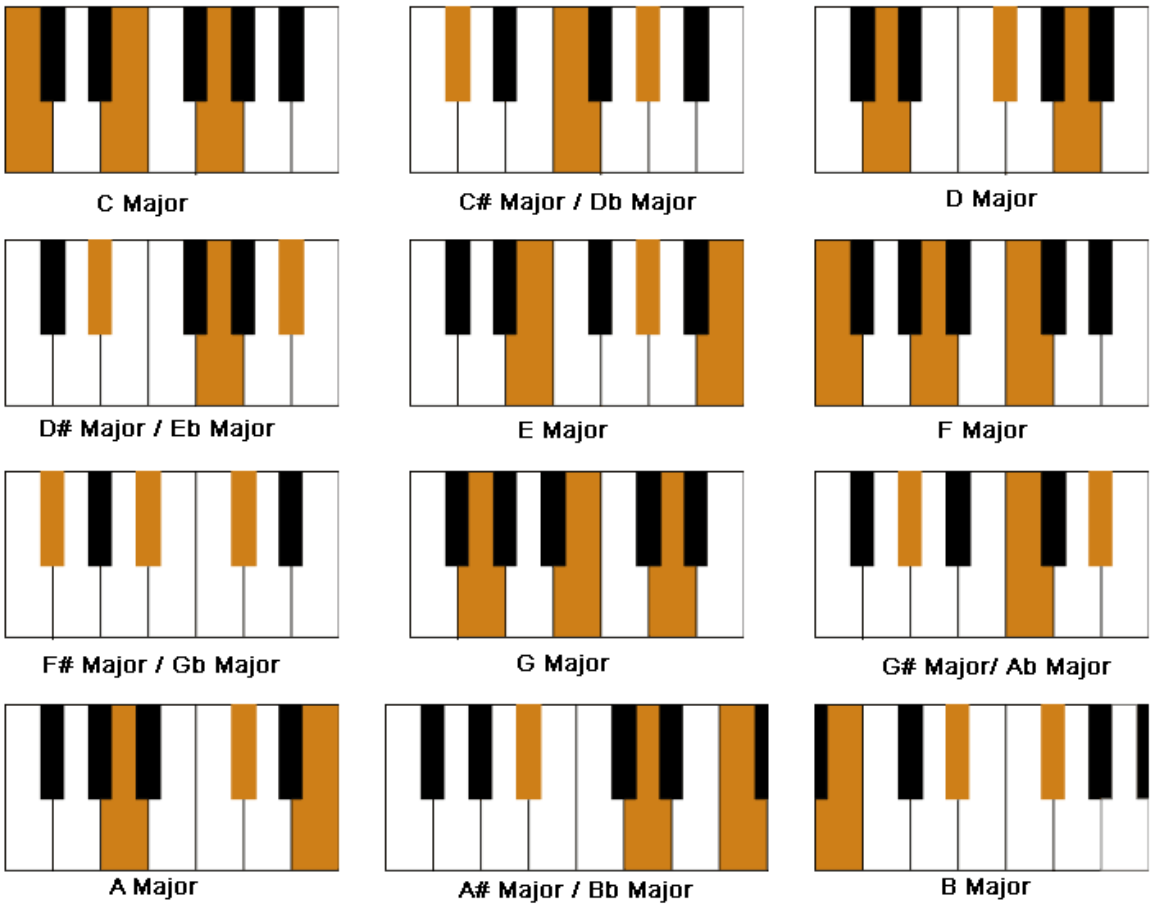
We saw the notes, then the intervals, finally the scales. So we just have to see one very important thing especially for pianists and guitarists: chords and tab. This is what we will see in this course. To talk about tab, we must first talk about chords, this is what we will do first. Then we will see how to encrypt the chords, then finally the tab.
My advice: Read this course several times, because it is quite complex, especially on the part of the costing of the chords.

1. Chords

A chord is a set of minimum 3 notes considered to form a harmonic whole. If the notes are played at the same time, we speak of chord, otherwise, we speak of arpeggios. If the chord has 2 notes, we will speak of an interval (see the course on intervals).
An arpeggio is therefore a kind of explosion of the chord: by assembling each of the notes of the arpeggio, we reconstitute a chord.

We speak of a chord in the fundamental state when its bass (the lowest note) is the fundamental of the chord (the lowest note of the three). For example, Do-Mi-Sol is a ground state agreement, while Mi-Sol-Do is not.
We speak of a perfect chord when it is a three-note chord formed by a succession of thirds. In the case of the major scale, the 1st third is major, and the fifth is fair. In the case of the minor scale, the 1st third is minor and the fifth is fair.

