



SONGS
by ear

CHEATSHEET



Any questions?

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BUILDING BLOCKS

Lesson 1 Supplement.

In music we have two main threads that come together to form a song: melody and harmony.

Melody is when a succession of notes are played one after the other to form a focal point for the song. **Harmony** is when a group of notes are played together to form a basis of support for the melody. These groups of notes in harmony are what we call '**chords**'.

There are a great many complicated types of chords but there are two simple chord types that are essential for you to know first.

To begin practising your chords go to the **Major & Minor Chords Cheatsheet**.

nailed it!

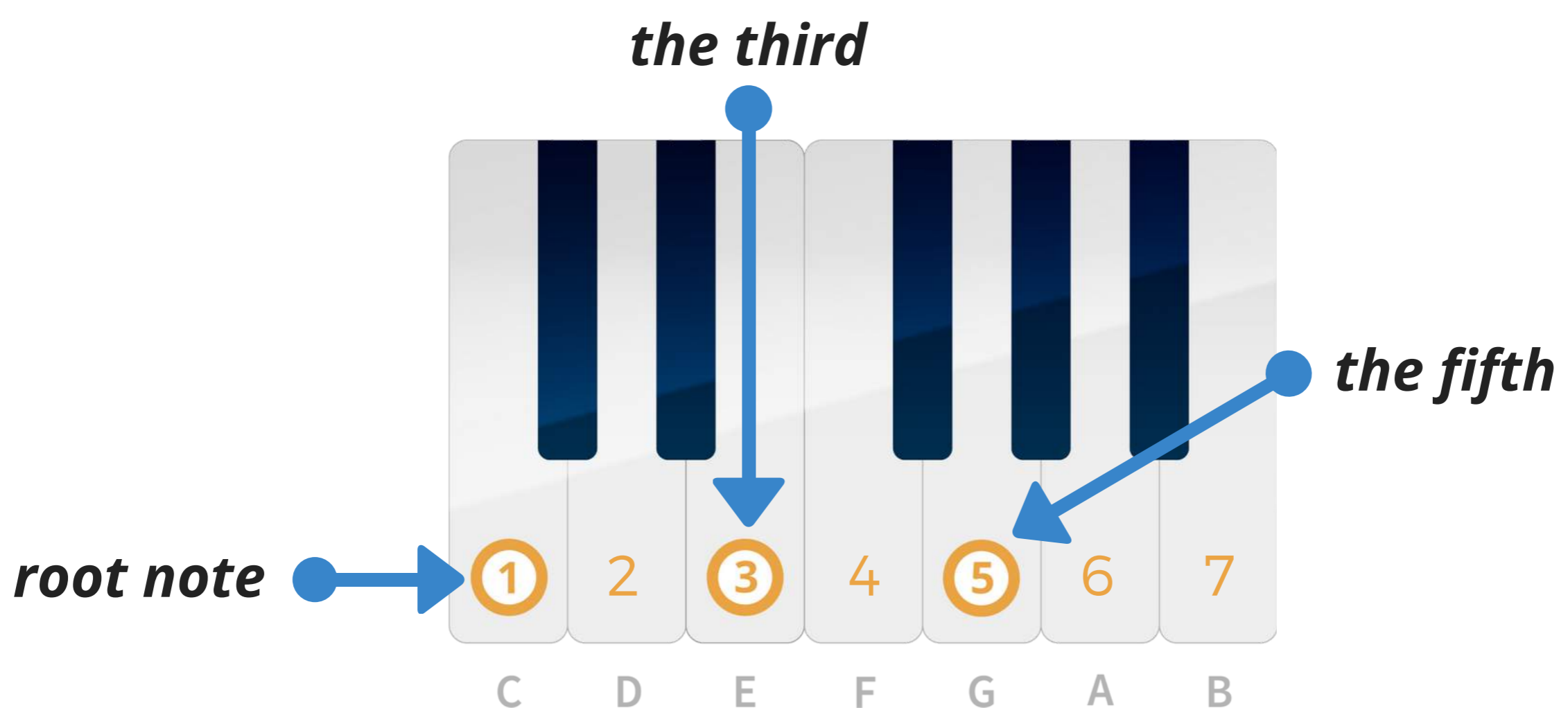
PRACTISE PLAYING YOUR
MAJOR CHORDS WITH THE
CHEATSHEET:
'MAJOR & MINOR CHORDS'

COME BACK HERE AFTER
THE **'CHORD TONES'**
LESSON.

