

Cool Chords

Intermediate
to Advanced 

Cool Chords - These are the chords do not typically show up in chord dictionaries or song books. They might show up in software programs that produce chords based on some underlying computer algorithm. These are the chords players ask, “What is that chord?”

Chord Categories

Chords can be grouped into one of four categories: open position chords, basic movable form chords, 4-part contemporary chords and *free form* chords. It is the *free form* chord category that these cool chords fall into.

One problem with chords are the number of possible voicings and shapes they produce. Memorizing chord shapes is fine for the basic open position and movable form chords. But there are just way too many possible voicings and shapes to memorize and the remembering shapes approach quickly falls apart when applied to 4-part chords and is useless for remembering these free form chords.

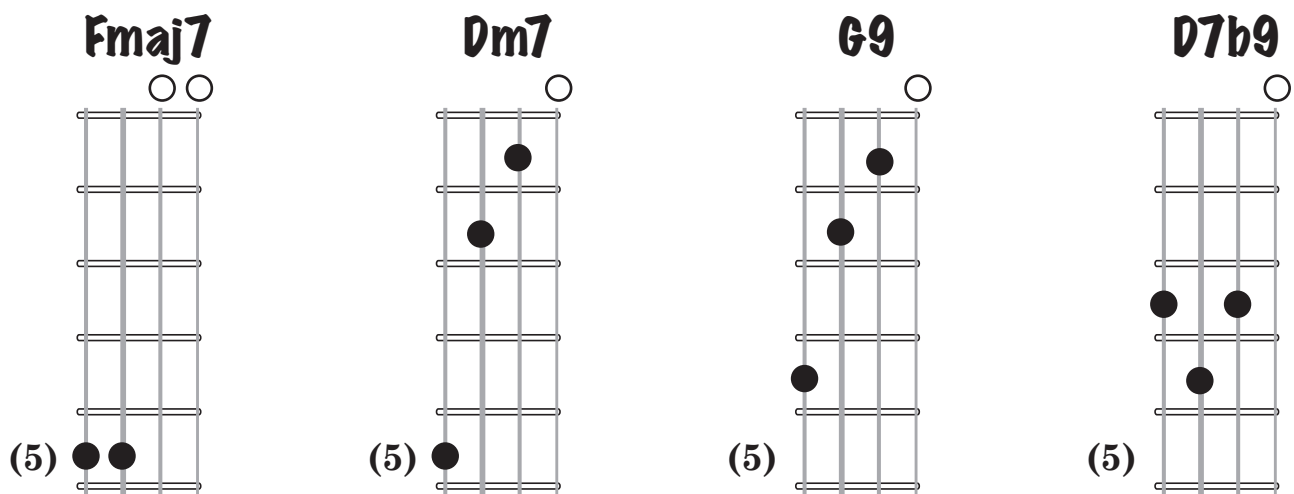
What is a Free Form Chord?

A cool chord is most likely a *Free Form* chord. These free form chords typically include open strings, wide stretches, displaced chord tones and or chord voicings. Plus they just sound “cool”.

A Free Form chord is where you know the notes of the chord (*chord spelling*) and the notes of the ukulele fingerboard. You can then play chords not found in to other three categories.

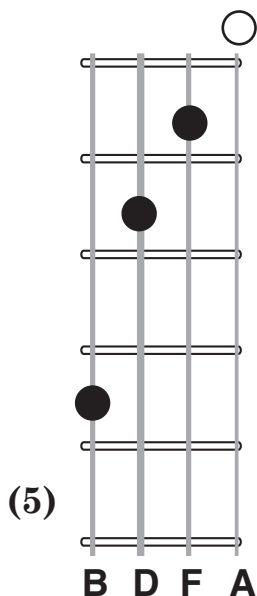
Fmaj7 F A C E, **Dm7** D F A C, **G9** G B D F A, **D7b9** D F# A C Eb.

Cool chords are sometimes 5-part, 6-part and 7-part chords are voiced as 4-part chords.

