

Understanding Chords and Inversions

C Major Triad is a chord built from the I, III and V notes of the major scale.
In these examples we are using C chords. Below is a C major scale.

C Major Scale

The Notes C D E F G A B C

Scale Degree / Interval II III IV V VI VII I

TAB 3 0 2 3 0 2 0 1

Root Position

C

3 2 1

Finger Placement

C G E The Notes

1 3 5 1 3

Scale intervals in the chord

C D E F G A B C

I II III IV V VI VII I

TAB 3 0 2 3 0 2 0 1

First Inversion C Chord with E in the bass

Chord Name
↓
Slash Chord C/E
↑
Bass Note in Chord

C/E

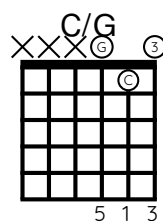
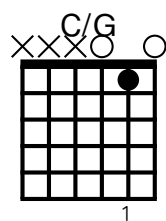
2 1

C/E E

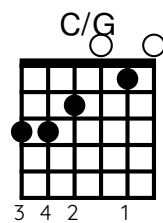
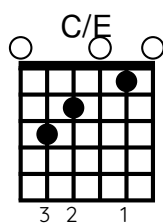
3 5 1 3

Diagram showing a musical scale on a treble clef staff. The notes are C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D, E. Below the staff, the fingerings are indicated: I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, I, II, III. The notes are color-coded: C (blue), D (black), E (red), F (black), G (orange), A (black), B (black), C (blue), D (black), E (red). Below the staff, the fret numbers for the bass are indicated: 3, 0, 2, 3, 0, 2, 0, 1, 3, 0. The notes are color-coded: 3 (blue), 0 (black), 2 (red), 3 (black), 0 (orange), 2 (black), 0 (black), 1 (blue), 3 (black), 0 (red).

Second Inversion C Chord with G in the bass



Alternate First and Second Inversion C Chords



A Minor Triad is a chord built from the I, $\flat$ III and V notes of the minor Scale.
In these examples we are using A Minor chords. Below is a A minor scale.

A Minor Scale

The Notes A B C D E F G A

Scale Degree I II $\flat$ III IV V VI VII I

T A B 0 2 3 0 2 3 0 2

Root Position

Am

2 3 1

Finger Placement

Am

1 5 1 $\flat$ 3 5

The Notes

Scale Degree in the chord

A B C D E F G A

I II $\flat$ III IV V VI VII I

T A B 0 2 3 0 2 3 0 1

Second Inversion A Minor Chord with E in the bass

Chord Name
↓
Slash Chord Am/E
↑
Bass Note in Chord

Am/E

2 3 1

Am/E

5 1 $\flat$ 3 5

A B C D E F G A B C D E

I II $\flat$ III IV V VI VII I II $\flat$ III IV V

T
A
B 0 2 3 0 2 3 0 2 0 1 3 0

First Inversion A Minor Chord with C in the bass