CHORD TONES

Lesson 2 Supplement.

You've learned that the 1st note in the chord is the 'root'. The other notes in the chord have names too, these names are based on their position within the scale.



Study the above example using the **C major chord**. The middle note of the chord (*E*) is called **the third** because it is the 3rd note in the major scale. The last note is called **the fifth** because it is the 5th note in the major scale.

done- burger!

NOW YOU CAN MOVE ON
TO THE SECOND HALF OF
THIS LESSON:
**'NAMING THE
BLACK KEYS'**

COME BACK HERE AFTER
'THE MINOR CHORD'

THE MINOR CHORD

Lesson 3 Supplement.

Here is a good way to remember the steps we count to build each chord:

Major = 4 + 3

How do we remember to count four notes first? Think of the 'major' (bigger) number!

Minor = 3 + 4

Likewise, to remember to count three notes first to build the minor chord, just think of the 'minor' (smaller) number!

THE MINOR CHORD

Lesson 3 Supplement.

Have A Go building the following chords from scratch. Check your answers by finding each chord in the *Major & Minor Chords* cheatsheet.

D major

Gm

E^b

A[#] minor

C[#]

no sweat!

NOW MOVE ON
TO LESSON 3:
'KEEP UP!'

COME BACK HERE AFTER
'WHEN IN ROME'

WHEN IN ROME

Lesson 4 Supplement.

To learn chord patterns we use the Roman numbering system to refer to chords based on their position in the scale. Using this method we can take a chord progression and begin playing it from anywhere on the keyboard.

We use capital letters for **major chords**.

I IV V

We use lower-case letters for **minor chords**.

ii vi

On the following pages you'll find the major and minor chords that occur naturally in the **key of C** and the roman numerals for each.



THE ONE CHORD



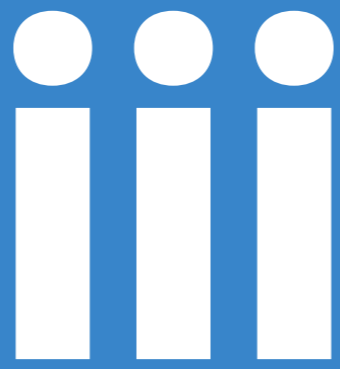
The **I** chord begins on the 1st note of the scale.
In the key of C major, this is the **C major** chord.



