

(Book 5) Lesson 13e.

Resolution of Major 7th chord: viewed as a Sus4 (#5,b9) Chord

This very dissonant chord tends to resolve on its own root. Sus4 falls to 3rd, #5 falls to 5th, b9 falls to Root in all inversions.

Bass note on "D" String

Dsus4(#5b9) D6

The diagram shows a guitar fretboard with a treble clef staff. The first two strings (D and G) are highlighted. The Dsus4(#5b9) chord is shown with notes: D (root), G# (sus4), Bb (b9), and F# (5th). The D6 chord is shown with notes: D (root), F# (3rd), and B (5th). The bass note is D on the 2nd string, 2nd fret. The resolution is shown in four measures, with the Dsus4 chord resolving to the D6 chord.

Bass note on "A" String

Csus4(#5b9) C6

The diagram shows a guitar fretboard with a treble clef staff. The first two strings (C and E) are highlighted. The Csus4(#5b9) chord is shown with notes: C (root), E# (sus4), Gb (b9), and D# (5th). The C6 chord is shown with notes: C (root), D (3rd), and G (5th). The bass note is A on the 4th string, 2nd fret. The resolution is shown in four measures, with the Csus4 chord resolving to the C6 chord.

Bass note on "E" String

Fsus4(#5b9) F6

The diagram shows a guitar fretboard with a treble clef staff. The first two strings (F and C) are highlighted. The Fsus4(#5b9) chord is shown with notes: F (root), C# (sus4), Eb (b9), and G# (5th). The F6 chord is shown with notes: F (root), G (3rd), and C (5th). The bass note is E on the 4th string, 2nd fret. The resolution is shown in four measures, with the Fsus4 chord resolving to the F6 chord.

When the chords are this low in pitch a similarly very low bass note is required in order to "hear" the chord correctly.

As the chord positions rise in pitch, a higher octave bass note is acceptable.

The "sus4,#5,b9 chord" is very dissonant. It may take some searching to find a musical situation where one might use this chord. Undoubtedly, the musical situation will be relatively sophisticated. Campfire songs most likely will not reveal an opportunity for these chords.

Special editorial note: The interchangeable chords can in some more rare situations be superimposed over an accompaniment chord that is more basic. For example, a Cmaj7 or C6 chord would have little trouble if another player was simply playing some form of a plain C chord. However, the interchangeable chords which are farther up the tower could produce some ungodly clashes. A good example would be the very first two chords on this page. The Ebmaj7 chord can be heard as a highly altered form of a D chord when played against a "D" bass note and then resolved to either a D chord or a D6 chord. However, if two players play the two chords simultaneously, they form a fantastically close-knit cluster of notes. One might experiment by playing the Ebmaj7 chord in some higher position while the D6 is played in a lower octave. This may alleviate some of the tension but the truth is that the "3rd of D" will clash with the "Sus4." The "#5th" will clash with the normal "5th." The "b9" may get some resistance from the "Root" of D.

The point is this: Using interchangeable chords can be colourful but you have to tell your playing partners that you are about to do so, or dedicate one instrument in the group for comping while the other one rests. (This is of course assuming that you are playing in an ensemble with another guitarist or a keyboard player.) Communication is of paramount importance.