

Chord Progression Chart.

The chords in every major key, with Roman numerals, Nashville numbers and the progressions players use most.

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CHORDS & HARMONY

Chords in Every Key

The seven chords of every major key, in circle-of-fifths order. Pick your key's row and read across; read down a column to see the same number in every key.

NUMERAL NUMBER	I1	ii2m	iii3m	IV4	V5	vi6m	vii°7°
C major A minor	C	Dm	Em	F	G	Am	B°
G major E minor	G	Am	Bm	C	D	Em	F#°
D major B minor	D	Em	F#m	G	A	Bm	C#°
A major F# minor	A	Bm	C#m	D	E	F#m	G#°
E major C# minor	E	F#m	G#m	A	B	C#m	D#°
B major G# minor	B	C#m	D#m	E	F#	G#m	A#°
F# major D# minor	F#	G#m	A#m	B	C#	D#m	E#°
Db major Bb minor	Db	Ebm	Fm	Gb	Ab	Bbm	C°
Ab major F minor	Ab	Bbm	Cm	Db	Eb	Fm	G°
Eb major C minor	Eb	Fm	Gm	Ab	Bb	Cm	D°
Bb major G minor	Bb	Cm	Dm	Eb	F	Gm	A°
F major D minor	F	Gm	Am	Bb	C	Dm	E°

Uppercase numerals and plain numbers are major chords, lowercase and m are minor, ° is diminished. Shaded: 1, 4 and 5, the three main chords. Each key's relative minor uses the same seven chords, with 6m as home.

Common progressions

1 – 4 – 5

I-IV-V · Rock, folk, country
in G: G – C – D

1 – 5 – 6m – 4

I-V-vi-IV · Pop
in G: G – D – Em – C

2m – 5 – 1

ii-V-I · Jazz, and the end of many songs
in G: Am – D – G

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Roman Numerals

Numerals name chords by scale degree, so a progression works in any key.

I Uppercase = major · ii Lowercase = minor · ° Diminished · + Augmented · 7 Adds the 7th (V7, ii7)

What each chord does

Tonic Home, at rest	Ivi
Predominant Moves away	IVii
Dominant Tension, pulls home	Vvii°

iii is sometimes grouped with the dominant instead of the tonic.

PRACTICE TIP

Say the note names out loud as you read.

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Nashville Numbers

Nashville numbers name each chord by its place in the key, like Roman numerals but in plain digits. Write a song once in numbers and the band can play it in any key.

1	A major chord	in C: C
2m	m: a minor chord	in C: Dm
7°	°: diminished	in C: B°
57	Adds the 7th	in C: G7
1/3	The 3rd in the bass	in C: C/E

A chart in numbers

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star	1	4 1	4 1	5 1
in C	C	F C	F C	G C
in G	G	C G	C G	D G

One number is one measure. Two numbers underlined share the measure, usually two beats each.
Minor keys: some players number from the relative major, so a song in A minor has 6m as home; others call the home chord 1m. Agree with your band which you use.

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Common Progressions

Ivi Uppercase = major · lowercase = minor

NUMERALS	IN C	STYLE
I V vi IV	C · G · Am · F	Pop anthem
vi IV I V	Am · F · C · G	Same chords, starting on minor
I vi IV V	C · Am · F · G	'50s doo-wop
I IV V	C · F · G	Rock, folk, country
ii V I	Dm7 · G7 · Cmaj7	Jazz's most common move

12-Bar Blues

C7 I7	C7 I7	C7 I7	C7 I7
F7 IV7	F7 IV7	C7 I7	C7 I7
G7 V7	F7 IV7	C7 I7	G7 V7

The last measure (V7) is the turnaround back to the top; end the song on I7 instead.

PRACTICE TIP

Practice slowly. Speed comes from playing it right, not from playing it fast.

