

CHORD SYMBOL SPELLING

Chord symbol spelling in the real world is highly variable. Everyone wants to believe that their preferred method of spelling chords is the One True Way. In reality, what is considered correct is determined by consensus within musical communities. That said, there are practical reasons to prefer chord symbols that are concise, compact, consistent, unambiguous, and visually distinct from one another. Chord symbols are more legible if a **sans-serif font** (like Helvetica) is used.

CHORD NAME	RECOMMENDED	ACCEPTABLE	DO NOT USE
MAJOR TRIAD	G		GMA, G triad, G ^Δ , G ^Δ TR, etc.
MINOR TRIAD	G ⁻ , Gm, Gmi	Gmin	GMI, Gm triad, etc.
AUGMENTED TRIAD	G+		Gaug
DIMINISHED TRIAD	G ^o		Gdim
SIXTH	G ⁶		anything else
MINOR SIXTH	Gm ⁶ , Gmi ⁶ , G- ⁶	Gmin ⁶	GMI ⁶ , etc.
MAJOR SEVENTH	GMA ⁷ , G ^Δ	G ^Δ 7, Gmaj ⁷	GM ⁷ , Gma ⁷ , GMaj ⁷ , etc.
SEVENTH	G ⁷		anything else
MINOR-MAJOR SEVENTH	Gm ^(MA7) , Gmi ^(MA7) , G- ^Δ	Gmin ^(MA7) , G- ^Δ 7	Gm ^(M7) , GmMAJ7, etc.
MINOR SEVENTH	Gm ⁷ , Gmi ⁷ , G- ⁷	Gmin ⁷	GMI ⁷ , etc.
HALF-DIMINISHED	G ^ø , Gm ^{7(b5)} , Gmi ^{7(b5)}	G ^ø 7, G- ^{7(b5)} , Gmin ^{7(b5)}	GMI ^{7b5} , G- ⁷⁻⁵ , etc.
DIMINISHED SEVENTH	G ^o 7		Gdim ⁷
CHORDS w/EXTENSIONS	G ^Δ 9, GMA ¹³ , G-9, Gm ¹¹ , G ¹³ , G ⁶ 9, etc.		GMA ⁷⁽⁹⁾ , Gm ⁷⁽¹¹⁾ , G ^{7(add13)} , G ^{6/9} , etc.
CHORDS w/SUSPENSIONS	Gsus, G ⁷ sus, G ⁹ sus	Gsus ⁴ , G ⁷ sus ⁴ , G ⁹ sus ⁴	G ⁴ , G ⁷⁽⁴⁾ , G ¹¹ , etc.
CHORDS w/ALTERATIONS	G ^(#11) , G ^{13(b9)} , G ⁷ _(#9) ^(b13) , etc.		G ^{#11} , G ⁷⁻¹³⁺⁹ , G ⁺⁷⁽⁺⁹⁾ , etc.
INVERSIONS & CHORDS w/ALTERNATE BASS NOTES	G [/] _B , G ⁷ _F , G ^Δ _{E^b} , etc.		G/B, G ⁷ on F, G ^Δ /E ^b bass, etc.
POLYCHORDS/COMPOUND CHORDS	$\frac{G}{B}$, $\frac{G^7}{F}$, $\frac{G^\Delta}{E^b-}$, etc.		G over B, $\frac{G^7}{F}$ triad, etc.