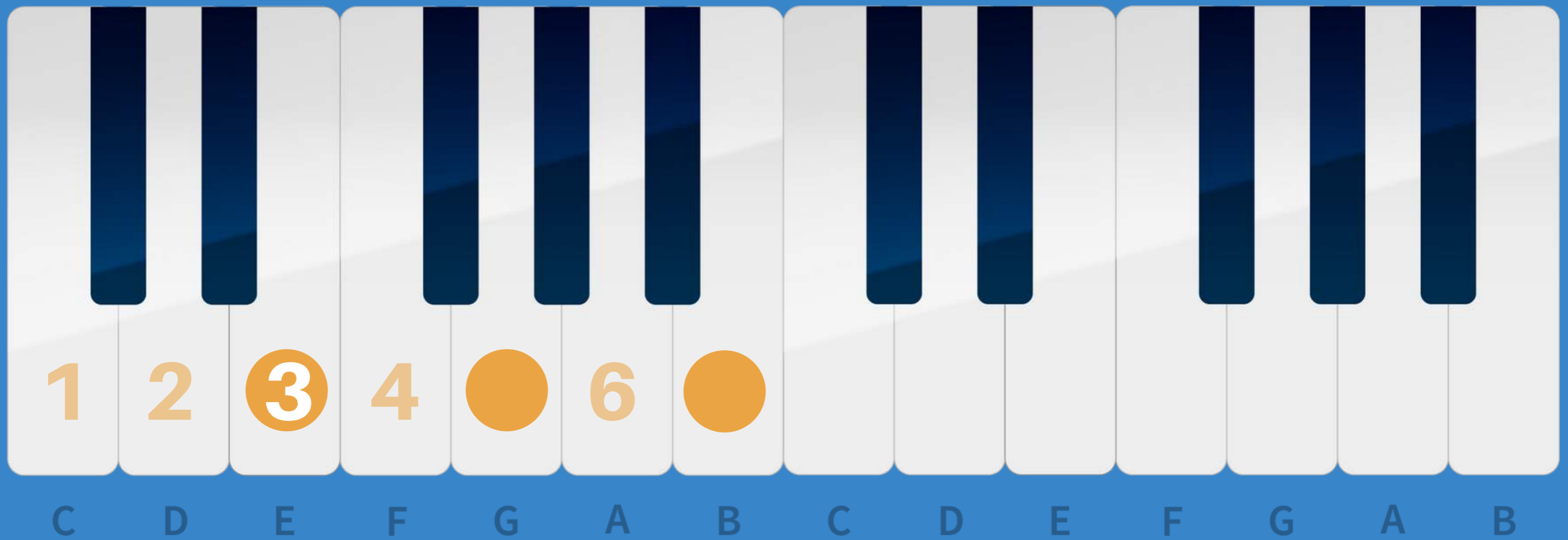
THE TWO CHORD



The **ii** chord begins on the 2nd note of the scale.
In the key of C major, this is the **D minor** chord.



THE THREE CHORD



The **iii** chord begins on the 3rd note of the scale.
In the key of C major, this is the **E minor** chord.



THE FOUR CHORD



The **IV** chord begins on the 4th note of the scale.
In the key of C major, this is the **F major** chord.

V

THE FIVE CHORD



The **V** chord begins on the 5th note of the scale.
In the key of C major, this is the **G major** chord.

vi

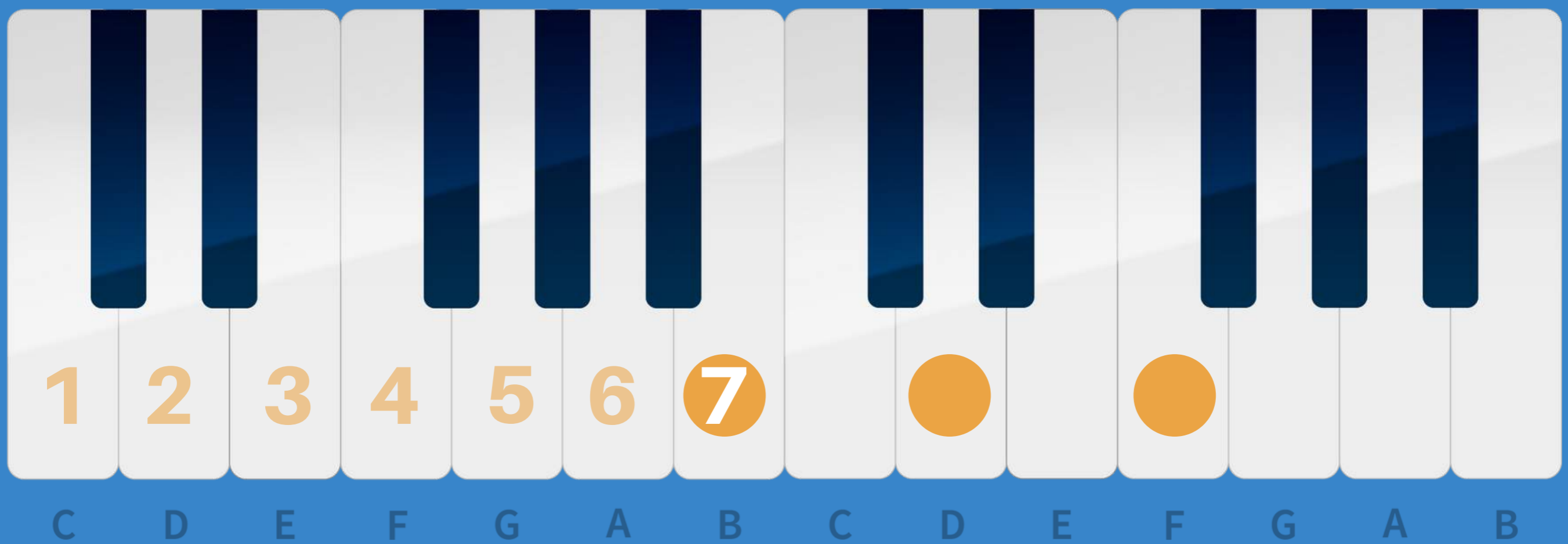
THE SIX CHORD



The **vi** chord begins on the 6th note of the scale.
In the key of C major, this is the **A minor** chord.

vii^o

THE SEVEN CHORD



The **vii^o** chord begins on the 7th note of the scale. In the key of C major, this is the **B diminished** chord.

DIMINISHED CHORD?

Another chord? Really? Yes. But this chord is more of an advanced bonus at this point. You will find that you won't use it a whole lot at this stage, but it is handy to know.

