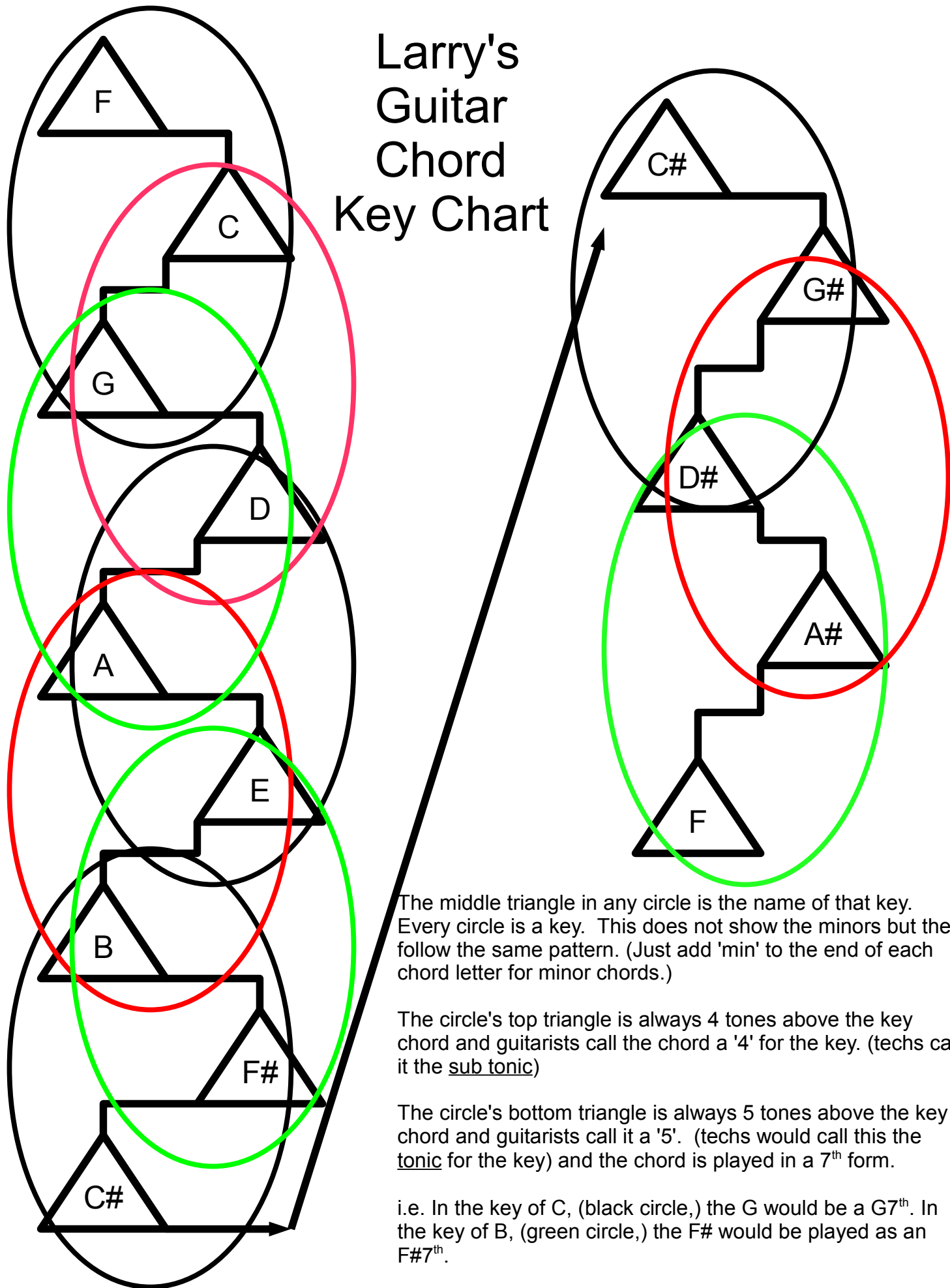


Larry's Guitar Chord Key Chart



The middle triangle in any circle is the name of that key. Every circle is a key. This does not show the minors but they follow the same pattern. (Just add 'min' to the end of each chord letter for minor chords.)

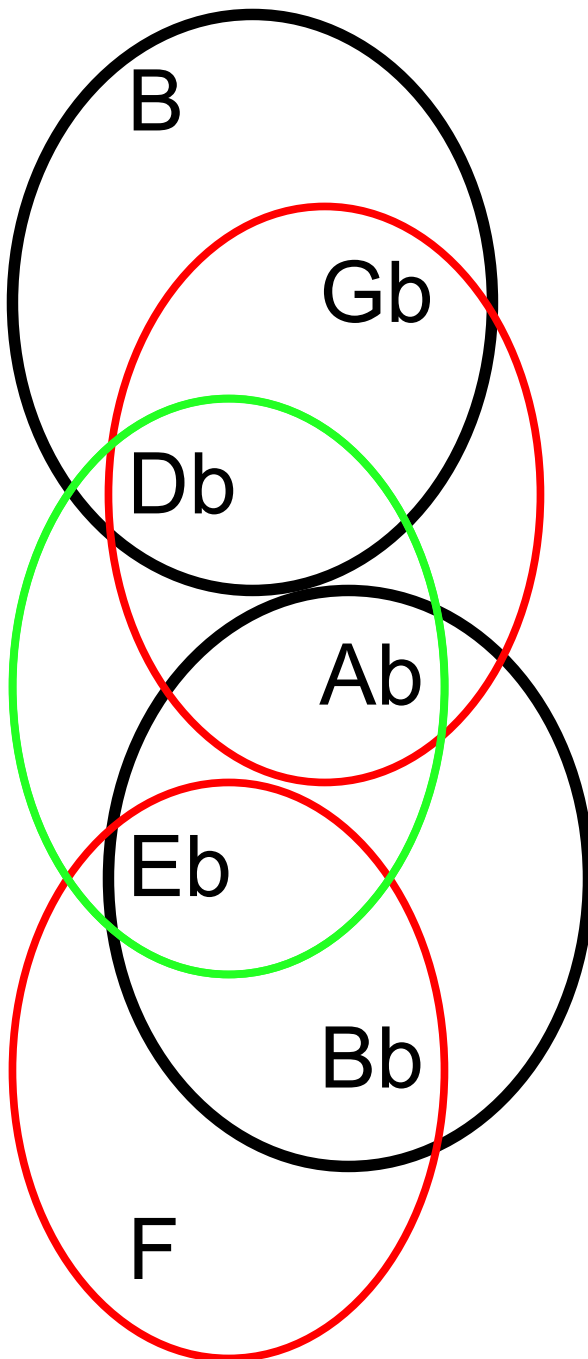
The circle's top triangle is always 4 tones above the key chord and guitarists call the chord a '4' for the key. (techs call it the sub tonic)

The circle's bottom triangle is always 5 tones above the key chord and guitarists call it a '5'. (techs would call this the tonic for the key) and the chord is played in a 7th form.

i.e. In the key of C, (black circle,) the G would be a G7th. In the key of B, (green circle,) the F# would be played as an F#7th.

What's not shown on the above chart? Flats!

The following Keys are missing, but using the pattern above, here is the order of the missing chords. These should be the beginning and the end of this list would connect to the beginning or top of the chart above. This list will end on **F**, which will be a duplicate of the top **F** in the chart above.



Gb = Black ring

Db = Red ring

Ab = Green ring

Eb = Black ring

Bb = Red ring

These chords are basically in the same position as the # chords in the first page. You can see that they start with B and end with F. On the piano they are the same physical note. They are just called something different depending on the key but that is way too complicated and I'm trying to keep it simple.

More on Minors

Every major key has a corresponding minor key to go with it. For the key of **C** (it can also be called **C major** or **Cmaj**, so you know if you're talking major or minor but it isn't necessary – if it isn't mentioned then assume it is 'major') the minor chord that goes along with the **C** chord is **Amin**. When you jump down into a minor key, you follow the same pattern and the chords are linked in groups together the same way. So if you are in **Amin** then the 7th chord for that would be an **Emin7th** and the sub tonic, or 4 chord would be **Dmin**. So this follows the same pattern as C, G7th and F from the major chord key group.

To find the minor key for every major key, just take the Key name chord (the middle triangle) and count down to the 3rd triangle to find the same chord in a minor. For example, take the key of D, or Dmaj: counting down 3 you would have Bmin as the corresponding minor chord and all the chords for the key of D major would be:

G

D - Key name

A7th

Emin

Bmin

F#min7th

Learning to play by ear.

To learn to play by ear, pick out all the chords from one complete group. That includes the 3 minor chords that correspond to the major ones. The group shown above is an example of the complete chord list of the key of **D**.

Start by picturing in your mind, the 3 major chords and their position within the circle (we'll add the minor ones after we learn the 'feel' of the major ones.) The next exercise is where you really need to pay attention with your hearing.

Start by just playing a D chord. (*This should work for any instrument that plays multiple notes at once, like a guitar, piano, ukelele, etc.)

Listen to the overall sound of that chord and in your mind, think or even hum or sing to yourself the Do, Re, Mi, Fa, So, La, Ti, Do scale based on the D chord. The intention of this is to become familiar with the 'home base' chord. Every other chord we play is going to have a 'feel' or sound that relates to this home chord.

Now with that sound in your head, play a **G** chord. Listen to how that feels... but picture it by remembering how the D chord just sounded. Then play the **D** chord again.

To finish the exercise off, play the **A7th** chord and listen to how that sounds compared to the **D** 'home plate' chord.

Now play all 3 using this pattern: **D, G, D, A7th, D, G, D, A7th, D**

You should hear a general song type melody that starts at 'Do' and goes up to 'Fa', then back to 'Do', and then down to 'So', and back up to 'Do' and so on as you change chords each time.

Now do the same thing with the minor chords, and end by the pattern in all minors: **Bmin, Emin, Bmin, F#min7th, Bmin, Emin, Bmin, F#min7th, Bmin.**

To complete the final learning of this 'feel' or sound, combine the minor chords with the D 'home plate' so you play the following pattern:

D, Bmin, D, Emin, D, F#min7th, D, Bmin, D, Emin, D, F#min7th, D

Now just to demonstrate the same sound or 'feel' relationship, play the exact same patterns using a different key. To save you the time of changing to a complex key, I'll write out the key of **F#** for you. You can translate to a different key yourself later. (try the **key of C** on your own, as it is an easy one to play on both piano and guitar.)

Pattern for Key of **F#**

Major only: **F#, C, F#, C#7th, F#, C, F#, C#7th, F#** Minor only: **D#min, G#min, D#min, A#min7th, D#**

Minor with major 'home plate' reference: **F#, D#min, F#, G#min, F#, A#min7th, F#, D#min, F#, G#min, F#, A#min7th, F#**

Advanced information on playing by ear

Once you know the sound of each chord within a key, you should be able to play the majority of songs. However you will notice that there are still some variations in the sound of the way the radio version sounds compared to how you play it yourself. In this section I'll explain why that is and how you can continue to develop your own ear and your own chord skills to explore more complex sounds.

To start with, let's simplify. We will take the key of C because if you're playing on the piano, we don't have any sharps or flats in this key. It is also relatively easy to play on guitar.

From the chord chart we see that the following chords make up the major C key:

F

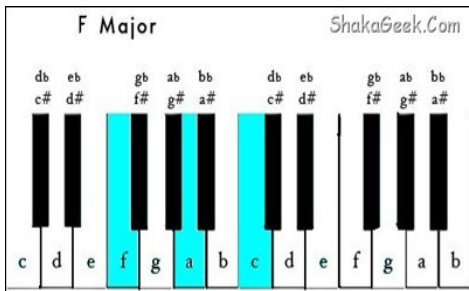
C

G⁷th

Now, let's picture the simple look of these chords on the piano keyboard.



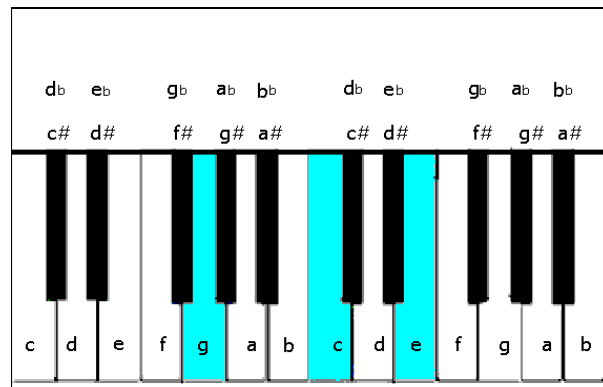
Each key in the C chord is a third away from the last one. This is the same pattern used to make the F chord and the G chord (if we drop the 7th part of it for now.)



In the more complex chords, there are **2 ways that they alter** that main chord. **First is by position.** The C chord you see above is called the first position. It contains 1 C, 1E, and 1G note. In the first position as that is called, those notes are positioned as you see them. But the C chord can be played in different ways. As long as you still have 1C, 1E and 1G, you can pick them up anywhere. So this gives us 2 more C chords and we call them the 2nd and 3rd positions.

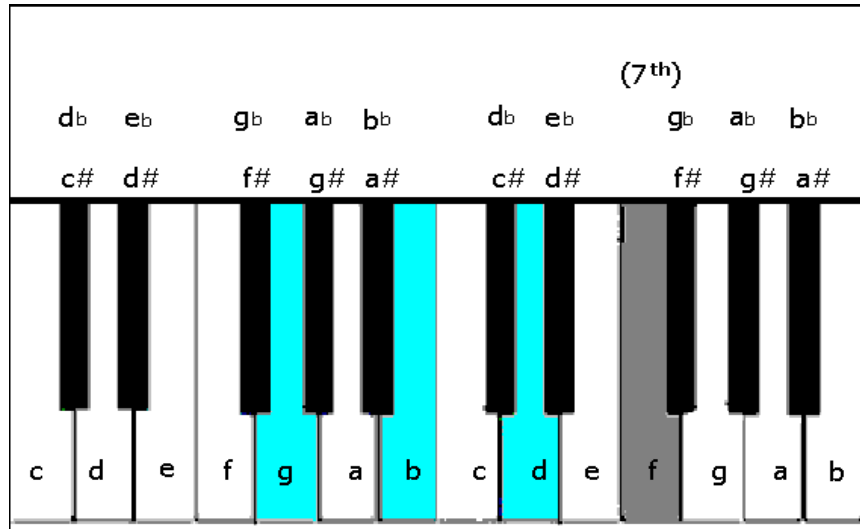


C chord 2nd position



C chord 3rd position

The second method is to **alter chords by adding or subtracting notes** to the main chord. For example, we showed a **G** chord before but in the key of **C**, we should be using a **G7th** chord. Well we simply do that by adding a **7th** note to the main **G** chord.



In this case, no notes were subtracted but we added the **7th** to make a **G7th** chord. Now that we added the **7th**, we could take away any 1 of the other 3 notes and it would still have almost the same sound so you can use any 3 of the 4 notes shown to play a **G7th** chord. It is a good idea though to always include the **7th** note itself.

So that's the idea of adding a note, but we can also add other notes too, not just a 7th. Here is an example showing a **G7th** chord that has the middle **B** note subtracted and a **C** or **4th** note added. It gives a different sound.



Go ahead and play with adding or subtracting notes from any of the chords to see what they sound like and try to figure out how that sound relates to a 'home plate' reference so you can be aware of how to use it in the future. May the Lord bless you and lead you as you develop this into something that blesses others in their worship too!