The main piano chords:



2. Encryption of chords

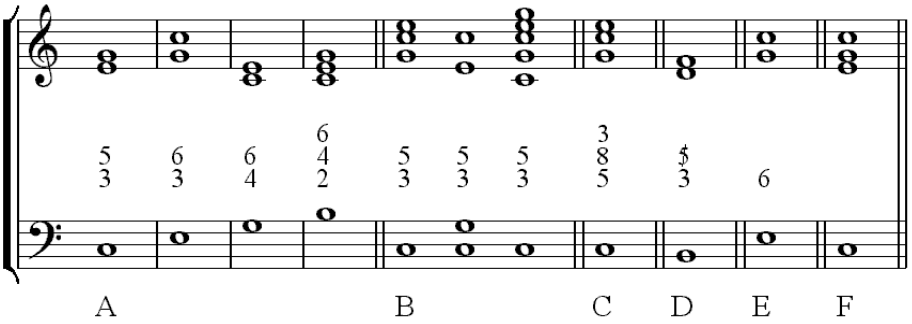
The chords have a specific name, composed of the root note, the qualification of the 1st third, and sometimes a number. We will in this paragraph learn how to decode all this.

In the chord encryption, each digit designates a note, or more precisely the interval between this note and the bass* of the chord (this interval can be possibly repeated).
The 2 will represent a second, the 3 a third, the 4 a fourth, the 5 a straight…
So you will understand: when you see a 7, it will be a 4-note chord, since we will find the seventh there, and the 9 will be a 5-note chord, since we will find the ninth there.

*The bass of a chord is the lowest note of the chord.

Please note, the numbers represent the intervals formed by the notes of the chord "in relation to the bass", and not in relation to the fundamental.
For example, the encryption of the chord of three C-F-A sounds (second reversal of F-A-C, the fundamental of which is F), is done using two numbers, a "4" and a "6", Above the bass do; the "4", meaning a "fourth", represents the fundamental (F), and the "6", meaning a "sixth", represents the third (A).

Some examples :

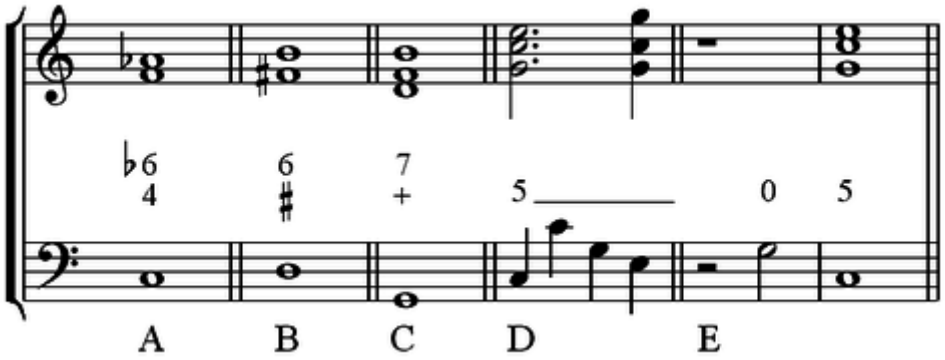


Certain figures may be implied. This is very often the case of the third of the bass (example E), or even that of the fifth of the bass when the latter is right. Consequently, when there are no figures, it is the perfect chord - therefore, fundamental, major or minor, as the case may be - that is wanted (example F).

Accidental alteration to a number affects the score represented by this number (example A).
An accidental alteration not followed by a number affects the third of the bass which is then implied (example B).
Certain special figures contain no accidental alteration: they are essentially chords of four and five notes placed on the dominant. In this case, in fact, the costing, sufficiently precise by itself (it indicates the number and the qualifier of each interval of the agreement to be made), makes any alteration unnecessary.
A small cross (+) represents the sensitive; we place it in front of the number of the interval corresponding to this sensitive. Note that this sign is used exclusively in the dominant seventh and ninth chords (example C).
A horizontal line after a number indicates the extension of one or more notes of the chord, without prohibiting possible changes of position (example D).

A horizontal line before a number is used exceptionally for the encryption of the bass delay.
A zero indicates an absence of harmony (example E).