The diminished chord is very similar to the minor chord except the 5th chord tone is also flattened. So we have notes **1** (the root note), **\flat 3** (flattened third) and **\flat 5** (flattened 5th).

NEW!

SONG SNACK



vi

IV

I

Key of C:

Am

F

C

Key of G:

Em

C

G

winning!

TRY THE QUIZ ON
ROMAN CHORD NAMES
IN THE LESSON AREA.

COME BACK AT THE END
OF 'TRIED & TRUE'.

Key of C

I IV V
C F G

1

2

I IV V IV
C F G F

I ii IV V
C Dm F G

3

4

I V vi IV
C G Am F

Key of D^b

I IV V
D^b G^b A^b **1**

2 **I IV V IV**
D^b G^b A^b G^b

I ii IV V **3**
D^b E^bm G^b A^b

4 **I V vi IV**
D^b A^b B^bm G^b

Key of D

I IV V **1**
D G A

2 **I IV V IV**
D G A G

I ii IV V **3**
D Em G A

**SONG
SNACK**

4 **I V vi IV**
D A Bm G

Play along to 'With Or Without You' by U2 using this progression! [Listen to our version on YouTube here.](#)

Key of E^b

I IV V
E^b A^b B^b

1

2

I IV V IV
E^b A^b B^b A^b

I ii IV V
E^b Fm A^b B^b

3

4

I V vi IV
E^b B^b Cm A^b

Key of E

I IV V
E A B

1

2

I IV V IV
E A B A

I ii IV V
E F#m A B

3

4

I V vi IV
E B C#m A

Key of F

I IV V
F B^b C

1

2

I IV V IV
F B^b C B^b

I ii IV V
F Gm B^b C

3

4

I V vi IV
F C Dm B^b

Key of G^b

I IV V
G^b C^b D^b **1**

2 **I IV V IV**
G^b C^b D^b C^b

I ii IV V **3**
G^b A^bm C^b D^b

4 **I V vi IV**
G^b D^b E^bm C^b

Key of G

I IV V
G C D ①

② **I IV V IV**
G C D G

I ii IV V
G Am C D ③

④ **I V vi IV**
G D Em C

Key of A^b

I IV V
A^b D^b E^b **1**

2 **I IV V IV**
A^b D^b E^b D^b

I ii IV V **3**
A^b B^bm D^b E^b

4 **I V vi IV**
A^b E^b Fm D^b

Key of A

I IV V
A D E

1

2

I IV V IV
A D E D

I ii IV V
A Bm D E

3

4

I V vi IV
A E F#m D

Key of B^b

I IV V

B^b E^b F

1

2

I IV V IV
B^b E^b F E^b

I ii IV V

B^b Cm E^b F

3

4

I V vi IV
B^b F Gm E^b

Key of B

I IV V
B E F#

1

2

I IV V IV
B E F# E

I ii IV V
B C#m E F#

3

4

I V vi IV
B F# G#m E

NEW!

SONG SNACK



I

V

vi

IV

Key of C:

C

G

Am

F

Key of D:

D

A

Bm

G

Watch our version of 'With or Without You'
by U2 on YouTube by [clicking here](#).

smashed it!

PRACTISE PLAYING ALONG
TO THE SONG
'WITH OR WITHOUT YOU'

COME BACK HERE AFTER
THE 'BREAK IT UP'
LESSON.

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Lesson 7 Supplement.

To begin to find the note on the keyboard that you are hearing we need to capture the note we hear and keep it locked in our mind, this is called 'inner hearing'.

To get it locked in there, we can hum it out loud. The goal here is to hum it confidently and steadfastly – try not to waver around the note, if you sing quietly you will tend to stray down or up slightly from it.

Once you are humming this note quietly play Middle C on the keyboard. Ask yourself "does the note I'm playing and the note I'm humming sound the same?" If so, then you've found your note! If not, take a breath, hum the original note and try quietly playing the next note up, C#. Does it match your humming note?

If not, continue to progress up the keyboard quietly, while humming your note loudly, until you find the right match.

HAVE A GO! ANSWERS

check your
**CHEAT
SHEET**

Try using this process to identify the note you hummed before. Capture the note in your mind and hum it confidently, then quietly work your way up the keyboard until you find it.

Find more notes with the supplement audio in the lesson area.

The answers to these Have A Go exercises are below, upside down so you don't accidentally see them!

