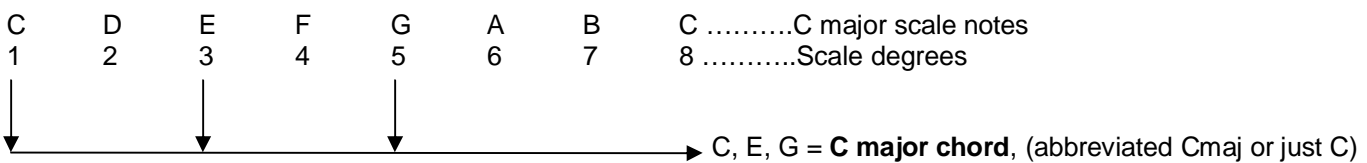


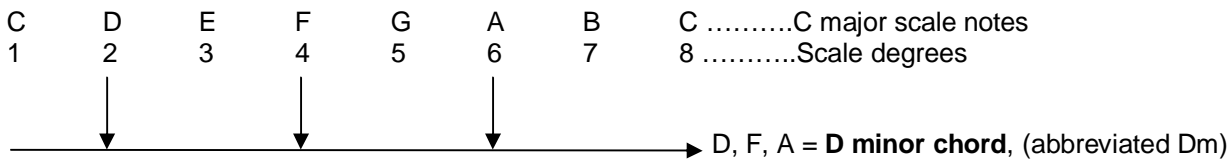
## Building chords from the major scale – major key -written by David Taub

As per previous lessons we have learned that music theory falls back to the major scale. The major scale is the standard in music that all is compared. Now we will build chords from each degree of the major scale and you will easily be able to know which chords are in any given key. A scale is a series of sounds arranged by order of pitch, or alphabetically, from any given note to its octave. To find the notes in any major key, (major scale), start at the root and go up following this pattern: *whole step, whole step, half step, whole step, whole step, whole step, half step*. This will take you to the root one octave higher than where you began, and will include all seven notes in the major key in that octave. Remember, any chord *might* show up in any given key, however, some chords are much more likely to be in a given key than others. The most likely chords to show up in a given key are the chords made from combinations of the notes in that keys' major scale. You'll find that although the chords change from one key to the next, the *pattern* of major and minor type chords is always the same for any major key. Lets examine the C major scale and build the chords in that key right from the scale. Follow this template to build the chords in any key.

If you start on C and skip every other note in the scale for a total of 3, you have built a C major chord. The major chord follows the formula root, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>. So a C major chord is constructed from the three notes C, E, and G, the root of the scale, the third note of the scale, and the fifth note of the scale. (If this is not clear or totally new, before going forward, please stop and review the previous lessons on chord construction).



Now if we do the exact same thing except start on the D note, the second degree of the scale, and skip every other note – or just keep stacking thirds, we then have the three notes that construct a D minor chord, (as illustrated below).



The process of stacking 3 notes up in the major scale continues until you have a total of 7 chords, one for each note of the scale. Each major key will have a total of seven chords, as illustrated below.

**C D E F G A B C** – E,G,B =Em (**E minor chord**)

**C D E F G A B C** – F,A,C =F (**F major chord**)

**C D E F G A B C D** – G,B,D =G (**G major chord**)

**C D E F G A B C D E** - A,C,E =Am (**A minor chord**)

**C D E F G A B C D E F** - B,D,F = B° (**B diminished chord**)

Because major scales are always built from stacking thirds, the pattern is always the same for every major key. The chords built on the first, fourth, and fifth degrees of the scale are major type chords (I, IV, and V). The chords built on the second, third, and sixth degrees of the scale are minor type chords (ii, iii, and vi). The chord built on the seventh degree of the scale is a diminished chord. So whichever key you are building chords from the pattern will always be the same.  
**Major....Minor....Minor....Major....Major....Minor....Diminished - commit this pattern to memory!**