

Triads

You Already Know More Than You Think

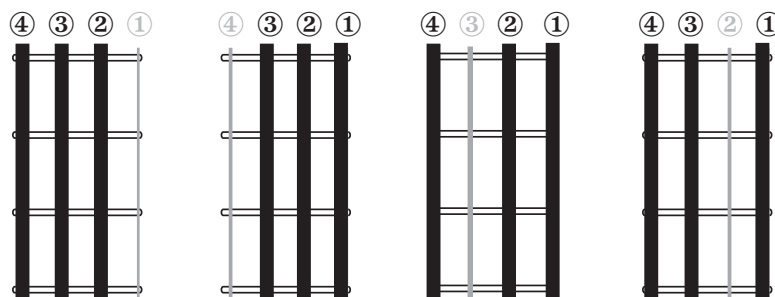
“Triads” - means a group of three. In music this grouping of three is the minimum number of notes in a chord to actually be called a chord. Two notes are a *dyad* or *interval*.

In traditional chord theory there are four *Traditional* triad chord types: *major*, *minor*, *diminished*, and *augmented*. *Contemporary* triads include *sus* and *add* chords.

Chords such as **C, Dm, Em, F, G, Am, Bdim, Gaug** voiced over all four strings of the ukulele are all still triads with a doubled note.

With triads containing three notes they can be played on any set of three strings.

The adjacent two sets of three strings can be organized into a system for learning with the



Strings Sets Using Three Strings

TWO non-adjacent sets of three strings more of a knowing the actual notes of the chord and finding them on the fingerboard – more free form. If playing a high string tuning the two adjacent three string sets are the same, with different chord fingerings.

Any note of a triad can be doubled and added to the chord on the string not part of the current three string set. This is how the basic open strings chords, triads are voiced using all four strings.

For this lesson we'll focus on the 123 string set – the top three strings on a standard tuned ukulele using C tuning G C E A. Whether using a high or low G, string four does not affect the chord, only the octave of that note on string four with a low G.



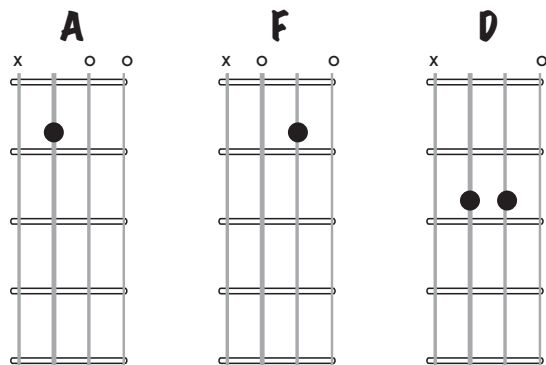
for more lessons visit

www.curtsheller.com • www.learningukulele.com



Major Triads

OPEN POSITION CHORD



**A/Bb
Major Form**

The root is on string ①

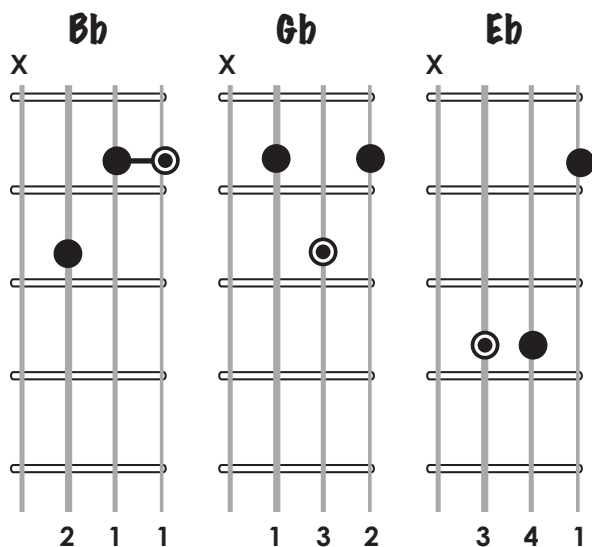
**F/Gb*
Major Form**

The root is on string ②

**D/Eb
Major Form**

The root is on string ③

MOVABLE CHORD FORM



Root and letter name of chord.

*The Enharmonic Equivalent for Gb is F#. With F# being a more common chord name.

Transposing Chords

To transpose a movable chord form to a different key use the *Natural Notes of the Fingerboard* graphic to the right.

