

(Book 2) Lesson 36.

Note: In Mr. Bradan's original manuscript, he only introduces the other three types of triads in the next book. I thought it may be just as well to introduce them here to allow the student to experiment with harmonizing songs containing a bit more harmonic complexity.

Minor, Diminished and Augmented Triads:

Although it may not be the theoretically most accurate way to think of them, it is easiest to consider the other three types of triads as mutations of the Major triad.

(chord symbols shown in brackets)

"C" Major (C) "C" Minor (Cm)

5th 3rd Root 5th flattened 3rd Root

Root 3rd 5th Root b3rd 5th

Remember that the Major triad is created by combining the Root, 3rd and 5th notes of the Major scale. The notes are called the Root, 3rd and 5th.

Minor triads can be formed by "flattening the 3rd" of any Major triad. The notes are called the Root, b3rd and 5th.

"C" Major (C) "C" Diminished (Cdim)

5th 3rd Root flattened 5th flattened 3rd Root

Root 3rd 5th Root b3rd b5th

Diminished triads can be formed by "flattening the 3rd and 5th" of any Major triad. The notes are called the Root, b3rd and b5th.

"C" Major (C) "C" Augmented (C+)

5th 3rd Root sharpened 5th 3rd Root

Root 3rd 5th Root 3rd #5th

The Augmented triad can be formed by "sharpening" the 5th of any Major triad. The notes are called the Root, 3rd and #5th.

The chords shown in the above examples are all in Root Position. The same process can take place also in First and Second Inversions.

Spell the chords from the low note upward in all inversions.

Example:

Eb: Root pos.= Eb-G - Bb, 1st inv.=G-Bb-Eb, 2nd inv.=Bb-Eb-G.

Ebm: Root pos.= Eb-Gb-Bb, 1st inv.=Gb-Bb-Eb, 2nd inv.=Bb-Eb-Gb

Eb dim: Root pos.=Eb-Gb-Bbb, 1st inv.=Gb-Bbb-Eb, 2nd inv.=Bbb-Eb-Gb

Eb+: Root pos.=Eb-G-B, 1st inv.=G-B-Eb, 2nd inv.=B-G-Eb.

A good way to practice playing the various chord types is to choose a chord name at random.

example: "B"

play B in root pos. followed by Bm. Then B followed by Bdim. Then B followed by B+.

play B in 1st inv. followed by Bm. Then B followed by Bdim. Then B followed by B+.

play B in 2nd inv. followed by Bm. Then B followed by Bdim. Then B followed by B+.

all the while making sure that you are spelling the chords in your mind. If you are not spelling the chords, chances are that you have just opted out for the pattern. Yes the patterns exist but they are a result of the necessary notes.

Special note: I have chosen to use the term "flatted" to mean that we have adjusted the note with a flat. "Flattened" would indicate that you have perhaps squashed the note. Similarly, I have used the term "sharped" to indicate an adjustment with a sharp. "Sharpenned" would indicate a process of whittling the note to a point.