

Basic Rules

To achieve a uniform and standard system of chord symbols, the following basic rules are presented:

1. Use only CAPITAL LETTERS for chord names:
C D E F G A B
2. Use only NECESSARY words and abbreviations, written only in UPPER CASE letters approximately one-half the size of those used for chord names, as follows:
MA MI SUS ADD OMIT PURE
Signifies MAJOR. Used only when followed by numeral "7", "9", "11" or "13" to indicate the presence of the interval of the MAJOR SEVENTH.
- MI
Signifies MINOR.
- SUS
Signifies SUSPENSION.
- ADD
Indicates the addition of a single note to a chord, as in "C (ADD 9)".
- OMIT
Indicates omission of a single note from a chord, as in "C (OMIT 3)".
- PURE
Signifies the indicated chord is to be used in its basic form, with no discretionary added notes.
3. Use the PLUS SIGN (+) ONLY to indicate the AUGMENTED FIFTH.
4. Use the SMALL CIRCLE (o) ONLY to indicate the DIMINISHED SEVENTH CHORD.
5. Use the SHARP (#) ONLY to indicate a raised function, such as a SHARP NINTH (#9).
6. Use the FLAT (b) ONLY to indicate a lowered function, such as a FLAT FIFTH (b5).
7. In altered functions, the SHARP or FLAT always PRECEDES the numeral: (b5, not 5b; #9, not 9#).
8. Use PARENTHESES () to enclose any and all changes in the basic chord, such as (#9), (b5), (OMIT 3), (ADD 9), (PURE), and so on. A SUSPENSION is not considered to be an altered function, and its abbreviation, SUS, is not parenthesized.
9. DO NOT USE THE FOLLOWING SYMBOLS; ELIMINATE THEM COMPLETELY:
MINUS SIGN (-) The worst offender of all. It has been used to signify a MINOR CHORD, a DIMINISHED SEVENTH CHORD, and to act as a substitute for the FLAT, such as (-5) and (5-).

12.

TRIANGLE (Δ)

THETA (Θ)

PHI (Φ and ϕ)

EUROPEAN SEVEN ($\#$)

The Greek letter DELTA currently has two interpretations: MAJOR SEVENTH and MINOR SEVENTH WITH A FLAT FIFTH, the so-called HALF-DIMINISHED CHORD. In use to indicate the HALF-DIMINISHED CHORD.

Also in use to indicate the HALF-DIMINISHED CHORD.

Adopted by a number of Americans to signify the MAJOR SEVENTH chord. In the European context it means the DOMINANT SEVENTH, MAJOR (large) 7th. The cross bar on the numeral seven is used by Europeans to distinguish it from their numeral one. Music being an international language, the American symbol (CMA7) is perfectly understood overseas, while the European numeral seven is ambiguous.

$\#$ = European numeral one.

$\#$ = European numeral seven.

Replace the abbreviation for AUGMENTED by the PLUS SIGN (+) to indicate the AUGMENTED FIFTH. (To repeat, this is the only valid use of the PLUS SIGN. It is not used to indicate a SHARP, such as ("4#9" for "#9".)

AUG