

Diatonic 7th Chords

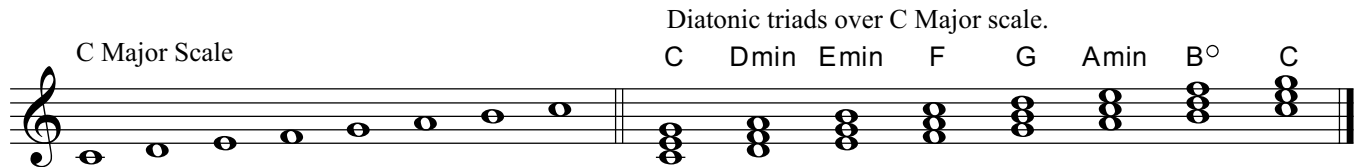
By
Per Danielsson

The concept of diatonic chords is taught in traditional music theory. By simply moving a triad up and down a scale, it creates different quality chords. It gives us an understanding of chord functions and the sound of a certain scale.

C Major Scale

Diatonic triads over C Major scale.

C Dmin Emin F G Amin B° C



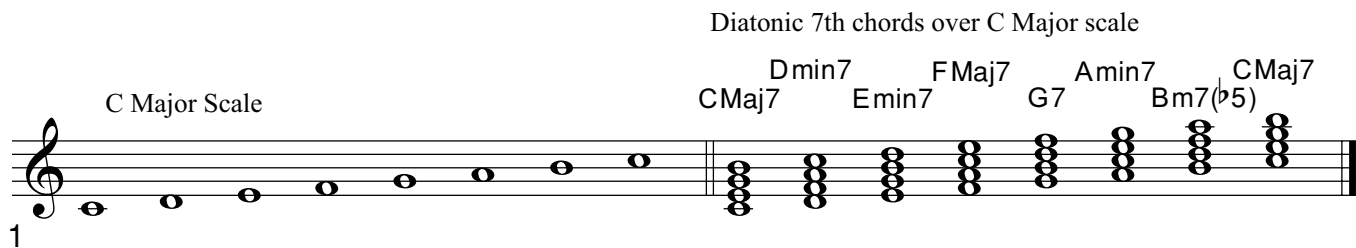
The image shows a musical staff in treble clef. The first part of the staff contains the C Major scale: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The second part of the staff shows seven diatonic triads stacked vertically above each note of the scale: C major (C-E-G), D minor (D-F-A), E minor (E-G-B), F major (F-A-C), G major (G-B-D), A minor (A-C-E), and B diminished (B-D-F).

Listen to the sound of the scale and chords when you play diatonic 7th chords. It creates a thicker and rich sound.

C Major Scale

Diatonic 7th chords over C Major scale

C Maj7 Dmin7 Emin7 F Maj7 G7 Amin7 Bm7(b5) CMaj7



The image shows a musical staff in treble clef. The first part of the staff contains the C Major scale: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The second part of the staff shows seven diatonic 7th chords stacked vertically above each note of the scale: C Major 7 (C-E-G-B), D minor 7 (D-F-A-B), E minor 7 (E-G-B-D), F Major 7 (F-A-C-E), G 7 (G-B-D-F), A minor 7 (A-C-E-G), and B minor 7 flat 5 (B-D-F-A).

In jazz, the diatonic concept is very useful when it comes to practicing technique and learning scales and their sound. It should **not** serve as the base of your improvisation since patterns and scales can easily sound mechanical. However, by practicing diatonic chords in patterns you will become a stronger player both harmonically and technically. It's just another piece of knowledge that is good to have in your bag of tricks.

You can play diatonic chords over any scale. Different scales will create a variety of diatonic chords. This article will demonstrate diatonic chords over:

- Major scale (Dorian and Mixolydian)**
- Harmonic minor scale**
- Diminished scale**
- Melodic minor scale**

Practice hints:

Practice the chords slowly and analyze its qualities.

Practice broken chords, up and down.

Create new patterns of the diatonic chords.

Practice in all twelve keys.

Use a metronome.

If you have questions about the theory of the scales you can refer to **back issues** of this web site.

Major Scale

Diatonic 7th chords over C Major scale

C Major Scale

C Maj7 Dmin7 Emin7 FMaj7 G7 Amin7 Bm7(b5) CMaj7

The C Major scale becomes **Dorian** when played over the Dmin chord and **Mixolydian** when played over the G13 chord.

Dmin9 G13 C⁶ C⁶

Dmin9 G13 C⁶ C⁶

Harmonic minor Scale

C Harmonic minor

Cm(maj7) Dm7(b5) EbM7(#5) Fmin7 G7 AbMaj7 B°7 Cm(maj7)

Dm7(b5) G7(b9) Dm7(b5) G7(b9)

Dm7(b5) G7(b9) Dm7(b5) G7(b9) Cmin7

Diminished Scale

C Half/Whole Dminished

C^o7 D^b7 E^b7 E^o7 F[#]7 G^o7 A^o7 B^b7 C^o7

The score for the Diminished Scale is presented in two systems. The first system shows the scale notes on a single staff and the piano accompaniment in a grand staff. The piano part begins with a C7(b9) chord in the bass clef. The second system continues the piano accompaniment, ending with an F6 chord in the bass clef.

Altered/Melodic minor Scale

C Altered (D^b melodic minor from C-C)

Cm7(b5) D^bm(maj7) E^bmin7 EM7(#5) G^b7 A^b7 B^bm7(b5) Cm7(b5)

The score for the Altered/Melodic minor Scale is presented in two systems. The first system shows the scale notes on a single staff and the piano accompaniment in a grand staff. The piano part begins with a C7alt chord in the bass clef. The second system continues the piano accompaniment, ending with C7alt and F6 chords in the bass clef.