

# NINTHS

Various notes can be added to triads and four-note chords to give a richer harmony.

With one exception, these are taken from the higher extensions of chords, ie. notes which lie over 1 octave (but within 2 octaves from the root note of the chord). The notes in question are the ninth, eleventh and thirteenth.

The exception is the second which is found on the second step of the major and minor chords which can be added to major and minor triads, with or without the root-notes, as shown below. Some of the inversions sound better than others.

**Without the root-note (C)**

C(add2)  
C2  
C add D

inversions

Cm(add2)  
Cm2  
Cm add D

Detailed description: This block shows two sets of musical notation on a five-line staff. The first set is for a C major triad without the root note (C). It lists the symbols C(add2), C2, and C add D. A bracket labeled 'inversions' spans three chord diagrams: the first has notes G4 and E5; the second has notes E5 and C6; the third has notes C6 and G4. The second set is for a C minor triad without the root note. It lists the symbols Cm(add2), Cm2, and Cm add D. A bracket labeled 'inversions' spans three chord diagrams: the first has notes Bb4 and Gb5; the second has notes Gb5 and Eb6; the third has notes Eb6 and Bb4.

*Sometimes it might be stated "omit C" or "omit root"*

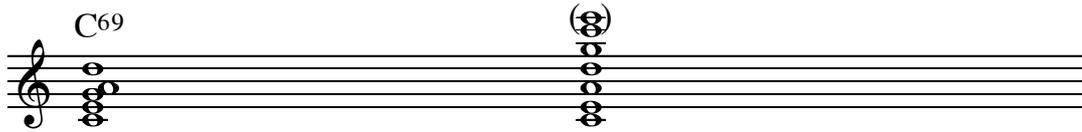
**With the root-note (C)**

same symbol as above

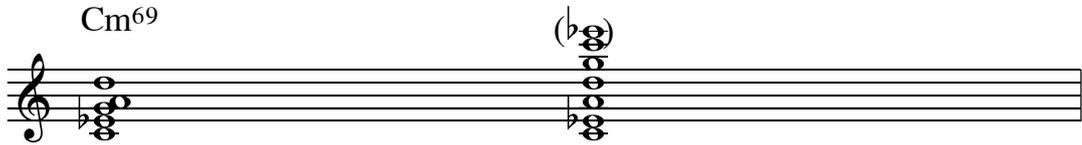
inversions

Detailed description: This block shows two sets of musical notation on a five-line staff. The first set is for a C major triad with the root note. It lists the symbols 'same symbol as above'. A bracket labeled 'inversions' spans three chord diagrams: the first has notes C4, E4, G4; the second has notes C4, G4, E4; the third has notes C4, G4, E4. The second set is for a C minor triad with the root note. It lists the symbols 'same symbol as above'. A bracket labeled 'inversions' spans three chord diagrams: the first has notes C4, Eb4, Gb4; the second has notes C4, Gb4, Eb4; the third has notes C4, Gb4, Eb4.

When the sixth is also added to the major or minor triad, we end up with a 69 chord.



This chord can be opened up by putting the fifth (G, here) up an octave

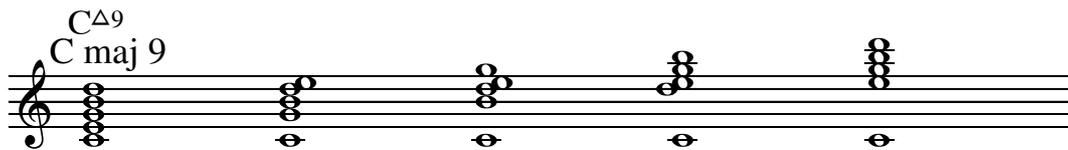


Note that in the open voicing, from the 3rd upwards the notes are arranged in fourths.

