

# Swift Guitar Lessons

## Anatomy of Basic Chords



Hello friends,

in today's session we will be examining basic chord harmonies and how they are constructed using notes within and adjacent to the major scale in the key of C. This document will also demonstrate how flattening certain notes in the scale changes its classification and how those scales relate to harmonies.

Let's get started!

### Major Chords | 1.3.5 Harmony

The basic major chord, sometimes called a major triad, is built from the 1st, *major 3rd*, and 5th notes of the major scale. In the tablature below, we can see how the C major scale in two octave compares to the C major chord in barred 3rd fret position.

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef. The first staff contains the C major scale in two octaves, starting on C4 and ending on C6. The second staff is a guitar tablature with six lines labeled T, A, B from top to bottom. The notes of the C major scale are indicated by fret numbers: 3, 5, 2, 3, 5, 2, 4, 5, 3, 5, 6, 3, 5, 7, 8. The final chord is a C major chord in the 3rd fret, with fret numbers 3, 5, 5, 5, 3 on the strings from top to bottom.

### Minor Chords | 1.b3.5 Harmony

The basic minor triad is a variation in which the 3rd chord interval has been flattened by one half-step or one frets distance. Flattening the 3rd interval in the major scale creates the *C melodic minor scale*, which can be used to construct the C minor chord in barred 3rd fret position.

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef. The first staff contains the C melodic minor scale in two octaves, starting on C4 and ending on C6. The second staff is a guitar tablature with six lines labeled T, A, B from top to bottom. The notes of the C melodic minor scale are indicated by fret numbers: 3, 5, 1, 3, 5, 2, 4, 5, 3, 4, 6, 3, 5, 7, 8. The final chord is a C minor chord in the 3rd fret, with fret numbers 3, 4, 5, 5, 3 on the strings from top to bottom.

### Major 7 Chords | 1.3.5.7 Harmony

Major 7 chords are extensions of the basic major triad that include the 7th interval of the major scale. In the tablature below, we can see how the C major scale compares to the Cmaj7 barre chord.

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef. The first staff contains the C major scale in two octaves, starting on C4 and ending on C6. The second staff is a guitar tablature with six lines labeled T, A, B from top to bottom. The notes of the C major scale are indicated by fret numbers: 3, 5, 2, 3, 5, 2, 4, 5, 3, 5, 6, 3, 5, 7, 8. The final chord is a C major 7 chord in the 3rd fret, with fret numbers 3, 5, 4, 5, 3 on the strings from top to bottom.



**Dominant 7 Chords | 1.3.5.b7 Harmony**

Bluesy dom7 chords are a variation to the jazzier major 7th harmony in which the 7th chord interval has been flatted by one half-step. Flattening this note in the scale changes it from a major scale to a more exotic mixolydian scale.

**Minor 7 Chords | 1.b3.5.b7 Harmony**

The Min7 chord harmony includes both a flat 3rd and flat 7 intervals. Applying this variation to the major scale in combination with the flat 6th interval creates a scale known as the *natural minor scale*. In the tab below we can see how the Cmin7 chord shape relates to this scale pattern.