

(Book 5.) Lesson 19a.

The evolution of the Four Part Triad (fingerings) on the D-G-B-E Strings

**Root Position**

Diagram showing the Root Position of four chords on the D-G-B-E strings. The top staff shows Eb6, Eb7, Ebmaj7, and Eb. The bottom staff shows Ebm6, Ebm7, Ebm(maj7), and Ebm. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 above or below notes.

Notice that if we begin moving the 6th degree upwards in half tones, we will arrive at a "four part triad." This process produces a playable fingering in most cases. The demonstration on this page uses the first four strings of the guitar.

In Root Position, the four part triad will contain a doubled Root.

**1st Inversion**

Diagram showing the 1st Inversion of four chords on the D-G-B-E strings. The top staff shows Eb6, Eb7, Ebmaj7, and Eb. The bottom staff shows Ebm6, Ebm7, Ebm(maj7), and Ebm. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 above or below notes.

Notice that in First Inversion, the four part Major or Minor chord would contain two Roots of the the same pitch. Not only would these chords be difficult to finger but would in essence be three part chords. Consequently, we will choose to double up on the 5th of the Major and Minor chords.

**2nd Inversion**

Diagram showing the 2nd Inversion of four chords on the D-G-B-E strings. The top staff shows Eb6, Eb7, Ebmaj7, and Eb. The bottom staff shows Ebm6, Ebm7, Ebm(maj7), and Ebm. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 above or below notes.

In Second Inversion, all is well until you try to finger the four part minor triad. The fingering span will be out of reach for most human hands. The solution is to either play the chord with three notes or to double up on the 5th.

**3rd Inversion**

Diagram showing the 3rd Inversion of four chords on the D-G-B-E strings. The top staff shows Eb6, Eb7, Ebmaj7, and Eb. The bottom staff shows Ebm6, Ebm7, Ebm(maj7), and Ebm. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 above or below notes.

In Third Inversion, all chords are possible to finger but the four part Major and Minor Triads are essentially now in Root Position because the Root has arrived at the bottom of the chords.

Worth noting is that you would have the option of harmonizing the Root of the chord with either the 2nd Inversion or the 3rd Inversion of the Major or Minor 4 Part Triad.