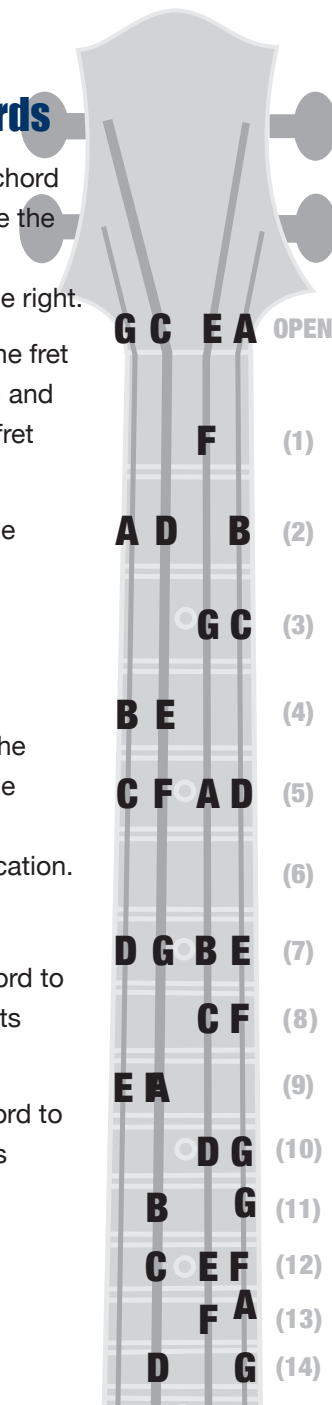
Sharp notes/letters are one fret higher on the same string and flat notes/letters are one fret lower on the same string.

- 1) Locate the root of the chord and the string that it is located on. The root is indicated by this symbol .
- 2) Move each note of the chord up or down the fingerboard until the root is at the new location.

Example:

The **Bb** movable form chord to the left moved up four frets higher is a **D** chord.

The **Eb** movable form chord to the left moved up six frets higher is a **A** chord.



for more lessons visit

www.curtsheller.com • www.learningukulele.com

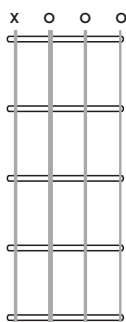




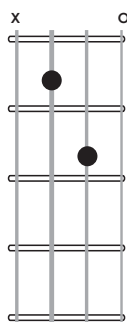
Minor Triads

OPEN POSITION CHORD

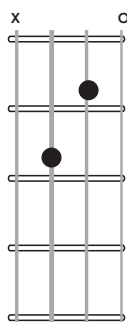
Am



F#m



Dm



**A/Bb
Minor Form**

The root is on string ①



**F#/G
Minor Form**

The root is on string ②



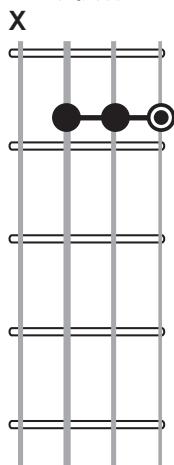
**D/Eb
Minor Form**

The root is on string ③



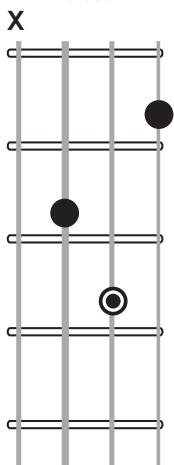
MOVABLE CHORD FORM

Bbm



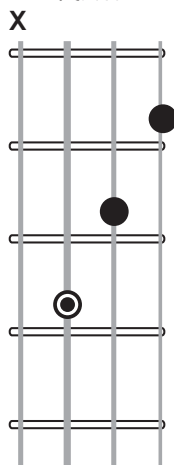
1 1 1

Gm



2 3 1

Ebm



3 2 1



Root and letter name of chord.

*The Enharmonic Equivalent for Gbm is F#m. With F#m being a more common chord name.

Transposing Chords

To transpose a movable chord form to a different key use the *Natural Notes of the Fingerboard* graphic to the right.

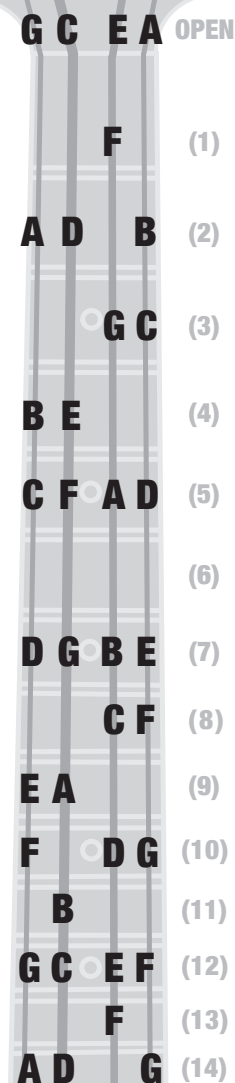
Sharp notes/letters are one fret higher on the same string and flat notes/letters are one fret lower on the same string.

