

Section 4.4

SEVENTH CHORDS

Seventh chords

A **seventh chord** is a four-note chord built using stacked thirds. The four notes are the **root**, **third**, **fifth** and **seventh** from bottom to top. There are five basic types. A **major seventh chord** has a **major triad** and a **major seventh**. A **minor seventh chord** has a **minor triad** and a **minor seventh**.

Major seventh, Minor seventh

M7 major 7th chord = major triad + major seventh = M7 chord (major third on top)
m7 minor 7th chord = minor triad + minor seventh = m7 chord (minor third on top)

Major-minor (dominant) seventh

A **major-minor seventh chord** has a **major triad** and a **minor seventh**. Mm7 chords function as dominant chords. “Mm7...**dominant?**”

Mm7 = major triad + minor seventh = Mm7 chord (minor third on top)

Half-diminished Fully-diminished

A **half-diminished seventh** has a **diminished triad** and a **minor seventh**. A **fully-diminished seventh chord** is a **diminished triad** plus a **diminished seventh**. **Fully-diminished seventh chords** are a stack of **all minor thirds**.

ø7 half-dim. = dim. triad + minor seventh = ø7 chord (major third)
◦7 fully-dim. = dim. triad + diminished seventh = ◦7 chord (minor third)

Inversions

Inversions may be **root position** (root on bottom), **1st inversion** (3rd on bottom), **2nd inversion** (5th on bottom), or **3rd inversion** (7th on bottom). See 5.2 Roman numerals and Volumes 2 and 3 for more study.