	b9-3-b13	b9b13
Dm/C	II _m	9-4-6	Ionian
Ebm/C	bIII _m	b3-b5-m7	Minor7b5
Em/C	III _m	3-5-maj7	Major7
Fm/C	IV _m	4 – b13 – R	Susb13
Gbm/C	bIV _m	#11 – 6 – b9	Dom7b9,#11,13
Gm/C	V _m	5 – b7 – 9	9
Abm/C	bVI _m	b13 – maj7 – b3	Minmaj7
Am/C	VI _m	6 – R– 3	Maj6
Bbm/C	bVII _m	b7 – b9 – 4	b9 Sus4
Bm/C	VII _m	maj7 – 9 – #11	Lydian9

Augmented triads over a root note .

Chord	Triad over I	Chord tones	Works over
Caug/C	I _{aug}	1-3-#5	Augmented
Dbaug/C	bII _{aug}	b9-4-13	Sus4b9
Daug/C	II _{aug}	9-#11-b7	Lydian dominant
Ebaug/C	bIII _{aug}	b3-5-maj7	Min/Maj7
Eaug/C	III _{aug}	3-#5-R	Augmented
Faug/C	IV _{aug}	13 – 6 – b9	Sus4b9
Gbaug/C	bIV _{aug}	#11 – b7 – 9	Lydian dominant
Gaug/C	V _{aug}	5 – maj7 – b3	Min/Maj7
Abaug/C	bVI _{aug}	#5 – R – 3	Augmented
Aaug/C	VI _{aug}	6 – b9 – 4	Sus4b9
Bbaug/C	bVII _{aug}	b7 – 9 – #11	Lydian dominant
Baug/C	VII _{aug}	7 – b3– 5	Min/Maj7

Because augmented triads are symmetrical, an augmented triad with a root on a note a major 3rd apart from another augmented triad is an inversion of the starting triad. For example C aug (C E G#) can be respelled as E aug (E G# C) and as G# aug (G# C E). These inversions will produce the same chord structure over the root note.

Diminished triads over a root note. Remember that only fully diminished chords (including a bb7) are symmetrical. Diminished triads aren't.

Chord	Triad over I	Chord tones	Works over
Cdim/C	I ^{dim}	1-b3b5	dim
Dbdim/C	bII ^{dim}	b9-3-5	b9
Ddim/C	II ^{dim}	9-4-b13	9b13
Ebdim/C	bIII ^{dim}	#9-#11-13 b3, b5, bb7	Dom#9#11,13 Dim7
Edim/C	III ^{dim}	3-5-7	Dom7
Fdim/C	IV ^{dim}	4 – b13 – maj7	Maj7b9b13
Gbdim/C	bIV ^{dim}	#11 – 6 – R	Lydian
Gdim/C	V ^{dim}	5 – b7 – b9	Dom7b9
Abdim/C	bV ^{dim}	#5 – maj7 – 9	Maj7#5
Adim/C	VI ^{dim}	6 – R– b3	Min6
Bbdim/C	bVII ^{dim}	b7 – b9 – #9	Dom7b9#9
Bdim/C	VII ^{dim}	maj7 – 9 – 4	Ionian

We explored how triads work over a root note. This is a first level of density that can be created and that can work very well on the guitar. By utilizing major, minor, augmented and diminished triads over different root notes we can have access to virtually any sonority we want when we superimpose the triad correctly.

A second level of density would be superimposing two triads or creating polychords. A polychord consists of two or more chords stacked together. For example C and D form a polychord that includes the notes C E G D F# A and that generate a Lydian sound. Since the guitar is limited to playing 6 notes at a time 2 chord polychords are pushing the limit of a guitar, but building polychords when playing in a guitar ensemble or playing duo with another guitar player or pianist can be very interesting. For the purpose of keeping this book simple polychords won't be studied in depth.

