

Elevate Your Chord Vocabulary with Sus2 and Add9 Triads

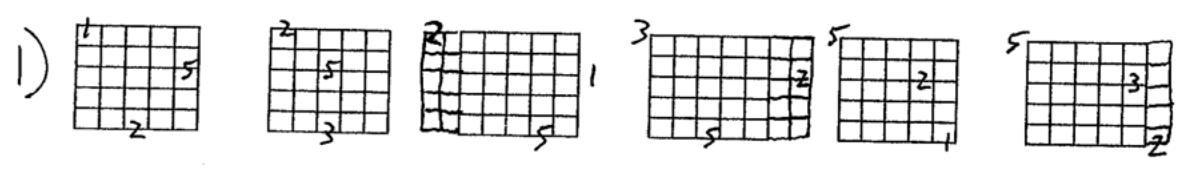
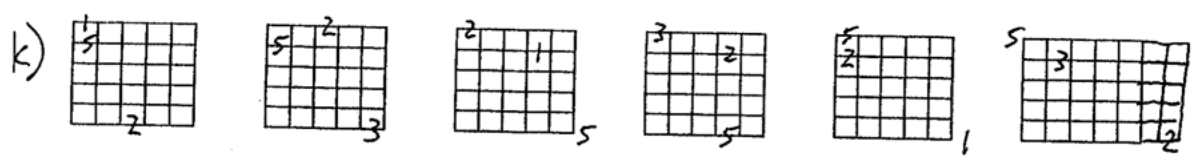
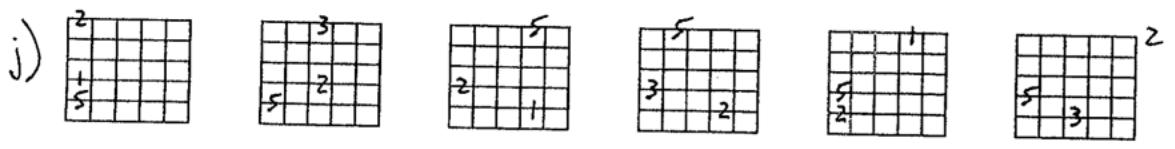
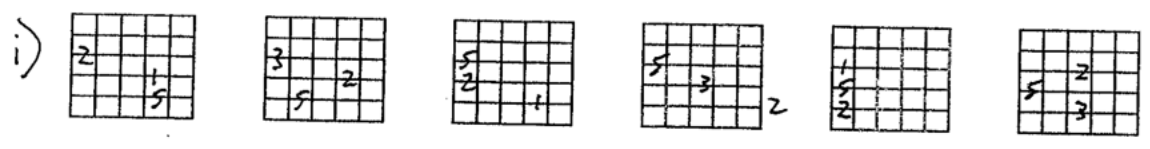
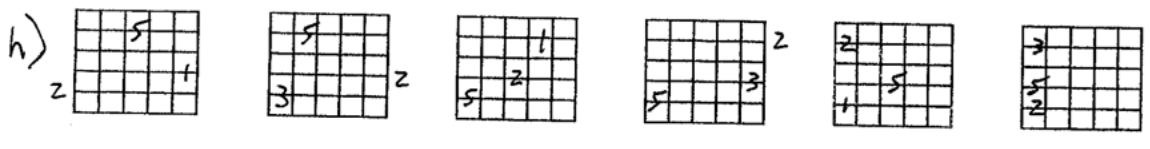
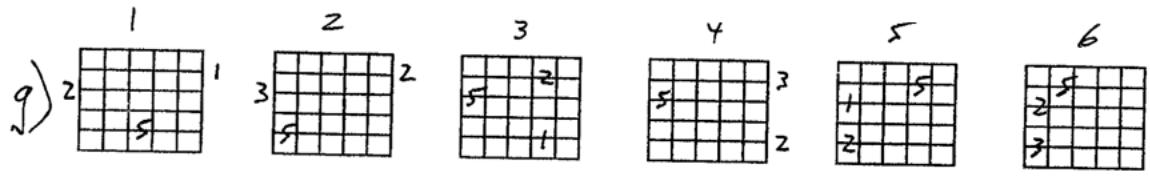
opening up and decorating traditional triads

