

# Eleven BBS Chords and Their Voicings

## MAJOR TONALITIES - SIX CHORDS

### MAJOR TRIAD 1-3-5

3-Note Chord (M3 + m3)  
Strong Chord  
Double root preferably  
Extremely seldom double 5th  
Never double third  
Bass on Root or 5th

Musical notation for the F Major Triad (F) in bass clef. The treble clef shows the chord structure with notes F, A, and C. The bass clef shows the chord structure with notes F, A, and C. The chord is labeled 'F'.

### BARBERSHOP (or Dominant) 7th

Major Triad + minor 3rd = 1-3-5-7 $\flat$   
4-Note Chord  
Very strong chord  
Hallmark chord of BBS  
Bass best on Root & 5th

Musical notation for the C7 Barbershop chord (C7) in bass clef. The treble clef shows the chord structure with notes C, E, G, and B $\flat$ . The bass clef shows the chord structure with notes C, E, G, and B $\flat$ . The chord is labeled 'C7'.

### MAJOR SIXTH (6th) 1-3-5-6

4 - Note Chord  
Major Triad + Major 2nd  
Weak Chord (modern flavor)  
Check bass note to identify  
Bass on Root or 5th

Musical notation for the F6 Major Sixth chord (F6) in bass clef. The treble clef shows the chord structure with notes F, A, C, and D. The bass clef shows the chord structure with notes F, A, C, and D. The chord is labeled 'F6'.

### MAJOR SEVENTH (M7th) 1-3-5-7

4 - Note Chord  
Major Triad + Major 3rd  
Dissonant, Weak - use in passing  
Used when melody is on the 7th  
Bass on Root

Musical notation for the F7 Major Seventh chord (F7) in bass clef. The treble clef shows the chord structure with notes F, A, C, and E. The bass clef shows the chord structure with notes F, A, C, and E. The chord is labeled 'F7'. A 'tenor melody' is indicated above the treble clef.

### MAJOR NINTH (M9th) 1-3-5-7-9

5 - Note Chord (Omit the 7th)  
Major Triad + Perfect 5th  
Extremely weak - use in passing  
Used when melody is on the 9th  
Bass on Root

Musical notation for the F9 Major Ninth chord (F9) in bass clef. The treble clef shows the chord structure with notes F, A, C, and E. The bass clef shows the chord structure with notes F, A, C, and E. The chord is labeled 'F9'. A 'tenor melody' is indicated above the treble clef, and a 'baritone melody' is indicated below the bass clef.

### DOMINANT NINTH (9th)

5 note Chord -- 1-3-5-7 $\flat$ -9  
Major Triad (with one note omitted)  
+ minor 3rd + Major 3rd  
Omit Root or 5th  
Root omitted = Bass on 5th-strongest  
5th omitted = Bass on Root  
Root omitted = same notes as m6

Musical notation for the C9 Dominant Ninth chord (C9) in bass clef. The treble clef shows the chord structure with notes C, E, G, and B $\flat$ . The bass clef shows the chord structure with notes C, E, G, and B $\flat$ . The chord is labeled 'C9'.

## MINOR TONALITIES - THREE CHORDS

### **MINOR TRIAD 1-3<sup>b</sup>-5**

3 - Note Chord  
Weak chord  
3 different notes;  
Any note can be doubled  
Bass OK on Root, 3rd, or 5th

Musical notation for the Fm chord. The treble clef shows a melody of F, A<sup>b</sup>, C, F, A<sup>b</sup>, C, F, A<sup>b</sup>, C, F, A<sup>b</sup>, C. The bass clef shows a bass line of F, A<sup>b</sup>, C, F, A<sup>b</sup>, C, F, A<sup>b</sup>, C, F, A<sup>b</sup>, C. The chord is labeled 'Fm'.

### **MINOR SIXTH (m6th) 1-3<sup>b</sup>-5-6**

4 - Note Chord  
Minor triad + Major 2nd  
A weak chord  
Bass on Root, 3rd, 5th, or 6th

Musical notation for the Cm6 chord. The treble clef shows a melody of C, E<sup>b</sup>, G, A, C, E<sup>b</sup>, G, A, C, E<sup>b</sup>, G, A. The bass clef shows a bass line of C, E<sup>b</sup>, G, C, E<sup>b</sup>, G, C, E<sup>b</sup>, G, C, E<sup>b</sup>, G. The chord is labeled 'Cm6'. A circled area in the treble clef is labeled 'passing chord (D7)'.

### **MINOR SEVENTH (m7th) 1-3<sup>b</sup>-5-7<sup>b</sup>**

4 - Note Chord  
Minor triad + minor 3rd  
A Weak chord  
Check Bass note to identify  
Bass on Root or 5th

Musical notation for the Cm7 chord. The treble clef shows a melody of C, E<sup>b</sup>, G, B<sup>b</sup>, C, E<sup>b</sup>, G, B<sup>b</sup>, C, E<sup>b</sup>, G, B<sup>b</sup>. The bass clef shows a bass line of C, E<sup>b</sup>, G, C, E<sup>b</sup>, G, C, E<sup>b</sup>, G, C, E<sup>b</sup>, G. The chord is labeled 'Cm7'.

## SYMMETRICAL CHORDS - TWO CHORDS

### **DIMINISHED 1-3<sup>b</sup>-5<sup>b</sup>-7<sup>bb</sup>**

4 - Note SYMMETRICAL Chord  
(Notes equi-distant apart - All minor 3rds)  
Weak chord, but used frequently  
Often deliberately spelled wrong  
Any note can be the Root  
Bass on any note

Musical notation for the diminished chord. The treble clef shows a melody of C, E<sup>b</sup>, G<sup>bb</sup>, B<sup>bbb</sup>, C, E<sup>b</sup>, G<sup>bb</sup>, B<sup>bbb</sup>. The bass clef shows a bass line of C, E<sup>b</sup>, G<sup>bb</sup>, B<sup>bbb</sup>, C, E<sup>b</sup>, G<sup>bb</sup>, B<sup>bbb</sup>. The chord is labeled 'dim'.

### **AUGMENTED 1-3-5<sup>#</sup>**

3 - Note SYMMETRICAL Chord  
All Major 3rds  
Weak chord - Double anything  
Often deliberately spelled wrong  
Used when melody is on the raised 5th  
Consider the doubled note to be the Root  
Bass on anything

Musical notation for the augmented chord. The treble clef shows a melody of C, E, G<sup>#</sup>, C, E, G<sup>#</sup>, C, E, G<sup>#</sup>. The bass clef shows a bass line of C, E, G<sup>#</sup>, C, E, G<sup>#</sup>. The chord is labeled 'C+'. The words 'Shine on' are written above the final notes.

NOTE: These Eleven Chords are the only chords used in Barbershop Harmony  
*Reference: Suzy Lobaugh, CMA and Jean Flinn CMA*