

Building Basic Extended Chords

(Major, minor and Dominant)

by Scott Wilson

Building all basic extended chords is as easy as thinking the 2 chord triad over a 1 seventh chord.

The easiest way to conceive basic extended chords is this: A seventh chord contains scale pitches 1,3,5 & 7. The only pitches left in the scale are scale tones 2,4,6 (which is a triad). Scale tones 2, 4, and 6 are called 9, 11, and 13. To build a basic extended 13th chord you will need scale tones 1,3,5,7,9,11,13 (flats and sharps on these notes will determine whether the chord is Major, minor, Dominant, etc). With this in mind we can say that Major, minor, and Dominant extended thirteenth chords can be conceptualized as a **2 chord triad.**
1 seventh chord

Building MAJOR 13th CHORDS

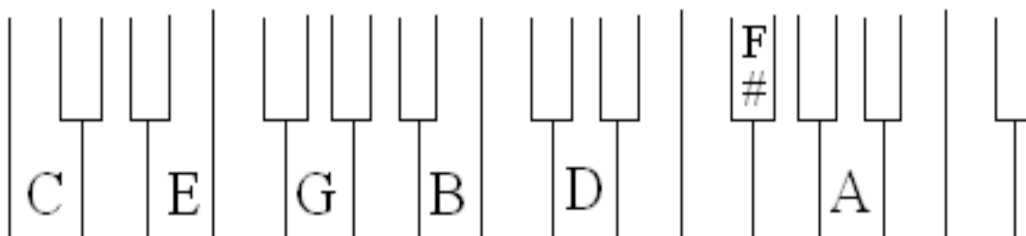
Now, if you can build Major 7th chords, you should be able to voice all of your Major 13th chords in all twelve keys. Simply play a Major seventh chord, identify the 2nd scale degree, build a Major triad off of the 2nd scale degree and place it over the top of the Major seventh chord. This gives you extensions **9, #11, 13.**

For example: C Maj 13 is **D Major Triad.**
C Major 7

All Major 13 chords = 2 Major Triad
1 Major 7

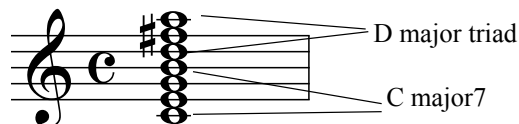
C Maj7 = scale tones 1, 3, 5, 7.

D Major Triad (hits scale tones 2, #4, 6 which we call 9, #11, 13)



Go try this on the piano. It's so easy!

C Maj13#11 = **2 Major Triad**
1 Major 7th Chord



Jazz Gem * A great scale to use over this chord would be the D major Pentatonic (1, 2, 3, 5, 6). Basically, you would be playing a Major Pentatonic Scale off of the 2nd scale degree of C Major. Every single note in a D Major Pentatonic Scale will sound great because every note is a colorful chord tone. The D Major Pentatonic Scale would include notes (D, E, F#, A, & B). Below, look at how the D Major Pentatonic Scale impacts the C Maj13th Chord.

Use D Major Pentatonic
over C Major13.

D = 9th
E = 3rd
F# = #11
A = 13th
B = 7th

By using the D Major Pentatonic Scale over a C Major 13th chord, you will be highlighting all the extentions / color-tones (9, #11, 13). In addition, the D Major Pentatonic Scale provides the 3rd and 7th of the C Major 13th (notes E and B).

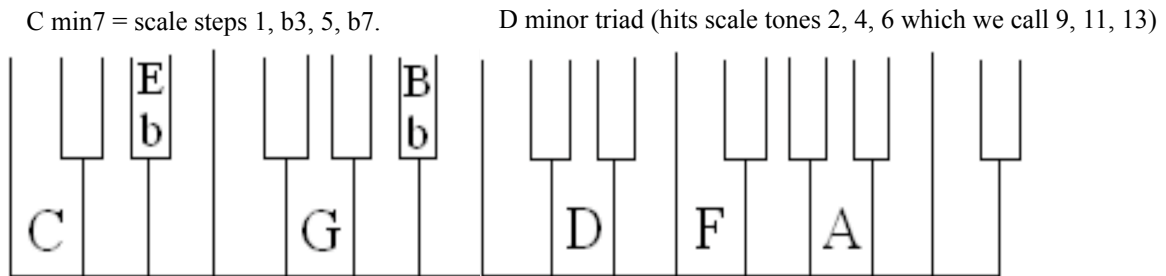
(Copyright@The Jazz Education Store 2006 / Purchase the complete Ultimate Jazz Tool Kit and matching Ultimate MusicWorkbook at <http://www.jazz-studies.com>)

Building MINOR 13th CHORDS

If you can build minor 7th chords, you should be able to voice all of your minor 13th chords in all twelve keys. Simply play a minor seventh chord, identify the 2nd scale degree, build a **minor triad** off the 2nd scale degree and place it over the top of the minor seventh chord. This gives you extensions **9, 11, 13**.

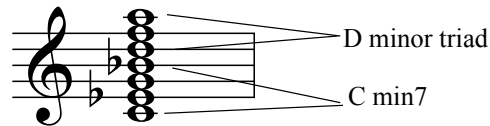
For example: **Cmin13** is a D minor triad.
C minor 7

All Minor 13 chords = 2 minor triad
1 minor7



Go try this on the piano. It's so easy!

C min13 = 2 minor triad
1 minor 7th Chord



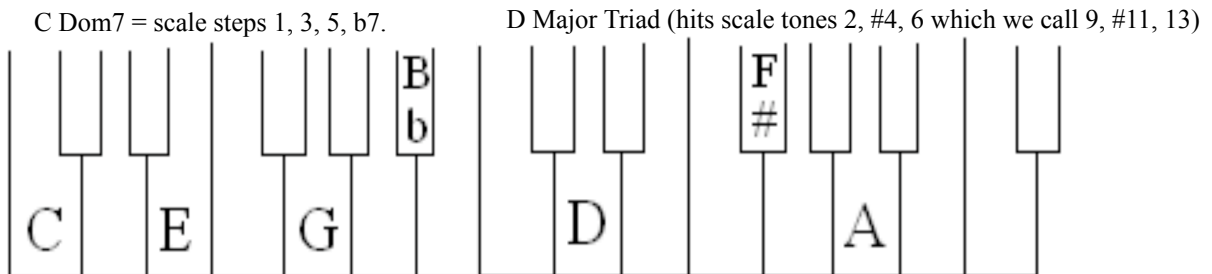
Building DOMINANT 13th CHORDS

Dominant 13th chords have **TWO basic options for easy construction**.

Option one: Play a Dominant seventh chord, identify the 2nd scale degree, build a **Major triad** off of the 2nd scale degree and place it over the top of the Dominant seventh chord. This gives you the chord extensions **9, #11, 13**.

For example: **C7 13#11** is a D Major triad.
C Dominant7

Some Dominant 13 chords = 2 Major triad
1 Dominant 7



C Dom13#11 = 2 Major Triad
1 Dom7th Chord

