

Chord Types

TRIADS

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

	Type	Quality symbol ²	Lead-sheet symbol*	Chord Spelling*
1.	Major	M	C	C, E, G
2.	Minor	m	C _m or C ⁻	C, E _b , G
3.	Augmented	A	C ⁺ or C _{aug}	C, E, G [#]
4.	Diminished	d	C ^o or C _{dim}	C, E _b , G _b

SEVENTH CHORDS

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

	Type	Quality symbol ³	Lead-sheet symbol*	Chord Spelling*
1.	Major-minor seventh ⁴	Mm	C ⁷	C, E, G, B _b
2.	Major seventh	MM	C _{maj} ⁷	C, E, G, B
3.	Minor seventh	mm	C _m ⁷ or C ⁻⁷	C, E _b , G, B _b
4.	Half-diminished seventh	dm	C ^{ø7} or C _m ^{7(b5)}	C, E _b , G _b , B _b
5.	Diminished seventh ⁵	dd	C ^{o7} or C _{dim} ⁷	C, E _b , G _b , B _{bb}

* - for a chord built on root C

Reading

Burstein/Straus (2015) Chapter 3, pp. 37-45

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

² I refer to this 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[#], B_b) whose lead-sheet symbol is C⁷⁽⁴⁵⁾, the **mM** chord (C, E_b, G, B) whose symbol is C_m^{maj7}, etc.

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

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