

HARMONIZING WITH INVERTED CHORDS

A chord is said to be inverted when it is out of order. In its triad form, the chord is built upon thirds from the first note of the scale in the root position Ex. C E G. When we take the bottom note C and move it up an octave, that is the first inversion Ex. E G C. When we move the bottom note again up an octave, and place it on top, that is the second move or the second inversion Ex. G C E. If we put the G on top, we return to root position C E G.

We practice harmonizing with inverted chords to keep our hand basically in the same place to facilitate easier playing instead of jumping all over the place. Inverted chords give a smoother sound than playing all chords in root position. Inverted chords also add variety. After learning the pattern in the key of C, try the pattern in other keys, remembering to add the sharps or flats of the key (scale) to which the pattern belongs.

Major Scale

I	C E G	C	Major	C ^M	or	C
IV	C F A	F	Major	F ^M	or	F
I	C E G	C	Major	C ^M	or	C
V	B D G	G	Major	G ^M	or	G
V ⁷	B D F G	G ⁷	Dominant seven			G ⁷
I	C E G	C	Major	C		
ii	d f a	d	minor	d ^m		
ii ⁷	d f a c	d	minor seven	d ^{m7}		
I	E G C	C	Major	C ^M	or	C

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Minor Scale

i	c e ^b g	c	minor	c ^m
iv	c f a ^b	f	minor	f ^m
i	c e ^b g	c	minor	c ^m
V	B D G	G	Major	G ^M or G
V ⁷	B D F G	G ⁷	Dominant seven	G ⁷
i	c e ^b g	c	minor	c ^m
ii ^o	d f a ^b	d	diminished	d ^o or d ^{dim}
ii ^{o7}	d f a ^b c	d	half diminished seven	d ^o
i	e ^b g c	c	minor	c ^m