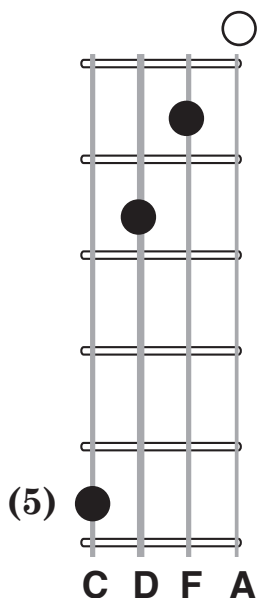




G9



Dm7



How to Remember Free Form Chords?

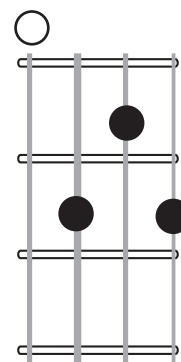
There are no short cuts for remembering free form chords other than knowing the notes of the chords and the fingerboard. But - here are a few tips that might help.

The **G9** (G B D F A) to the left can be thought of as coming from the open position **G7** (G B D F) chord on the right. To get the 9th (A) on string one, lower the third of the chord (B) on string one lower two frets to the open string A. The third of a chord is a fundamental tone of a chord and should not be displaced. However the root of a chord can be displaced as in this chord with the third being played on string four.

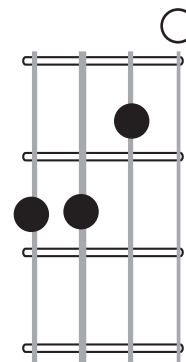
The **Dm7** to the left can be thought of as coming from the open position **Dm** (D F A) chord. The duplicate chord tone A, is raised to C, the flat seventh of Dm7.

The **Dm7** and **G9** go great together and are a common chord movement in the key of C. All that is need is a **Cmaj7** (C E G B) or a substitute such as a **C6** (C E G A), **Cmaj9** (C E G B D) or **C6/9** (C E G A D).

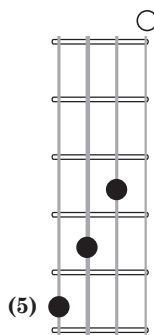
G7



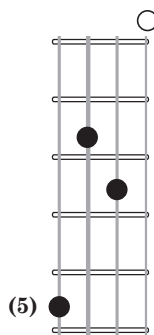
Dm

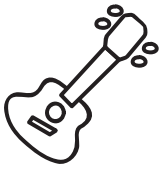


C6



C6/9





Examples Free Form Chords?

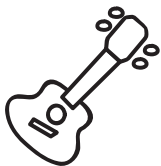
Here is a collection of cool chords that you can get started with. Each chord contains the chord spelling and the chord formula to aide in remembering the chord?

<p>Am7b5</p> <p>(5)</p> <p>C Eb G A 3 b5 b7 1</p>	<p>C13</p> <p>(3)</p> <p>Bb D E A b7 9 3 13</p> <p>no Root</p>	<p>Dadd9</p> <p>(7)</p> <p>D F# E A 1 3 9 5</p> <p>no b7</p>	<p>C9+</p> <p>(5)</p> <p>G# C E D #5 1 3 9</p>	<p>Cmaj7</p> <p>(7)</p> <p>G C B E 5 1 7 3</p>
---	--	--	--	--

Naming Chords

With displaced and missing chords tones the naming of a chord can only be done in the context of a chord progression and only after the chords function has been determined. See **UkuleleLesson** on Naming Chords.

The **Am7b5** about could also be named F9, Cm6, B7#5b9, Eb6#11, etc... What name to use for a chord depends on the chord's harmonic function within a chord progression.



Experiment

Fmaj7 - is a 4-part chord containing the notes F A C E.

Here are the notes of Fmaj7 on the ukulele. Experiment with possible chord voicings.

Fmaj9 - is a 5-part chord containing the notes F A C E G.

With the ukulele only having 4 strings this chord needs to be voiced using 4 of the five notes.

The color tones of a Fmaj7 chord are the third (A) and seventh (E). The ninth (G) is an important chord tone and that leaves the root (F) or fifth (C) to try and get in or double the A, E or G.

Fmaj7

