

Voicings 1: Learning Page(F)

Chords are always "voiced."

Root Position and **Inversions** are the foundation.

In this LP the Root and Inversion positions will be displayed.

JimO

1. Here is a C major Triad. Triads are 3-part chords built with major or minor thirds.* Short-hand musician language for these is One-Three-Five, or 1-3-5.

C.Major(Triad)

Root
1

Third
3

Fifth
5

2. A chord of 3 tones yields 3 structures. We refer to them as Root, 1st and 2nd inversions. They are built in 3rds and invert by "raising" the lower tone an octave.

5

Root.Position

1st.Inversion

2nd.Inversion

Root.Position

3. Try them out. Play, see and listen to each inversion. First, hands separate.

9

1 3 5

3 5 1

5 1 3

1 3 5

4. Here is a "broken chord" shape of the inversions.

13

1 3 5 3

3 5 1 5

5 1 3 1

1 3 5 3

2

5. Here is another broken chord version.
This one has a classical feeling.

17

1 5 3 5 | 3 1 5 1 | 5 3 1 3 | 1 5 3 5

6. Here are the additional TRIADS for the key of C major.
These are in Root position followed by their inversions. Again, play them and listen.

21

Dm
IIIm.chord

Root

1st

2nd

25

Em
IIIIm.chord

Root

1st

2nd

29

Fmajor
IV.major

Root

1st

2nd

33

Gmajor
V.major

Root

1st

2nd

37

Am
VII^m.chord

Root 1st 2nd

Detailed description: This block shows the Am VII^m chord in three positions. The first column shows the Root position with notes A, C, and E. The second column shows the 1st inversion with notes C, E, and A. The third column shows the 2nd inversion with notes E, A, and C. The notes are represented by circles with stems, and the bass clef is indicated by a 'b' symbol.

41

Bdim
VII^{dim}.chord

Root 1st 2nd

Detailed description: This block shows the Bdim VII^{dim} chord in three positions. The first column shows the Root position with notes B, D, and F. The second column shows the 1st inversion with notes D, F, and B. The third column shows the 2nd inversion with notes F, B, and D. The notes are represented by circles with stems, and the bass clef is indicated by a 'b' symbol.

6. Triads in C major. Summary Staff.

45

F G^m A^m B^b C D^m E^m7^b5 F

Detailed description: This block is a summary staff for triads in C major. It shows eight chords: F, G^m, A^m, B^b, C, D^m, E^m7^b5, and F. Each chord is shown in its root position with notes represented by circles with stems. The bass clef is indicated by a 'b' symbol.

Inversion Exercises

49 7. Ascending scale with broken chords. Root Position.

F G^m A^m B^b C D^m E^{dim} F

Detailed description: This block shows an ascending scale with broken chords in root position. The scale is played in the right hand, and the chords are played in the left hand. The chords are F, G^m, A^m, B^b, C, D^m, E^{dim}, and F. The notes are represented by circles with stems, and the bass clef is indicated by a 'b' symbol.

53 8. Ascending scale in 1st Inversion.

F G^m A^m B^b C D^m E^{dim} F

Detailed description: This block shows an ascending scale in 1st inversion. The scale is played in the right hand, and the chords are played in the left hand. The chords are F, G^m, A^m, B^b, C, D^m, E^{dim}, and F. The notes are represented by circles with stems, and the bass clef is indicated by a 'b' symbol.

9. Ascending scale in 2nd Inversion.

57

10. 3 position triad "Climb".

61

64

NOTE: Getting a little fancy now. We're just getting started.

67

11. Shift to 3/4 time and try this.

71

12. Now try both hands in unison.

75

JimO's Diatonic Circle-of-Fifths

5

79

F B \flat Em7 \flat 5 Am Dm Gm C F

NOTE: The "Circle-of-Fifths" exercise shows how triads fit together from the standpoint of smooth "Voice-Leading." The basic principle of Voice-Leading is to do your best to keep "Common tones in the same voice." In this exercise the common tones are easy to see starting from the middle C on the treble clef. In this approach the Inversions follow the voice-leading.