The Ultimate Guide to Voicings for Advanced Chords on Guitar
by [Dennis Winge](#)

A. Overview

The following is only meant to be a summary of, not a substitute for, your doing homework on each individual chord that is unfamiliar to you. There is much information on the internet for each chord type and how it is used. I personally have published articles such as: the half-diminished chord, the diminished chord, slash chords, the minor and major 11 chords, and many more. Read these or similar articles first before you use this summary. Not doing so would be like buying a book of 1000 chord diagrams for guitar and always being dependent on it for life.

Because the diagrams and/or standard notation and/ or tab are presented in the full articles, and because of the sheer number of voicings presented, we will here use a system of notation in which the fret numbers of each string is given in order from the low E string (6th string) to the high E string (1st string). For example a C major open chord is x-3-2-0-1-0 where x means you don't play the 6th string. Another example is Dm which is x-x-0-2-3-1 where you don't play the 5th or 6th strings.

The examples are all in the key of C and it will be up to you to transpose the chords shapes to other keys. Of course, there are tons of possible chord voicings for each of the chords listed below. We have simply narrowed it down to what we think are the two most accessible voicings for each chord, one built off of the root on the 6th string (in the case of C, at the 8th fret) and one built off the 5th string (at the 3rd fret for C).

B. Specific Intervals Chosen

Not every interval will be present in the common voicing. For example, in a C13b9 chord, there are seven intervals listed (1, 3, 5, b7, b9, 11, 13). This is physically impossible with a guitar that only has 6 strings, so one or more notes has to be omitted.

Further, not every interval that could be theoretically present in a chord is commonly played. For example, in a Cmaj13 chord, the 9, 11th & 13th are all theoretically present but in practice the 11th is omitted (unless the chord specifically calls for some kind of 4th or 11th such as Cmaj13#11 or C13sus4).

In order to be able to build your chord vocabulary and not be dependent on a sheet like this to look at every time you are presented with an unfamiliar chord, you must know the intervals that make up that chord. The intervals of each chord type are also given below, which you would do well to memorize.

The roots are played in every voicing, except where impractical. For example, the voicing listed for C9 off the 6th string root does not include the root at all and is simply played as 3, 5, b7 & 9.

The inversions are presented for the basic triads and 7th chords only. It would simply be overkill to provide information for every single permutation and its inversions, such as, for example, C9sus4/Bb. You can derive more complicated inversions from the other chords presented.

C. Slash Chords

For the slash chords, some of the chords will be simply inversions of a 7th chord, and some imply more complex chords. For example, the very first one, Db/C is the 3rd inversion of a Dbmaj7 chord. When we analyze that from the point of view of Db, the resulting intervals will be the same as Cmaj7/B, namely 7, 1, 3, 5, and the voicings will be similar (just moved up 1 fret in this case.)

For those chords that are inversions of another chord, we have decided not to reiterate it in the slash chord section. This is also to help you make connections and think on their feet. For example, the very first slash chord Db/C has the same intervallic relationship as the chord Cmaj7/B. Thus by not repeating the same information again, you will be better able recognize that c is the 7th of Db and that the chord Db/C is simply the 3rd inversion of a Dbmaj7, and make the connection to the 3rd inversion of Cmaj7 (here notated as Cmaj7/B) previous presented. (In cases like this the chart will simply say "same relationship as Cmaj7/B – see above.")

For slash chords whose bass note note (i.e. the note after the slash) are not a chord tone of the chord before the slash, the intervals are analyzed from the perspective of the bass note. For example, Bb/C is analyzed from the point of view of C, which yields 1, 2, 4, b7. This construction is very similar to C9sus4 (1, 4, 5, b7, 9). Because the 9 and the 2 are the same note, the only difference will be that the 5th gets left out on the Bb/C. This case in point illustrates how knowing the intervals help you make connections to other chords.

There are also times in which a slash chord is redundant notation because it is the same as a common 7th chord. For example, Eb/C is, from the point of view of C, a 1, b3, 5, b7 and is thus the exact same thing as Cm7. Here again, the chart will not repeat the intervals previously presented in order to help you makes connections in case you do see such slash chord notation. (In cases like this the chart will simply say "same chord as Cm7 – see above.")

[As an aside, there may be times where notation such as Eb/C is more useful than Cm7, as in the following: ||: Cm7 | Eb/C | D/C | Db/C :||. Even though the first two chords are the same, the choice of voicings would most likely be different, and more logical, by the way it is presented here.]

D. How You Should Use the Table

Of course, you can consult the table for specific chord voicings for a chord you see in a chart that you don't know how to play. Some of the chords listed are common (such as Bb/C) and some are very rare (such as Cdimb9). You could use the table to memorize two voicings of a chord you see often.

A much better, deeper and more pervasive way of using the table is to understand the process by which the voicings were chosen. In other words, given the intervals of the chord, why was this particular voicing chosen in the table? Are there others you have discovered that you like better?

