

Common Chord Progressions and Chord Tendencies in C Major

Every wonder why certain chords seem to popup together time and time again?

All harmonic or chord movement in a chord progression is a combination of the active and passive quality of individual chords within the progression or song. Chords provide tension and resolution, the feeling of movement and non-movement in songs and progressions.

Passive chords tend to offer a feeling of rest or resolution. Active chords are restless, creating a feeling of movement. An active chord wants to resolve to a passive chord. There is no stronger resolution in music then the tendency for a V chord to resolve to its home or I chord. In the key of C major that would be G or G7 resolving to a C.

The key of C major is one of the more common keys used in music and typically the first key used when learning to play an instrument or explore the principles of music and harmony. The key of C major contains no sharp or flat notes and uses all seven letters of the musical alphabet: C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C', the white keys of a standard piano.

If we number the scale degrees of a major scale from 1 to 7, we get each scale degree's position and function within the scale.



Triads in C Major

The chords of a major scale are numbered using capital roman numerals to indicate their harmonic function within the scale.

C	Dm	Em	F	G*	Am	Bdim*
I	II	II	IV	V	VI	VII

* A G7 can be substituted for a G or B diminished chord without changing its harmonic function.



A triad, a three note chord, that contains the third of the scale present, is passive. A triad without the third of the scale present, is active. For C major the third is E and the fourth is F.

For the key of C Major, the active and passive chords are:

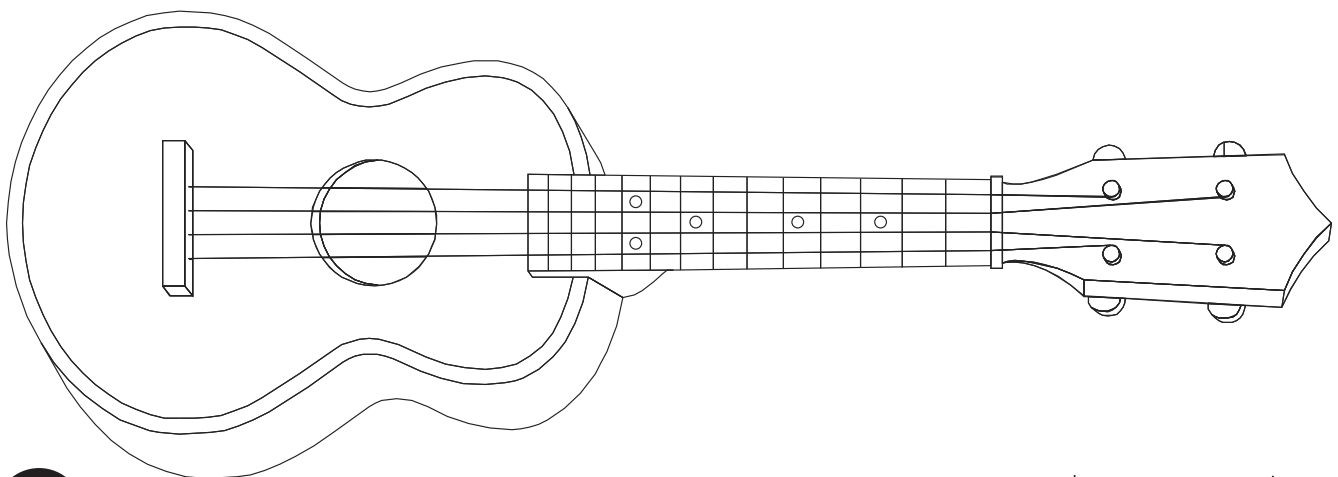
Active Chords	Passive Chords
V G (G B D)	I C (C E G)
IV F (F A C)	VI Am (A C E)
II Dm (D F A)	III Em (E G B)
VII B° (B D F) <i>rare</i>	

A *passive* chord can substitute for a *passive* chord, an *active* chord can substitute for a *active* chord.

Common Progressions in the Key of C Major

The primary chords in any major key are the I, IV and V chords. The I chord is the home chord and passive. The IV and V are active chords. For the key of C major, these are the C, F, and G chord.

