

# CHAPTER 16

## CHORD SCALES

Chord symbols indicate the vertical or harmonic framework of a piece; however, their use may be expanded by using chord scales for horizontal or melodic application. A given chord symbol normally **implies** use of a particular scale.

### MAJOR SIXTH AND MAJOR SEVENTH CHORD SCALES

The major or ionian scale (**MLM**) is used for tonic major sixth or major seventh chords. The lydian scale (**LMM**) is used for all other major sixth or major seventh chords.

The figure displays four musical staves, each representing a different chord scale. The first staff is for C6 (Major) in treble clef, showing an ascending scale with intervals marked as Major (M), Lydian (L), and Major (M). The second staff is for F Maj7 (Major) in bass clef, also with intervals marked as Major (M), Lydian (L), and Major (M). The third staff is for C6 (Lydian) in treble clef, with intervals marked as Lydian (L), Major (M), and Major (M). The fourth staff is for Eb Maj7 (Lydian) in bass clef, with intervals marked as Lydian (L), Major (M), and Major (M).

*Figure 16.1: Major Sixth and Seventh Chord Scales.*

### MINOR SIXTH AND MINOR/MAJOR SEVENTH CHORD SCALES

The ascending melodic minor scale (**mLM**) is used both ascending and descending on minor sixth and minor/major seventh chords.

The figure displays two musical staves. The first staff is for C min6 in treble clef, showing an ascending scale with intervals marked as melodic minor (m), Lydian (L), and Major (M). The second staff is for Fmin(Maj7) in bass clef, also with intervals marked as melodic minor (m), Lydian (L), and Major (M).

*Figure 16.2: Minor Sixth and Minor/Major Seventh Chord Scales.*

## DOMINANT SEVENTH CHORD SCALES

The mixolydian scale (**MML** or **MLm**) is used for dominant seventh chords which move from dominant to tonic. The lydian seventh scale (**LMm**) is used for all other dominant seventh chords.

G7 (mixolydian):



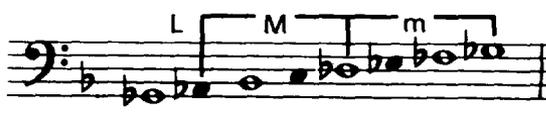
B $\flat$  7 (mixolydian):



F7 (lydian seventh):



G $\flat$  7 (lydian seventh):



*Figure 16.3: Dominant Seventh Chord Scales.*

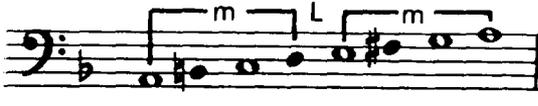
## MINOR SEVENTH CHORD SCALES

The dorian scale (**mLm**) is used for minor seventh chords. Although some minor seventh chords should take other scales, the dorian scale will fit all minor seventh chords.

E $\text{min}7$ :



A $\text{min}7$ :



*Figure 16.4: Minor Seventh Chord Scales.*

## MINOR SEVENTH (FLAT FIVE) CHORD SCALES

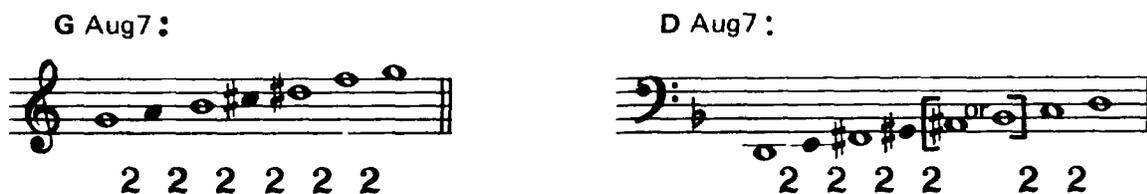
The locrian scale (NNL) is used for minor seventh (flat five) chords.



*Figure 16.5: Minor Seventh (flat five) Chord Scales.*

## AUGMENTED SEVENTH CHORD SCALES

The whole tone scale (222222) is used for augmented seventh chords.



*Figure 16.6: Augmented Seventh Chord Scales.*

## DIMINISHED SEVENTH CHORD SCALES

The diminished scale (21212121) is used for diminished seventh chords. A diminished scale may be thought of as two superimposed diminished seventh chords a whole step apart.



*Figure 16.7: Diminished Seventh Chord Scales.*

## THE BLUES SCALE

The blues scale is a scale used primarily as a device while playing blues. It cannot be analyzed with tetrachords. The scale contains the tonic (1), subdominant (4), and dominant (5) plus the “blue notes” which are the lowered third ( $\flat 3$ ), lowered fifth ( $\flat 5$ ), and lowered seventh ( $\flat 7$ ). Enharmonic spellings are frequently used.

C blues scale:

**blue notes**

Half Step Combinations

F blues scale :

1  $\flat 3$  4  $\sharp 4$  5  $\flat 7$  1  
( $\flat 5$ )

*Figure 16.8: The Blues Scale.*

## PENTATONIC SCALES

The pentatonic major scale may be used with major sixth, major seventh, and dominant seventh chords.

The pentatonic minor scale may be used with minor seventh chords or as a substitute for the blues scale.

**B $\flat$  6 (pentatonic major)**

**A Maj7 (pentatonic major):**

**E $\flat$  7 (pentatonic major)**

**G min7 (pentatonic minor)**

**G blues (pentatonic minor):**

Figure 16.9: Pentatonic Scales.

CHORD TYPE	COMMON CHORD SCALES USED		
Major Sixth and Major Seventh	Major (MLM)	Lydian (LMM)	Pentatonic Major (1 2 3 5 6)
Minor Sixth and Minor/Major Seventh	Ascending Melodic Minor (mLM)		
Dominant Seventh	Mixolydian (MML or MLm)	Lydian Seventh (LMm)	Pentatonic Major (1 2 3 5 6)
Minor Seventh	Dorian (mLm)	Pentatonic Minor (1 $\flat$ 3 4 5 $\flat$ 7)	
Minor Seventh (Flat Five)	Locrian (NNL)		
Augmented	Whole Tone (222222)		
Diminished	Diminished (21212121)		
blues	Blues (1 $\flat$ 3 4 $\flat$ 5 5 $\flat$ 7)		Pentatonic Minor (1 $\flat$ 3 4 5 $\flat$ 7)

Figure 16.10: Common Chord Scale Usage.

