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OTHER CHORD TYPES

Sus Chords

The common triads can be changed to create tension or color in music. One of the most common ways to too add interest to a chord is to replace the 3rd with either a 2nd or a 4th. These are called *sus chords*.

For example, if we replace the 3rd of a major triad with a 2nd, we create a *sus2 chord*. If we replace the 3rd with a 4th, we create a *sus4 chord*.



Remember the point is to replace the 3rd...if the 3rd were also present, then we would be creating something else.

Add Chords

If the 3rd is present and the 2nd is added, we think of it as a 9th, and the chord is an *add9 chord*. If the 3rd is present and we add a 4th we think of it as an 11th, and the chord is an *add11 chord*. As in the extended chords, a major add 11 is rarely used, because of the clash between the 11th (4th) and the 3rd.

5 Chords (Power Chords)

Eliminating the 3rd altogether, retaining just the root and the 5th, creates a 5 chord, sometimes called a *power chord*. Since there is no 3rd, a 5 chord is neither major nor minor. Classical musicians think of this as being an "open" sound, and rock musicians use them for pretty much the same reason; powerful, yet undefined, a 5 chord can be combined with many different kinds of sounds. The root is often doubled in a 5 chord.

6th Chords

6th chords are similar to 7th chords in that they are four-note chords. The 6th is added to the triad. A 6th is a great color to add to both major and minor triads.

ALTERED CHORDS

Raising or lowering a note in a chord by using an *accidental* (sharp, flat or natural) is called making an *alteration*. We don't use this term for changing one basic triad into another type (e.g. lowering the 3rd of a major chord to create a minor chord). Rather, an altered chord is an extended chord where the 5th or 9th is raised or lowered with an accidental. Doing this adds a non-diatonic note to the chord and thus creates a lot of tension, which is the whole point. Major, minor and dominant chords may be altered, but altered dominant chords are definitely the most common.

Only 5ths or 9ths can be altered. Altering any other note can be interpreted as an altered 5th or 9th. The following chart shows how any chord alteration can be interpreted as altering the 5th or 9th. Enharmonic relationships are important to these interpretations.

ALTERED SCALE TONE		ALTERATION
Raising the root	=	$\flat 9$
Lowering the 2 nd or 9 th	=	$\flat 9$
Raising the 2 nd or 9 th	=	$\sharp 9$
Lowering the 3 rd	=	$\sharp 9$
Raising the 3 rd	=	4 th or 11 th , not an alteration
Lowering the 4 th or 11 th	=	3 rd , not an alteration
Raising the 4 th or 11 th	=	$\flat 5$
Lowering the 5 th	=	$\flat 5$
Raising the 5 th	=	$\sharp 5$
Lowering the 6 th or 13 th	=	$\sharp 5$
Raising the 6 th or 13 th	=	$\flat 7$, essential dominant chord tone, not an alteration
Lowering the 7 th	=	$\flat 7$, essential dominant chord tone, not an alteration
Raising the 7 th	=	root

Altered Dominant Chords

Here are the four basic altered dominant chords, and four ways to alter both the 5th and 9th in a dominant chord:

