

Jazz Chord Symbols

<i>Chord Type</i>	<i>Symbols Used</i>	<i>Notes Included</i>
Major Triad	C	
Minor Triad	Cm, C-, Cmi, Cmin	
Diminished Triad	C ^o , Cdim	
Augmented Triad	C ⁺ , C ^{aug} , C ^(#5)	
Minor Seventh	Cm ⁷ , C- ⁷ , Cmi ⁷ , Cmin ⁷	
Dominant Seventh	C ⁷	
Major Seventh	Cmaj ⁷ , CΔ ⁷ , Cma ⁷ , CM ⁷	
Fully Diminished Seventh	C ^{o7} , Cdim ⁷	
Half Diminished Seventh	Cm ^{7(b5)} , C ^{ø7} , C- ^{7(b5)}	

Other Bits of Useful Information:

- “**SLASH**” **CHORDS** - The use of the slash in chord writing simply means that whatever is below the slash must be the bass note. Consequently, C/E indicates a C major triad with an E in the bass (first inversion). Be aware that there need not be a harmonic relationship between the chord above the slash and the note below it. This makes it possible to write chords that would be impossible to analyze in Roman numerals such as Cm/F#.
- In contemporary chord symbols, there is rarely any distinction made between a diminished triad, and a fully diminished seventh chord. They are usually used interchangeably.
- A special situation arises when a minor seventh chord is placed in first inversion (for example – **Am7/C**). While this notation will agree with traditional Roman numeral analysis, it will only rarely appear in jazz chord symbols. This type of chord would almost always be written as **C⁶** – that is, a C major chord, with an added 6th scale degree.
- Ninth chords follow the same conventions as seventh chords. A major ninth (C, E, G, B, D) is written **Cmaj⁹**, a dominant ninth (C, E, G, B^b, D) is written **C⁹**, and a minor ninth (C, E^b, G, B^b, D) is written **Cm⁹**.
- In Jazz, most chords are voiced with four pitches (regardless of the chord) and are played in the left hand near middle C. This sometimes means leaving out pitches and sometimes means adding pitches (triads are rare in jazz). See a chord glossary pages for specifics. The right hand would either play the tune, play a solo, or emphasize roots and 5ths.
- In “pop” music, there would be fewer tall chords (although Major 9th chords are still popular) and the voicings would be more simple and played in the right hand with the left hand either not playing, or playing roots and fifths.

“Tall” Chords

Symbol	Construction	Notes Present
C9	C7+9 th	
Cm9	Cm7+9 th	
Cmaj9	Cmaj7+9 th	
C11	C9+11 th but without a 3 rd (same as Gm7/C)	
C13	C9+6 th (do NOT play an 11 th in this chord)	