

Chords to embellish with – Suspended, Add, and major 7th chords -written by David Taub

Below are chord illustrations for some common chords that you can use to spice up your playing and create melody. These can be peppered in and substituted to create interest and melody lines in your songs and progressions. Below we will examine some suspended 2nd and 4th chords, some add chords and major 7th chords. These chords can be very rich, lush, and “big” sounding – so memorize the notes and fingerings and start to use them in your playing. These are only a few to get you started – many more to come.

Suspended 2nd and 4th chords have no third interval – it is suspended. So the third is either raised to the 4th or lowered to the 2nd scale degree. Remember from past lessons a major chord or major triad is made of the formula root, 3rd, and 5th. A minor chord or minor triad is made of the formula root, flat third, and fifth. You can easily tell a major chord from a minor chord by looking at that third degree – whether it is a major third or a flatted third. Suspended 2nd and 4th chords do not have thirds, so they are technically not major or minor chords and they work equally well when used with both major AND minor chords. Suspended chords are often used in combination with major or minor chords with the same letter name.

Add chords differ from suspended chords in that an interval is not removed from the chord but rather added. An add2 chord has the 1,3,5 and then on top of that adds a 2nd - so the formula becomes 1,2,3,5. Where suspended 2nd and 4th chords remove, or suspend an interval, the add chords leaves that in and then adds another.

Below are some chords that can really add tremendous interest and melody to your playing. Try peppering them in while strumming in time. Think melodically and start off strumming slow with 8th note strum patterns. Work up to 16th note patterns and then try adding them to your other songs and progressions. Always play in time and think melodically.

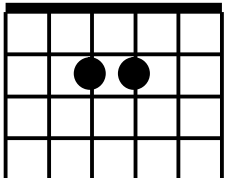
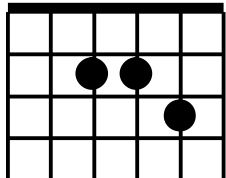
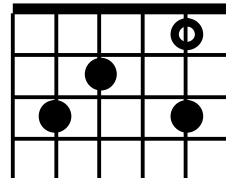
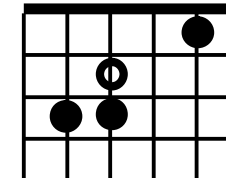
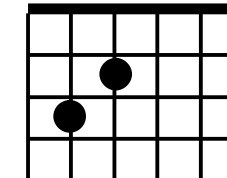
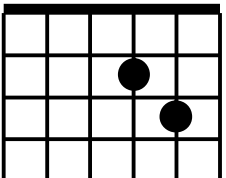
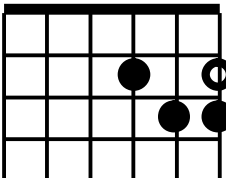
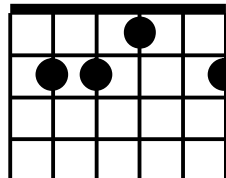
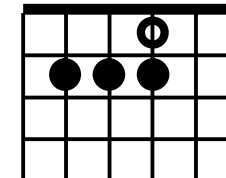
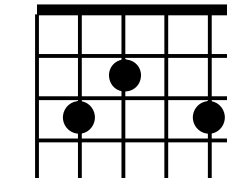
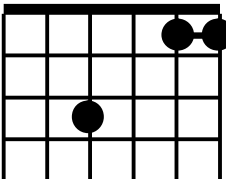
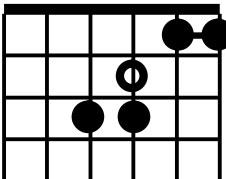
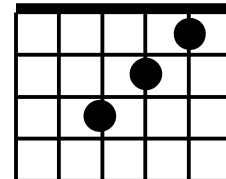
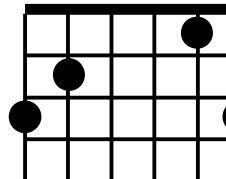
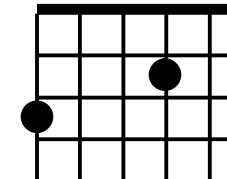
CHORD FORMULAS:

Suspended 2nd=Sus2 = 1, 2nd, 5th
Add2 = 1, 2nd, 3rd, 5th

Suspended 4th=Sus4 = 1, 4th, 5th
Add4 = 1, 3rd, 4th, 5th

Major 7th – maj7 = 1, 3rd, 5th, 7th
○ =leave finger down in position

CHORD VOICINGS AND FINGERINGS:

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Asus2  X 0 1 2 0 0 | Asus4  X 0 1 2 4 0 | Cadd2  X 3 2 0 4 0 | Cadd4  X 3 4 0 1 0 | Cmaj7  X 3 2 0 0 0 |
| Dsus2  X X 0 1 3 0 | Dsus4  X X 0 1 3 4 | Eadd2  0 2 3 1 0 4 | Esus4  0 2 3 4 0 0 | Cadd9  X 2 1 0 3 4 |
| Fsus2  X X 3 0 1 1 | Fsus4  X X 3 4 1 1 | Fmaj7  X X 3 2 1 0 | Gadd4  3 2 0 0 1 4 | Gadd2  3 0 0 2 0 4 |