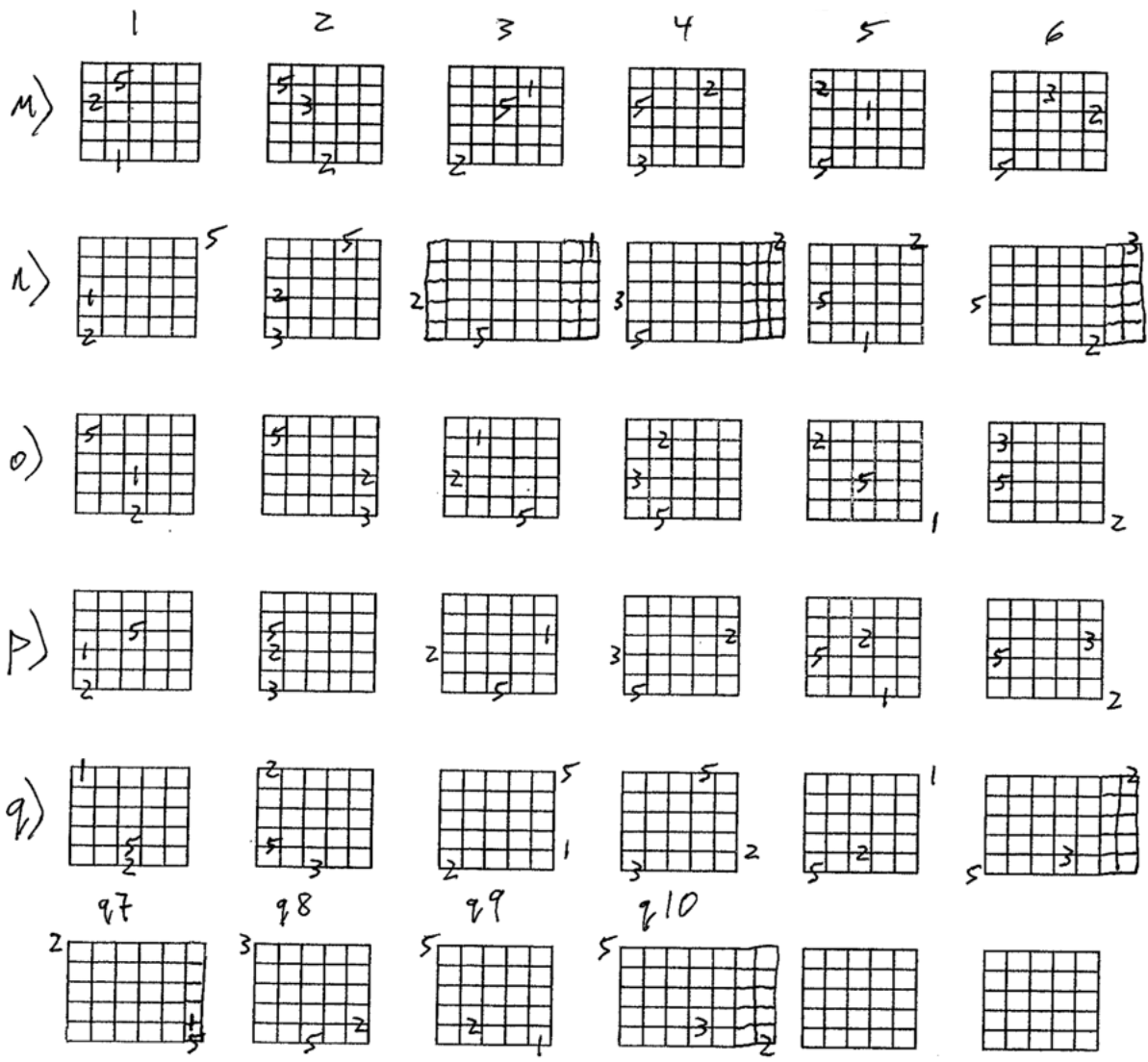
If I were to describe the sound of sus2 chords, I'd call them "open," while add9 chords have a distinctly "decorative" quality. Previous articles I've done such as "[9th Chords, Simplified](#)" and "[3 Different Types of 9th Chords](#)" discuss larger voicings, but what if we simply took any major triad and lowered the 3rd to the 2nd, creating sus2 voicings all across the fretboard? And why not raise the root to 2, giving us the add9 flavor?