Examples:



Qualification of a chord:

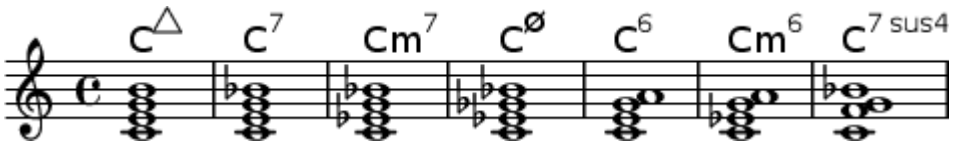
The major, minor, augmented, diminished qualifications are indicated by a specific symbol:

Symbol	Qualification	Example	Notes	Formula
No symbol	Major	**C**	C - E - G	1 - 3 - 5
- , **m** ou **min**	Minor	**C-**, **Cmin**	C - E flat - G	1 - b3 - 5
+, **aug**	Augmented	**C+**, **Caug**	C - E- G sharp	1 - 3 - #5
°, **dim**	Diminished	**C°**, **Cdim**	C - E flat - G flat	1 - b3 - b5
sus, **sus4**	Suspended	**C^{sus}, C^{sus4}**	C - F - G	1 - 4 - 5

Chords with 4 sounds:

The fourth note must be described explicitly either using a symbol or using a number.

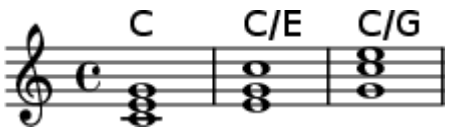
Symbol/Number	Qualification	Example	Notes	Formula
Δ, Maj7	Of major seventh	**CΔ**	C - E - G - B	1 - 3 - 5 - 7
-Δ, -M7, min7Δ, -Maj76	Of major seventh with minor third	**C-Δ**	C - E flat - G - B	1 - b3 - 5 - 7
7	Of minor seventh	**C7**	C - E - G - B flat	1 - 3 - 5 - b7
	Minor 7	**C-7**	C - E flat - G - B flat	1 - b3 - 5 - b7
Ø , -7b5	Semi-diminished	C^{ø}, **C^{-7b5}**	C - E flat - G flat - B flat	1 - b3 - b5 - b7
6	Of sixth	**C6**	C - E - G - A	1 - 3 - 5 - 6
		C-6	C - E flat - G - A	1 - b3 - 5 - 6
sus	suspended	**C7sus4**	C - F - G - B flat	1 -4 - 5 - b7



The suspended chords are noted: Csus4 = C-F-G or Csus2 = C-D-G. Here we replace the third with a fourth (sus4) or a second (sus2).
The chords with added note are noted: Cadd2 = C-D-E-G, Cadd4 = C-E-F-G, Cadd9 = C-E-G-D, etc.

Reversals:
Reversals are encrypted by specifying the chord and the lowest note of the reversal, i.e. the note that will have a bass function in place of the fundamental. A slash "/" separates the two indications.

Encryption	Reversal	Notes
C	Fundamental position	C - E - G
C/E	First reversal	E - G - C
C/G	Second reversal	G - C - E



3. The tab

Now that we've seen the chords and how to encrypt them, all we have to do is to see the tab.

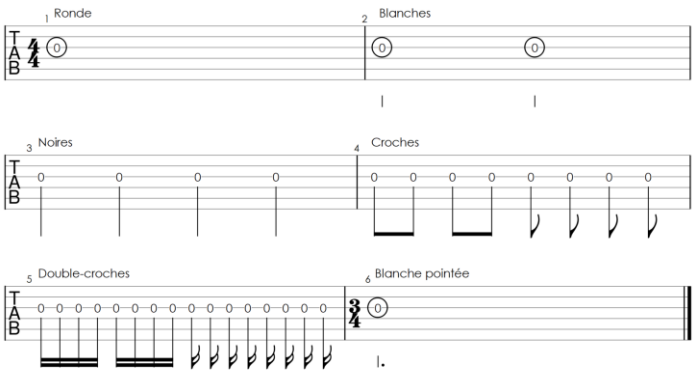
The tab is a notation system indicating, on a schematic representation of the parts of an instrument, the fingerings and the rhythm.
The information it contains is different from that of the musical score in the sense that the tab takes into account the specificities of the instrument and that it allows either to simplify the performance or to inform the performer about the precise use of the instrument, for example with which fingers of the right hand it is necessary to raise or fold down the string or strings to be struck.
It is notably used for the musical notation of the guitar, the diatonic accordion, the drums or the piano.

