

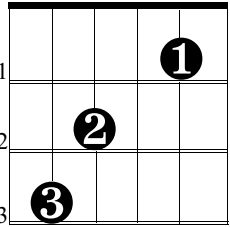
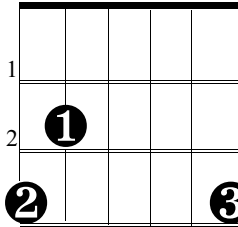
## Triads

In order to harmonize and compose with more complex chords ('Dsus4', 'Em7b5', etc.), the first step is to know how to build a chord from 'scratch'. This requires an understanding of how individual notes can be arranged to build chords with three note *triads*. Once the fundamentals of triads are understood, then the process of writing and harmonizing with more complex chords can begin.

### The Triad

The fundamental base of any chord is a three-note combination called the *triad*. There are only four types of triads: *Major*, *Minor*, *Diminished*, and *Augmented*. Major and Minor chords are essentially three-note major and minor triads. On guitar, a major or minor chord can consist of up to six total strings, but there are actually only three different notes (*triad*) that makeup each chord (see chord/triad examples shown right).

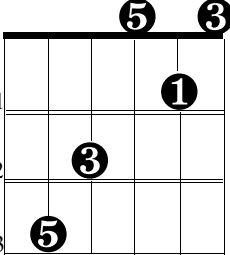
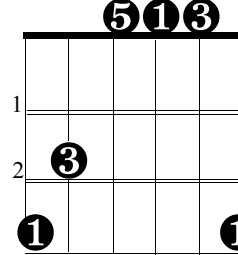
#### Examples

x C E G C E 	G B D G B G 
<b>'C' Triad: 'C-E-G'</b>	<b>'G' Triad: 'G-B-D'</b>

### 'Spelling-Out' Major Triads

'Spelling-out' triads involves matching each letter note of a triad to its corresponding degree from the Major scale. For example, the 'C', 'E', and 'G' notes that makeup a 'C' chord will correspond to the first, third, and fifth degrees of the 'C' Major scale, so a 'C' Major triad can be spelled-out with letters ('C'- 'E'- 'G'), or with degrees ('1'- '3'- '5'). Since degrees are universal and apply to any key, every major triad is spelled-out '1-3-5'.

#### Examples

	
<b>Major Triad: '1-3-5'</b>	<b>Major Triad: '1-3-5'</b>

### Comparison Chart

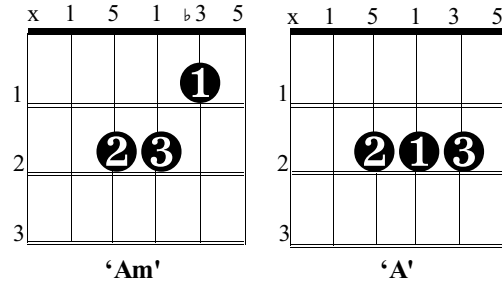
The chart below shows how the major triad is derived from the Major scale, comparing how degrees and letter notes 'sync-up' with how a major triad is 'spelled-out'.

Degree	'1'	'2'	'3'	'4'	'5'
<b>Any Major Triad</b>	'1'		'3'		'5'
<b>'C' Major Scale</b>	'C'	'D'	'E'	'F'	'G'
<b>'C' Major Triad</b>	'C'		'E'		'G'
<b>'G' Major Scale</b>	'G'	'A'	'B'	'C'	'D'
<b>'G' Major Triad</b>	'G'		'B'		'D'

**‘Spelling- Out’ Minor Triads**

To ‘spell-out’ a *minor triad*, match each letter note of a triad to its corresponding degree from the Minor scale. For example, an ‘A’ Minor chord is a triad of ‘A’, ‘C’, and ‘E’ notes, which correspond to the first, flattened third, and fifth degrees from the ‘A’ Minor scale. An ‘A’ Minor triad can be spelled-out with letters (‘A-C-E’), or with degrees (‘1- $\flat$ 3-5’). Since degrees are universal and apply to any key, every minor triad is spelled-out ‘1- $\flat$ 3-5’.

<b>Degree</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	$\flat$ <b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Minor Triad</b>	<b>1</b>		$\flat$ <b>3</b>		<b>5</b>
<b>‘Am’ Scale</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>‘Am’ Triad</b>	<b>A</b>		<b>C</b>		<b>E</b>



**Major vs. Minor Triads**

There is only one note that differentiates between a major and minor triad: the *flattened third degree* (‘ $\flat$ 3’). The flattened third degree is essential to any type of Minor chord (‘m7’, ‘m9’, etc.) or scale, and when compared to the third degree found in Major chords, produces a more sad or serious mood or tone.

**Triad Comparison Chart**

<b>Triad</b>	<b>Degrees</b>	<b>Chord</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Major</b>	<b>‘1-3-5’</b>	<b>‘A’</b>	<b>‘A-C<math>\sharp</math>-E’</b>
<b>Minor</b>	<b>‘1-<math>\flat</math>3-5’</b>	<b>‘Am’</b>	<b>‘A-C-E’</b>
<b>Diminished</b>	<b>‘1-<math>\flat</math>3-<math>\flat</math>5’</b>	<b>‘Adim’</b>	<b>‘A-C-E<math>\flat</math>’</b>
<b>Augmented</b>	<b>‘1-3-<math>\sharp</math>5’</b>	<b>‘A+’</b>	<b>‘A-C<math>\sharp</math>-F’</b>

**‘I-IV-V’ vs. ‘1-3-5’ Terms**

One of the common mistakes students make regarding the application of degrees is confusing the *primary chord degrees* (‘I-IV-V’) with the *individual degrees* (‘1-3-5’ or ‘1- $\flat$ 3-5’) that makeup a particular chord or triad. For example, in the Key of ‘C’ each of the primary chords (‘C’, ‘F’, and ‘G’) is each made up of a major triad (‘1-3-5’), however the ‘F’ chord corresponds to the ‘IV’ degree of the ‘C’ Major scale. Two examples comparing degrees to chords and keys are shown below.

<b>‘C’ Major Scale</b>	<b>‘C’</b>	<b>‘D’</b>	<b>‘E’</b>	<b>‘F’</b>	<b>‘G’</b>
<b>Degrees</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Primary Chords</b>	<b>‘C’</b>			<b>‘F’</b>	<b>‘G’</b>
<b>‘C’ Major Triad</b>	<b>‘C’</b>		<b>‘E’</b>		<b>‘G’</b>

<b>Chord</b>	<b>Key of ‘C’</b>	<b>Triad</b>
<b>‘I’</b>	<b>‘C’</b>	<b>‘1-3-5’</b>
<b>‘IV’</b>	<b>‘F’</b>	<b>‘1-3-5’</b>
<b>‘V’</b>	<b>‘G’</b>	<b>‘1-3-5’</b>