Each progression is shown with their roman numeral chord function below it. Use these roman numerals, with the *Chords for All Major Keys* chart on page 5 for transposing to other major keys.



Common Chord Progressions, C Major

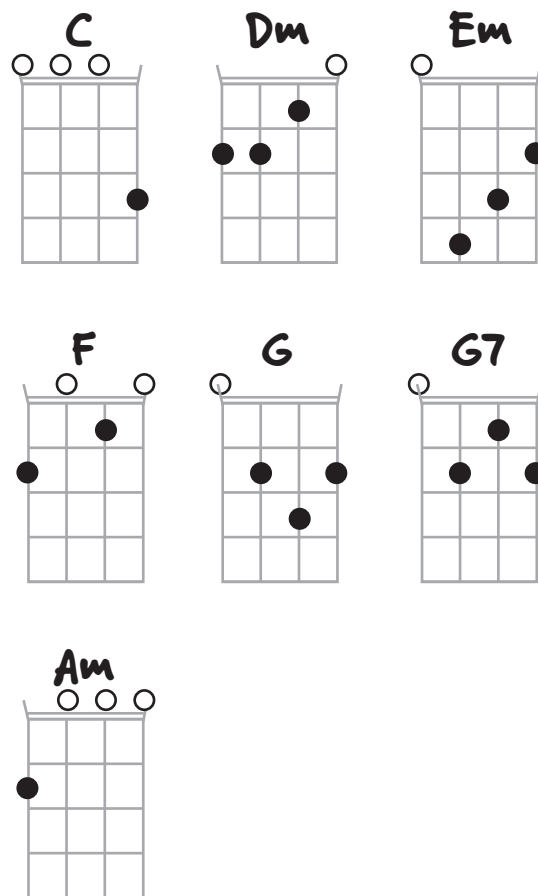




Here are a few common chord progression for C major.

C I	G* V	G I			
C I	F IV	G V	C I		
C I	Am VI	F IV	G V	C I	
C I	Dm II	F IV	G V	C I	
C I	G V	Am VI	F IV	C I	
C I	Em III	Am VI	G V	C I	
C I	F IV	C I	G V	C I	
C I	Em III	F IV	C I		
C I	Dm II	Em III	F IV	G V	C I

Basic Ukulele Chords for Key of C Major



○ = open string

Explore additional possibilities.

* A G7 can be substituted for a G chord without changing its harmonic function.

Common Chord Progressions, C Major





Common Major Keys

There are 15 possible major keys. Only a few are common, depending on the style of music.

Common Rock, Country, Folk, Blues and Pop Keys: C, G, D, A and E

Common Jazz: C, F, Bb, Eb, Ab, Db and G

If we combine the lists we have C, F, Bb, Eb, Ab, Db, G, D, A and E.

Common Chords in Common Major Keys

Key	I	II	III	IV	V, V7	VI
C	C	Dm	Em	F	G, G7	Am
F	F	Gm	Am	Bb	C, C7	Dm
Bb	Bb	Cm	Dm	Eb	F, F7	Gm
Eb	Eb	Fm	Gm	C	Bb, Bb7	Cm
Ab	Ab	Bbm	Cm	Db	Eb, Eb7	Fm
Db	Db	Ebm	Fm	Gb	Ab, Ab7	Bbm
G	G	Am	Bm	C	D, D7	Em
D	D	Em	F#m	G	A, A7	Bm
A	A	Bm	C#m	D	E, E7	F#m
E	E	F#m	G#m	A	B, B7	C#m