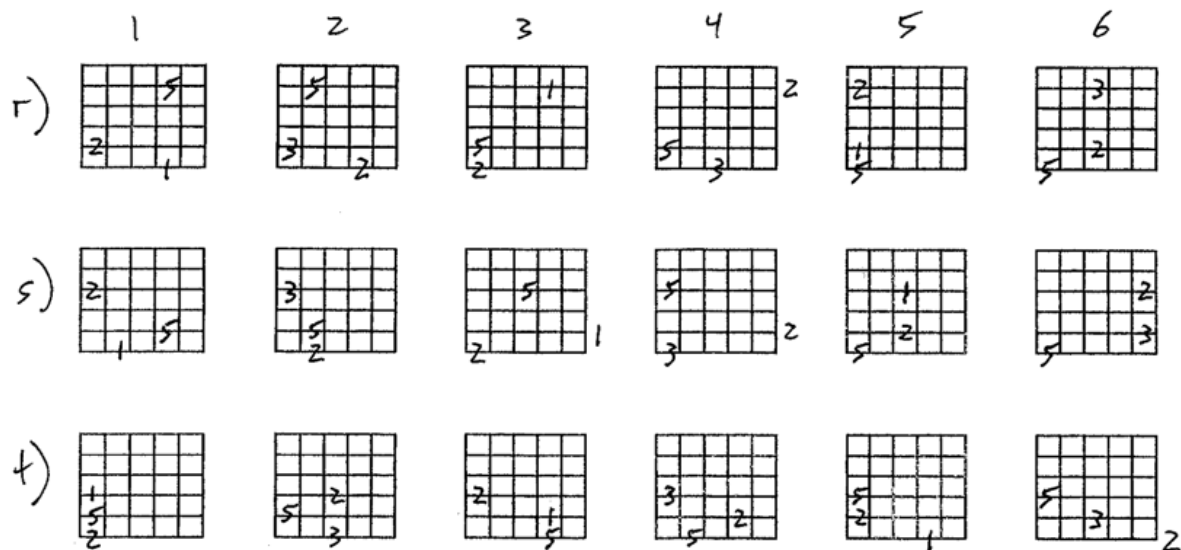
In "[Triads on Every String Set](#)," we explored the 20 possible string set combinations for playing triads. Now, let's apply the same principle to sus2 and add9 triads. Technically, to be called an add9 chord, the intervals 2, 3, and 5 need to include a root. However, since the root is implied in all our examples, we'll refer to the intervals 2, 3, and 5 as "add9 triads."

I've arranged them into 20 lettered rows, representing specific sets of strings, and 6 columns featuring 3 inversions of sus2 and 3 inversions of add9. Some may seem nearly impossible to play, like k6, while others, like g2, are just a bit challenging. I've included them all for several reasons: a) to offer a thorough exploration of possibilities; b) for the 'unplayable' ones, at least one note can be on an open string in a particular key; c) sometimes what's difficult lower on the neck becomes much easier higher up, like h2 in the key of G above the 12th fret.

You'll notice that I've placed the 125s next to the 235s. This is because once the 5 is in place on the sus2, it's relatively easy to move the other 2 voices up a whole step to get the add9s, and vice versa.







[In this video](#), I did not play the more difficult stretches, especially if those same pitches could be easily played on a different string set. (For example, I left out c5 in favor of b3). The ones left out are c:5,6; f:3,4; g:1,2; h:1,2; k: 3,5,6; l:3-6; n:1,3,4,6; o:5,6; p:6; q:3,4,6,7,9,10; r: 3,4.

My personal favorites are a 1-6; b 1,4; c 1,2; d 1-6; e 2,5; f 1,2,6; g 3,6; h 3,5; i 1-6; j 6; k 4; m 1,4,5,6; o 2,4; p 2,5; s 1,5,6

Happy triad-embellishing!