In order to really understand how each particular voicing was chosen and to explore your own possibilities, you must recognize each interval played. It would be a great practice to go through each chord and assign interval numbers to each voicing. This is not to be confused with the fret numbers presented in the table. For example, the voicing for C on frets 8-10-10-9-10-10 are the intervals 1-5-1-3-5-1 and the one on frets x-3-5-5-5-3 is 1-5-1-3-5.

If you really want to be in command of your chord voicings and not be dependent on any table, chart or book, go through every voicing below and, on a separate sheet, make an interval voicing table. For the example of C at the 6th string in the previous paragraph, your table might look something like this:

Chord	Intervals	intervals off 6th string root	intervals off 5th string root
Major	1, 3, 5	1-5-1-3-5-1	x-1-5-1-3-5

E. Chord Voicings Table

Chord	Intervals	6th string root	5th string root
Major Chords			
C	1, 3, 5	8-10-10-9-8-8	x-3-5-5-5-3
Cmaj7, C△7	1, 3, 5, 7	8-x-9-9-8-x	x-3-5-4-3-3
Cmaj9, C△9	1, 3, 5, 7, 9	8-7-9-7-x-x	x-3-2-4-3-x
Cmaj7sus2, C△7sus2	1, 2, 5, 7	8-x-9-7-8-x	x-3-x-4-3-3
Cmaj7#11, C△7#11	1, 3, 5, 7, 9, #11	8-x-9-9-7-x	x-3-4-4-5-x

Cmaj7#5, C△7#5	1, 3, #5, 7	8-x-9-9-9-x	x-3-x-4-5-4
Cmaj7b5, C△7b5	1, 3, b5, 7	8-x-9-9-7-x	x-3-4-4-5-x
C6	1, 3, 5, 6	8-x-7-9-8-x	x-3-2-2-x-x
C aug, C+, C(#5)	1, 3, #5	8-x-10-9-9-x	x-3-2-1-1-x
C+(maj9), Caug(maj9)	1, 3, #5, 7, 9	8-x-9-9-9-10	x-3-x-4-3-4
C6/9	1, 3, 5, 6, 9	8-x-7-7-8-x	x-3-2-2-3-x
Cadd9	1, 3, 5, 9	x-7-10-7-8-x	x-3-2-0-3-x
Csus2	1, 2, 5	x-x-10-7-8-x	x-3-5-5-3-3
Csus4, Csus	1, 4, 5	8-10-10-10-8-8	x-3-5-5-6-x
Cmaj13, C△13	1, 3, 5, 7, 9, (11), 13	8-x-9-9-10-10	x-3-5-4-5-5
Cmaj13(#11), C△13(#11)	1, 3, 5, 7, 9, #11, 13	8-7-7-7-7-x	x-3-2-2-3-2
C/E	3, 5, 1	12-x-10-12-13-x	x-7-5-5-5-x
C/G	5, 1, 3	x-10-10-9-8-x	3-x-5-5-5-x
Cmaj7/B	7, 1, 3, 5	7-x-5-5-5-x	x-2-2-0-1-x
Dominant Chords			
C7	1, 3, 5, b7	8-10-8-9-8-8	x-3-5-3-5-3
C9	1, 3, 5, b7, 9	x-7-8-7-8-x	x-3-2-3-3-3
C7sus4, C7sus	1, 4, 5, b7	8-10-8-10-8-8	x-3-5-3-6-3
C9sus4, C9sus	1, 4, 5, b7, 9	x-10-10-10-11-10	x-3-3-3-3-3
C11	1, 3, 5, b7, 9, 11	x-10-10-10-11-10	x-3-3-3-3-3
C13	1, 3, 5, b7, 9, (11), 13	8-x-8-9-10-x	x-3-x-3-5-5
C13sus4	1, 4, 5, b7, 9, 13	8-10-8-10-10-x	x-3-3-3-3-5
C7b5	1, 3, b5, b7	8-x-8-9-7-x	x-3-4-3-5-x
C7#11	1, 3, 5, b7, 9, #11	8-7-8-7-7-x	x-3-2-3-3-2
C7#5, C7+, C7aug	1, 3, #5, b7	8-x-8-9-9-x	x-3-x-3-5-4
C9#5, C9+, C9aug	1, 3, #5, b7, 9	8-7-8-7-9-x	x-3-2-3-3-4
C7b9	1, 3, 5, 7, b9	8-x-8-6-5-x	x-3-2-3-2-3
C7b9sus4	1, 4, 5, b7, b9	8-x-8-6-6-x	x-3-3-3-2-x
C7#9	1, 3, 5, 7, #9	8-10-x-9-11-11	x-3-2-3-4-x
C13b9	1, 3, 5, b7, b9, 11, 13	x-7-8-6-10-x	x-3-2-3-2-5
C13#11	1, 3, 5, b7, 9, #11, 13	x-9-8-7-10-x	x-3-4-3-3-5
C7/E	3, 1, 5, b7	12-x-10-12-11-x	x-7-8-5-8-x
C7/G	5, 1, 3, b7	x-10-8-9-8-8	3-3-5-3-5-3
C7/Bb	b7, 1, 3, 5	6-x-5-5-5-x	x-1-x-0-1-0
C7alt	1, 3, b/# 5, b7, b/# 9	8-x-8-9-9-11	x-3-2-3-4-4
Minor Chords			
Cm	1, b3, 5	8-10-10-8-8-8	x-3-5-5-4-3
Cm7	1, b3, 5, b7	8-10-8-8-8-8	x-3-5-3-4-3
Cm9	1, b3, 5, b7, 9	8-6-8-7-x-x	x-3-1-3-3-x
Cm6	1, b3, 5, 6	8-x-7-8-8-x	x-3-1-2-1-x