Chords for ALL Major Keys

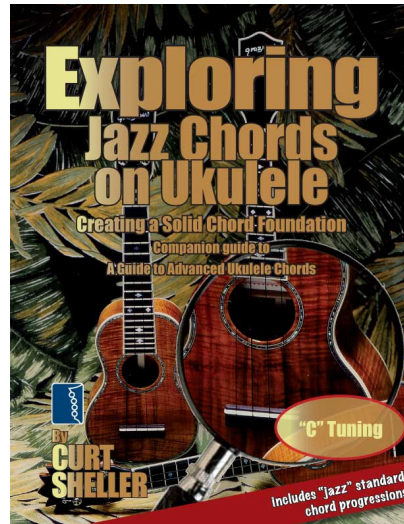
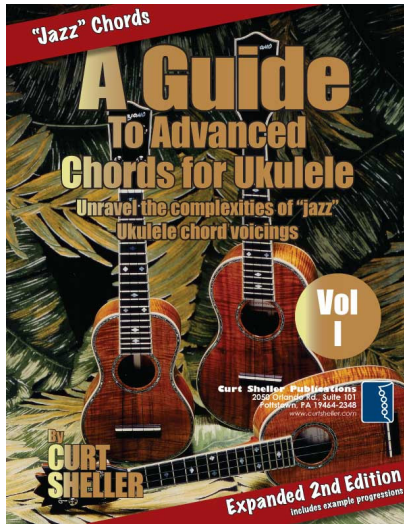
Active / Passive Chord Qualities

	I <i>Passive</i>	II <i>Active</i>	III <i>Passive</i>	IV <i>Active</i>	V, V7 <i>Active</i>	VI <i>Passive</i>	VII <i>Active</i>
C	C	Dm	Em	F	G, G7	Am	Bdim
G	G	Am	Bm	C	D, D7	Em	F#dim
D	D	Em	F#m	G	A, A7	Bm	C#dim
A	A	Bm	C#m	D	E, E7	F#m	G#dim
E	E	F#m	G#m	A	B, B7	C#m	D#dim
B	B	C#m	D#m	E	F#, F#7	G#m	A#dim
F#	F#	G#m	A#m	B	C#, C#7	D#m	E#dim
C#	C#	D#m	E#m	F#	G#, G#7	A#m	B#dim
F	F	Gm	Am	Bb	C, C7	Dm	Edim
Bb	Bb	Cm	Dm	Eb	F, F7	Gm	Adim
Eb	Eb	Fm	Gm	Ab	Bb, Bb7	Cm	Ddim
Ab	Ab	Bbm	Cm	Db	Eb, Eb7	Fm	Gdim
Db	Db	Ebm	Fm	Gb	Ab, Ab7	Bbm	Cdim
Gb	Gb	Abm	Bbm	Cb	Db, Db7	Ebm	Fdim
Cb	Cb	Dbm	Ebm	Fb	Gb, Gb7	Abm	Bbdim

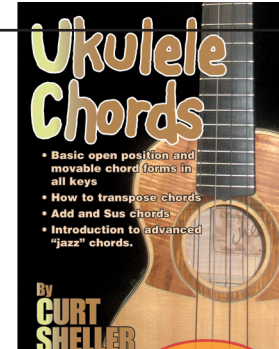
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Exploring* Chords on Ukulele!!!



All books available as a hard copy book and downloadable-printable e-books



A GUIDE TO ADVANCED UKULELE CHORDS - VOLUME I

A Guide to Advanced Ukulele Chords provides detailed information on voicing 4-part chords.

Beyond learning open and barre chords, most ukulele players struggle with advanced chords. Commonly called “jazz” chords, these more sophisticated voicings find a wide use in all forms of music.

EXPLORING “JAZZ” CHORDS ON UKULELE

Exploring “Jazz” Chords takes the core chords from A Guide to Advanced Chords for Ukulele and shows their use over a variety of common chord progressions based on songs from the standard jazz repertoire.

Building a Solid “Jazz” Chord Foundation using Seventh, Major Seventh, Major 6, Minor Seventh, Minor Sixth, Diminished Seventh, Minor Seventh Flat Five, Augmented Seventh.

THE ADVANCED GUIDE TO CHORD PROGRESSIONS FOR UKULELE - VOLUME I

Volume I features the principles of voice leading applied to chord progressions. These principles are explained using chords from volume I of The Advanced Guide to Ukulele Chords. Chapters with common major and minor full diatonic, partial diatonic and chromatic chord progressions are also included to further explore voice leading.

