

## Diatonic 7 Chords (Four Part Chords)

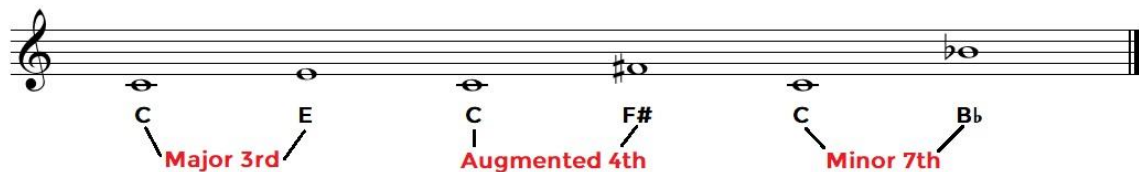
Let's start playing some Jazzy 7 chords, but first I need to teach you a word, and that is Diatonic. Diatonic means "belonging to the scale or key". Remember that word. Diatonic.

In Jazz, 4 part chords are more commonly used as they give a richer or more diverse sound and are often referred to as 7<sup>th</sup> Chords, because they are made up of 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Intervals.

### What is an Interval?

An interval is the word used to describe the distance between two different notes (or keys on the piano).

Some examples of intervals:

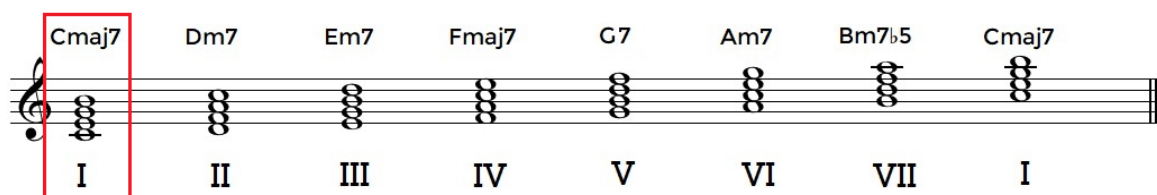


An interval is very similar to the "degrees of a scale", the only difference is that an interval is the distance between ANY two notes, whereas when counting using the degrees of a scale, you only use notes from the scale that you are using.

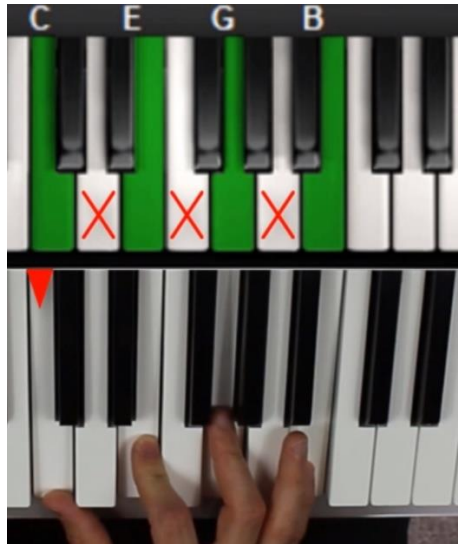
We will go into more details on intervals later.

### Back to the 7 Chords

Let's have a go at playing this first chord:



For the moment, to play these chords, think about it like a pattern. Put your thumb on Middle C, then skip the D, 2<sup>nd</sup> finger on E, skip the F, 3<sup>rd</sup> finger on G, skip the A, then put your 5<sup>th</sup> finger on the B.

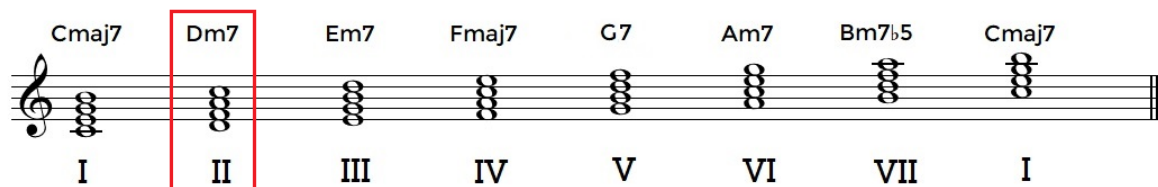


Can you see that you are playing a key, missing a key, playing a key, missing a key, playing a key, missing a key, then playing a key? This is made up of 3<sup>rd</sup> Intervals. For the moment I want you to think about these 7<sup>th</sup> Chords with this pattern:

Fingers: 1st                                      2nd                                      3rd                                      5th  
**PLAY - SKIP - PLAY - SKIP - PLAY - SKIP - PLAY**

Then, even if you can't read the music notation, all you need to do is move that pattern up one step to the right every time and you'll be able to play all of these diatonic 7<sup>th</sup> chords.

For example, the Dm7:





You may have noticed that these chords are named after the lowest note, or root of the chord, so if it's starting with a C, it's the Cmaj7, and if it's starting with the E, it's the Emin7, and so on.

So all you need to do is move that pattern up to the right (to the next white key) and you will be able to play all of the diatonic 7 chords in the key of C.

So just to re-iterate, Diatonic means "belonging to the scale or key", which in this case is the C Major scale, and as you can see all of these chords are built using notes from the C Major scale as they are all white keys.

So these diatonic 7<sup>th</sup> chords are moving through the degrees of the C Major scale:

|   |    |     |    |   |    |     |   |
|---|----|-----|----|---|----|-----|---|
| I | II | III | IV | V | VI | VII | I |
| C | D  | E   | F  | G | A  | B   | C |

Have a go at playing these 7<sup>th</sup> chords, going up and down the degrees of the scale in your right hand.