

Nydana Chord Symbol Notation

This document is a proposal for a standardized chord symbol notation that is recommended to be used with Nydana Notation, but it could also be used with standard notation as well. The goal has been to eliminate ambiguities, and to reduce the number of ways a chord can be written. There doesn't seem to be any world standard, and as a consequence, a great number of different chord symbols have been employed to describe what is otherwise identical chords. The proposed notation consists of a number of basic chord symbols to which other intervals can be added when needed. Another goal with this notation has been to make it differ as little as possible from what has been used traditionally; so most things will look familiar.

In chord symbols used today, intervals that are added to these do not always reflect the true names of the intervals they represent. This is however the case in the proposed notation. Once a basic chord symbol below has been chosen, there should only be one way to write the desired chord no matter how complicated it is. Here are the basic chord symbols and the intervals they represent:

C1	1
C5	1 5
C	1 3 5
C6	1 3 (5) 6
C7	1 3 (5) m7
C9	1 3 (5) m7 9
C11	1 (3) (5) m7 9 11
C13	1 3 (5) m7 (9) (11) 13
Cm	1 m3 5
Cm6	1 m3 (5) 6
Cm7	1 m3 (5) m7
Cm9	1 m3 (5) m7 9
Cm11	1 m3 (5) m7 (9) 11
Cm13	1 m3 (5) m7 (9) (11) 13
Cmaj7	1 3 (5) M7
Cmaj9	1 3 (5) M7 9
Cmaj11	1 (3) (5) M7 9 11
Cmaj13	1 3 (5) M7 (9) (11) 13
CmMaj7	1 m3 (5) M7
CmMaj9	1 m3 (5) M7 9
CmMaj11	1 m3 (5) M7 (9) 11
CmMaj13	1 m3 (5) M7 (9) (11) 13
Cdim	1 m3 -5 (-7)
Csus4	1 4 5
C6sus4	1 4 5 6
C7sus4	1 4 5 m7
C9sus4	1 4 5 m7 9
C13sus4	1 4 5 m7 (9) (11) 13
Csus2	1 2 5
C6sus2	1 2 5 6
C7sus2	1 2 5 m7

m = minor, M = major, - = diminished, + = augmented

Intervals 2, 3, 6, 9, 10 and 13 are all major intervals, but the "M" has been omitted.

Intervals in parentheses can be left out. A minimalistic, and also less dissonant version of a chord, with a maximum of five notes, will be rendered if all parenthesized notes are left out.

The way the basic chord symbols are written above is not actually how they will be written in sheet music. In order to make these symbols more compact, the following substitutions should be made:

maj7:	△
dim:	○
sus4:	□ ₄
sus2:	□ ₂

Thus the list of basic chords becomes:

C1	1
C5	1 5
C	1 3 5
C6	1 3 (5) 6
C7	1 3 (5) m7
C9	1 3 (5) m7 9
C11	1 (3) (5) m7 9 11
C13	1 3 (5) m7 (9) (11) 13
Cm	1 m3 5
Cm6	1 m3 (5) 6
Cm7	1 m3 (5) m7
Cm9	1 m3 (5) m7 9
Cm11	1 m3 (5) m7 (9) 11
Cm13	1 m3 (5) m7 (9) (11) 13
C△	1 3 (5) M7
C△9	1 3 (5) M7 9
C△11	1 (3) (5) M7 9 11
C△13	1 3 (5) M7 (9) (11) 13
Cm△	1 m3 (5) M7
Cm△9	1 m3 (5) M7 9
Cm△11	1 m3 (5) M7 (9) 11
Cm△13	1 m3 (5) M7 (9) (11) 13
C ^o	1 m3 -5 (-7)
C□ ₄	1 4 5
C6□ ₄	1 4 5 6
C7□ ₄	1 4 5 m7
C9□ ₄	1 4 5 m7 9
C13□ ₄	1 4 5 m7 (9) (11) 13
C□ ₂	1 2 5
C6□ ₂	1 2 5 6
C7□ ₂	1 2 5 m7

If a + is added after a chord symbol, the fifth is augmented (sharp fifth).
 If a - is added after a chord symbol, the fifth is diminished (flat fifth).
 For instance, C7+ involves: 1, 3, +5, m7. A + or a - that is appended like this to a basic chord symbol, always refers to the fifth.

A bass note can be added after a chord symbol by the usual slash:

C7+/E

If an interval is to be added to a basic chord symbol, it should be taken from the following list which is written in an ascending order. Although it would be possible to add just about any interval, the following are most likely to be used:

m2, 2, m3, 3, 4, -5, 5, +5, 6, m7, M7, m9, 9, m10, 10, 11, +11, m13, 13

Put the interval to be added in square brackets, right after the basic chord symbol:

C[m9] 1, 3, 5, m9 (a text within brackets is preferably written in a condensed style)

When more than one interval is to be added, separate intervals with commas (do not include blanks):

C[m9,11] 1, 3, 5, m9, 11 (always yield intervals between brackets in an ascending order)

If a basic chord symbol already has an interval with the same number in it, the interval in square brackets will replace it:

C9[m9] 1, 3, 5, m7, m9

If, for example, both the 9th and the minor 9th should be present at the same time, then write:

C9[m9,9] 1, 3, 5, m7, m9, 9

If an interval is to be excluded from a chord, write ≠ ahead of it:

C7[≠3,+11] 1, 5, m7, +11

Bass notes are always added after any square brackets:

C6[+11]/G

Compound chords, where one chord is played on top of another, would be written the usual way:

$\frac{Am}{Gm}$ (in a text, it could, as a suggestion, be spelled Gm^Am)

The basic chord symbol C1 can be used to create chords by specifying intervals:

C1[+5,M7] 1, +5, M7

Accidentals should not be raised or made smaller. Some examples using accidentals:

Bbm, F#7, Ebb, Fx9 bb = double flat, x = double sharp

All other notions found in chord symbol notation today, would no longer be needed. For example, a half-diminished chord, which is sometimes written with a dashed circle, becomes Cm7-. A sharp eleventh chord, which can sometimes be written as C+11, or even C11+, now becomes C11[+11]. A plus sign together with a basic chord symbol always signals an augmented fifth; so C11+ should be read as C11[+5]. Other examples of notions no longer needed are the words "no" and "add", and chord symbols with slashes (or dots), such as C6/9.