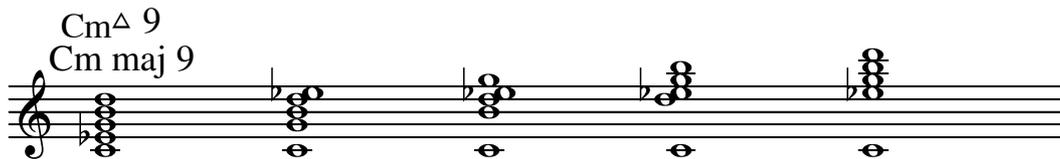
Note also that the same notes can be played as a scale by putting the 9th down an octave to form a major and minor pentatonic scale respectively

The 69 chord is often used when the melody note is the tonic (C),

A major seventh can also have a ninth added to it.

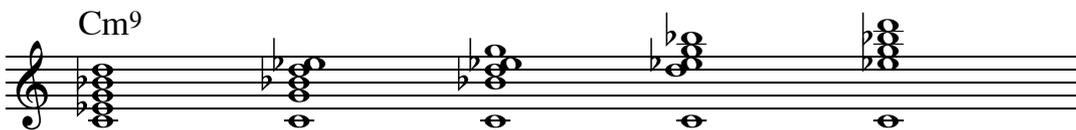


The notes above the root-note can be inverted to give the following



Play these chords also an octave lower

The ninth can also be added to minor seventh chords.



Play these chords also an octave lower

Usually in the chords given above the ninth is left unaltered (ie. it is the same as in the major and minor scales. This is not the case with dominant sevenths when the ninth is added. First of all, let's see the chords with unaltered ninths.



Play these chords also an octave lower

With dominant sevenths, the ninth can be unaltered or raised or sharpened by a semitone.

#### Dominant sevenths with flattened ninths



Note that if you take away the root-note you have various diminished chords  
The -9 and b9 are sometimes enclosed in round brackets

Play these chords also an octave lower

#### Dominant sevenths with sharpened ninths



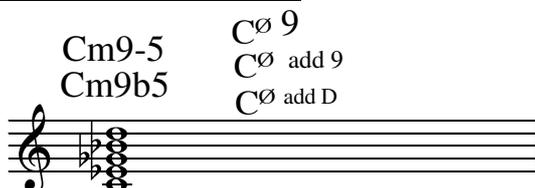
Depending on the context, the sharpened ninth may be written with a #9 (see first chord) or as a b10 (see second, third and fourth chords)

The +9 and #9 are sometimes enclosed in round brackets

Play these chords also an octave lower

It is also possible to have a dominant seventh with both a flattened and sharpened ninth.

Half-diminished chords can also have a ninth (usually unaltered)



Note that the ninth (D) is a tone above the root-note (the octave)

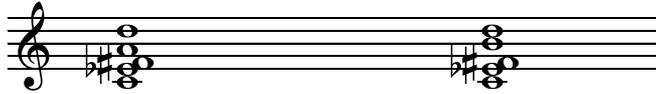
A half-diminished with a flattened ninth is rarely found.

Cm7-5 (add Db) Cø add Db



The diminished chord can also have a ninth added to it.

$C^{\circ 9}$   
 $C^{\circ}$  add D                       $C^{\circ}$  add D, B



When the ninth is added to the diminished chord the sixth (A, here) is often replaced by the major 7th (B)

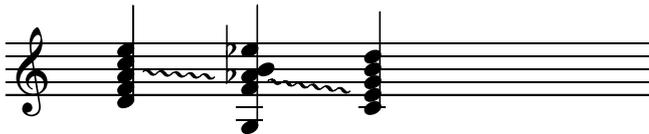
Strictly speaking I have written the chord wrongly, but it is easier to read this way.

### When to use the ninth

1. When the melody note itself is the ninth or altered ninth.
2. To make a fuller chord.

### Guidelines as to which form of the ninth to add

1. If the dominant seventh lies on a note not in the key, the unaltered ninth is usually the one.
2. If the dominant seventh is preceded by a half-diminished or followed by a minor chord of some sort, the altered (usually flattened) ninth sounds best.
3. If the ninth of whatever chord is part of an inner movement of voices (usually semitones) choose accordingly. Note the A going to the Ab and then to the G in this example.



4. Dominant sevenths with sharpened ninths can be used to give a bluesy sound as the #9 (which can be thought of as a flattened third) is found in the blues scale.

With all of these chords, experiment with different voicings and with different notes playing the lead.