

Chord Types

TRIADS

The following 4 *triad types* are encountered in tonal music.¹

	Type	Quality symbol ²	Lead-sheet chord symbol [†]	Chord Spelling [†]
1.	Major	M	C	C, E, G
2.	Minor	m	Cm or C-	C, E \flat , G
3.	Augmented	A	C ⁺ or C _{aug}	C, E, G \sharp
4.	Diminished	d	C ^o or C _{dim}	C, E \flat , G \flat

SEVENTH CHORDS

The following 5 *seventh-chord types* are commonly encountered in tonal music.

	Type	Quality symbol ³	Lead-sheet chord symbol [†]	Chord Spelling [†]
1.	Major-minor seventh ⁴	Mm	C ⁷	C, E, G, B \flat
2.	Major seventh	MM	C _{maj} ⁷	C, E, G, B
3.	Minor seventh	mm	C _m ⁷ , C _{min} ⁷ , C _{mi} ⁷ , or C ⁻⁷	C, E \flat , G, B \flat
4.	Half-diminished seventh	dm	C ^{o7} or C _m ⁷⁽⁵⁾	C, E \flat , G \flat , B \flat
5.	Diminished seventh ⁵	dd	C ^{o7} or C _{dim} ⁷	C, E \flat , G \flat , B $\flat\flat$

† - Example for a chord whose root C

Reading

Burstein and Straus 2015, Chapter 3, pp. 37-45

¹ The terms *chord type* and *chord quality* are often used interchangeably.

² 'M' stands for *major*, 'm' stands for *minor*, 'A' stands for *augmented*, and 'd' stands for *diminished*. I will refer to this labeling system as the M/m/A/d (read 'mad') system.

³ The first symbol represents the triad type. The second symbol represents the type of seventh. For example, 'Mm' represents a major triad with a minor seventh. Other seventh-chord types are possible: e.g., the 'Am' chord (C, E, G \sharp , B \flat) whose lead-sheet chord symbol is C⁷⁽⁵⁾, the 'mM' chord (C, E \flat , G, B) whose symbol is C_m^{maj7}, etc.

⁴ The terms *major-minor seventh* and *dominant seventh* chord are often used interchangeably.

⁵ The terms *diminished seventh* and *fully-diminished seventh* chord are often used interchangeably.