In a tab, there are first of all lines representing the strings of the instrument (6 to 12 strings for a guitar, 4 to 5 for a banjo, 4 to 12 for a bass, etc.) in the posed position flat on the knees strings up.

Unlike the tablature for guitar or the French tablature for lute, the sharpest string is represented below, as if one looked at the instrument in a mirror.

The figures correspond to the boxes delimited by two joint frets of the instrument (example: 5 represents the fifth box between the fret 4 and the fret 5, starting from the head of the neck). The instrumentalist must press with his fingers in the box indicated to reduce the length of vibration of the string and thus vary the pitch of the note. The number zero indicates an "empty string" which must be scraped without any intervention by the left hand on the handle.

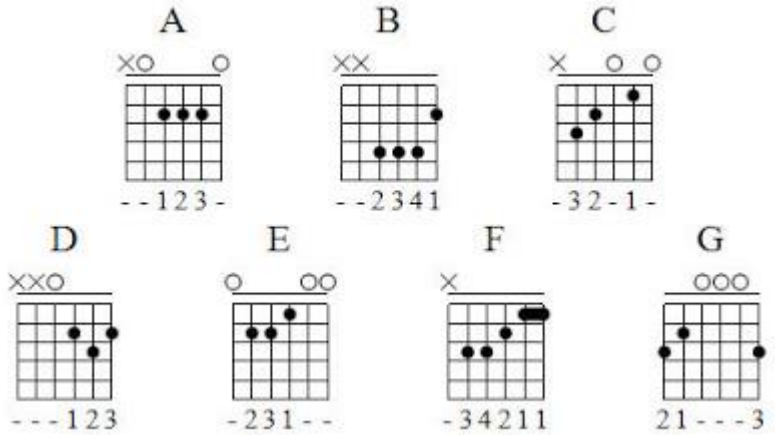
To represent the rhythm, we use the symbol of the stems of the classical musical notation by simplifying them: a line in the vertical of the figure indicates a quarter note, two notes whose vertical lines have a right hook or are connected at the end by a horizontal line are eighth notes, etc. The absence of a line means that the number represents a round. A line not going up to the number represents a white. The dynamics (strong, crescendo, etc.) also use the conventions of classical musical notation.



However, despite all this, there is no convention recognized by all, each one uses more or less different symbols. Some of the most well-known symbols include:

- X: mute: blocked left hand.
- T: thumb: slap tapped with the thumb or tapping.
- P: pop: slap drawn with other than the thumb.
- H: hammer-on: note played only with the left hand (or right for lefties) by adding a finger on the neck after a note played normally upwards (ex: 5 h6).
- PO (or po): pull-off: reverse, note played with the left hand in (or right for lefties) removing a finger from the neck after a note played normally but down (ex: 6 po5).
- /: rising slide: sliding from one or more frets or frets to the other with the same finger towards the treble.
- \: descending slide: dragged from one or more boxes or frets to the other with the same finger towards the bass.
- ~: vibrato: very quickly twist the string for a note rendering close to the vibrato sound in a violin.
- B: bend: twist the string to increase the note without changing boxes.
- A: bend release: twist the rope to increase the note without changing the box, then return to the initial note
- PM (or M): palm mute: use the wrist of the right hand to soften the sound by lightly pressing the strings near the bridge.
- H: harmonic: play the note in harmonic.
- AH: artificial harmonic: play an artificial harmonic (with the pick)
- O: open string: Note played without palm mute, this symbol is rarely used

Here are some examples of tabs:



As we can see, this is a type of tabs where we see the strings, but also the frets of the guitar neck. The numbers below each line indicate with which finger to play the note, black dot on the line at a certain square.
If we see a cross above a vertical line, it is that we should not play this string. If, on the contrary, there is a circle, it shows that you have to play the string "empty", that is to say without pressing any of the boxes. If there is finally a line, it is that a note has been drawn.

Conclusion: THE TIPS TO REMEMBER

- chords are composed of 3 or more notes.
- if the notes are not played at the same time, we speak of an arpeggio.
- like the intervals, the agreements have a different qualification and costing depending on the situation and its composition.
- the most important thing is not to know how to encrypt the intervals, but to know how to decode them. If your objective is to know how to calculate the intervals, in this case, it is that you are not a beginner, and therefore I advise you to come and email me: benmmusique@gmail.com
- tablature is another way of writing music, more suited to the instrument.
- “chords”, for guitars, are a special type of tablature.