The concepts applied in this chapter can be either used melodically or harmonically. We could either choose to comp through a tune using only superimposed triads as our core harmony or we could use these same concepts to improvise lines that outline the upper structure of chords. Please refer to the etudes and exercises at the end of this book for different examples of how to apply these concepts musically. We will be only covering harmonic material since the melodic aspects of superimposing triads melodically can be a theme for an entire new book.

Chapter 7: Etudes and Exercises

This last chapter is filled with etudes and exercises that will help the reader transfer the knowledge acquired throughout the book in a musical context. The etudes should be approached as musical pieces; they should be treated with the utmost musicality and if possible memorized and performed. The etudes will be developed progressively, starting with a more simplistic version and developing concepts until a final and more advanced version. The exercises, on the other hand, will be less complex and attempt to develop concepts in more abstract ways.

Blue Bossa

Closed Triad Etude#1

Natural triads with bass on 5th string

Etude by Pepe Valdez

Cm Fm/C

T A B 4/4 0 0 1 1 3 3 3 3 1 1 3 3 3 3

5 D° G/D Cm/Eb

T A B 1 3 5 4 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 6 6

9 Ebm Ab/Eb Db/F

T A B 3 4 6 5 6 6 6 6 6 6 8 8 8 8

13 D°/F G Cm/G

T A B 7 6 8 7 9 10 8 10 8 10 8 10 8 10 10 10

Closed Triad Etude#2
Octave higher (mostly) in Position

17 Cm Fm/C

T 8 8 9 9
A 8 8 10 10
B 10 10 10 10

21 D° G/D Cm/Eb

T 9 7 8 8
A 10 8 8 8
B 12 7 8 8

25 Ebm Ab/Eb Db/F

T 6 8 9 9
A 7 9 9 9
B 8 8 10 10

29 D°/F G Cm/G

T 10 10 11 11
A 9 12 13 13
B 10 12 12 12

Closed Triad Etude #3

Use of other triads including upper structures and synthetic triads

33 Cm Cm/Bb Fm⁹/Ab Fm⁷/Ab

T	0	0	5	3
A	1	1	6	6
B	3	1	4	4

37 D^o/Ab B^o Cm Cm/Bb

T				
A	3	3	5	5
B	4	7	8	6

41 Ebm/Bb C^o Fm/C Db/F

T				
A	4	4	6	6
B	6	8	8	8

45 D^o/F B^o/F Cm/G

T	7	7	8	8
A	6	9	10	10
B	8	8	10	10

Closed Triad Etude #4 Octave higher

49 Cm Cm/B \flat Fm 9 /A \flat Fm 7 /A \flat

T	8	8	8	6
A	8	8	8	8
B	10	8	6	6

53 D $^{\circ}$ /A \flat B $^{\circ}$ Cm Cm/B \flat

T	6	6	8	8
A	7	7	8	8
B	6	9	10	8

57 Ebm/B \flat C $^{\circ}$ Fm/C D \flat /F

T	7	7	9	9
A	8	8	10	9
B	8	10	10	10

61 Fm B $^{\circ}$ /F Cm/G

T	8	10	8	8
A	9	12	8	8
B	10	10	8	8

Excercise 1

Harmony Ascending by thirds, voicing descending 1 note at a time
 Closed triads, bass on 3rd string

by Pepe Valdez

C Em G B° Dm F Am C Em G B° Dm

5 4 3 2 1

T
A
B

5 F Am C Em G B° Dm F Am C Em G

5 4 3 2 1

T
A
B

9 B° Dm F Am C Em

5 4 3 2 1

T
A
B

Excercise 2

Harmony Ascending by thirds, voicing descending 1 note at a time
 Closed triads, bass on 4th string

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C Em G B° Dm F Am C Em G B° Dm

T	13	12	12	12	10	10	10	8	8	8	6	6
A	12	12	12	10	10	10	9	9	9	7	7	7
B	14	14	12	12	12	10	10	10	9	9	9	7

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F Am C Em G B° Dm F Am

T	6	5	5	5	3	3	3	1	1
A	5	5	5	4	4	4	2	2	2
B	7	7	5	5	5	3	3	3	2

Excercise 3

Harmony Ascending by thirds, voicing descending 1 note at a time
Open triads, bass on 5th string