MORE ANSWERS in order: A, F[#], D, G[#]

ANSWER 1: This note is G.

done-ski!

NOW YOU CAN GO TO
'FOLLOW THAT BASS'

COME BACK HERE ONCE
YOU'VE 'HAD A GO'

FOLLOW THAT BASS

Lesson 8 Supplement.

When you listen to a pop song there are usually a number of different instruments in the mix - whether it's an electronic or acoustic song we can identify an instrument that is playing the chords (which is the harmony); a voice, or other solo instrument, playing the melody; and either a bass guitar or synth playing the low bass line.

This is where we want to hang out.

By focussing on the notes played in the bass line we can get a basic idea of what the chords will be doing. Listen carefully to the first measures of the song and using the humming method, trap in your mind the first bass note that you hear.

HAVE A GO! ANSWERS

check your
**CHEAT
SHEET**

Once you have the first bass note, then listen to the next bass note after it, does it go up or down from there?

Hum the note out loud, and decide whether to find the note on the keyboard by quietly playing either up one note at a time, as we did before, or down.

Keep doing this until you have the first four bass notes in the song.

The answers to these Have A Go exercises are below, upside down so you don't accidentally see them!

MORE ANSWERS in order: C, G, A, F

ANSWER 1: This bass note is C.

**bloody
marvellous!**

**NOW IT'S TIME TO GO
'CHORD HUNTING'**

**COME BACK HERE ONCE
YOU'VE 'HAD A GO'**

CHORD HUNTING

Lesson 9 Supplement.

Once you have the bass notes identified, you can then begin to decide which chords will fit with that bassline to play along to the song.

Does the chord sound happy? Try the major chord built upon that bass note as the root.

Does the chord sound more sad or just not happy? Try building a minor chord instead.

This trick will not work for all songs - sometimes the bassline will not play the root of the chord, sometimes the chord type will be more complicated, or the bassline moves too quickly to easily identify.

But, this is a good technique to practice with a standard pop song because it will help to develop your musical ear in this way.

HAVE A GO! ANSWERS

check your
**CHEAT
SHEET**

Listen to the full mix version of this song from the previous lesson. Try to decide whether each chord sounds happy or sad.

Using the bass note as the root of the chord, try out a major and then a minor chord and identify which matches the audio best.

Do this for the first four chords, once you've had a go, check your answers below.

The answers to these Have A Go exercises are below, upside down so you don't accidentally see them!

CHORD ANSWERS in order: C major, G major, A minor, F major.

**magnifique!
sensationnel!**

**NOW HASTEN TO THE
NEXT CHAPTER
'RIFF-RAFF'**

**COME BACK HERE AFTER
'WRAP IT UP'**

WRAP IT UP

Lesson 11 Supplement.

Listen, listen, listen. If you know the song well in your head (meaning that you could hum along to it) then you will find it much easier to figure out which chords are used.

Always start with the chorus: The chorus is always the most recognisable section as it is repeated the most, which means if you learn it first you already have half the song done.

Use this workflow:

- Find the **first bass note** and build on that.
- Try the **common chord progressions** you've learned and see if they fit.
- If some chords fit but others don't then you can try **replacing** those chords with the other type (major/minor).
- Or try **following the bass notes** to find the root of each chord.



SONG SNACK ANSWERS

CHORUS

Chords: C major, G major, A minor, F major =
C - G - Am - F
C - G - Am - F

VERSE

Chords: A minor, F major, C major, D minor, G major/B =
Am - F - C
Am - F - C - Dm
Am - F - C - G/B

BRIDGE

Chords: D minor, A minor, F major, G major =
Dm - Am - F
Dm - Am - F - G
F - G - F - G

**Winner,
winner,
chicken
dinner!**

**YOU'VE COMPLETED THE
'SONGS BY EAR' COURSE!**

**CHECK OUT THE FINAL QUIZ
IN THE LESSON AREA!**

cut your teeth!

Try out your new skills with these ten classic pop songs!

'CLOCKS' - COLDPLAY

'HEY JUDE' - BEATLES

'SOMEONE LIKE YOU' - ADELE

'STAY WITH ME' - SAM SMITH

'DON'T STOP BELIEVIN'' -

JOURNEY

'GET LUCKY' - DAFT PUNK

'GRENADE' - BRUNO MARS

'NO ONE' - ALICIA KEYS

'ALL OF ME' - JOHN LEGEND

'SAY SOMETHING' - A GREAT BIG

WORLD & CHRISTINA AGUILERA



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