Cm(b6)	1, b3, 5, b6	8-x-6-8-8-x	x-3-1-1-1-x
Cm6/9	1, b3, 5, 6, 9	8-x-8-8-10-10	x-3-1-2-3-x
Cm11	1, b3, 5, b7, 9, 11	8-x-8-8-6-x	x-3-x-3-4-1
Cm13	1, b3, 5, b7, 9, 11, 13	8-x-8-8-10-x	x-3-x-3-4-5
Cm(maj7)	1, b3, 5, 7	8-x-9-8-8-x	x-3-5-4-4-x
Cm(maj9)	1, b3, 5, 7, 9	8-x-9-8-8-10	x-3-1-4-3-x
Cm/Eb	b3, 1, 5	11-x-10-12-13-x	x-6-5-5-8-8
Cm/G	5, 1, b3	x-10-10-8-8-8	3-x-5-5-4-x
Cm7/Eb	b3, 1, 5, b7	11-x-10-12-11-x	x-6-8-5-8-x
Cm7/G	5, 1, b3, b7	x-10-10-8-11-x	3-3-5-3-4-3
Cm7/Bb	b7, 1, b3, 5	6-x-5-5-4-x	x-1-1-0-1-x
Other Chords			
Cm7b5, C$^{\varnothing}$	1, b3, b5, b7	8-x-8-8-7-x	x-3-4-3-4-x
Cm9b5, C$^{\varnothing 9}$	1, b3, b5, b7, 9	x-6-8-7-7-x	x-x-1-3-3-2
Cm7b5(b9), C$^{\varnothing(b9)}$	1, b3, b5, b7, b9	x-6-8-6-7-x	x-x-1-3-2-2
Cdim, C^{o}	1, b3, b5	8-9-10-8-x-x	x-3-4-5-4-x
Cdim7, C^{o7}	1, b3, b5, bb7	8-x-7-8-7-x	x-3-4-2-4-x
Cdim9, C^{o9}	1, b3, b5, bb7, 9	x-6-7-7-7-x	x-x-1-2-3-2
Cdim(b9), C$^{o7(b9)}$	1, b3, b5, bb7, b9	x-6-7-6-7-x	x-x-1-2-2-2
C5	1, 5	8-10-x-x-x-x	x-3-5-x-x-x
Slash Chords			
Db/C	(same relationship as	Cmaj7/B)	(see above)
D/C	1, 2, 4, 6	8-x-7-7-7-x	x-3-x-2-3-2
Eb/C	(same chord as	Cm7)	(see above)
E/C	(same chord as	Cmaj7#5)	(see above)
F/C	(same relationship as	C/G)	(see above)
F#/C	1, b2, b5, b7	8-x-8-6-7-x	x-3-x-3-2-2
G/C	(same as chord as	Cmaj7sus2)	(see above)
Ab/C	(same relationship as	C/E)	(see above)
A/C	1, b2, 4, b7	8-x-11-9-10-x	x-3-2-2-2-x
Bb/C	1, 2, 4, b7	8-x-8-7-6-x	x-3-x-3-3-1
B/C	1, b3, b5, 7	8-x-9-8-7-x	x-3-x-4-4-2
Dbm/C	1, b2, 3, #5	8-7-6-6-x-x	x-3-6-6-5-x
Dm/C	(same relationship as	Cm7/Bb)	(see above)
Ebm/C	(same chord as	Cm7b5)	(see above)

Em/C	(same chord as	Cma7)	(see above)
Fm/C	(same relationship as	Cm/G)	(see above)
F#m/C	1, b2, b5, 6	8-x-11-11-10-x	x-3-x-2-2-2
Gm/C	1, 2, 5, b7	8-x-8-7-8-x	x-3-x-3-3-3
Abm/C	1, b3, #5, 7	8-x-9-8-9-x	x-3-x-4-4-4
Am/C	(same chord as	C6)	(see above)
Bbm/C	(same chord as	C7b9sus4)	(see above)
Bm/C	1, 2, b5, 7	8-x-9-7-7-x	x-3-4-4-3-x

About the author: Dennis Winge is a professional guitarist living the Finger Lakes Region of New York State. If you are interested in taking Guitar Lessons in Ithaca, NY, then be sure to contact Dennis!