C Em G B° Dm F Am C Em G B° Dm

T	17	17	15	15	15	13	13	13	12	12	12	10
A	17	17	17	15	15	15	14	14	14	12	12	12
B	15	14	14	14	12	12	12	10	10	10	8	8

F Am C Em G B° Dm F Am C

T	10	10	8	8	8	6	6	6	5	5		
A	10	10	10	9	9	9	7	7	7	5		
B	8	7	7	7	5	5	5	3	3	3		

Excercise 4

Harmony descending by thirds, 1 voice ascending at a time
Open triads, bass on 5th string

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C Am F Dm B^o G Em C Am F Dm B^o

T	5	5	6	6	6	8	8	8	10	10	10	12
A	5	7	7	7	9	9	9	10	10	10	12	12
B	3	3	3	5	5	5	7	7	7	8	8	8

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G Em C Am F Dm B^o G Em C

T	12	12	13	13	13	15	15	15	17	17		
A	12	14	14	14	15	15	15	17	17	17		
B	10	10	10	12	12	12	14	14	14	15		

Excercise 5

Harmony ascending by 4ths, voices ascending 2 notes at a time
 Closed triads with bass on 5th string

34 C F B° Em Am Dm G C F B° Em Am

T	0	2	4	4	5	7	7	9	10	10	12	14
A	2	3	3	5	7	7	9	10	10	12	14	14
B	3	3	5	7	7	8	10	10	12	14	14	15

Excercise 6

Harmony ascending by 4ths, voices ascending 2 notes at a time
 Closed triads with bass on 4th string

38 C F B° Em Am Dm G C F B° Em Am

T	1	1	3	5	5	6	8	8	10	12	12	13
A	0	2	4	4	5	7	7	9	10	10	12	14
B	2	3	3	5	7	7	9	10	10	12	14	14

Excercise 7

Harmony ascending by 4ths, voices ascending 2 notes at a time
 Closed triads with bass on 3rd string

42 C F B° Em Am Dm G C F B° Em Am

T	0	1	1	3	5	5	7	8	8	10	12	12
A	1	1	3	5	5	6	8	8	10	12	12	13
B	0	2	4	4	5	7	7	9	10	10	12	14

I - IV - V

Common progression in different string sets

Diagram illustrating the I - IV - V progression in different string sets, showing chord diagrams for C, F, and G, and corresponding fretboard diagrams for strings T, A, and B.

Chord diagrams: C (x02321), F (133211), G (320033).

Fretboard diagrams (strings T, A, B):

- Measure 1 (C): T (0, 1, 2), A (4, 0, 2), B (4, 3, 3)
- Measure 2 (F): T (1, 1, 2), A (2, 3, 3), B (3, 3, 1)
- Measure 3 (G): T (1, 0, 0), A (0, 0, 0), B (0, 2, 3)
- Measure 4 (C): T (1, 0, 0), A (0, 0, 0), B (0, 2, 3)

Bass note on 5th string (closed)

Diagram illustrating the I - IV - V progression in different string sets, showing chord diagrams for C, F, and G, and corresponding fretboard diagrams for strings T, A, and B, with a bass note on the 5th string (closed).

Chord diagrams: C, F, G, C.

Fretboard diagrams (strings T, A, B):

- Measure 1 (C): T (0, 2, 3), A (0, 2, 3), B (0, 3, 3)
- Measure 2 (F): T (2, 3, 3), A (2, 3, 3), B (2, 3, 3)
- Measure 3 (G): T (0, 0, 2), A (0, 0, 2), B (0, 2, 2)
- Measure 4 (C): T (0, 2, 3), A (0, 2, 3), B (0, 3, 3)

Diagram illustrating the I - IV - V progression in different string sets, showing chord diagrams for C, F, and G, and corresponding fretboard diagrams for strings T, A, and B, with a bass note on the 5th string (closed).

