

CHORDS

A **chord** is a group of notes played simultaneously. Chords consist of at least three notes, as two notes together are thought of as an interval. The most basic form of a chord found in tonal or diatonic music are the major and minor **triad**. Triads are built around a **root** note (the fundamental or generating note of the chord), with pitches that are an interval of a third and a fifth above that. The intervals of these pitches can be major or minor. Below is a chart which spells out the names and intervals of these triads, the first two of which are regarded as consonant; the last two, dissonant.

NAME OF TRIAD	INTERVALS	EXAMPLE (C Major)
Major	Major third, minor third	C, E, G
Minor	Minor third, major third	C, Eb, G
Diminished	Minor third, minor third	C, Eb, Gb
Augmented	Major third, major third	C, E, Ab

Each major and minor triad has **inversions**, or alternate voicing patterns. The 1st inversion (or the six-three chord) is voiced E, G, C; the 2nd inversion (or the six-four chord) is voiced G, C, E. These are so named because of the intervals between the lowest sounding pitch and the two other higher pitches.

POSITION/INVERSION	NAME	EXAMPLE (C Major)
Root		C, E, G
1st Inversion	Six-three	E, G, C
2nd Inversion	Six-four	G, C, E

Triads based on the tonic (i.e. Tonic triad) of a major key will be major; the tonic triad of a minor key will thus be minor. The tonic triad (or the I chord), along with the IV chord (the submediant) and the V chord (the dominant), make up the **primary** triads. Together these chords contain each note in their respective key signature.