- 1) Locate the root of the chord and the string that it is located on. The root is indicated by this symbol .
- 2) Move each note of the chord up or down the fingerboard until the root is at the new location.

Example:

The **Bbm** movable form chord to the left moved up three frets higher is a **Dm** chord.

The **Ebm** movable form chord to the left moved up six frets higher is a **Am** chord.



for more lessons visit

www.curtsheller.com • www.learningukulele.com





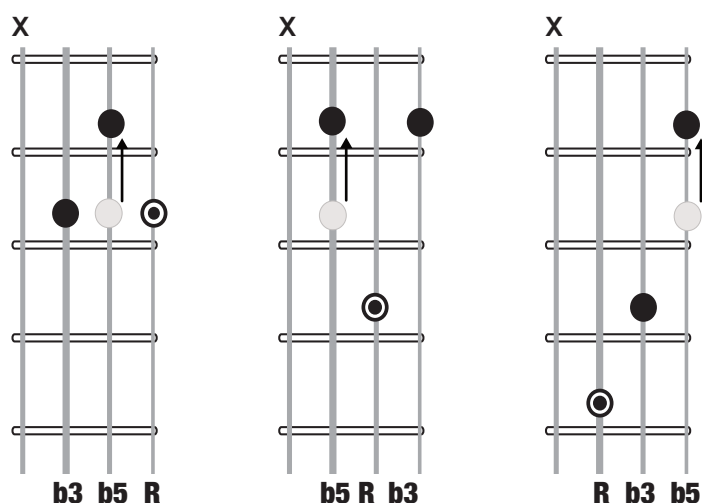
Derived Triads

Building On What You Just Learned

The *Diminished* and *Augmented* triads can all be derived from the *Major* and *Minor* triads by simply moving one of the notes either up or down a fret.

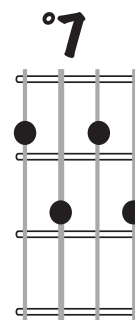
Diminished

For a *Diminished* triad lower the fifth of a minor triad one fret.



It's very rare to strum a diminished triad. Although songs contain diminished (dim) chords, a diminished seventh is always played in its place and the common chord grids above diminished chords typically show a diminished seventh (dim7, °7) chord NOT a diminished triad. However the diminished triad is a great chord that can be played melodically as single notes.

A *Diminished Seventh* chord is symmetrical chord where any one of the notes can be the root. At fret one the dim7 chord shown to the right can be named any one of the following: G#°7, Ab°7, D°7, F°7, E#°7, B°7, Cb°7. With the theoretical possibilities of double sharps and double flats there can be a lot more possible names - *in theory*. In practical terms you only need the one you looking for.



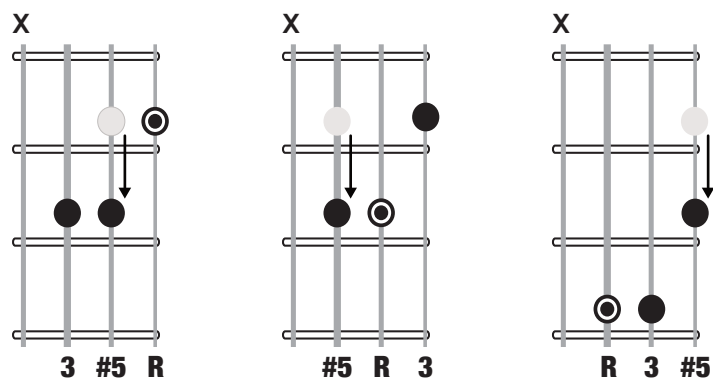
for more lessons visit

www.curtsheller.com • www.learningukulele.com

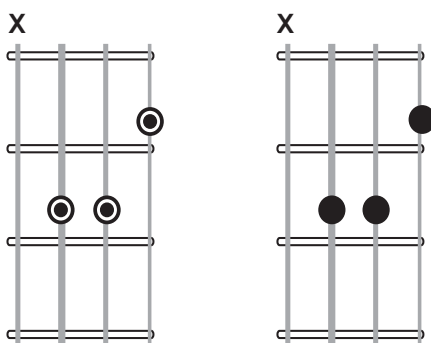


Augmented

For an *Augmented* triad raise the fifth of a *Major* triad one fret.



