

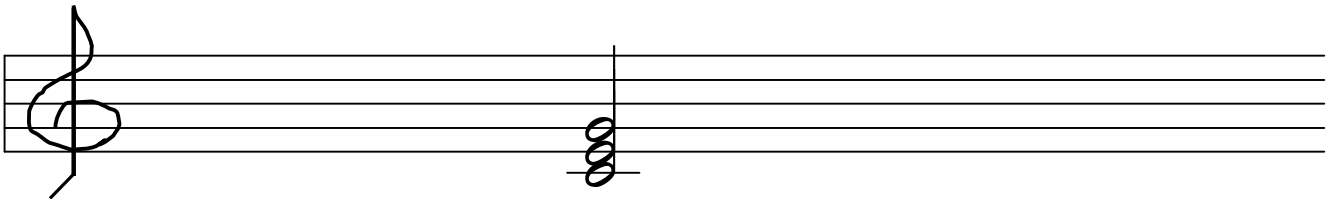
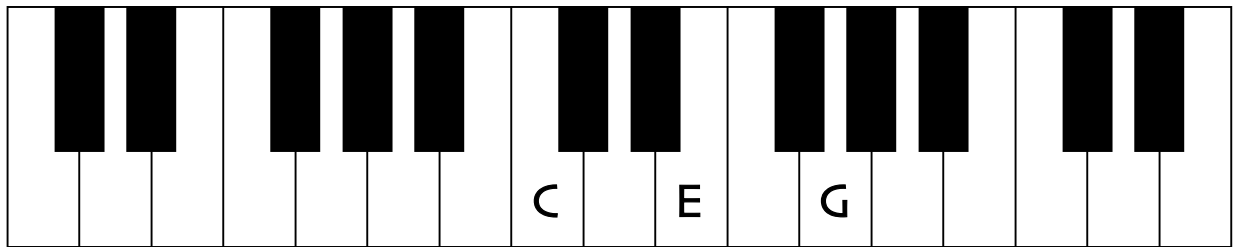
BEGINNING CHORD THEORY

CHORDS

- A chord consists of multiple notes played at the same time.
- A basic chord is built with a triad (3 notes).
- The number of half steps between notes determines the quality of the chord. A major triad has four half steps between notes 1 & 2 and 3 half steps between notes 2 & 3. A minor triad has three half steps between notes 1 & 2 and 4 half steps between notes 2 & 3. (The middle note moves down one half step.)

For example:

C Major chord begins on C. The second note (up 4 half steps) is E. The third note (up 3 half steps) is G. (From C, the half steps are C#, D, D#, to E: from E, the half steps are F, F#, to G)



CHORD PROGRESSIONS

- Music is created using combinations of chords called chord progressions.
- Each note in the music alphabet can be used to begin a scale. Chords are numbered using Roman Numerals relative to the scale degree in the key.
- Upper case Roman Numerals represent major chords; lower case numerals represent minor chords.

Key of A

Chord Representation:	I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi	vii
Beginning Note:	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Scale Degree:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Common Chord Progressions:

I V I

I IV I

I IV V I

Some Typical Patterns:

I often begins and ends phrases and/or songs. This establishes tonality and resolve within a song.

ii often moves to V.

vi is frequently used to prolong the sound of a I chord while relieving monotony.

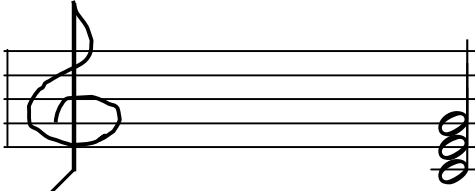
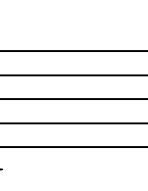
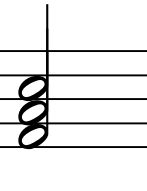
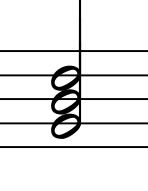
Key of G

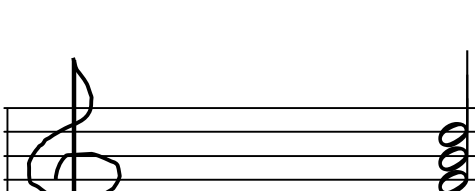
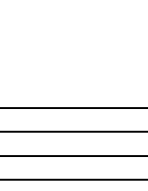
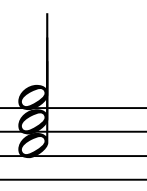
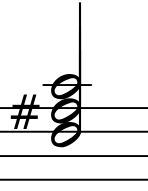
Chord Representation:	I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi	vii
Chord Name:	G	Am	Bm	C	D	Em	Fm
Scale Degree:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Key of C

Chord Representation:	I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi	vii
Chord Name:	C	Dm	Em	F	G	Am	Bm
Scale Degree:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

NOTATING CHORD PROGRESSIONS

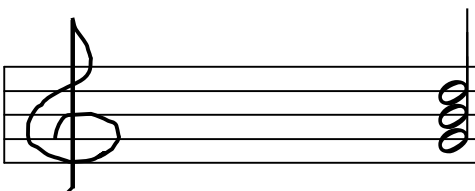
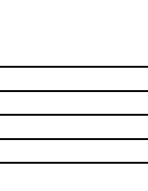
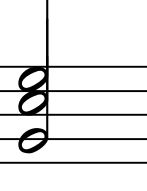
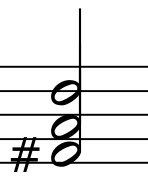
Chord names:	C	F	G	C
				
Key of C:	I	IV	V	I

				
Key of G:	I	IV	V	I

(Using the beginning note that corresponds to the scale degree of the chord, the major triads are formed by calculating the appropriate number of half steps between notes. The correct notation includes spelling the chord with every other letter name (therefore, the second note in the V chord is F# rather than its enharmonic equivalent, Gb).

PLAYING CHORD PROGRESSIONS

Most players achieve a smoother sound by using chord inversions to play chord progressions. An inversion is just a re-stacking of the notes of the chord so that less hand movement is required when moving from one chord to the next.

				
Key of G:	I	IV	V	I

In the IV and V chords, the notes are still C-E-G and D-F#-A, but their position on the staff has been rearranged in order to simplify hand motion.