Chord diagrams: C, F, G, C.

Fretboard diagrams (strings T, A, B):

- Measure 1 (C): T (5, 5, 7), A (5, 5, 7), B (5, 7, 7)
- Measure 2 (F): T (5, 7, 8), A (5, 7, 8), B (5, 8, 8)
- Measure 3 (G): T (4, 5, 5), A (4, 5, 5), B (4, 5, 5)
- Measure 4 (C): T (5, 5, 7), A (5, 5, 7), B (5, 7, 7)

Diagram illustrating the I - IV - V progression in different string sets, showing chord diagrams for C, F, and G, and corresponding fretboard diagrams for strings T, A, and B, with a bass note on the 5th string (closed).

Chord diagrams: C, F, G, C.

Fretboard diagrams (strings T, A, B):

- Measure 1 (C): T (9, 10, 10), A (9, 10, 10), B (9, 10, 10)
- Measure 2 (F): T (10, 10, 12), A (10, 10, 12), B (10, 12, 12)
- Measure 3 (G): T (7, 9, 10), A (7, 9, 10), B (7, 10, 10)
- Measure 4 (C): T (9, 10, 10), A (9, 10, 10), B (9, 10, 10)

Bass note on 4th string (closed)

17 C F G C

T	1	1	0	1
A	0	2	0	0
B	2	3	0	2

21 C F G C

T	5	6	3	5
A	5	5	4	5
B	5	7	5	5

25 C F G C

T	8	10	8	8
A	9	10	7	9
B	10	10	9	10

Bass note on 3rd string (closed)

29 C F G C

0	1	3	0
1	1	3	1
0	2	4	0

33 C F G C

3	5	7	3
5	6	8	5
5	5	7	5

37 C F G C

8	8	10	8
8	10	12	8
9	10	12	9

This exercise should be now played in every key and with open triads.

Suspended Triads

On this exercise we will work with suspending the 5th of the chord and moving it to the 4th. i.e E - G - B turns into E - G - A (1-3-5 to 1-3-4)

Em Em/G Em/B

Now let's harmonize the G major scale using this formula (1-3-4). Notice that the second interval between 3 and 4 create a rich and modern sound.

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On this next exercise we can see a pattern working with the 1st inversion of this formula

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Now let's work an arpeggio with the same chord voicings.

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There Will Never Be Another You

Superimposition of Triads

Staff 1: $E\flat\text{maj}7$ (Gm triad) | $Dm^{7(b5)}$ (Fm triad) | $G^{7(b9)}$ (Abm triad)

Staff 2: Cm^7 (Eb triad) | $B\flat m^7$ (Db triad) | $E\flat^7$ (Db triad)

Staff 3: $A\flat\text{maj}7$ (Bb triad) | $D\flat^{7(\#11)}$ (Eb triad) | $E\flat\text{maj}7$ (F triad) | Cm^7 (Eb triad)

Staff 4: F^7 (Cm triad) | Fm^7 (Ab triad) | $B\flat^7$ (Bbaug triad)

Staff 5: $E\flat\text{maj}7$ (F triad) | $Dm^{7(b5)}$ (Fm triad) | $G^{7(b9)}$ (Gaug triad)

Staff 6: Cm^7 (Ab triad) | $B\flat m^7$ (Db triad) | $E\flat^7$ (Caug triad)

Staff 7: $A\flat\text{maj}7$ (Cm triad) | $D\flat^{7(\#11)}$ (Eb triad) | $E\flat\text{maj}7$ (F triad) | C^7 (Bb triad)

Staff 8: $A^{m7(b5)}$ (Cm triad) | D^7 (Am triad) | $G^{m7(b5)}$ (Bbm triad) | C^7 (Gm triad) | Fm^7 (Ab triad) | $B\flat^7$ (Bbaug triad) | $E\flat\text{maj}7$ (F triad)