One thing pretty apparent about an augmented triad is that all three chords are the same shape. An augmented chord is a symmetrical just like the Diminished Seventh chord where anyone of the notes of the chord can be the root. This really starts to drive home the need to really know the notes of the ukulele fingerboard



for more lessons visit

www.curtsheller.com • www.learningukulele.com



Contemporary Triads

These are the *add* and *sus* chords such as *add2*, *add9*, and *sus2*, *sus4* chords used in a wide range of contemporary and traditional music. It turns out the “add” and “sus” part of the name are a big clue into what goes in creating these chords. However, really knowing the names of the notes of the fingerboard and the individual role each note plays in a chord is the key to learning and using these cool sounding, contemporary chords.

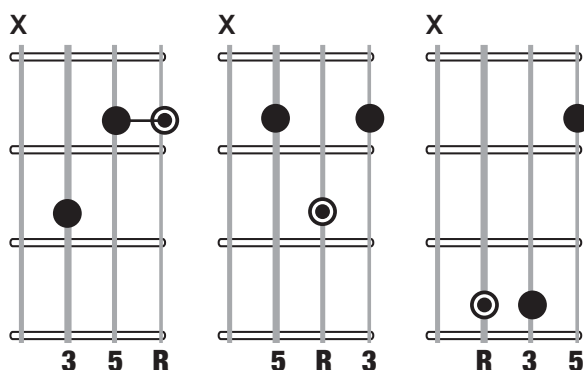
Chord Tones

Chord tones are the individual notes of a chord and they come from scales. They can come from any number of scales – but the best scale to use for building and learning all about chord construction is the major scale. Regardless of the chord type you can get the correct names and roles of each note of a chord from its corresponding major scale based on the root of the scale.

The *role* of a chord tone is simply its numeric placement in the scale - its *scale degree*. Using the C major scale the scale degrees are:

| C | D | E | F | G | A | B | C | D | F | A |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1/R | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 11 | 13 |

Notice there is no chord tones for 10 or 12, as these are fundamentally the third and fifth of the core triad - the foundation of all chords. The 8 or octave is to show the relationship to the 2 4 and 6 chord tones



The **1** is the root (**R**) of the chord. For major chords the root, 3 and 5 are used. These are the fundamental chord tones of the chord. Notice that chord tones can go up to 13 within the scale. For traditional and contemporary triads only the first five notes of the scale need to be used as the 2nd and 9th as well as the 4th and 11th are the same letters.

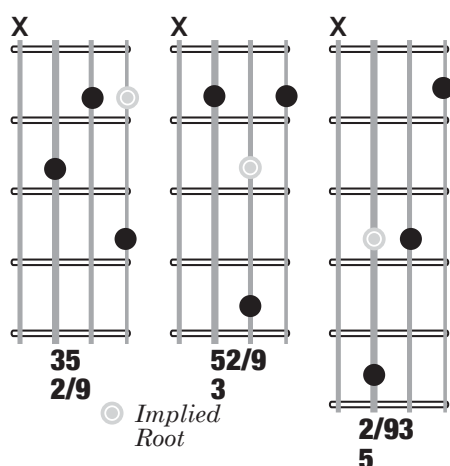
for more lessons visit

www.curtsheller.com • www.learningukulele.com



add2 and add9

As the *add* implies we add a note to the chord. It can be any note with the *two* and *nine* being the most common. However sticking with only three notes we need to displace a note of the chord to do the *add*. The best note to displace is the root and you do this by raising the root two frets, a whole step to get the add2 or add9. Technically a two (2) is a whole step above the root and the nine (9) is a whole set above the octave. For triads on a ukulele simply consider them the same.

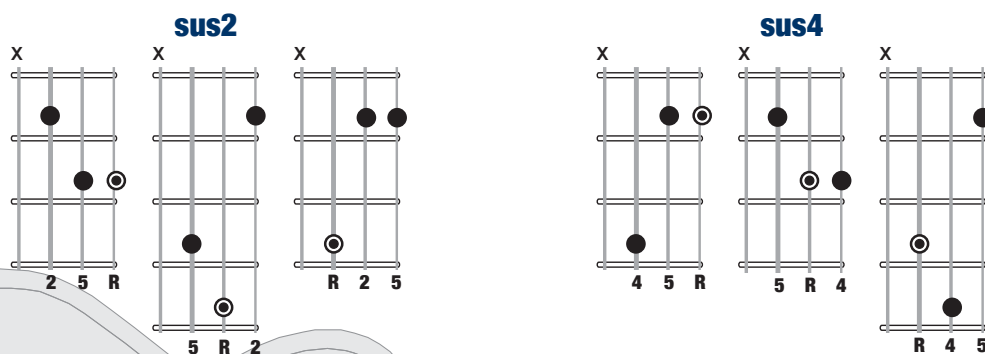


sus2 and sus4

The *sus* is an abbreviation for suspension or suspended and refers to suspending the inherent resolution to the third of a chord when coming from other chords. For triads the most typical application is with major triads. For sus2 you lower the third two frets. For a sus4 you raise the third one fret.

