

# Unit 4: Chords

Content Area: **Music**  
Course(s): **Music Theory & Basic Composition I**  
Time Period: **2nd Marking Period**  
Length: **6 Weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit Overview

---

Students will learn how to identify, construct, and apply major, minor, perfect, diminished, and augmented triads. Students will also learn the dominant seventh chord and how it applies. Students will use these skills in composition.

## Transfer

---

Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

- Assign roman numerals to the corresponding triad.
- Compose compositions with appropriate triads and chords.

## Meaning

---

## Understandings

---

Students will understand that...

- The major triad can be found in the physics of sound, occurring in most naturally formed sound.
- Triads are the harmonic foundation of music.
- Specific chords will create specific sounds that help establish a certain mood in composed music.

## Essential Questions

---

Students will keep considering...

- What is the harmonic series and how does it define the major triad?

- In what ways are triads ubiquitous in written and recorded music of all styles and genres?
- How can we use different chords to create different moods in musical compositions?
- How do chord progressions relate to roman numerals?

## **Application of Knowledge and Skill**

---

### **Students will know...**

---

Students will know...

- A triad is a chord consisting of the root, third, and fifth pitches of a major or minor scale.
- The primary chords are major triads built on the tonic, subdominant, and dominant.
- The dominant 7th chord is a dominant triad with the minor 7th from the root.
- A chord in which the third is in bass is a first inversion chord. A chord in which the fifth is in the bass is a second inversion chord.
- Augmented triads are created by raising the fifth of a major triad one half step. Diminished triads are created by lowering the fifth of a minor triad one half step.

### **Students will be skilled at...**

---

Students will be skilled at...

- Name and draw major and minor triads.
- Label and construct primary chords in written music.
- Find and build dominant 7th chords.
- Aurally discern the difference between major and dominant 7th chords.
- Write and identify, both visually and aurally, triads and dominant 7th chords in inversions.
- Name and draw augmented and diminished triads.
- Aurally discern the differences among major, minor, diminished, and augmented triads.

## Academic Vocabulary

---

Chord  
Chord progression  
Dominant  
Dominant 7th chord  
Triad  
Major triad  
Minor triad  
Perfect triad  
Augmented triad  
Diminished triad  
Primary triad  
Roman Numerals  
Root

## Learning Goal

---

Identify, recall, and compose all forms of triads and dominant seventh chords.

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| VPA.1.1.12.B.1 | Examine how aspects of meter, rhythm, tonality, intervals, chords, and harmonic progressions are organized and manipulated to establish unity and variety in genres of musical compositions.                                 |
| VPA.1.1.12.B.2 | Synthesize knowledge of the elements of music in the deconstruction and performance of complex musical scores from diverse cultural contexts.  |
| VPA.1.3.12.B.2 | Analyze how the elements of music are manipulated in original or prepared musical scores.  |
| VPA.1.3.12.B.3 | Improvise works through the conscious manipulation of the elements of music, using a variety of traditional and nontraditional sound sources, including electronic sound-generating equipment and music generation programs. |
| VPA.1.3.12.B.4 | Arrange simple pieces for voice or instrument using a variety of traditional and nontraditional sound sources or electronic media, and/or analyze prepared scores using music composition software.                          |

## Target 1-- Level 1 Retrieval

---

SWBAT identify major, minor, perfect, augmented, diminished triads, and dominant seventh chords.

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| VPA.1.1.12.B.1 | Examine how aspects of meter, rhythm, tonality, intervals, chords, and harmonic progressions are organized and manipulated to establish unity and variety in genres of musical compositions. |
|----------------|--|

## **Target 2-- Level 2 Comprehension**

---

SWBAT construct all forms of triads and dominant seventh chords.

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| VPA.1.3.12.B.1 | Analyze compositions from different world cultures and genres with respect to technique, musicality, and stylistic nuance, and/or perform excerpts with technical accuracy, appropriate musicality, and the relevant stylistic nuance. |
| VPA.1.3.12.B.2 | Analyze how the elements of music are manipulated in original or prepared musical scores.  |

## **Target 3-- Level 3 Analysis**

---

SWBAT distinguish between different triads and how they are used in musical compositions.

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| VPA.1.3.12.B.1 | Analyze compositions from different world cultures and genres with respect to technique, musicality, and stylistic nuance, and/or perform excerpts with technical accuracy, appropriate musicality, and the relevant stylistic nuance. |
| VPA.1.3.12.B.2 | Analyze how the elements of music are manipulated in original or prepared musical scores.  |

## **Target 4-- Level 4 Knowledge Utilization**

---

SWBAT apply knowledge of triads and chords to create simple original compositions.

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| VPA.1.3.12.B.3 | Improvise works through the conscious manipulation of the elements of music, using a variety of traditional and nontraditional sound sources, including electronic sound-generating equipment and music generation programs. |
| VPA.1.3.12.B.4 | Arrange simple pieces for voice or instrument using a variety of traditional and nontraditional sound sources or electronic media, and/or analyze prepared scores using music composition software.                          |

## **Summative Assessment**

---

-Benchmark Exam

-Finale Project

## **Formative Assessment and Performance Opportunities**

---

- Aural Dictation
- Self-critique
- Written assessments
- Study and analysis of popular or created musical compositions.

## **21st Century Life and Careers**

---

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| CRP.K-12.CRP5  | Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.              |
| CRP.K-12.CRP6  | Demonstrate creativity and innovation.   |
| CRP.K-12.CRP7  | Employ valid and reliable research strategies.                                     |
| CRP.K-12.CRP8  | Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. |
| CRP.K-12.CRP11 | Use technology to enhance productivity.  |
| CRP.K-12.CRP12 | Work productively in teams while using cultural global competence.                 |

## **Differentiation / Enrichment**

---

### **Differentiation**

- Strategic seating for reduced distraction, enabling better lesson focus.
- Small-group, teacher-monitored learning activities.

### **Enrichment**

- Expand and extend concepts and ideas.
- Students will be provided with additional resources on relative topics.
- Provide students with supplemental resources to expand knowledge base.
- Create experiences for deeper learning.

## **Unit Resources**

---

-Alfred's Essentials of Music Theory

-Music in Theory and Practice (Eighth Edition)

-Audio/video examples

-Written tests

-Classroom Piano

-Harmony Director Keyboard

-Finale 2012