The term is borrowed from the contrapuntal technique of suspension, where a note from a previous chord is carried over to the next chord, and then resolved down to the third or tonic, suspending a note from the previous chord. In modern uses our ear accepts the lack of resolution.

These chords seem to just float and don't need to go anywhere.



for more lessons visit

www.curtsheller.com • www.learningukulele.com

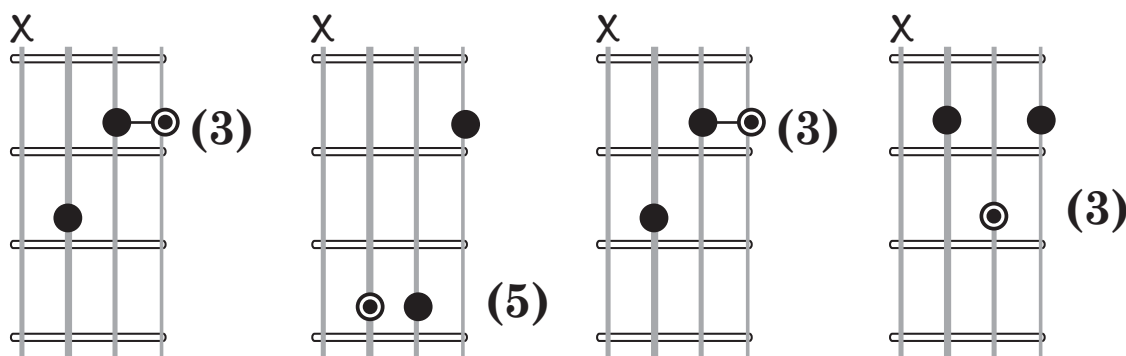
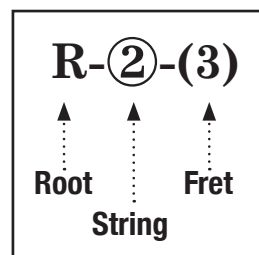




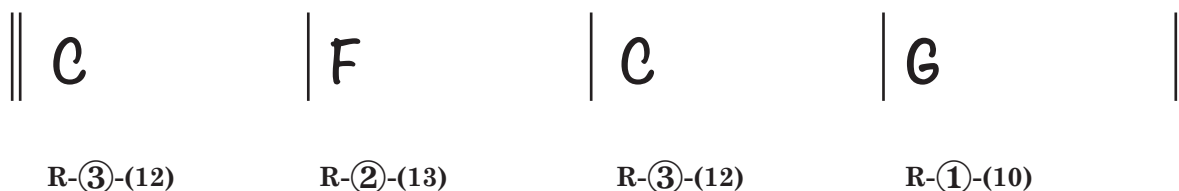
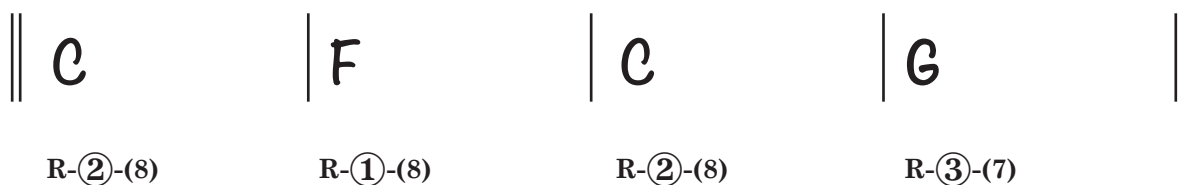
Using Triads

Now that you know the location of the root of the chord. Here are three ways to play the common I IV V chord progression using the triads that are closest to each other. This technique is called *Voice Leading*

Read the code to the right. The *root* is on *string two, fret three*. Here's the solution for the first progression.



Here are the other two solutions for the same progression without the chord grids.



for more lessons visit

www.curtsheller.com • www.learningukulele.com